

DIGITAL EXPOSURE AND SEXUAL BEHAVIOR: THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA VIDEOS AMONG STUDENTS AT BAYELSA UNIVERSITY

Amaka Ifeoma Okeke

Department of Sociology, Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

DOI:<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15497036>

Abstract: Adolescents today are immersed in a digital environment where Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) profoundly influence their social behaviors and interactions. The internet, particularly social media platforms, has become an integral part of daily life, especially for young people. During adolescence, individuals undergo significant physical, emotional, and social changes, which make them especially vulnerable to external influences, including digital media. A substantial portion of the adolescent population, particularly those aged 18 to 29, actively engage with social networking platforms, with 87% of individuals in this age group participating in such online spaces (Asrese & Mekonnen, 2015). These platforms provide avenues for the exchange of various types of information, including sexual content, which can significantly shape sexual behaviors and attitudes. Research indicates that exposure to sexual content on social media influences the sexual intentions and behaviors of young people (Gonçalves, 2023). This study explores the link between social media video consumption and risky sexual behaviors among undergraduates in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. By examining how adolescents use these platforms and the potential implications for their sexual decision-making, the study highlights the role of digital media in shaping sexual attitudes and behaviors in a rapidly evolving social landscape. The findings are expected to contribute to understanding the broader implications of social media in the lives of young people and provide insight into the need for appropriate interventions in promoting safer sexual behaviors.

Keywords: Adolescents, Social Media, Sexual Behavior, Digital Influence, Risky Sexual Behaviors

Introduction

Adolescents in the 21st century navigate a digital world where Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have transformed social interactions. The Internet has become integral to daily life for most modern individuals, especially young people. Significant physical, emotional, and social changes occur during adolescence, making this age group particularly susceptible to external influences that shape their thoughts and behaviours (Landry et al., 2017). Among these influences, the internet plays a pivotal role, with 87% of individual's aged 18 to 29 using social networking platforms (Asrese & Mekonnen, 2015). The popularity of social media provides opportunities for the exchange of sexual information, influencing sexual intentions and actions (Gonçalves, 2023).

Adolescents' interaction with social media is intricately linked to their sexual development. On average, young people spend 4.5 hours daily viewing social media videos, forming a significant portion of the nearly 11 hours they engage with media overall (Chou et al., 2024). The rapid integration of connected devices into adolescents' lives introduces opportunities and risks, particularly in the realm of sexual behaviour. Concerns about online risks include unwanted sexual solicitation and risky sexual behaviour, both of which have garnered significant public attention (Davidson et al., 2024). However, empirical research on these issues remains limited, focusing primarily on the prevalence of risky behaviours rather than their cognitive or psychological predictors (Savoia et al., 2021).

Studies reveal that 13% to 23% of adolescents globally have experienced unwanted online sexual solicitation (Madigan et al., 2018). African statistics highlight the widespread use of social media, with Nigeria alone accounting for 17 million of the 200 million Facebook users across the continent (Internet Users Statistics for Africa, 2019). Among Nigerian adolescents, 63% access social media primarily through mobile phones, exposing them to sexual content and increasing their vulnerability to risky behaviours (Banounin et al., 2023). Research suggests that adolescents are particularly prone to such risks due to their high internet usage and online leisure activities (Banounin et al., 2023).

The influence of social media on sexual behaviour among young people has been the subject of various studies. For instance, findings from Kwara State, Nigeria, show that social media significantly affects youths' sexual behaviour, promoting activities such as sexting, viewing pornographic content, and engaging in risky sexual practices (Adegboyega, 2019). Similar studies in Ilorin, Nigeria, confirm a strong association between exposure to sexual content on social media and risky sexual behaviour among undergraduates (Onasoga et al., 2020). Moreover, research highlights the role of parental mediation in mitigating these risks, with parents expressing a need for more support to address the challenges posed by adolescents' smartphone and social media use (Allison, 2018).

Though existing studies have made significant contributions to understanding the relationship between social media and risky sexual behaviour, most have been conducted outside Nigeria or lack empirical depth. Additionally, few studies have explored the implications of social media video content viewing on adolescents' risky sexual behaviour, particularly among undergraduate students in Bayelsa State. This study seeks to bridge this gap by investigating the impact of social media video content on risky sexual behaviour in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. It aims to provide a nuanced understanding of how digital media shapes sexual behaviours in this context, thereby addressing a critical gap in the literature.

