

## Exposure of Children and Teenagers to Internet Pornography in South Western Nigeria: Concerns, Trends & Implications

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### Abstract

*In this article we investigated the level of consumption of Internet pornography among children and teenagers of primary and secondary school age in Southwestern Nigeria. Two research instruments titled "Children/Teenagers Internet Pornography Profile in Southwestern Nigeria and an adapted Pornography Addiction Test questionnaire were employed to solicit responses from children and teens. Findings from the analysis of collected data using chi square analysis, regression and other descriptive measures showed that teenagers are more exposed to Internet pornography than children. A positive relationship exists between age, parental income and level of exposure to Internet pornography, which implies that as children advance in age, the level of exposure will definitely increase. Children of medium and high-income earners also exhibit above average level of addiction to Internet pornography. Recommendations were made based on our findings.*

**Keywords:** Youths, Contents Channeling Technology, Content Filters and Exposure.

### Introduction

Apart from the issues of piracy and fraudulent scam mails, one major emerging worrisome dimension in the Nigerian cyberspace is pornography in its various guises. The Internet, aided by technology-induced anonymity has popularized the sex business more than any other means of advertisement. With unlimited access to a variety of websites, and the impediment of needing to enter a brothel physically removed, immoral gratification is just the click of a mouse away from any intending customer (Sackson, 1996). Anonymity has been an aid to most crimes perpetuated on the Internet and other IT applications. For instance, immoral contents can be viewed in the closet, on a laptop, on a palmtop etc without the reservation that any other person will know about the content being consumed. It has also serve as the platform for pedophiles who take undue advantage of the innocence of children and teenagers to engage them in sex chat rooms and eventually invite them for sexual escapades.

In her paper *Internet Infidelity: A Critical Review of the Literature*, Katherine (2006) is of the opinion that people are using the Internet more frequently to form friendships and romances and to initiate inordinate affairs. She provided a critical review of the literature on Internet infidelity. Cheryl (2007) revealed that the average age of a child when first exposed to Internet pornography is 11 years old, with the largest consumers of pornography in America being the 12-to-17-year-old group. Almost 90 percent of eight to 16-year-olds has viewed pornography online, most while doing homework. Of those who were accidentally exposed to pornography while surfing the Web, 66 percent say they did not seek the images out, and did not want to view them. In 2002, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting conducted a research on children's Internet use in the United States of America. It was discovered that children experienced the equivalent of an adolescent growth in their use of the Internet between 2000 and 2002. 65% of American children ages 2–17 were observed to use the Internet from home, school, or some other location — a 59 percent growth rate since 2000, when 41 percent of children went online from any location (CTF, 2002).

For parents, learning about the dangers of Internet pornography and how to protect their children has become very imperative. It is most unfortunate that over 90 percent of 8 to 16-year-olds in the category mentioned earlier viewed pornography online while doing homework. Apparently, the home front has become relatively unsafe for a balanced psychosocial growth and development of American children. The situation is not any different in Nigeria. ICT penetration is on the increase (Chiemeké & Longe, 2007). Although empirical data about Internet pornography and its impact on the life of the teeming youth and children are not readily available, fears are already very rife in some sectors about the possible negative consequences obnoxious and uncensored Internet contents will have on the psychosocial well being of varying categories of users and especially children and teens in Nigeria. A previous study (Longe, 2004) established that children and teenagers belonging to the age range 7-18 years constitute over 32% of Internet users in Nigeria.

The Internet is both a source of promise for our children and a source of concern. The promise is that the Internet offers such an enormous range of positive and educational experiences and materials. Yet children online may be vulnerable to harm through exposure to sexually explicit materials, adult predators, and peddlers of hate. If the full educational potential of the Internet is to be realized for children, these concerns must be addressed. Although only a small fraction of material on the Internet could reasonably be classified as inappropriate for children, that small fraction is highly visible and controversial. People have strong and passionate views on the subject, and these views are often mutually incompatible. Different societal institutions see the issue in very different ways and have different and conflicting priorities about the values to be preserved. Different communities--at the local, state, national, and international levels--have different perspectives. Furthermore, the technical nature of the Internet has not evolved in a way that makes control over content easy to achieve (Dick and Herbert, 2003)

### **Concerns About The Disorganization Of Primary Societies**

Across all the tribes represented in Nigeria, we had forefathers who gave young ones informal/traditional education to prepare them for life (Fafunwa, 1974). These systems from North to South and East to West saw to it that young men and women were taught to acquire a

healthy attitude towards sex as part of their preparation for adult life. The expressions of sexuality were delayed until the youngsters are matured enough to face the challenges of adulthood. Baker and Rich (1992). During this period, teenagers and adolescent have little opportunity for full sexual expression until their late twenties (Bledsoe and Cohen 1993). Across sub-Saharan Africa, Ghana, for example, adolescents' sexual experience was not encouraged. Elders are said to be bothered about youngsters participating in sexual activity since the society associates very dire and lasting negative consequences to such acts. (Barbara et al., 1999; Grindal, 1982).

