

# Digital Technology and Deviant Behaviour of Secondary School Students in Uyo Local Government Area

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## Abstract

The study examined digital technology and deviant behavior of secondary school students in Uyo Local Government. The survey research design was used in the study. The population of the study comprised all 24, 630 secondary school students in Uyo Local Government Area. A sample of 520 of students aged 11-18 were selected from this population for the study through the stratified random sampling technique. Instrument used in collecting data for this ex-post facto survey was the *digital age and deviant behavior of secondary school student's questionnaire* (DADBSSSQ) developed by the researcher. The data from the study was analyzed and hypotheses tested using Pearson product moment correlation statistic. The findings revealed that web surfing, television and movies content have relationship with deviant behaviors of secondary school students in Uyo Local Government Area. It was therefore recommended that adolescent students should be informed and guided on the danger inherent in these digital technologies.

## Keywords

Deviant Behavior, Digital Technology, Secondary School Students, Education, Adolescents

## 1. Introduction

Digital Technology is characterized by the use of electronic systems and devices to process, store, and transmit digital signals or information. The electronic systems commonly used in the processing and transmission of information and include computer systems, television, radio, video players, and a wide array of audio-visual systems. The use of these digital devices and machines has both negative and positive effects on individuals, especially the adolescent, and the society at large. Electronic systems, however, were developed to improve the communication systems in the society, in such a way that pictures, video sounds, music can be processed digitally stored and disseminated at far distances with credible speed [1].

As children enter adolescence, many begin to engage in risky behaviours. Such include smoking, alcoholism, sexual behaviours, violence, and armed robbery due to what they view and listen to on the television, radio, video tape (films) and computer (internet). Several studies [2] have affirmed that, majority of the adolescents indulge in social menace and

deviant behaviours as the result of what they view on media; internet and television. Some presentations, firms, movies, video, music's, television presentation and on the internet are pornographic. Many have fallen victims of death, school dropout, early pregnancy, imprisonment etc. because of media influences.

Adolescent students' behaviours do not occur in isolation. They grow out of complex interaction with the individual, peer, family, school, community, and societal levels. According to Stephen, American Youth aged eight (8) to eighteen (18) now spend an average of six to eight and half hours a day using various forms of media, print media computer, and video games. Thus, sociologists and psychologists and social researchers [3] have asserted a strong relationship between electronic media and juvenile delinquency among school adolescents, and their academic.

In today's context, it is not possible to distinguish the society from its media. People in the society are simply followers of values, beliefs and ideologies that are propagated

by its various electronic media [4]. The same holds true for children. Violent video games, movies, cartoons and the like combine to make them behave inappropriately. This includes lack of values to life, ethics and ethical practices by the electronic media compound the problem.

According to Brown [5], one of the first skills of emotional competence is the ability to recognize emotions in others. To express in concrete terms, children develop negative and positive emotions from other people; peers, adult and parents. Researchers indicate that, pre-schoolers are able to identify and differentiate basic emotions such as happiness, sadness, and fear experienced by television characters [6]. The same way, that they form and display emotions that set the pace for deviant behaviours. Deviant behaviours are thought of and stored in the mind and affected the emotion of children. Very young individuals or adolescents however, struggle to recognize more complex emotions on television programme

Agar [7] found that older children can learn about and initiate sexual activities and violent crimes like armed robbery from watching lurid sexual contents in television and listening to sensuous musicals and watching violent crime videos, which would impact on their emotions and incite them to attempt these acts. Agar further expressed that simple exposure of children to a television episode can alter children ideas about emotions in real life and is consistent with the idea that electronic media portrayal can influence a child's mental representation or schema for emotional event. A schema is an organized structure of knowledge about a topic or event that is stored in memory and helps a person assimilate new information and copy a particular habits he views.