Theoretical Framework: Online Disinhibition Effect Theory

The Online Distribution Effect (ODE) theory examines the ways digital platforms, particularly social media, amplify the distribution of information and influence individual and societal behaviors. This

theory, developed by scholars like Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) and extended by more recent digital media researchers, focuses on how content shared online becomes widely accessible and impactful through mechanisms like virality, algorithmic recommendations, and user engagement. The theory emphasizes that online platforms reshape traditional communication structures by accelerating the spread of information to a global audience, transcending geographical and cultural boundaries (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). The ODE theory is built on several key tenets:

1. **Amplification and Reach:** Content shared online has the potential to reach a much broader audience than traditional media, increasing its influence.
2. **Engagement and Interactivity:** Social media allows users to actively engage with content, fostering personal connections and increasing memorability.
3. **Algorithmic Reinforcement:** Platform algorithms promote content based on user preferences, increasing the likelihood of exposure to specific themes or behaviors.
4. **Behavioral Influence:** The repeated exposure to certain types of content, especially visually engaging and emotive videos, shapes attitudes, perceptions, and behaviours, often subconsciously.

The ODE theory provides a robust framework for analysing how social media video content contributes to risky sexual behaviour. Social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube are widely used among adolescents and young adults. The ODE theory explains how explicit or suggestive video content can become pervasive, influencing the sexual behaviour of viewers in this demographic. Firstly, videos depicting risky sexual behaviours, glamorized relationships, or permissive sexual norms can gain traction online due to high levels of engagement, likes, shares, and comments. These videos may normalize such behaviours among viewers. Secondly, social media algorithms often recommend similar content to users based on their viewing history. If adolescents interact with sexually suggestive videos, they are likely to be exposed to more of such content, reinforcing certain attitudes toward risky behaviours (Boyd, 2014).

Furthermore, the theory posits that individuals, especially young people, are likely to imitate behaviours they perceive as popular or glamorous online. Influencers or content creators who engage in or promote risky sexual behaviours can inadvertently encourage similar behaviours among their followers. Finally, the ODE theory accounts for the interplay of globalized content and local cultures. In Bayelsa State, traditional values regarding sexuality may clash with the liberal attitudes portrayed in online videos, leading to confusion or shifts in behaviour among young people (Sundar & Limperos, 2013).

The Online Distribution Effect theory provides a critical lens through which to examine the impact of social media video content on risky sexual behaviour. Its focus on amplification, engagement, and behavioural influence underscores the need to address the pervasive role of digital platforms in shaping adolescent and youth behaviours in Nigeria. This theoretical foundation can guide researchers in identifying the mechanisms of influence and developing targeted interventions.

Materials and Methods

This cross-sectional study was conducted in Bayelsa State Nigeria. Bayelsa state is located at the southern part of Nigeria. Bayelsa state is predominantly Ijo with the Ijaw language being widely spoken. The study population includes all undergraduate students 16 years and above schooling in Bayelsa state and is exposed to one social media platform or another such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Tiktok, Instagram, Twitter, WeChat, etc. and also view video content online like that of skit video making, online live streaming, weblog videos, web-interviews, online User-generated content, product Demo videos etc. The inclusion criteria for this study were made to be limited to the identified undergraduate students in Bayelsa state mentioned above who are expected to have had the experience of online risky sexual behaviour as a result of social media video content viewing while making use of the online space.

The sample size for this study was determined using Leslie Kish (1965) formula which yielded a sample size of 384. For this study, the probability and non-probability sampling techniques were used. Firstly, there was a purposive selection of Niger Delta University and the Federal University of Otuoke because of its high and well-known population of students in the state. Secondly, the undergraduate students of Niger Delta University and Federal University of Otuoke in Bayelsa state were stratified based on their faculties. Thirdly, at the point of contacting students in Niger Delta University and Federal University of Otuoke of the selected population, a simple random sampling technique was used to select the undergraduate students of both schools. Lastly, the population of undergraduate students were randomly selected from different departments of Niger Delta University and Federal University of Otuoke.

Primarily, data was collected from the undergraduate students of Niger Delta University and Federal University of Otuoke in Bayelsa state in the surveyed process through the questionnaire. Questionnaires were mostly administered to accessible undergraduate students who were willing to participate in the study. The questionnaire is a closed question which was divided into four different sections. The first category comprises socio-demographic questions which include questions about age, gender, religion, marital status, monthly allowance, educational qualification, level of study etc. Other aspects of the questionnaire targeted the aim of the study. Data analysis for this study was done using descriptive statistics such as percentages, frequency and charts with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Results

Socio-demographic Profile of Respondents

The socio-demographic profile of the respondents reveals a diverse range of characteristics. In terms of gender, the majority of respondents are female, accounting for 65.1% of the sample, while 34.9% are male. Age distribution shows that the largest group falls within the 16-19 age category, making up 51.0%, followed by 33.1% in the 20-23 age range, and 15.9% in the 24-27 range, with a mean age of 19.65 years and a standard deviation of 1.948.