The disorganization of primary societies, and resort to urban life, with its attendant loss of rich cultural values has encroached on the adolescent's ability to handle their newly awakened sexual impulses. Today, we notice gross sexual misconducts among different age groups in our nation fuelled by the claim of urbanization, modernization, spurious sexual expressions in junk magazines and of course pornography and Internet dating. The consequences are not farfetched. They include child-pregnancy, abortion, sexually transmitted diseases and of course possible increase in the incidence of HIV/AIDS due to unguided sexual escapades.

Across Africa, the story is not any different, With rapid urbanization and the breakdown of moral values, sexual permissiveness have become a characteristic of the social life of adolescents and there have been growing incidents of pregnancy and contracting of sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/ AIDS among unmarried teenagers (Ojo and Fasuuba (2005). More than one-third of these pregnancies are aborted, with almost half of the pregnant ones being admitted in hospitals for bleeding, anemia and fatigue (Nwanko, 1983). Some have been confirmed HIV positive while others are already dead or are at the point of death because of AIDS. Studies in Cote D'Ivoire, Malawi, South Africa, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Nigeria confirmed that young women in their teens and early twenties had highest prevalence rates (Verkiyl, 1995; Briggs, 1995; Abdvol Karim et al., 1992). Often, the society frowns at these adolescents due to series of problems they face. Most of them drop out of school, live on welfare, often below poverty line, while their health and that of their babies (in the case of pregnant ones) suffer.

In South Africa, the country's largest providers of Internet services to home dial-up subscribers, M-Web, World Online and SAIX, are carrying links to child pornography websites on their servers. The links are part of the Usenet service, an Internet-wide system of virtual bulletin boards on which subscribers can place and respond to messages. M-Web carries at least 12 newsgroups clearly marked as being devoted to pedophilia (Internet sex crawlers). Some of the M-Web newsgroup link goes straight to Web pages carrying images of obviously pre-pubescent girls, nude and posing provocatively. This and similar links appeared amid references to very young boys, schoolboys play with each other and little boys in sexual escapades. Among these references were links to pictures of boys with erections. The boys appeared to be between 12 and 17 years old.

### **Sexuality Trends Among Teenagers And Children In Nigeria**

Sexuality behavior among youths and young adults has been studied in a range of situation. Ojo and Fasubaa (2005) opined that adolescents' sexuality behavior in Nigeria and sub-Saharan Africa is seriously going through transformation from what it used to be in the past. They attributed this to the effect of modernization caused by industrialization, education, exposure and

enculturation through importation of various foreign cultures, which were alien to the Nigerian culture in particular and African as a whole. The major deterrents against these vices were previously cultural orientation and religious beliefs. Unfortunately, the Internet, more than any other agent of social change has contributed in no small measure to the removal of guilt, fear and shame associated with unconventional sexual activities. In a nation where the poverty level continues to rise, children involved in hawking wares to assist in making ends meet at home are continuously exposed to circumstances that can jeopardize healthy sexual behaviors. They sometimes fall victim to the lure of older children or young adults who expose them to Internet pornography in the quest to awaken their sexual responses on the Internet.

A trend that is very glaring in most societies is that children learn from the older generations and they learn fast. They also seem to imitate their immediate preceding generation of adolescents in defiant behaviors more than they learn good manners from the older generations. It is noteworthy that sexual behaviors displayed by adolescents are evolving and tending to unabated willingness to try out different sexual flavors discovered through exposure, contacts and otherwise. Adebayo et al (2006) examined the relative contributions of gender and Internet use, as well as their interactive influence on young adults' sexual behaviors in Nigeria. They established an interaction effect between the use of the Internet by males and risky sexual behavior. Emeozor (2005) raised an alarm on the possible relationship between access to pornographic contents on the Internet and risky sexual tendencies that can lead to the spread of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

### **Efforts at Preventing Internet Pornography in Nigeria**

It has become imperative to evolve protective schemes for Internet savvy children and teenagers in a country where the struggle for survival keeps parents at work while having little or no time to monitor what their children do with the Internet at home, in their schools and other Internet access points. There are no obvious concerns for the underage and children in their access to the Internet in Nigeria. Children, youths and adults consume the same vulgar contents with impunity and without deterrents. One would have thought that the trend applicable in the movie industry in Nigeria regarding content ratings would have been applied online. It seems nobody has thought or is thinking along these lines among our policy makers. All we can see and observe are on paper in the Cybercrime Act. As far as the authors know, there has been no form of arrest or prosecution of pedophiles, Internet sex hawkers or Internet service provider where the right of users to decent contents especially children and youths are violated.

