

**SOCIAL FACTORS AS PREDICTORS OF PORNOGRAPHIC VIEWING AMONG IN SCHOOL ADOLESCENTS IN EDO STATE, NIGERIA**

**BY**

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**Abstract**

*The belief in the sacredness and sanctify of human sexuality is gradually deteriorating globally. This is aided by the proliferation of pornographic materials through modern technologies. Therefore, this study investigated the social factors as predictors of pornographic viewing among in-school adolescents in Edo State. This study adopted descriptive survey research design. Three hundred participants were selected from ten secondary schools in Edo state using simple random sampling technique. Three research questions were raised and answered using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and multiple regression analysis. Three structured questionnaires; Internet addiction Scale ( $\alpha=0.86$ ), Peer influence Scale ( $\alpha=0.92$ ) and Pornography Viewing Scale (0.78) were used for data collection. The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between internet addiction; peer influence and pornographic viewing. The two variables jointly accounted for 74.7% variance in the prediction of pornographic viewing among the participants. The independent variables made positive relative contribution to pornographic viewing in the following order: internet addiction contributed most to the prediction of pornographic viewing among in-school adolescents followed by peer influence. Based on this finding, it is recommended that positive peer influence training should be organized to curb pornographic viewing. Positive use of internet should be encouraged among adolescents so as to curb pornographic viewing.*

**Keywords:** Peer influence, Internet addiction, Pornographic viewing and In-school adolescents.

**Introduction**

The number of teenagers involved in pornographic viewing is increasing in epidemic proportion. Hence, the range of the problem of pornography is wider than it seems, everything pertaining to the behaviours or attitudes, which the youths exhibit today, can directly or indirectly be attributed to their constant viewing or exposure to pornographic viewing bearing in mind the unseen power of motion pictures. Pornographic viewing behaviour may lead to disaster socially, psychologically and academically especially to the adolescents. Pornography hinder the development of a healthy sexuality and among adolescents, it distorts sexual attitudes and social realities. Pornographic viewing has social effects on the adolescents include lack of respect for elders, rape and negative attitude toward their own.

The growing exposure to pornography through smartphone has become an issue of great concern to parents and the general society (Adegbite, 2013). Pornography appeals to many individuals across all age group and is especially common among adolescents. Pornography is sexually explicit websites that describe people having sex, show clear pictures of nudity or people having sex, or show a movie or audio that describes people having sex. The rapid growth of the pornography facilitates adolescents' exposure to sexually explicit materials either intentionally or accidentally (Flood, 2007).

Recently, tablet computers, smart phones, and other electronic devices have added ubiquity to electronic communication and the Internet. For example, a recent study found that one in three teenagers sends more than 100 text messages a day and 15% send more than 200 a day, or 6,000 a month (Lenhart, 2010). Four percent of teens have sent a sexually suggestive text message, which are often nude photographs, and 15% of this age group has received a sexually suggestive text. Yet, information from these sources may not be accurate and more likely to mislead adolescents' understanding concerning on appropriate sexuality and reproduction health.

The stage of adolescence underscores an important definition for sexuality. At that stage, adolescent is preoccupied with getting information about sex. One of the important platform through which they learn about sex and sexual related information is the internet.

According to Mattebo, (2014), internet pornography creates demands and expectations in terms of how to behave in sexual relations. Expectedly, while this has significant influence on their sexual attitude (Sholarin & Emerenwa, 2015), their risk-taking tendency means that adolescent would be more than willing to experiment what they watch than other individuals within other developmental brackets (Adewuyi, 2019). This situation seems more pertinent given the fact that the revolution in communication which makes available sophisticated phone at cheaper rate as well as ease in accessing internet without limitations increased the probability for adolescents to take to online pornography.

