

EVALUATION OF PREVALENT DIGITAL MEDIA PLATFORMS WHERE YOUTH ACCESS SEXUAL CONTENTS IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Digital media platforms have become a means of communication that enable social networking, which is essential for intellectual, emotional and social lives among youngsters. Recent showbiz of nude content on digital gadgets, influencer's media accounts, youth digital pages and other internet applications have prompted the researchers to evaluate the prevalent digital media platforms where youth access sexual contents. The study adopted observation and survey to source for data derived through observation schedule and questionnaire. The study was carried out among 401 undergraduates of the University of Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. Technology determinism theory provided the theoretical background for the study. Responses from the completed questionnaire were collated, coded and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics of multiple linear regression. The findings revealed that digital website was the prevalent digital media platform through which the undergraduates gained access to sexual contents which were links to website pop ups. The study recommends that digital media users must be careful of accidental clicks to avoid unwanted sexual pop-up on their digital gadgets. Youth should also focus on content that will promote good morals among them.

KEYWORDS: *Digital Media Platforms, Digital Technology, Sexual Content, Youth*

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is one of the developing countries with high population of youth who need more information on sexual education so as to protect one another from sexual assaults Halwani R. (2020). The Unusual sexual contents on digital media have lured many students to several illicit sexual activities, resulting to some cases of premarital sexual intercourse, abortion sexually transmitted diseases and prostitution Akinwale A(2010).

Digital media is a technology innovation that functions through digital gadgets and software components to communicate, interact, and pass information to the subscribers, this medium is widely accepted among undergraduates Marieke D. & Axel M. (2018).

Digital media has provided a shift in mobile communication unlike when only people who are privileged to browse and pay for browsing time in the café do have access and use the internet, provision of digital gadget and mobile network has made information access, process and dissemination easy and convenient Omotosho L.A. (2016).

Digital media offers both growth and loyalty opportunities for image brands and the development of a company's ideas and productivity Miniukovic A & Marchese M (2020). Apart from other functions of digital media, it has also been a source where sexual content is communicated to the students in various universities through the internet. This has been an issue affecting the undergraduates psychologically and has developed into the mind and emotional imbalance resulting to

unsound devastating behaviour and harm the future of individual youth Adegboyega A (2019).

Sexual contents referred to nude images, erotic videos and numerous uncensored content which may trigger sexual behaviour that are posted on daily basis by users, media influencers and sites managers, Studies have shown that the may lead to various sexual behaviour among students Omotosho L. A (2016). Youngsters in Nigeria recently are addicted to digital media with constant use of digital media for social interactions Ngonso B (2019).

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Digital media platforms have become a means of communication that enable social networking, which is essential for intellectual, emotional and social lives among youngsters. Recent showbiz of nude content on digital gadgets, influencer's media accounts, youth digital pages and other internet applications have prompted the researchers to evaluate the prevalent digital media platforms where youth access sexual contents.

OBJECTIVE

Examine the digital media platforms through which undergraduates access sexual contents.

Access to Digital Media Platforms

Digital media are applications that function using network facilities such as internet browsers to create and send information - opinion, Video, audio, and multimedia are used to share and discuss Mamgain A. etal(2020). The communication sites have some electronic communication features through which user information, ideas, can create online communities to share personal messages and other contents. These components process contents and other information digital media platforms such as social media have brought about a transformation from the traditional unidirectional medium of communication to a multidirectional, real-time and interactive medium Halwani R (2020).

Access to digital media platforms and the internet have further complicated and promoted constant viewing of sexual related materials which have dominated a greater part of student's time instead of creating more time for studies. The increase in the rate of digital media access to nude content have resulted in negative use and influence on the sexual behaviour of young adults Mayungbo O. etal (2017).

A related study revealed that access to digital media platforms have provided youths with a unique, affordable and conducive opportunities for expression, discussion and interaction of all forms of sexuality, without been noticed by parents, guardians, family members and others in the society Uzobo Eetal (2020).

Youth access digital media due to the high quality of visual content which are appealing, attractive, beautiful and full of aesthetics for users to relate well to the interfaces. Numerous studies have shown the influence of aesthetics on digital media accessibility Miniukovic A & Marchese M (2020). Advances in technology allow faster downloads of video, audio and other relevant materials to intended search on digital media, this gave undergraduates and individuals a chance for more creative use of digital media content, enhancing the use of emotional appeals in creating videos, animations and images on the Internet Uzobo E etal(2020).