As at this time of writing, there are virtually no known technical measures imposed by the government and implemented for combating internet pornography in Nigerian. The EFCC and the Cybercrime Working Group saddled with the responsibilities for combating cybercrime and working out policies for a safer cyber space will definitely have to do more than passing bills and erecting warning posters. Apart from posting bills on the walls of cyber cafes warning against the browsing of sex sites, most Cyber cafes in Nigeria are able to monitor and control network users with content filters. This is mostly done through a section in the café billing software. Prohibited sites are usually listed among caption-restricted programmes (a form of blacklist). For instance, Cyberguage and GoCybertix, two very popular billing system in installed on main servers in

Nigerian cafes automatically shut down domain names containing specified contents such as erotix, sex, sexy, XXX, Xxx, porno, pussy etc. as a result, cafes with such facilities have been able to control and minimize the number of pornographic sites visited daily by Internet users. However, the setback with these measures is that both legitimate and illegitimate users accessing pages with these contents are denied services. To a large extent, this has affected café business negatively in terms of revenue generation since users with legitimate reasons to use pages with such contents complain and eventually leave such cafes for other places where such web pages can be served.

A couple of non-governmental organizations across the country have taken it upon themselves to address the problem of the spread of HIV/AIDS among Nigerian youths and children. Notable among these organizations are the HIV/AIDS Prevention for Secondary Schools, the Youthcare 2000 and Beyond, the Save Our Future Foundation, the AIDS Prevention Foundation, and the AIDSCare Group etc. Other religious groups affiliated to Christian denominations and Islamic movements are also involved in the AIDS prevention campaign. The focus of most of the enlightenment programmes organized by these bodies in workshops and seminars on the prevention of HIV/AIDS emphasize the use of condom, sticking to one single sexual partner, saying No to sex before marriage (popularly referred to as “ZIP UP”) and abstinence of sex outrightly among non-married youths and teenagers. To the best of our knowledge, none of these organizations championing the prevention of HIV/AIDS in Nigeria nor sexuality education curriculum in schools have addressed the prevalence of Internet pornography as a possible factor for the increase in the incidence of HIV/AIDS in Nigeria.

Using the Internet for sexual abuse remains a very active research interest. Researchers have investigated the relationship between young adults’ involvement with online sexual activities such as chats, quest for romantic and sexual relationships and the development of their sexuality (Brown and Eisenberg, 1995). Using time spent in viewing sexually related activities online as a yardstick, . Cooper et al (2000) found that excessive usage is positively related to stress and sexual sensation seeking among youths. The same phenomenon was replicated in the study by Goodson et al., in which participants’ attitude towards seeking sex information and sexual entertainment varied based on the frequency of their Internet usage. Scholars have established positive correlations between exposure to spurious web content and sexual beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors (Young, and Rogers, 1998, Kraut, Patterson and Lundmark, 1998). Longe & Longe (2005) x-rayed Internet pornography in Nigeria and advocates the use of web filtering programs as a robust measure against unwanted Internet content. Other researchers also correlated early initiation of sexual intercourse with cyber sex exposures (Brown & Newcomer, 1991).

### **Limitations of Legal Deterrents to Fighting Web Pornography in Nigeria**

The computer security and critical information infrastructure protection bill 2005 worked out by the Nigerian Cybercrime Working Group remains one of the most powerful legal tool for fighting cybercrime in Nigeria. The objectives of the acts are **to** secure computer systems and networks and protect critical information infrastructure in Nigeria by prohibiting certain undesirable computer-based activities and for matters connected therewith (NCWG, 2005). Section 17 of the

bill addressed issues relating to inordinate and criminal use of the Internet for sexual activities. It states thus

**Any person who, using any computer -**

- (a) engages or solicits or entices or compels any minor to engage in any sexual or related act; or
- (b) engages in, or facilitates any indecent exposure of a minor or creates, possesses or distributes child pornography; or
- (c) facilitates the commission of a sexual or related act which constitutes an offence under any law for the time being in force in Nigeria, commits an offence under this Act and shall be liable on conviction –
  - (i) in the case of paragraph (a), to a fine of not less than N3,000,000 or imprisonment for a term of not less than 7 years or to both such fine and imprisonment, and
  - (ii) in the case of paragraph (b) and (c) of this subsection, to a fine of not less than N1,000,000 or imprisonment for a term of not less than 5 years or to both such fine and imprisonment. (Source: NCWG, 2005)