The plight of Nigerian adolescents seems worrisome considering the increment in the rate of pornographic viewing in many secondary schools (Ihaji & Nase, 2015). Yet more appalling is the fact that young people constitute a large proportion of internet users in Nigeria; and the activity of their internet use ranging from examination related matters such as processing of examination forms, chatting with friends, initiating and maintaining romantic relationships, doing business, doing research, cybercrime, online sexual activities, shopping. This has significant impact on adolescents' sexual practice (Okafor & Efetobor, 2015). On the consequent side, it portends graver implication for adolescents' social and healthy life. Exposure of adolescents to pornographic material has led to an increase in teenage pregnancy and school dropout.

From the psychological point of view, exposure to pornographic sexual content of Nigeria adolescents can be a significant factor in early sexual activities, teenage pregnancy (unwanted pregnancy), significantly increased sexual intercourse with non-romantic friends, self-esteem and masturbation among others. Also, adolescents viewing pornography are prone to truancy, school dropout, low academic performance, deviant attitude to teachers and other school authority. It is paramount to know that adolescent pornographic viewing does not only affect the adolescent but the society at large (Sholarin & Emerenwa, 2015). Among the effect on the Nigerian society are

increase in dependent population ratio, insecurity, overpopulation and increase in unemployment among others. Based on the gravity of dangers of pornographic viewing of Nigerian adolescents on the adolescents and the society at large, this study therefore determines to investigate the effect of internet addiction and peer influence on pornographic viewing among in-school adolescents in Benin, Edo State.

Although there is no standardized definition of internet addiction, there is an acknowledgement among researchers that this phenomenon does exist. As Griffin (2008) notes, “excessive use of the internet may not be problematic in most cases but the limited case study evidence suggests that for some individuals, excessive internet use is a real addiction and of genuine concern. Griffin (2008) further considers internet addiction to be a kind of technological addiction (such as computer addiction), and one in a subset of behavioural addictions (such as pornography and compulsive gambling). He defined internet addiction as a psychological dependence on the internet, regardless of the type of activity once logged on.

Bodrova and Leong (1998) found that internet addiction plays a role in helping students move to the next level on pornography. Particularly, internet addiction leads students to realize what they know and what they do not know because internet and social media which allow adolescent fixated to pornography. This means internet addiction promotes student pornographic viewing. In a study of Chinese fifth-graders, withdrawn children were found to hold positive perceptions about pornography in the domains of physical ability, appearance, and peer relations (Xiao & Matsuda, 2008). A study with young adolescents (age 18–21) found that internet addiction predicted pornographic viewing with a high number of media-efficacy, but for those who had numerous friendships (Schwartz, Chang & Farver, 2000). Studies have found that adolescents prefer internet addiction because it arose their pornographic viewing in school (Weiss & Ebbeck, 2016).

Dollete, Steese, Phillips and Matthews (2004) who found that internet addiction could act as a negative factor that could increase pornographic viewings among students. They found that internet addiction provides motivational influence on students’ pornography. This study has found that internet addiction and its structures moderate the effects of pornography among students in their academic life. In a cross-sectional study, Nwadinigwe (2000) found in his research work that student preferred internet addiction and are high prone to pornographic viewing in the school environment. This is because they have been enjoyed and love of togetherness, peace, sharing and understanding in the internet with their peers. Adolescents demonstrate internet addiction in demonstrate higher rates of pornographic viewing and negative outcomes, this which often resulted into lower achievement scores, and higher dropout rate in the school and society at large. For high-internet addiction, online thinking is encouraged, but students who are fixated with internet are prone to pornography among secondary school adolescents.

Another important variable is peer influence. Peer influence becomes increasingly important during adolescence. Adolescents’ intentions to engage in sex are strongly influenced by their social context in which peers play a major role in determining normative behaviour (Sieving, 2008). Meaning affiliation with friends who engage in risky behaviours has shown to be a strong

predictor of an adolescents own behaviour. Peer influence can also have positive effects when youths are pressured by their peers towards positive behaviour such as volunteering for charity or excelling in academics. The importance of peer's declines upon entering adulthood while socially accepted kids often have the most positive experiences (Adewuyi & Sanusi, 2006). Popular adolescents are the most socialized into their peer groups and thus are vulnerable to peer influence, such as behaviours usually reserved for those of a greater maturity and understanding.