Prevalent Digital Media Platforms Accessed

Websites are well prepared to use another program in other to have more materials that can be used for various gratifications, learning and research. Websites in recent times have been used to attain accelerated development of

companies with richer and interactive content as well as related tools such as image chat rooms, email newsletters and magazines use in interactive sessions and update information Miniukovic M & Marchese M (2020). Website is well designed to give the first impression to a vital moment in order to capture the interest of the users, this makes people develop an interest in the surfing of the internet continuously to check relevant contents of their needs which some undergraduates use to serve aimed sexual pleasure Zilka G.C (2021).

Blog practice came into existence in the 1990s as spare time activity before it became a profession by many bloggers who source for news content and other necessary information for its audience Miniukovic A & Marchese M (2020). Blogs contain detailed information on specific topics and discussions which are used to create and facilitate an in-depth discussion on any issue through comments from the user. With increased popularity, bloggers do organise competitions that are worldwide accessible by the youth. Though recently now has some sexual materials to attract more subscribers Joshi U et al (2020).

YouTube is a visual content sharing platform that is occupied and updated every day with videos to give everyone the privilege to interact and share visual content through the platform, the medium is created with four values as freedom of expression, freedom of information, freedom of opportunity, and freedom of belonging. Users can document their views, upload and watch the videos as there is provision for sharing and commenting on videos with additional facilities for the subscription of other users L win M & Phau I (2014)

Facebook is the most used social media platform in the world, with more than 1.87 billion monthly users who subscribe and actively use the on its site, the platform gave huge privilege to potential users for extension professional activities such as marketing products, advertising and other confidential interactions Joshi U et al (2020).

Facebook platforms are highly recognized among adolescents, the adolescents use the platform to check news feeds and post updates of daily incidents, events and information. It was recently revealed that adolescents also use social media to distribute sexually suggestive images among themselves, research has shown that one in every five adolescents shared sexual revealing images on his or her online profile L win L & Phau I (2014)

WhatsApp is a messenger application used on smartphones and presently on other electronic media gadgets. It is an internet-based interactive platform that supports text, audio, video, graphics and pictures. Real-time video chatting has also been integrated recently, making it more popular among users. The application currently has more than one billion users of the app in 180 countries L win M & Phau I (2014). Though it was formally used for personal messaging before gaining more popularity among internet users both professionals and practitioners to share information, the medium is aided by the group messaging feature that is updated when outdated Joshi U et al (2020).

Instagram is generally known as a novel photo, video-sharing social networking platform. It is also used for messaging and interactive live video conversation. Instagram is essentially a mobile-based application that enables users to take videos, photos or pictures including a display of products and services to followers who liked comments on the content different manipulation tools to transform the appearance of images and share them instantly with friends on different social L win M & Phau I (2014).

Twitter slightly differs from other social media sites due to followership's strategy, one user can follow another user without obligation for the latter to follow the original Curran K et al (2016). Nigeria is regarded as the third most active

African country on Twitter with a large number of users and influencers who use the platform for news information, games, images, messages and video materials Zilka G.C (2021). Studies have established that undergraduates spend more time twitting, which usually influences them to engage in various sexual behaviours Curran K etal (2016)

Prevalent Digital Media Platforms where Undergraduates Gain Access Sexual Contents.

The new media has provided digital media applications that are fast acceptable and accessible through smartphones and digital devices which promote effective interaction through the website and social media platforms such as, website, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, blogs, YouTube, Snapchat, and My Space Collins R & Strasburger V (2017).

Studies has proven that such applications have changed virtually everything in the society including human behaviour, business transactions, and communication, as everyone now interacts and make friends with close and distance individual. However various technology and approach to different issues have changed drastically in recent times and has affected access to information for personal and social development which are also changing very quickly. The revolution in the telecommunication sector has therefore increased Internet access and use among the general population, particularly young people Ihuoma I. Hetal(2013).

THEORETICAL REVIEW

This study employs technology determinism theory. The theory simply express the significance embedded in the way people access or uses various technologies. The theory deems relevant to the study as it shows the level by which acceptance of certain technological inventions could affect the behaviour of an individual. The implication is that technology's influence is ultimately determined by how it is been accessed by users and culture that accept it. This implies that many youths do not have a reasonable objective of visiting the digital media platforms but many are only interested in erotic contents to satisfy their sexual needs, and this has resulted in the unusual access of online contents Collins R & Strasburger V (2017).