Table 1: Socio-demographic Profile of the respondents

Variables	Frequency (N = 384)	Percentage (% = 100)
Gender		
Male	134	34.9%
Female	250	65.1%
Age category		
16 – 19	196	51.0%
20 – 23	127	33.1%
24 – 27	61	15.9%
Mean & Std. Age:	19.65 ± 1.948	100.0%
Family type		
Monogamous	189	49.2%
Polygamous	128	33.3%
Single Parenthood	67	17.4%
Relationship status		
Cohabiting	67	17.4%
Single	249	64.8%
Married	68	17.7%
Religion		
Christianity	317	82.6%
Islam	67	17.4%
Ethnic group		
Ijaw (Ogbia, Ijaw, Nembe, Epie, Atissa)	188	49.0%
Igbo/Ikwere	129	33.6%
Isoko/Urhobo/Beni	67	17.4%
Current level of study		
100	128	33.3%
200	129	33.6%
300	67	17.4%
400	60	15.6%
Faculty		
College of Health Sciences	67	17.4%
Management sciences	67	17.4%
Education	189	49.2%
Sciences	61	15.9%

Estimated allowance per month		
Less than - ₦5,000	68	17.7%
₦6,000 - ₦10,000	67	17.4%
₦11,000 - ₦15,000	67	17.4%
₦16,000 - ₦20,000	61	15.9%
Above ₦20,000	121	31.5%
Source of funding for education		
Parents	256	66.7%
Relatives	67	17.4%
Self- reliance	61	15.9%

Regarding family structure, nearly half of the respondents (49.2%) come from monogamous families, while 33.3% are from polygamous families, and 17.4% come from single-parent households. Relationship status data indicates that 64.8% of respondents are single, 17.4% are cohabiting, and 17.7% are married. The majority of respondents practice Christianity (82.6%), while a smaller proportion (17.4%) follow Islam.

In terms of ethnicity, a significant portion of the respondents identify as Ijaw or from related ethnic groups like Ogbia, Nembe, Epie, and Atissa, representing 49.0% of the sample. The Igbo/Ikwere ethnic group accounts for 33.6%, while Isoko/Urhobo/Beni make up 17.4%.

Concerning the level of study, there is a fairly even distribution, with 33.3% of respondents in the 100 level, 33.6% in the 200 level, 17.4% in the 300 level, and 15.6% in the 400 level. Faculty representation shows that 49.2% of the respondents are from the Faculty of Education, while 17.4% belong to the College of Health Sciences and Management Sciences, and 15.9% are from the Faculty of Sciences.

When it comes to monthly allowances, the highest proportion of respondents (31.5%) receive above ₦20,000, while 17.7% receive less than ₦5,000. The remaining respondents are fairly evenly distributed among those who receive between ₦6,000-₦10,000 (17.4%), ₦11,000-₦15,000 (17.4%), and ₦16,000-₦20,000 (15.9%). Lastly, the main source of funding for education is parents, as 66.7% of the respondents rely on them. Relatives and self-reliance account for 17.4% and 15.9%, respectively.

The types of social media video content viewed

The data in table 2 presents the types of social media video content viewed, with percentages indicating the proportion of respondents who affirmed or denied viewing each type. Comedy videos were less popular, with only (33.3%) of respondents indicating they viewed such content, while the majority (66.7%) did not. Conversely, short movie clips were more commonly watched, with (66.7%)

of respondents affirming this preference, leaving (33.3%) who did not watch them. Similarly, political discussions attracted a significant viewership, with (66.7%) indicating interest, while (33.3%) did not engage with such content.

Table 2: Type of Social Media Video Content Viewed

Type of Social Media Video Content Viewed	Yes N (%)	No N (%)	Total
Comedy	128 (33.3%)	256 (66.7%)	38.4 (100%)
Short movie clips	256 (66.7%)	128 (33.3%)	38.4 (100%)
Political Discuss	256 (66.7%)	128 (33.3%)	38.4 (100%)
Porn Related-videos	255 (66.4%)	129 (33.6%)	38.4 (100%)
Fashion	256 (66.7%)	129 (33.4%)	38.4 (100%)
Do-it-yourself videos (DIY)	256 (66.7%)	128 (33.3%)	38.4 (100%)
Documentary	249 (64.8%)	135 (35.2%)	38.4 (100%)
Christian Video	129 (33.6%)	255 (66.4%)	38.4 (100%)
Reality shows	225 (66.4%)	129 (33.6%)	38.4 (100%)
Celebrity Lifestyles	128 (33.3%)	256 (66.7%)	38.4 (100%)

Porn-related videos were viewed by (66.4%) of respondents, whereas (33.6%) reported not watching them. Fashion-related content also garnered notable attention, with (66.7%) affirming viewership, and a smaller proportion (33.4%) indicating they did not watch such videos. Do-it-yourself (DIY) videos mirrored this trend, with (66.7%) reporting interest, and (33.3%) not viewing them. Documentaries saw slightly lower engagement, with (64.8%) affirming they watched these videos, compared to (35.2%) who did not. Christian videos, however, were far less popular, with only (33.6%) indicating they viewed such content, while a significant majority (66.4%) did not. Reality shows maintained a higher level of interest, with (66.4%) of respondents watching them, leaving (33.6%)

uninterested. Finally, videos showcasing celebrity lifestyles were among the least viewed, with only (33.3%) indicating they watched such content, while a majority (66.7%) did not.