According to the word of Anderson [8] television viewing is associated with substance use, illicit sexual activities. Alcohol drinks are the beverages most commonly advertised on television. Statistically, from 2001 to 2005, alcohol companies spent 4.7 billion on 1.4 million advertisements for alcohol beverages on television [9]. Adolescent over exposure to alcohol is more often found on the cable since cable networks usually have more narrowly defined and concentrated views than broadcast networks. The more adolescents are exposed to alcoholic media peers, the more they would feel inclined to indulge in alcoholism.

Uncensored television viewing may also expose adolescents to pornographic contents which may induce illicit sexual urge in the adolescent. Most adolescents who engage in sexual activities with opposite sex do so with the fact that they learn it on the television. Some of these adolescents download pornographic pictures and information into their cell phones. According to Ogden and others [10] roughly two thirds (2/3) of television programmes contain graphic sex, yet few studies have examined the association over time between exposure to television and sexual behaviour in adolescents. A longitudinal study conducted by James [11] and Ogden *et al* [10] suggested a positive link between amount of television watched and early initiation of sexual intercourse but the effect size was not statistically significant. Collins [12] presented findings from a recent longitudinal study that took into account other risk factors, such as age, race and ethnicity,

social environment, religiosity, deviant behaviour, mental health, and sensation seeking, and still found a significant association between the amount of sexual content viewed by adolescents and their sexual behaviour watching television that features sexual content has the effect of artificially aging of youths.

Computer plays significant role in driving the youths to engage in cybercrime and sexual activities. Most adolescents use the internet to practice financial crime and hacking. Hacking on the internet involves tampering with people's privacy on the network without the knowledge of the owner of the information. Most hackers and crackers write computer programmes to find out secret financial information of people in the internet [13].

Some send scam mails that look like original information from the sender, just to obtain private information from the individual's special account data. The use of passwords has been able to reduce the amount of crime performed on the internet. Programmes are developed to secure and protect individual accounts in the network.

Another form of physical destruction is modification of user's files and plagiarizes peoples (authors) ideas, information published by the owner, without official writing permission of the author or referencing the author. Copy right laws have been made to secure and protect plagiarism and unauthorized access to people's privacy in the internet. According to Nelson [14], most adolescents are always on the internet browsing to fraud people by flashing messages in a particular websites and E-mails account, environment telling the user to click or log on the that link. These hackers tend to get secret information about people. Sometimes they defraud buyers who use the internet to buy their products and services. They seek for debit cards and credit card data and passwords in order to defraud people of their finances. Often times, these hackers cleverly conceal their identities such that any attempts to trace them will lead in uncertain directions, making them untraceable. As adolescents become more computer literate and able to understand how the internet works, their curiosities and delinquent tendencies may lead them to explore cybercrime as well.

In the word of Jenkins [15], movies have influenced many adolescents negatively. Jenkins explained that, movies and films can damage the emotion of the adolescents depending on the type of movies viewed. Analysts have used both short-term experimental studies and longitudinal studies to examine the link between exposure to smoking in the movies and both adolescents' views of smoking and their smoking initiation. Most movies and commercial films feature on tobacco and cigarette advertisement. This induces the feelings of the adolescents and encourages them to indulge in smoking and drug abuse.

Anderson [8] conducted an experimental study on the effect of movies, smoking and other substance abuse among 2,603 adolescents aged ten to fourteen. The study measured the exposure to smoking in movies by asking participants to indicate the films they had seen from a list of fifty. He found significant associations between exposure to movie-smoking

and smoking-initiation after adjusting for age, gender, and school grade. 10% of the participants began smoking during the follow-up period. The researcher also assessed potential interaction between exposure to movies, smoking and other smoking risk factors such as age, gender, and social influences.

Other studies provide clear and strong evidence that youth are more susceptible to viewing smoking as favourable and to becoming smokers as a result of exposure to smoking in the media [16]. Several studies have affirmed the influence of digital system like internet, movies, radio and television on adolescents' deviancy. A close examination of adolescents student in secondary schools reveals that, most of them tend to indulge in deviant behaviours; smoking, sexual activities, other substance abuse; alcohol etc. Their level of engagement in this social menace depends on their frequent access and viewing of advertising programmes on drug abuse, sexual activities, etc. More so, school adolescents are ignorant of the negative effects of engaging in social menace in their social and educational life.