Legal experts always disagree on matters relating to the territorial jurisdiction for the trial of the cyber offences since the perpetrators can be continents away from the victims (Longe, 2004). This scenario is very true for Internet pornography. This situation makes the investigation and prosecution of cyber-crime offences extremely difficult. Effective and vigorous law enforcement can help deter Internet pornography and diminish the supply of inappropriate sexually explicit material available to children. For practical and technical reasons, it is most feasible to seek regulation of commercial sources of such material. As discussed earlier, some forms of legal regulation exist in Nigeria against sex cybercrime against minors. These legal measures, to our knowledge, have not achieved much either in the fight against pornography or other forms of cyber crime.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Question**

Based on the foregoing, this paper wishes to provide answers to the following questions.

- (1) What are the level of exposure of children and teenagers of primary and secondary school age to Internet pornography in Nigeria?
- (2) Are schools, parents, guardians, technology and the society moderating the level of exposure of children to Internet pornography?

### **Population**

A total of 270 questionnaires were administered to children and teenagers over a 3 months period across four locations in Southwestern Nigeria. 241 questionnaires were returned out of which 232 satisfied the statistical stratification for age, sex and access to Internet facilities. The sampling technique used is the stratified sampling method in combination with simple random sampling. The simple random sampling technique is a method employed in selecting a sample of considerate size from a given population of data used in the survey.

## Design

The survey method employed in this research is the use of questionnaires to solicit information from the selected population. Our focus population consists of children and teenagers of primary and secondary school age partitioned into ages 7-12 and 13–18. Confidentiality of personal information was guaranteed as respondents were asked to specify only their age brackets and sex. The name and location of schools, name of respondents and other personal information were excluded. The respondents were encouraged to provide honest answers and items in the questionnaire involving some Internet technicalities were explained to assist the respondents in understanding each question so as to be able to proffer correct answers. The questions only required Yes or No answers.

## Research instruments

The research instrument titled “Children/Teenagers Internet Pornography Profile *In Southwestern Nigeria*” was self-constructed and administered to obtain information on usage and the role played by schools, parents, guardians, technology and the society on addressing the issue of pornography and its impact on children and teens. *Pornography Addiction Test* adapted from the Kimberly Young *Internet Addiction Test (Store.net, 2006)* was administered to measure the level of addiction to Internet pornography among the respondents.

## Research instrument validation

Experts in the subject area verified the face-validity and content-validity of the self-constructed instrument. The various suggestions made were used to modify the instrument. The Alpha reliability measure for the instrument was 0.84 for the first.

## Administration of instrument

The research instrument was administered by the researchers and trained research students under our supervision.

## Data Presentation

### Formulation of hypothesis

Table 2 presents obvious variations in the responses obtained from the respondents regarding contact with web pornography and its impact. We therefore formulate a null hypothesis and employ the use of an associative analytical tool, the chi-square analysis, to determine if the age group of the respondents influences their responses.

H<sub>0</sub>: The responses from the different groups is not dependent on their age group

Table 1. Internet Usage Profile

PARENTAL INCOME			LOCATION OF INTERNET ACCESS			LEVEL OF EXPOSURE			ACTIVITY MOSTLY ENGAGED ON THE INTERNET		
ITEM	Freq	%	ITEM	Freq	%	ITEM	Freq	%	ITEM	Freq	%
High	108	46.6	Schools	80	34.5	High	116	50.0	Study	47	20.3
Medium	70	30.2	Home	115	49.6	Medium	80	34.5	Games	11	4.7
Low	54	23.3	Cyber Café	27	11.6	Low	36	15.5	Pornography	22	9.5
TOTAL	232	100.0	Others	10	4.3	TOTAL	232	100.0	Chats	35	15.1
			TOTAL	232	100				E-mail	50	21.6
									Music	53	22.8
									Movies	8	3.4
									Sports	6	2.6
									TOTAL	232	100.0

PARENTAL INCOME		LOCATION OF INTERNET ACCESS		LEVEL OF EXPOSURE		ACTIVITY MOSTLY ENGAGED ON THE INTERNET	
Mean	1.767	Mean	1.8578	Mean	1.6552	Mean	4.0819
Median	2.000	Median	2.0000	Median	1.5000	Median	5.0000
Std.	.8043	Std.	.7849	Std.	.7339	Std.	1.9929
Variance	.6469	Variance	.6160	Variance	.5386	Variance	3.9716

Table 2. Responses to Part B of the First Set of Questionnaire Addressed to Children and Teenagers on the Impact of Web Pornography.