The data highlights varying preferences for social media video content, with short movie clips, political discussions, fashion, and DIY videos emerging as the most popular categories, while comedy, Christian videos, and celebrity lifestyles were less preferred.

Types of Risky sexual behaviour

Table 3 summarises the prevalence of various types of risky sexual behaviours among respondents, with percentages illustrating the proportion of those who engaged in or abstained from each behaviour.

Table 3: Type of Risky sexual behaviour

Type of Risky sexual behaviour	Yes N (%)	No N (%)	Total
Cybersex	255 (66.4%)	129 (33.6%)	38.4 (100%)
Sexting	255 (66.4%)	129 (33.6%)	38.4 (100%)
Pornography and Erotica	128 (33.3%)	256 (66.7%)	38.4 (100%)
Webcam sex	256 (66.7%)	128 (33.3%)	38.4 (100%)
Sextortion	128 (33.3%)	256 (66.7%)	38.4 (100%)
Luring	256 (66.7%)	128 (33.3%)	38.4 (100%)
Grooming	128 (33.3%)	256 (66.7%)	38.4 (100%)

Cybersex was reported by (66.4%) of respondents, indicating a notable level of engagement, while (33.6%) denied involvement. Similarly, sexting displayed identical proportions, with (66.4%) affirming participation and (33.6%) indicating they did not engage in the activity. On the other hand, pornography and erotica were less prevalent, with only (33.3%) of respondents admitting to viewing such content, whereas a larger majority (66.7%) did not.

Webcam sex was reported by (66.7%) of respondents, demonstrating a high level of engagement, compared to (33.3%) who did not partake in the activity. Sextortion, however, showed lower engagement, with only (33.3%) of respondents reporting involvement, while the majority (66.7%) denied participating. Luring was another highly reported behaviour, with (66.7%) affirming engagement, while (33.3%) did not partake in it. Grooming followed a similar pattern to sextortion, with (33.3%) indicating involvement and (66.7%) abstaining. The data highlights that cybersex,

sexting, webcam sex, and luring were the most commonly reported risky sexual behaviours, while pornography and erotica, sextortion, and grooming were less frequently reported. This variation underscores the differing prevalence of these behaviours within the surveyed population.

Frequency of engaging in risky sexual behaviour

The bar chart in Fig 2 reflects the respondents' accounts of specific frequency, with the most reported being experiences lasting more than a month (33.60%) and those occurring in less than a week (31.50%). Additionally, fewer respondents reported engaging in risky sexual behaviour twice a week or once a month, with both categories having the same proportion of responses (17.40%).

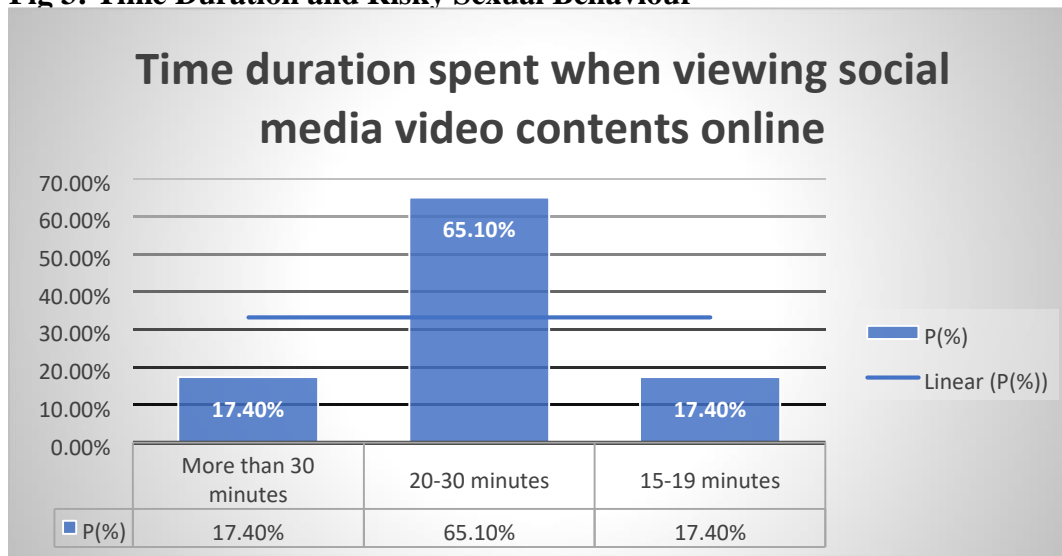
Figure 2: Risky Sexual Behaviour



Time Duration spent on Risky sexual behaviour

The bar chart in Fig. 4 highlights three significant time durations related to viewing social media video content online. Among the respondents, the highest proportion (65.10%) reported spending 20–30 minutes on this activity, making it the most common time duration. In contrast, the least number of respondents reported spending an equal amount of time in the categories of more than 30 minutes and 15–19 minutes, indicating these were the least frequent durations observed.