METHODOLOGY

The design for this study is survey method, the instrument is structured questionnaire, which were distributed randomly among study 401 student of the University of Ibadan Oyo State Nigeria, the data were gathered, coded and interpreted using SPSS data application

Demographic Information of the Respondents

Table 1: Respondents According to Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	223	60.38%
Female	147	39.7%
Total	370	100%

Source: Field Study, 2021

The gender of the respondents is presented in the table. The table shows that, out of 370 respondents sampled for the study, 223 (60.38%) respondents are male while 147 (39.78) are female

Table 2: Respondents According to Age

Age of Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
16-20 years	117	31.6%
21-25 years	169	45.7%
26-30 years	57	15.4%
31 and above years	27	7.3%
Total	370	100%

Source: Field Study, 2021

The table presents the age group of the respondents, it reveals that 117 respondents given as 31.6% were between the ages 16-20 years, 160 respondents given as 45.7% were between ages 21-25, 57 respondents given as 15.4% were 26-30 years, while 27 given 7.3% were between 31 and above

Table 3: Exposed to Sexual Contents on Digital Media Platforms

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	370	100
No	00	00
Total	370	100

Source: Field Study, 2021

Data shows respondents who are exposed to sexual content on digital media, it reveals that 370 respondents given as 100% were exposed to sexual contents on digital media. This was achieved because the questionnaire was only given to those that have seen sexual content on digital media in order to get more valid response.

Table 4: Digital Media Platforms Accessed by Undergraduate

S/No	Item (1)	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	St.D
1.	Gain access to sexual contents on website	187 (50.5%)	120 (32.4%)	25 (6.8%)	38 (10.3%)	3.23	.966
2.	Gain access to sexual contents on Blog	88 (23.8%)	142 (38.4%)	69 (18.6%)	71 (19.2%)	2.67	1.041
3.	Gain access to sexual contents on Facebook	96 (25.9)	130 (35.1)	67 (18.1)	77 (20.8%)	2.66	1.078
4.	Gain access to sexual contents on Instagram	98 (26.5%)	140 (37.8%)	132 (35.7%)	98 (26.5%)	2.91	.784
5.	Gain access to sexual contents on WhatsApp	118 (31.9%)	124 (33.5%)	56 (15.1%)	72 (19.5%)	2.78	1.093
6.	Gain access to sexual contents on twitter	95 (25.7%)	116 (31.4%)	71 (19.2%)	88 (23.8%)	2.59	1.111
7.	Gain access to sexual contents on YouTube	102	103	164	11	3.01	

Source: Field Study, 2021

Keys: SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree, M= Mean, Std.D = Standard Deviation, WM= Weighted Mean

The table revealed that 187 respondent (50.5%) strongly agreed that they gain access to sexual contents on website, 120 respondents (32, 4%) agreed that they gain access to sexual content on website, 25 respondents (6.8%) disagreed and 38 (10.3%) strongly disagreed, with mean score of 3.23. The table also revealed that, 88 respondent (23.8%) strongly agreed that they gain access to sexual content on blog, 142 (38.4%) agreed, 69 (18.6%) disagreed, 71 (19.2%) strongly disagreed. with mean score of 2.67. The table further revealed that 96 respondents (25.9%) strongly agreed that they gain access sexual content on Facebook, 130 respondents (35.1%) agreed, 67 (18.1%) disagreed while 77(20.8%) strongly disagreed with mean score of 2.66. the study further revealed that 98 respondents (26.5%) strongly agreed that,

they gain access to sexual contents on Instagram, 140 respondent (37.8%) agreed, 132 (35.7%) disagreed while 98(26.5%) strongly disagreed with mean score of 2.91. the table also revealed that, 118 respondent strongly agreed that, they gain access to sexual contents on WhatsApp, 124 (33.5%) agreed, 56 15.1%) disagreed while 72 (19.5%) strongly disagreed and the mean is 2.78. The table also shows that, 95 respondents (25.7%) strongly agreed that, they gain access to sexual contents on twitter, 116 (31.4%) agreed, 71 (19.2%) disagreed, while 88 (23.8%) strongly disagreed, the mean is 2.59. finally the table stated that, 102 respondents (27.6%) strongly agreed to gain access to sexual contents on YouTube, 103 (27.8%) agreed, 164 (44.3%) disagreed while 11 (2.3%) strongly disagreed.

Also from table, it could be deduced that with an average mean of 3.23 on a scale of 4 point, access to sexual content on website had this mean scores. This was also the highest mean score in table therefore, the prevalent digital media platform through which undergraduates of University of Ibadan gain access to sexual contents are websites

CONCLUSION

The study revealed that prevalent digital media platform through which undergraduates of University of Ibadan gain access to sexual contents are websites. These are various websites with several pop-up on digital gadgets, feeding users with nude, half naked and other erotic materials

RECOMMENDATION

The study recommends that digital media users must be careful of accidental clicks to avoid unwanted sexual pop-up on their digital gadgets. Youth should also focus on contents that will promote good morals among them.

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