	Those Saying Yes		Those Saying No	
	Age 7-12	Age 13-18	Age 7-12	Age 13-18
No of question Items	10	10	10	10
Total response	424	810	419	667
Mean	42.40	81.00	41.90	66.70
Standard deviation	21.20	17.81	20.33	16.25
Coefficient of variance	0.50 = 50%	0.2198 = 21.98%	0.4852 = 48.52%	0.2436 = 24.36%

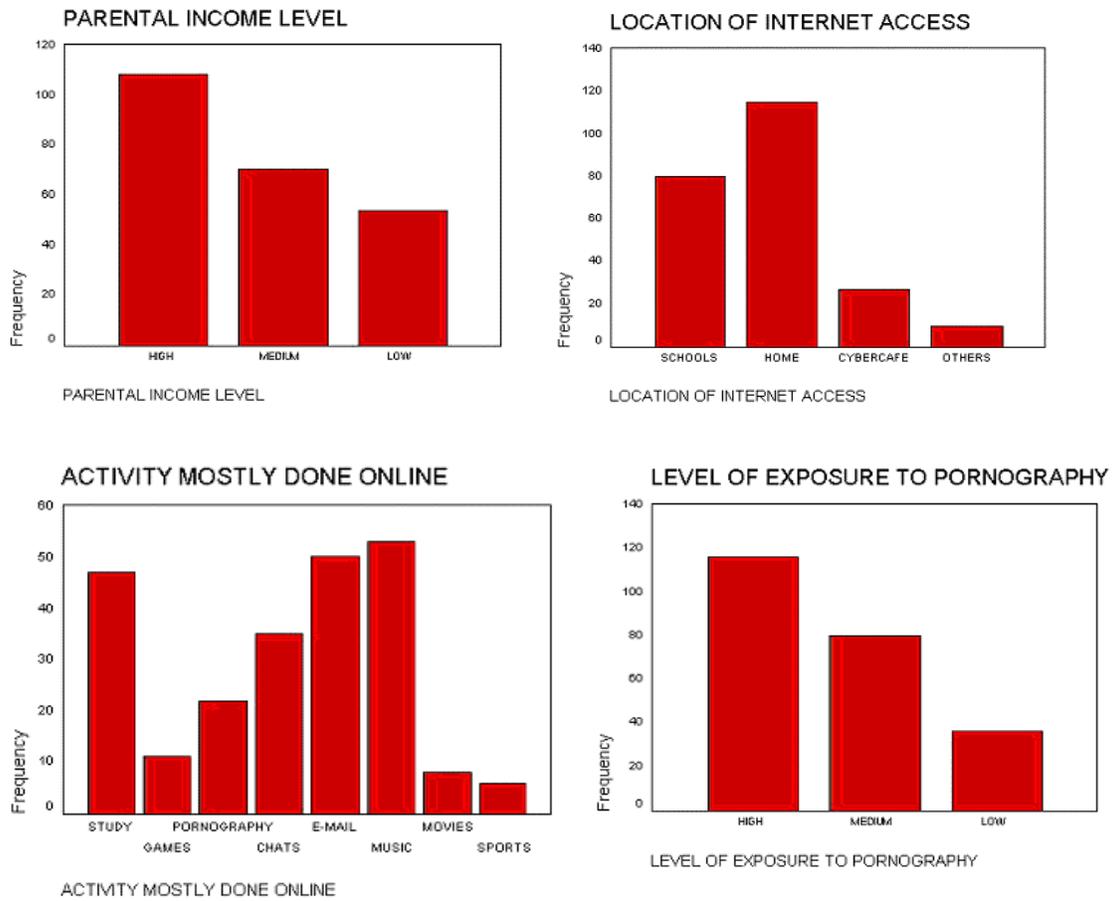


Figure 1. Graph Of Responses For Parental Income, Location Of Internet Access, Activity And Level Of Exposure To Pornography.

**Chi Square Analysis**

The essential nature of the chi-square analysis is to compare an observed distribution to a theoretical distribution of values, the theoretical distribution having been arrived at on the basis of some rational grounds. It is, thus, a test of the significance of the difference between an observed, actual distribution consisting of data to be analyzed, and a theoretical, usually computed, distribution to which the observed distribution is to be compared. If the computed chi-square value from the results obtained is less than the two table values at 0.1 and 0.5 levels of significance, we reject the null hypothesis, otherwise, the hypothesis accepted.