Fig 3: Time Duration and Risky Sexual Behaviour



Reasons for viewing video content online

The table presents the reasons for viewing video content online, with percentages highlighting respondents' motivations. A significant proportion of respondents cited excitement as a reason, with (68.5%) indicating this motivation, while a smaller group (31.5%) did not view videos for this purpose. Leisure time was another common reason, with (66.7%) of respondents acknowledging it, and (33.3%) denying it as a factor. Similarly, influence, entertainment, and personal knowledge were equally prevalent reasons, with each being reported by (66.7%) of respondents, while (33.3%) did not attribute their video-watching habits to these motivations. Addiction also emerged as a notable factor, with (66.4%) indicating it played a role, compared to (33.6%) who did not agree.

Table 4 Reasons for viewing video content online

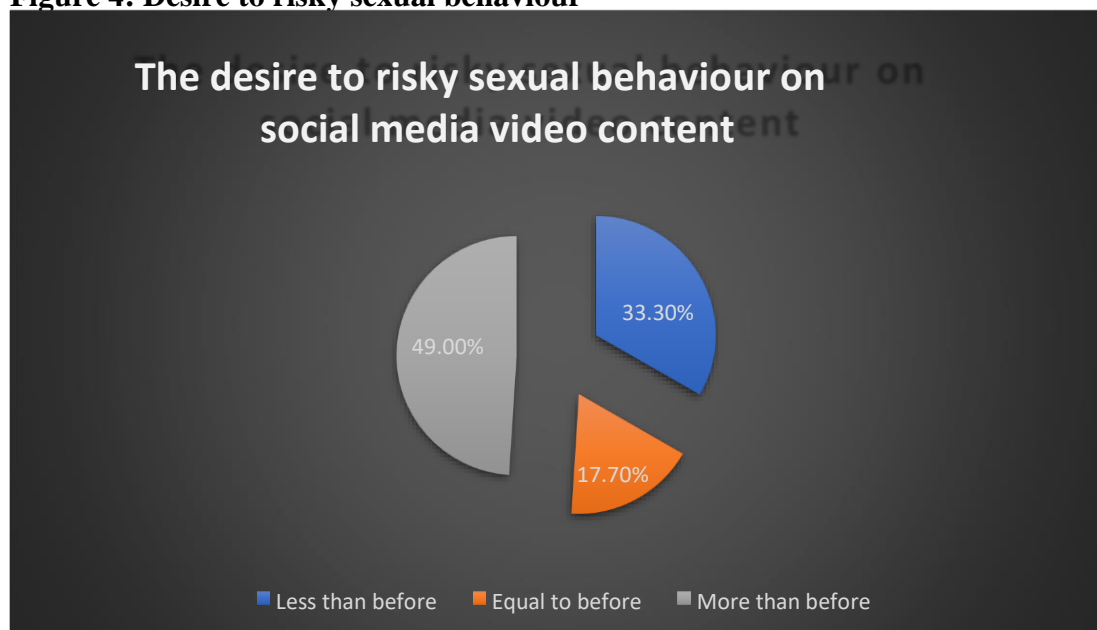
What are the reasons for viewing video content online	Yes N (%)	No N (%)	Total
Loneliness	128 (33.3%)	256 (66.7%)	38.4 (100%)
Excitement	263 (68.5%)	121 (31.5%)	38.4 (100%)
Leisure Time	256 (66.7%)	128 (33.3%)	38.4 (100%)
Interesting content	128 (33.3%)	256 (66.7%)	38.4 (100%)
Influence	256 (66.7%)	128 (33.3%)	38.4 (100%)
Entertainment	256 (66.7%)	128 (33.3%)	38.4 (100%)
Personal knowledge	256 (66.7%)	128 (33.3%)	38.4 (100%)
Addiction	255 (66.4%)	129 (33.6%)	38.4 (100%)

On the other hand, loneliness and interesting content were less commonly cited reasons. Only (33.3%) of respondents attributed their video-watching to loneliness, while a majority (66.7%) did not. Similarly, (33.3%) found interesting content as a reason for viewing, whereas (66.7%) did not. Overall, the data suggests that excitement, leisure time, influence, entertainment, personal knowledge, and addiction are the primary reasons for viewing video content online, while loneliness and interesting content were less influential motivations among respondents.

Desire for Risky Sexual Behaviour Before and After Watching Social Media Video Content

According to the chart in Fig 4, a significant proportion of students reported a higher desire for risky sexual behaviour than before, with (49.00%) indicating an increase. Meanwhile, (33.30%) of students reported a lower desire compared to before. Only a small proportion of students, (17.70%), noted that their desire for risky sexual behaviour remained the same as before.