### 1.1. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the relation that exists between selected digital technologies and deviant behaviour of adolescent students in secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area. Specifically, this study examined:

1. The relationship between internet access and deviant behaviors of secondary school students in Uyo Local Government Area.
2. The relationship between television exposure and deviant behaviors of secondary school students in Uyo Local Government Area.
3. The relationship between movie contents and deviant behaviors of secondary school students in Uyo Local Government Area.

### 1.2. Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What is the relationship between internet access and deviant behaviours of secondary school students?
2. What is the relationship between digital television exposure and deviant behaviour of secondary school students?
3. What is the relationship between movie content and deviant behaviours of secondary school students?
4. What is the relationship between use of Social media interaction and deviant behaviours of secondary school students?

### 1.3. Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested in this study.

1. There is no significant relationship between digital television exposure and deviant behaviour of secondary school students.
2. There is significant relationship between digital

television exposure and deviant behaviour of secondary school students.

3. There is no significant relationship between movie content and deviant behaviours of secondary school students.
4. There is no significant relationship between use of Social media interaction and deviant behaviours of secondary school students.

## 2. Research Method

The ex-post facto survey design was used for this study because the researcher sought to access the opinion of people in social phenomena. The area of the study was Uyo local government Area. Uyo is the capital of Akwa Ibom state, Nigeria. The population comprises all the secondary school students in the 14 Public schools. All the ages group (11-18 years) students the population is 24, 630 students. A sample size of 520 respondents was selected for the study using the stratified sampling technique.

The instrument used for this study was researcher made questionnaire known as the digital age and Deviant Behaviours of secondary school students (DADBSSSQ). It was made up of two sections 'A' and 'B' Section A measured the personal data of the students which consisted of items which consist of sex, age, and class. While section 'B' of the questionnaire contain items for measuring students responses on digital age and deviant behaviours of secondary school students. The questionnaire was scaled on a four-point summative scaled type: ranging from strongly agreed to strongly disagree. The instrument was submitted to expert in test and measurement unit of education who subjected the instrument to scrutiny. Errors were corrected and approval was given for administration. The reliability of the instrument using the Cronbach's alpha was 0.82.

The instrument was administered to the respondents by hand using research assistants. The researchers spent some times to explain the items of the questionnaire to the respondents. Data generated was for collated and Pearson product Moment Correlation used to answer the Research question and was tested for significance in the hypothesis.

## 3. Results

**Table 1.** Internet access and deviant behaviour of secondary school students

Variable	$\Sigma X^1$	$\Sigma X^2$	$\Sigma XY$	r
Internet Access (X)	5977	31,901	139,842	0.78*
Deviant behaviour (Y)	9030	99,876		

\*Significant at 0.05 level; df = 518; N=520; Critical r-value = 0.187

From Table 1 the r-value is 0.78. This value was tested for significance by comparing it with the critical r-value at 0.05 levels with 518 degree of freedom. The obtained r-value (0.78) is greater than the critical r-value (0.187). Hence, the result is significant. The result of the data analysis therefore means that there is no significant relationship between digital television exposure and deviant behaviour of secondary school students.

**Table 2.** Digital television exposure and deviant behaviour of secondary school students

Variable	$\Sigma X^1$	$\Sigma X^2$	$\Sigma XY$	R
Digital TV (X)	5813	2905		
Deviant behaviour (Y)	9030	99,876	132,689	0.53*

\*Significant at 0.05 level; df = 518; N=520; Critical r-value = 0.187

From Table 2 the r-value is 0.53. This value was tested for significance by comparing it with the critical r-value at 0.05 levels with 518 degree of freedom. The obtained r-value (0.53) is greater than the critical r-value (0.187). Hence, the result is significant. The result of the data analysis therefore means that there is significant relationship between digital television exposure and deviant behaviour of secondary school students.