Table 3. Chi-Square ( $\chi^2$ ) Pair Experiment on the Responses

Age Group	Age 7 – 12 Years	Age 13 – 18 Years		Age 7 – 12 Years	Age 13 – 18 Years	
Response	OBSERVED VALUE		Total Observed Value	EXPECTED VALUE		Total Observed Value
YES	424	810	1234	448	786	1234
NO	41925	667	1086	395	691	1086
<b>Total</b>	<b>843</b>	<b>1477</b>	<b>2320</b>	<b>843</b>	<b>1477</b>	<b>2320</b>
<b>Df</b>	<b>1</b>					

Table 4. Correlation Table

CORRELATIONS									
		Parental Income Level	Location Of Internet Access	Activity Mostly Done Online	Level Of Exposure To Pornography				
Pearson Correlation	Parental Income Level	1.000	.393	.539	.907				
	Location Of Internet Access	.393	1.000	.879	.330				
	Activity Mostly Done Online	.539	.879	1.000	.462				
	Level Of Exposure To Pornography	.907	.330	.462	1.000				
MODEL SUMMARY									
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.917(a)	.842	.839	.3223	.842	403.646	3	228	.000
A Predictors: (Constant), Level Of Exposure To Pornography , Location Of Internet Access, Activity Mostly Done Online									

Table 5. Pornography Viewing Level

	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
RARE	31	13.4
OCCASIONAL	46	19.8
FREQUENT	64	27.6
OFTEN	41	17.7
ALWAYS	18	7.8
NOT APPLICABLE	32	13.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.280</b>	
<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>1.547</b>	
<b>Variance</b>	<b>2.393</b>	

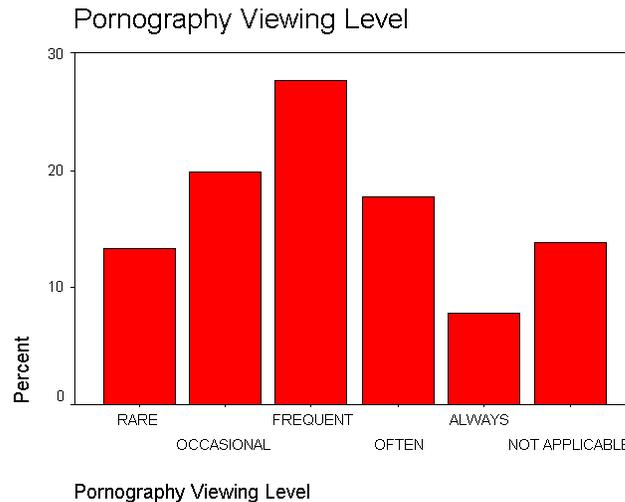


Figure 2. Level of Viewing of Pornographic Contents

### Results and Discussion

The mean measures performance and from Table 2, the group with the highest mean value is the teenage group with a mean value of 81.0. They seem to have more contact with Internet pornography. They also have the lowest variance showing that their response has a good spread thereby justifying their aversion for any measure that might be adopted to combat pornography. To this set of respondents, pornography appeals more to their youthful attitude. The mean for the children age group 7-12 (42.40) reveals an alarming trend on the level of exposure of children in the research area to Internet pornography. The variance of those saying NO to most of the questions among the children though very high (48.52%) is not significantly far from that of those saying YES within the same age group.

From Table 3  $\chi^2$  calculated is 3.6080 is less than  $\chi^2$  tabulated at 0.01 and 0.05 level of significance and 1 degree of freedom that is 3.841 and 6.635. We therefore reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative that the responses from the different groups are dependent on their age range. This simply means that as children advance in age to become teenagers, if proper control measures are not adopted, they will also become addicted to and affected negatively by internet pornography.

Table IV showed a high degree of correlation (.907) between income and level of exposure to Internet pornography. This implies that children and teens from the medium and high-income family have more access to the Internet and by implication are more prone to viewing pornography. In the same vein, there is a relatively high correlation between activities mostly done online (879) and the location of Internet access. This trend substantiate the fact that teenagers and children with easy access to the internet, especially, using Cybercafés and internet facilities at school are likely to become more exposed to internet pornography.

In Table V, the highest percentage of the respondents (27.6) claimed to view pornography frequently while 13.8% and 13.4% agreed that they do not view or rarely view pornography. These two percentages combined (27.2) is still less that the percentage of the respondents that view pornography frequently. The percentages of the respondents who view pornography (53.1) almost double that of those who rarely view or do not view at all (27.6). This result is alarming as it gives an impression of a tendency towards pornography addiction among the respondents.

### Summary of Findings

Content channeling/selection technology, monitoring software and parental control software are not in use in the research area. The CP80 Foundation is championing the usage of this form of technical deterrents that allows Internet content to be categorized for instance to adult and children/general content(CP80, 2005). Other parental control software such as CyberPatrol, Net Nanny and Spector can also be installed to block pornographic sites and monitor Internet activities without the knowledge of the children (Jeri & Beth, 2006). Some software titles are also provided at [http://web.chapel1.com/products/parental\\_control.htm](http://web.chapel1.com/products/parental_control.htm).