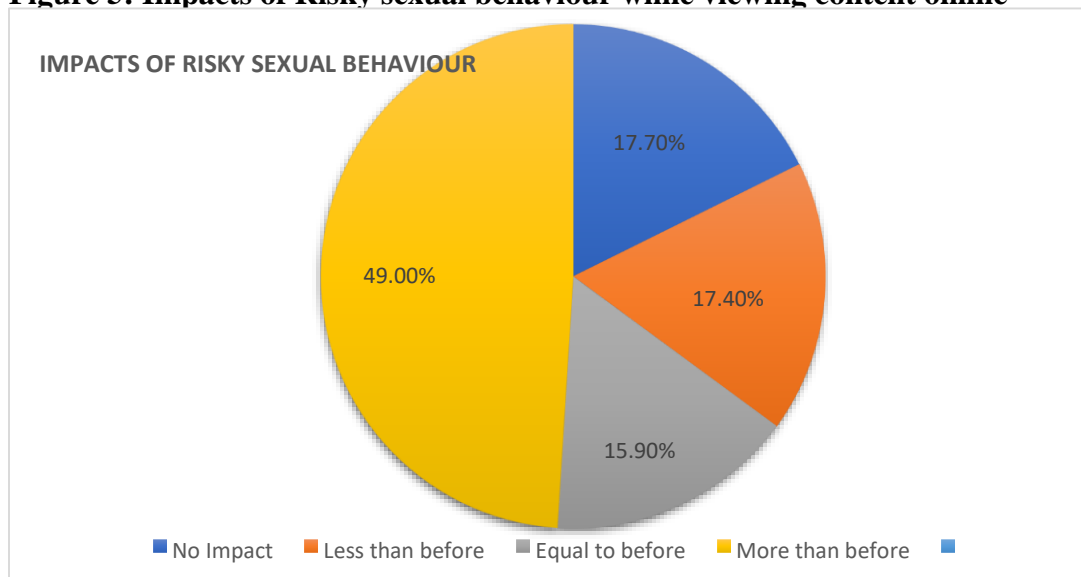
Figure 4: Desire to risky sexual behaviour



Impacts of Risky sexual behaviour while viewing contents online

The pie chart in Fig 5 illustrates the varying impacts of online social media video content on respondents.

Figure 5: Impacts of Risky sexual behaviour while viewing content online

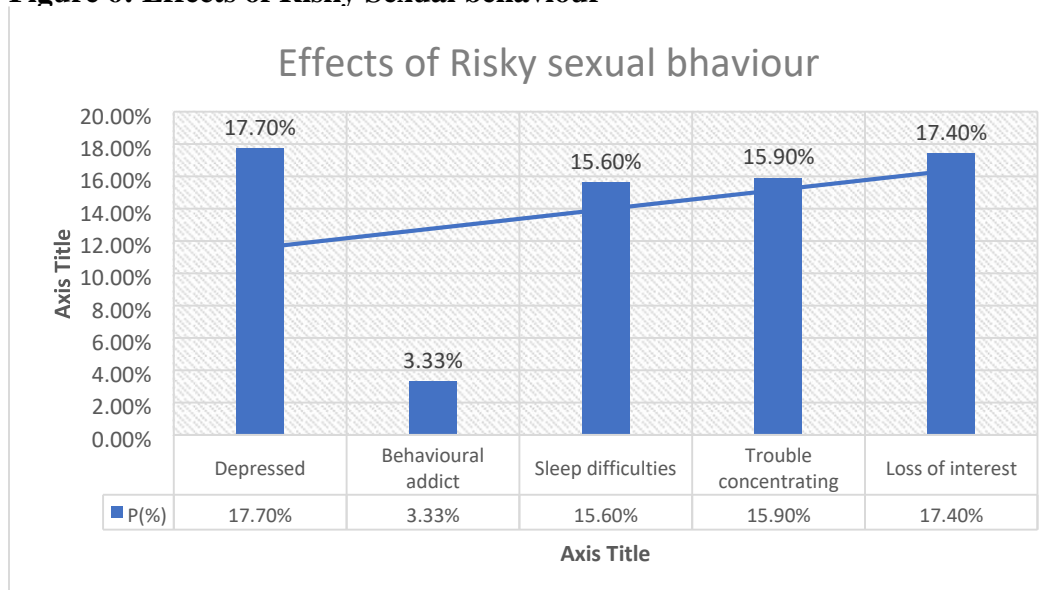


A significant proportion of students (49.00%) reported experiencing a greater impact while viewing social media videos online compared to when offline. In contrast, a smaller proportion indicated equal to before impacts, accounting for (15.90%), while (17.70%) reported less than before or no impact at all.