**Table 3.** Movie content and deviant behaviour of secondary school students

Variable	$\Sigma X^1$	$\Sigma X^2$	$\Sigma XY$	R
Movie Content (X)	5889	29973		
Deviant behaviour (Y)	9030	99,876	135,954	0.73*

\*Significant at 0.05 level; df = 518; N=520; Critical r-value = 0.187

From Table 3 the r-value is 0.73. This value was tested for significance by comparing it with the critical r-value at 0.05 levels with 518 degree of freedom. The obtained r-value (0.73) is greater than the critical r-value (0.187). Hence, the result is significant. The result of the data analysis therefore means that there is significant relationship between movie content and deviant behaviours of secondary school students.

**Table 4.** Social media interaction and deviant behaviour of secondary school students

Variable	$\Sigma X^1$	$\Sigma X^2$	$\Sigma XY$	R
Social media interaction (X)	5977	30,894		
Deviant behaviour (Y)	9030	99,876	138,864	0.76*

\*Significant at 0.05 level; df = 518; N=520; Critical r-value = 0.187

From Table 4 the r-value is 0.76. This value was tested for significance by comparing it with the critical r-value at 0.05 levels with 518 degree of freedom. The obtained r-value (0.76) is greater than the critical r-value (0.187). Hence, the result is significant. The result of the data analysis therefore means that there is significant relationship between use of Social media interaction and deviant behaviour of secondary school students.

## 4. Discussions of Findings

This work examined digital age and deviant behaviours of secondary school students in Uyo Local Government Area. The variables examined in the course of the study were all significant. These included; the computer (internet), television viewed content (alcohol / pornography) and movie viewed content on sexual activities. Presenting their outcome differently; the study reveal that a greater percentage of the respondent were of the view that there exist a strong relationship between the internet and deviant behaviours in

our secondary school. Support was seen in the work of Nelson [14] who states that internet browsing and tempering with files and private data without permission has become very rampant on the internet.

Television viewing content specifically on alcohol and pornography study has it that went further to reveal that most deviant behaviour in these two ways were mostly got or generated from peer – influence. These facts had back – up the revelation without getting in the hand bottles of alcohol drinks one cannot drink from the television and so is the case of pornography. James [11] opined that television content on sexual activities can stimulate and arouse ones emotion.

While considering movie and sexual activities, in relationship to deviants in students, their ages were considered. Students below 17 years only get influenced but not urge for sex. But the urge to attempt sex is naturally present in 17 years and above even without viewing the content of television or movies. This was closely examined base on the response to the questionnaire items. Thus, conclusively, the variables considered in this content have relationship with student deviant behaviours.

## 5. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that television content viewed has a positive correlation with deviant behavior of secondary school students. This implies that content viewed portraying sexual activities and drug abuse may stimulate the emotion and arouse the desire of adolescent to engage in these delinquent behaviors. It was also concluded that the content of movies viewed have a significant correlation with deviant behavior of secondary school students. Movies with graphic sex may encourage the adolescent to practice illicit sex. Moreover, it was concluded that the internet has a strong negative relationship with deviant behavior of secondary school students. Adolescents indulge in cybercrime like plagiarism, unauthorized access to people's privacy and sending of fraudulent scam mails are commonly practiced by them on the internet.

## Recommendations

Based on the result of the finding in this study, the following recommendations were made.

1. Students should not spend most of their time on television programme that are not academic but should use such time for personal study and research.
2. Parents are to regulate the use of television by their wards to enable them select programme for their ages.
3. Parents should mind their children while engaging in some activities at home e.g. (drinking & smoking) to avoid direct imitation by the children
4. The government should pay for the security of some web sites to avoid students having access to them free.
5. All movies at home should be kept under the control of parents so as to be able to check the children on movies.
6. Sex education should be given to students first by parent

at home, in churches as well as on school by their guidance counsellors.

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