Using content channeling technologies, we can set computers meant for children's usage solely to be able to display only contents healthy for that age group's consumption. The challenge against monitoring is that children's right to privacy may be violated thereby breaking the healthy bond of trust that exists in the child-parent relationship. Other findings from the research are summarized below:

- (a) Physical examination of schools with Internet facilities revealed that over 87% of them do not install pornographic filters or the filters are not efficient enough for filtering pornography. Some schools are not even aware that pornography can be filtered
- (b) Cybercafés are reluctant to filter because filters prevent adult users from accessing other web documents that share similar content characteristics with pornography.
- (c) Children at home and in schools are usually not supervised when on the Internet.
- (d) Children are exposed to pornography at an early age of 10 on the average.

- (e) Most parents either not aware of or non-challant about the content their children consume in schools and at home. Those conscious are handicapped because they are not aware of any measures for combating Internet pornography. Some parents perceived and correlate defiant behaviors in their children to Internet exposure.
- (f) Some children view pornography deliberately, accidentally and due to peer pressure and continue to view after exposure. Most children cannot yet explain the impact of Internet pornography on their psychology except that they tend to have risky sexual behaviors.

### **Conclusion**

So, just how safe is the unsupervised access to spurious pornographic web contents by children and teenagers in Nigeria? Protecting children begins at home; parents are responsible for monitoring and educating their children about the value and danger of the Internet. Parents are not, however, alone in this endeavor. The widest possible protection should be accorded to the family to enable it to play its crucial role in society. Internet governance bodies and principles can facilitate this protection and assist families in fulfilling its role. Existing literature opined that harm could come after repeated exposures, when a child may be drawn to seek it out, and can quickly become addicted after that (Cheryl, 2007).

Learning more about the dangers of Internet pornography and how to protect children has become critical. One good way to prepare children for accidental viewing of Internet porn is by letting the child know beforehand that they may occasionally come across unwanted information or pictures, and to let parents, teachers and guardians know if this happens. Another way to protect children is to buy Internet filtering software to block pornographic sites. While not 100-percent effective, the software will cut down substantially on the times children come across pornographic or questionable material.

Developing strategies against Internet pornography and its impact on children and teenagers is a process that will require synergy among policy makers and technocrats. Collectivity seems to be the only line of action against web pornography. While parents and teachers will do well to focus on developing healthy Internet content appetite on their wards and students, filter and content selection/selection developers will do well in designing technologies that works seamlessly without additional stress to other system users.

### **Recommendations**

In Nigeria, Cyber Cafés should be encouraged to partition their services to adult, youth and children/teen sections in order to take advantage of technologies for content channeling/selection. While some computer terminals can be dedicated to access all forms of contents others for children/teenagers usage can be enabled to access contents that are purely healthy for children/teenagers' age group consumption. The responsibility of monitoring Internet contents being consumed by children and youths at home rests with parents and guardians. Content channeling/selection technologies and filters can be used as an aid to moderating contents viewed by children /teenagers at all Internet access points. In schools, students can be allocated user and password IDs. These passwords and IDs can then be configured and usable only on systems that have been conditioned using filters and content selection technology for web contents that are

healthy for the consumption of children and teenagers.

Responsible mentorship on all fronts demands that adult members in the society be interested in the web contents being consumed by the children and teenagers – otherwise, we will end up breeding a generation of youths that will become sexually perverse, times bombs, waiting for the right time to explode. The information society will definitely be worse off for it. Society only ignores the menace of Internet pornography at her own detriment (Eshiet, 2003).

In the words of Dick and Herbert (2003), effective and vigorous law enforcement can help deter Internet pornography and diminish the supply of inappropriate sexually explicit material available to children. For practical and technical reasons, it is most feasible to seek regulation of commercial sources of such material. Adults must learn to teach children how to make good choices on the Internet. They must be willing to engage in sometimes difficult conversations. They must face the tradeoffs that are inevitable with demanding work and family schedules. But in addition to teaching responsible behavior and coping skills for encounters with inappropriate material and experiences on the Internet, this instruction will help children think critically about all kinds of media messages, including those associated with hate, racism, and violence. It will also help them conduct effective Internet searches for information and to make ethical and responsible choices about Internet behavior--and about non-Internet behavior as well.

### Direction for Future Research

A combination of social policy, education and technology has been adjudged the best panacea for combating pornography. Our future effort will be directed at determining the most effective ways of combining these treatments in schools, homes, cafes and other Internet access points in order to be able to combat the menace of Internet pornography.