Kelly and Emery, (2003) in their finding shows that children have greater pornographic problems when their peers used pornographic view. Furthermore, a negative correlation between peer influence and pornographic viewing has been reported, in that high level of peer influence have been associated with high level of pornography in college students. Peer influence was found to be one of the most important negative factors for students' pornography (Tao, Dong, Pratt, Hunsberger & Pancer, 2000). Calvete and Smith (2006) found that peer influence has been found to increase the impact of pornography among students. Villanova and Bownas (1994) for example found that peer influence could help to cope with everyday life stressor and darken the burden of pornographic viewing among college students. Without enough support from family and friends, they would be in trouble and are prone to pornography and depression.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the social factors as predictors of pornographic viewing among secondary school adolescents in Edo state. Specifically, the purposes of this study were to:

1. Examine the relationship that exists between the independent variables (internet addiction and peer influence) and the dependent variable (pornographic viewing) among in-school adolescents.
2. Find out the joint contribution of the independent variables (internet addiction and peer influence) on the dependent variable (pornographic viewing) among in-school adolescents.
3. Investigate the relative contribution of each of the independent variable (internet addiction and peer influence) to the dependent variable (pornographic viewing) among in-school adolescents.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study;

- i. What pattern of relationship exists between independent variables (internet addiction and peer influence) and pornographic viewing among in-school adolescents?
- ii. What is the joint contribution of the independent variables (Peer influence, Internet addiction) to the dependent variable (Pornographic viewing) among in-school adolescents?
- iii. What is the relative contribution of the independent variables (peer influence and internet addiction) to the dependent variable (Pornographic viewing) among in-school adolescents?

### **Methodology**

This study adopted the descriptive research design of *ex-post facto type* to achieve the purpose of the study. It is a research study in which, group of people, items or objects is studied by collecting and analyzing data from the representatives. This is used because the researcher is not interested in manipulating the variables. The target population for this study consists of in-school

adolescents in Edo state of Nigeria. The populations under this study are senior secondary school students in Edo-State, Nigeria. Edo state has 3 senatorial districts: Edo Central, Edo North and Edo south. For the purpose of this investigation, with a view to making generalization about the population, the researcher therefore employed a random sampling technique in selecting 300 participants as the sample of this study. This was done by breaking the population of the study into strata according to their socio-demographic characteristics. Also, the stratification was done based on classification of participants from their various classes. Ten (10) secondary schools each from the senatorial districts, 10 students were then selected each from the various schools. On the whole, a total of 300 students were used for the study. The participants were broken down into strata that are schools base on their homogeneity group. It was however broken down into schools of which ten schools were used. Thirty students were therefore selected from each of the identified schools. This cut across both gender and Senior secondary classes 1-3.

A structured questionnaire was used in this study for data collection. The questionnaire was divided into sections A and B. Section A contains bio-data, which sought information on personal data of the respondents. Section B contains the measuring scales.

**Internet addiction Scale:** This scale was developed by the Keser, Esgü, Kocadag and Bulu (2013). Items three and eight were modified by the researcher. The scale was developed to measure internet addiction questionnaire. It contains 20 items and each item is rated using 5-point Likert scale. The internal consistency after moderation of items ranged between 0.68 to 0.76 with overall coefficient of 0.88. The Guttman Split half coefficient observed was 0.78, equal length Spearman Brown was 0.73 and unequal length was 0.71. For this study however the reliability result showed 0.86 as its Cronbach alpha.

**Peer Influence Scale:** This section was self-developed by Steinberg and Monahan (2007). It contains 12 items and each item is rated using 4-point Likert scale. It ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The author reported an internal reliability co-efficient (alphas) ranging from .78 to .93. For this study, the researcher reports a split-half reliability of .93 and .47 were observed for part 1 and 2 respectively, with a Cronbach alpha of .92.