Effects of Risky Sexual behaviour

Fig 6 illustrates specific challenges or problems students face when exposed to online sexual risks while viewing video content on social media. The data focuses on the effects that received significant responses from students, highlighting five key impacts. The chart reveals that the most reported effects were depression (17.70%) and loss of interest (17.40%). Other notable responses included trouble concentrating (15.90%) and sleep difficulties (15.60%) among students exposed to such behaviours.

Figure 6: Effects of Risky Sexual behaviour



The least reported effect was behavioural addiction, which accounted for only (3.33%) of the responses. These findings underscore the varied and potentially severe consequences of risky sexual behaviour for students.

Discussion of Findings

This section compares the findings of the present study with previous research, aligning the results with the specific objectives and literature review. The study answers all the formulated research questions and hypotheses. The findings are presented as follows:

To address the spread of online risky sexual behaviour while viewing social media video content, the most significant findings focus on sexuality and social media. A similar study by S. E. Baumgartner et al. (2010) examined the rise in unwanted online sexual solicitation and risky online sexual behaviour. The findings of this study are interpreted within specific limitations. First, the cross-sectional design prevents the establishment of causal links between online risky sexual behaviour and sexual activity. Secondly, the study is based on a quantitative survey limited to a particular case study, although it has nationwide implications. Thirdly, the contextual factors of Niger Delta University and Federal University of Otuoke students, as case studies, may not necessarily apply to other locations, as suggested by Adegboyega (2020). The prevalence of risky sexual behaviour is highlighted as a significant concern, with drastic effects on individuals, and there has been increasing speculation about its rise, especially concerning online video content consumption.

Another critical focus is the connection between viewing social media video content and risky sexual behaviour. Themes and experiences identified in the study include cybersex, sexting, pornography and erotica, sextortion, luring, and grooming, all of which contribute to an increase in risky behaviour. Responses to these themes were categorised into "yes" and "no" responses based on

students' usage of social media platforms while viewing video content. Additionally, the types of video content consumed by undergraduates—such as comedy, short movie clips, political discussions, pornographic material, fashion, DIY videos, documentaries, Christian videos, reality shows, and celebrity lifestyles—were explored. The findings indicate varied risks across social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp, with users reporting higher risks associated with behaviours such as depression, anxiety, behavioural addiction, sleep difficulties, trouble concentrating, loss of interest, sexual demonstration, feeling unwell, and "love bombing."

The literature review identified 15 related studies and two theoretical frameworks on risky sexual behaviour, providing insights into whether sexual behaviour increases when viewing online video content. Responses highlighted reasons for viewing such content, including loneliness, excitement, leisure, interesting content, influence, entertainment, personal knowledge, and addiction. Further findings revealed behavioural patterns regarding risky sexual behaviour, the frequency of such experiences (most commonly "more than before"), and the average time spent on social media platforms (20–30 minutes being the most frequent duration). Notably, students reported a "more than before" desire to engage in risky online sexual behaviour (49.00%).

Regarding respondents' socio-demographics, the study revealed that most students experiencing risky sexual behaviour are from the Southern Ijaw regions, followed by the eastern part of Nigeria, despite the small sample size from these locations. The majority of respondents were female. Analysis of age groups showed that students aged 16–19 years (51.0%) reported the highest incidence of risky sexual behaviour. Furthermore, Christian respondents (82.6%) experienced more instances of risky sexual behaviour than individuals of other religions.

The study also found that single students were more likely to engage in risky sexual behaviour compared to married or cohabiting individuals. Most respondents reported monthly allowances of ₦20,000 or more, funded predominantly by their parents, and came from monogamous families. A significant portion of the respondents were 200-level students from the Faculty of Education. Additionally, the study revealed that risky sexual experiences typically lasted for more than a month, with students reporting a "more than before" experience while viewing video content online.

These findings differ slightly from other studies regarding the prevalence of risky sexual behaviour. While this study found high levels of risky sexuality as indicated by various measures of online content consumption, other studies estimate the prevalence of such behaviour to be between 72% and 79% among teenagers and young adults using smartphones to access the internet, thereby increasing their exposure to risky sexuality.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings of this study highlight significant patterns in both social media content consumption and risky sexual behaviours among respondents. There is a clear preference for short movie clips, political discussions, fashion, and DIY videos, while other types such as comedy, Christian content,

and celebrity lifestyle videos receive less attention. This variation in content preferences may reflect diverse interests among social media users, with some categories of content being more engaging or relevant to their daily lives.

The prevalence of risky sexual behaviours, such as cybersex, sexting, webcam sex, and luring, reveals a concerning trend among a significant proportion of respondents. While some behaviours, such as pornography and erotica, were less commonly reported, the overall incidence of engagement in risky activities underscores the need for targeted interventions. The frequency and time duration data further suggest that these behaviours are not occasional but rather recurrent, with some students engaging in them over extended periods.