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## APPENDIX

### QUESTIONNAIRE EXTRACT (1)

#### USAGE PROFILE

- (1) Are you allowed to browse in your school's computer centre without the supervision of your computer teacher
- (2) Are you able to browse Pornographic Web sites in your school's computer centre
- (3) Would you disagree with your parents supervising what you do view in your home computers
- (4) Do you browse pornographic websites at home
- (5) Have you ever stumble on a pornographic website
- (6) Do you get invitation for sexual escapades online
- (7) Do you browse pornography sites in Cybercafés
- (8) Do you continue viewing such websites after stumbling on it
- (9) Would you stop browsing the internet if there are deterrents to pornographic sites when browsing
- (10) Do you experience any deterrents to browsing pornography in cybercafe

### QUESTIONNAIRE EXTRACT (2)

#### INTERNET ADDICTION

Developed by Dr. Kimberly Young, the IAT is a 20-item questionnaire that measures mild, moderate, and severe levels of Internet Addiction. It has been adapted here to suit our research purpose

To assess your level of addiction to pornography answer the following questions using this scale:

- 1 = Rarely.
- 2 = Occasionally.
- 3 = Frequently.
- 4 = Often.
- 5 = Always.

1. How often do you find that you stay on-line longer than you intended when watching pornography?  
Rarely [ ] Occasionally. [ ] Frequently [ ] Often. [ ] Always [ ]
2. How often do you neglect household chores to spend more time on-line watching pornography?  
Rarely [ ] Occasionally. [ ] Frequently [ ] Often. [ ] Always [ ]
3. How often do you prefer the excitement of the Internet pornography to intimacy with your peers?  
Rarely [ ] Occasionally. [ ] Frequently [ ] Often. [ ] Always [ ]
4. How often do you form new relationships while viewing pornography on-line?  
Rarely [ ] Occasionally. [ ] Frequently [ ] Often. [ ] Always [ ]
5. How often do others in your life complain to you about the amount of time you spend watching pornography on-line?  
Rarely [ ] Occasionally. [ ] Frequently [ ] Often. [ ] Always [ ]
6. How often do your grades or school work suffer because of the amount of time you spend watching pornography?  
Rarely [ ] Occasionally. [ ] Frequently [ ] Often. [ ] Always [ ]
7. How often do you check your e-mail to know if there are reply from your sex sites before something else that you need to do?  
Rarely [ ] Occasionally. [ ] Frequently [ ] Often. [ ] Always [ ]
8. How often does your performance at home and other commitments suffer because of the Internet pornography?  
Rarely [ ] Occasionally. [ ] Frequently [ ] Often. [ ] Always [ ]
9. How often do you become defensive or secretive when anyone asks you what you do on-line?  
Rarely [ ] Occasionally. [ ] Frequently [ ] Often. [ ] Always [ ]
10. How often do you block out disturbing thoughts about your life with soothing thoughts of Internet pornography?  
Rarely [ ] Occasionally. [ ] Frequently [ ] Often. [ ] Always [ ]
11. How often do you find yourself anticipating when you will go on-line again?  
Rarely [ ] Occasionally. [ ] Frequently [ ] Often. [ ] Always [ ]
12. How often do you fear that life without the Internet pornography would be boring, empty, and joyless? Rarely [ ] Occasionally. [ ] Frequently [ ] Often. [ ] Always [ ]
13. How often do you snap, yell, or act annoyed if someone bothers you while you are on-line? Rarely [ ] Occasionally. [ ] Frequently [ ] Often. [ ] Always [ ]
14. How often do you lose sleep due to late-night log-ins?  
Rarely [ ] Occasionally. [ ] Frequently [ ] Often. [ ] Always [ ]
15. How often do you feel preoccupied with the Internet pornography when off-line, or fantasize about being on-line?  
Rarely [ ] Occasionally. [ ] Frequently [ ] Often. [ ] Always [ ]
16. How often do you find yourself saying "just a few more minutes" when on-line?  
Rarely [ ] Occasionally. [ ] Frequently [ ] Often. [ ] Always [ ]
17. How often do you try to cut down the amount of time you spend on-line and fail?  
Rarely [ ] Occasionally. [ ] Frequently [ ] Often. [ ] Always [ ]
18. How often do you try to hide how long you've been on-line?  
Rarely [ ] Occasionally. [ ] Frequently [ ] Often. [ ] Always [ ]
19. How often do you choose to spend more time on-line over going out with others?  
Rarely [ ] Occasionally. [ ] Frequently [ ] Often. [ ] Always [ ]
20. How often do you feel depressed, moody, or nervous when you are off-line, which goes away once you are back on-line?  
Rarely [ ] Occasionally. [ ] Frequently [ ] Often. [ ] Always [ ]