**Pornographic Viewing Scale:** This section was developed by Shane and Harold (2013). This consists of 12 items with a response format ranging from Strongly Disagree = SD to Strongly Agree = SA. They obtained an alpha coefficient of 0.90. Guttman split – half = 0.78, alpha for part 1 = 0.81 while alpha for part 2=0.84. Pearson product moment correlation was used to test the relationship among the independent variables and the dependent variable while Multiple Regression Analysis was used to analyse the joint contribution and the relative effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable

## Results

**Research Question One:** What is the relationship between the independent variables (Peer influence and internet addiction) and the dependent variable (Pornographic viewing)?

**Table 1: Correlation matrix showing the relationship between study variables**

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3
Pornographic viewing	38.5133	14.08371	1.000		
Internet addiction	40.0767	12.25117	.573**	1.000	
Peer influence	31.2900	10.84981	.411**	.410**	1.00

\*\*Correlation is significant at 0.01(2-tailed)

Table 1 revealed the relationship of each independent variables (peer influence and internet addiction) with the dependent variable (Pornographic viewing); Pornographic viewing positively correlated with internet addiction ( $r = .573$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), followed by peer influence ( $r = .411$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ). This implies that increase in peer influence and internet addiction will increase the likelihood of students' pornographic viewing.

**Research Question Two:** What is the joint contribution of the independent variables (Peer influence, Internet addiction) on the dependent variable (Pornographic viewing)?

**Table 2: Summary of regression for the joint contributions of independent variables to the prediction of Pornographic viewing**

R = .973

R Square = .947

Adjusted R square = .747

Std. Error = 7.91813

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	56195.495	2	28097.75	2682.106	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	3111.452	297	10.476		
	Total	59306.947	299			

Table 2 reveals a significant joint contribution of the independent variables (Peer influence and internet addiction) to the prediction of Pornographic viewing. The result yielded a coefficient of multiple regressions  $R = 0.973$  and multiple R-square = 0.948. This suggests that the three factors combined accounted for 74.7% ( $\text{Adj.}R^2 = .747$ ) variance in the prediction of Pornographic viewing. The other factors accounting for the remaining variance are beyond the scope of this study. The ANOVA result from the regression analysis shows that there was a significant effect of the independent variables on the Pornographic viewing,  $F(2, 299) = 1782.005$ ,  $p < 0.01$ .



**Research Question Three:** What is the relative contribution of the independent variables (peer influence and internet addiction) on the dependent variable (Pornographic viewing)?

**Table 3: Relative effect of the independent variables to the prediction of Pornographic viewing**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
	B					
(Constant)	-7.909	1.477			-5.355	.000
Internet addiction	1.089	.022	.947		49.636	.000
Peer influence	.049	.025	.037		1.967	.050

Table 3 shows two out of three predictors (internet addiction and peer influence) are potent predictors of Pornographic viewing. The most potent factor was internet addiction (Beta = .947,  $t = 49.636$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), followed by peer influence (Beta = .037,  $t = 1.967$ ,  $p = 0.05$ ). This implies that students' Pornographic viewing is likely to increase if peer influence and internet addiction persists.

### Discussion of Findings

In response to research question one stated that what pattern of relationship exists between the independent variables (internet addiction and peer influence) on pornographic viewing among in-school adolescents in Benin, Edo State. The result shows that there was significant relationship between internet addiction and pornographic viewing. This finding is in line with Dollete, Steese, Phillips and Matthews (2004) who found that internet addiction could act as a negative factor that could increase pornographic viewings among students. Also, this study has found that internet addiction and its structures moderate the effects of pornography among students in their academic life. In a cross-sectional study, Kelly and Emery, (2003) in their finding shows that children have greater pornographic problems when their peers with pornographic. Long and Forehand (1997) asserts that adolescents demonstrate internet addiction in demonstrate higher rates of pornographic viewing and negative outcomes, this which often resulted into lower achievement scores, and higher dropout rate in the school and society at large. For high-internet addiction, online thinking is encouraged, but students who are fixated with internet are prone to pornographic among secondary school adolescents.