The motivations behind video content consumption also provide insight into the factors influencing students' online behaviours. Excitement, leisure, influence, and entertainment are the dominant reasons for watching videos, which may indirectly contribute to the increased desire for risky sexual behaviours, as respondents have reported a heightened desire for such activities after viewing certain video content. The role of addiction in this context cannot be overlooked, as it appears to play a significant part in shaping online viewing habits.

The impact of social media content on students' sexual desires was particularly notable, with nearly half of the respondents reporting an increase in their desire for risky behaviours after watching online videos. This suggests that the content consumed on social media may influence not only their immediate attitudes but also their broader behavioural tendencies. The most reported effects of risky sexual behaviours included depression, loss of interest, and trouble concentrating, indicating that these behaviours could have serious psychological and academic consequences for students.

In light of these findings, there is a pressing need for comprehensive interventions aimed at educating students about the potential risks associated with online behaviours. Efforts should focus on raising awareness about the harmful impacts of risky sexual activities, including mental health issues such as depression and anxiety. Educational campaigns should emphasize the dangers of engaging in cybersex, sexting, and other forms of online sexual behaviour, particularly given their potential to lead to long-term emotional and academic challenges. Furthermore, institutions should consider implementing programs that foster healthier relationships with social media, encouraging students to view content that promotes positive social values and self-improvement. Given the significant proportion of respondents who indicated they engage in social media to pass time or for excitement, addressing the underlying motivations for these behaviours is crucial. The development of resources that encourage alternative forms of engagement with social media, such as educational or skill-building content, could be beneficial in mitigating the negative impact of excessive and harmful content consumption.

Finally, there is a need for continuous monitoring and research on the evolving patterns of social media use and its associated risks. By keeping track of trends in content consumption and risky sexual behaviour, policymakers and educators can better tailor their interventions and support

services to meet the needs of the student population, ensuring that they are equipped to navigate the complexities of the digital age safely and responsibly.

References

- Asrese, K., & Mekonnen, A. (2018). Social network correlates of risky sexual behavior among adolescents in Bahir Dar and Mecha Districts, North West Ethiopia: An institution based study. *Reproductive Health*, 15(61). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12978-018-0505-8>
- Banounnin, B. H., Toska, E., Maughan-Brown, B., Rudgard, W., Hertzog, L., Jochim, J., Armstrong, A., & Cluver, L. (2023). Associations of social media and health content use with sexual risk behaviours among adolescents in South Africa. *Sexual and reproductive health matters*, 31(1), 2267893. <https://doi.org/10.1080/26410397.2023.2267893>
- Banounnin, B. H., Toska, E., Maughan-Brown, B., Rudgard, W., Hertzog, L., Jochim, J., Armstrong, A., & Cluver, L. (2023). Associations of social media and health content use with sexual risk behaviours among adolescents in South Africa. *Sexual and reproductive health matters*, 31(1), 2267893. <https://doi.org/10.1080/26410397.2023.2267893>
- Boyd, D. (2014). *It's complicated: The social lives of networked teens*. Yale University Press.
- Sundar, S. S., & Limperos, A. M. (2013). Uses and grats 2.0: New gratifications for new media. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 57(4), 504-525.
- Chou, W. -J., Liu, T. -L., Hsiao, R. C., & Yen, C. -F. (2024). Online Sexual Risk Behaviors in Adolescents: Roles of Family Relationships, Impulsivity, and Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. *Children*, 11(10), 1199. <https://doi.org/10.3390/children11101199>
- Davidson, J., Aiken, M., Gekoski, A., Netuveli, G., Farr, R., & Deac, A. (2024). Understanding Adolescent Criminal and Risky Online Sexual Behaviors in the Context of Mental Health and Well-Being: Findings from a Multi-National European Cybercrime Study. *Victims & Offenders*, 1–26. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15564886.2024.2408675>
- Gonçalves, M. J. (2023). The influence of social media on adolescent sexual behavior: A retrospective analysis. *Asian Journal of Health and Science*, 2(9), 227–235.
- Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media. *Business Horizons*, 53(1), 59-68.
- Landry, M., Turner, M., Vyas, A., & Wood, S. (2017). Social Media and Sexual Behavior Among Adolescents: Is there a link? *JMIR public health and surveillance*, 3(2), e28. <https://doi.org/10.2196/publichealth.7149>

- Madigan, S., Villani, V., Azzopardi, C., Laut, D., Smith, T., Temple, J. R., Browne, D., & Dimitropoulos, G. (2018). The Prevalence of Unwanted Online Sexual Exposure and Solicitation among Youth: A Meta-Analysis. *The Journal of adolescent health: official publication of the Society for Adolescent Medicine*, 63(2), 133–141.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2018.03.012>
- Savoia, E., Harriman, N. W., Su, M., Cote, T., & Shortland, N. (2021). Adolescents' Exposure to Online Risks: Gender Disparities and Vulnerabilities Related to Online Behaviors. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 18(11), 5786.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18115786>