The result of the second research question two on the joint contribution of the independent variables on the pornographic viewing among in-school adolescents in Edo State. The result shows that there was joint effect of the factors (peer influence and internet addiction) on pornographic viewing. It was further revealed that 74.7% variance in the prediction of pornographic viewing among in-school adolescents in Benin, Edo State; this was due to the prediction of the independent variables. The ANOVA results from the regression analysis also attests to the causal effect of the independent variables on the dependent variables; hence, the rejection of the null hypothesis. In line with this finding, a combination of variables like peer and internet addiction has been observed by Carroll (1997) on pornographic viewing while the combination of variables like peer influence and parental influence have also been observed by Theodore and Runya, (1999) on pornographic viewing. The result shows that there was significant relationship between peer influence and pornographic viewing. This assertion is in

line with the findings of Williams (2004) reported that the influence of peer was stronger on pornographic viewing. Delinquent peers also may have a greater influence on later pornography. It also supports the findings of Friedlander, Reid, Shupak and Cribbie (2007) reported on peer group.

The result of the third research question on the relative effect of each of the variables was also significant. In all, academic work as a whole, it is revealed that the degree of peer influence and internet addiction is very relevant to pornographic viewing among in-school adolescents in Edo State. This finding is corroborated by the study of Ryan (2006); Simon (2007); Adika (2009) who found that the above variables have independent effect on pornographic viewing among students. It is also in contrary with the findings of Holley (2011) who found that peer influence at times could act as a protective factor that could increase pornographic viewing among college students.

### **Implication of the Study**

The effect of pornographic viewing on the social, economic political and educational life of Nigerian students cannot be over emphasized. With changing time and advancement in science and technology pornographic viewing among secondary school students, if not curbed will escalate into a societal problem, increase the risk taking behaviour and crime rate. Therefore, this study makes an urgent demand for intensive orientation and re-orientation of the adolescents concerning the effect of pornographic viewing on the well-being of our future leaders and what would befall this nation if it persists. Counsellors and all other professionals must be alert and sensitive to these growing trends of pornographic viewing. The implication of this is that all concerned caregivers in Nigeria should embark on intensive studies to identify the different causes of pornographic viewing and different developmental trajectories associated with it. The study revealed that internet addiction, including peer influence already involved in pornographic viewing are strongly associated with offending behaviour, while parental neglect is also a powerful risk factor. Therefore, special counselling services or guidance services such as emotional stability of an individual, parenting programmed, improved communication between parents and teenagers should be encouraged to bring about stable home and family.

### **Conclusion**

This study was reinforced with the realization that the lingering pornographic viewing had permeated in to the school system. This study has therefore, established linking pathways between some variables and pornographic viewing. These include internet addiction and peer influence among secondary school students. Changing the face of pornographic viewing in-school adolescents requires a lot of psychological re-orientation especially considering interventions that employ the independent variables in this study (peer influence and internet addiction). School curriculum should be developed along these lines and taught in schools and other centres of learning. Where this is consistently done with corresponding support from government and other stakeholders, the entire perspective would change for better. This study has contributed to knowledge on internet addiction and peer influence as predictors of pornographic viewing. This research work has established that, there is a positive joint correlation between internet addiction, peer influence and pornographic viewing. Also, this study has provided more details to the existing information on the pornographic viewing as a factor



that required immediate solution. From this study, it becomes clear that various strategies should be designed to address the issue of pornographic viewing in different schools, attention should also be given to the identified means or factors through which the researcher has been able to identify that can affect the pornographic viewing of secondary school students, that is through the internet and the type of peer they associate with.

### Recommendations

In the light of these findings, the following recommendations are hereby proffered:

- Proper peer monitoring and behavioural modification of children should be given from the family. Adolescent's behaviour should be monitored right from home before they become inducted into the society.
- The type of friend adolescents associate themselves with should be well known by the parents and monitored to ensure that they are not pornographic viewing users and curb their excesses by constant counselling of the groups which their ward associate themselves with.
- Public enlightenment Programmes should be mounted by the government (Federal, State and Local) to broaden the knowledge of the populace especially parents to understand what lies behind young people's pornographic viewing.
- There should be improvement in guidance and counselling services - Guidance services in schools should be functional enough to take care of all categories of behaviours exhibited by students.

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