

**THE KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS  
TOWARDS THE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF MOBILE PHONES AS  
INDUCERS OF PORNOGRAPHY AMONG STUDENTS IN A  
PRIVATE UNIVERSITY IN NIGERIA**

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**Abstract**

*This study investigates the knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of Babcock University students toward the adverse effects of mobile phones as inducers of pornography, adopting a social work perspective. Using a quantitative research design, a structured questionnaire was administered to 387 undergraduate students selected through multistage random sampling. Data were analyzed using SPSS, with descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution and percentages employed to interpret the findings. The results revealed that 67.9% of respondents aged 19-21, with 78.6% male and 21.4% female. Students demonstrated high awareness of pornography's negative effects, with a weighted average mean score of 4.22924, acknowledging its easy access via mobile phones (mean score: 4.1906) and its role in the sexual relationship with women (mean score: 4.1253). Despite this awareness, students held permissive attitudes, with 78.3% agreeing that viewing pornography on mobile phones is morally acceptable, and 83.5% recognizing its alarming consumption rate. Students perceived pornography as harmful to their psychological, social, and academic well-being (weighted average mean score: 3.83392), with 78% agreeing to its negative impacts on mental health and 76.2% noting its harms to social relationships. Factors*

*such as accidental exposure (mean score: 3.5796) and sexualized ads (mean score: 3.8172) were identified as key contributors to continued engagement. Students favored educational programs (mean score: 3.6475) and counseling services (mean score: 3.2402) over stricter mobile phone policies (mean score: 2.6501) to address the issue. The study highlights the need for targeted interventions, including education, counseling, and technology-based solutions, to promote responsible digital behavior. Further research is recommended to explore qualitative insights and broader societal influences.*

**Keywords:** *Knowledge, Attitudes, Perceptions, Adverse Effects, Mobile Phones, Inducers, Pornography, Students, Private University.*

## **1. Introduction**

The widespread availability and increasing use of mobile phones among students have dramatically transformed their lives, bringing both positive and negative influences (Pew Research Center, 2022). In particular, the advent of smartphones, which offer easy access to the internet, social media platforms, and various forms of multimedia, has significantly affected young people's exposure to inappropriate content, including pornography (Livingstone & Smith, 2014). Research indicates that unrestricted access to mobile devices increases the likelihood of exposure to sexually explicit materials, which may influence students' attitudes, behaviors, and psychological well-being (Owusu-Acheaw & Larson, 2017).

Pornography, as an element of media consumption, has become increasingly accessible due to the portability and privacy that mobile phones afford. Research indicates that mobile devices, particularly smartphones, serve as primary tools for consuming pornographic content among adolescents and young adults. Studies suggest that exposure to pornography may lead to various psychological, emotional, and behavioral issues, particularly among students who are in a formative stage of cognitive and social development (Davies et al., 2016). In addition to promoting unhealthy perceptions of sex and relationships, regular exposure to pornography can contribute to addiction, objectification of individuals, and the normalization of harmful sexual behaviors (Owens et al., 2012). The issue is especially significant in educational institutions like Babcock University, where the integration of moral and academic excellence is prioritized.

Babcock University, a private faith-based institution, operates within a framework that emphasizes moral and ethical conduct, making the issue of pornography particularly sensitive. Students at Babcock University, despite the institution's moral focus, are not immune to the broader societal influences that affect the consumption of inappropriate content via mobile phones. The near-universal ownership of mobile phones among students raises concerns about the ease of accessing explicit material and its impact on their mental health, academic performance, and social relationships. In educational settings such as Babcock University, addressing these adverse effects is crucial, especially given the institution's commitment to producing well-rounded individuals who embody both academic and moral uprightness.

Several studies highlight the complex relationship between mobile phone use, pornography consumption, and students' attitudes toward both (Loh, Liu 2021). Students' knowledge and perceptions of the negative effects of pornography

are often shaped by their peer interactions, cultural background, and personal values. However, despite awareness of the detrimental consequences, many students continue to engage in pornography consumption due to the ease of access and the anonymity afforded by mobile phones (Duncan, Greenfield, 2018). This study aims to analyze the knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of students at Babcock University regarding the adverse effects of mobile phones as inducers of pornography. Understanding their perspectives is vital for designing more effective interventions and educational programs to mitigate these effects.

The need to explore the role of mobile phones in facilitating access to pornography among students is more pressing than ever, as the lines between offline and online interactions continue to blur. As such, this research will provide insights into how students perceive and engage with their mobile devices and the extent to which these devices influence their exposure to harmful content. This will contribute to the growing body of literature on media consumption, mobile phone usage, and their psychosocial effects on young adults, particularly within educational settings.

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework for this study is grounded in Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) and Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT). These theories provide a robust foundation for understanding the relationship between mobile phone usage, pornography consumption, and the psychological, social, and academic outcomes among students. This theory as developed by Albert Bandura (1986), posits that human behavior is influenced by personal factors, environmental factors, and behavioral factors through a process known as reciprocal determinism. In the context of this study, it helps explain how students' interactions with mobile phones and pornography are shaped by their personal beliefs, social environment, and the behaviors they observe in others.

Uses and Gratifications Theory, developed by Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1973), focuses on how individuals use media to fulfill specific needs and desires. In the context of this study, UGT helps explain why students use mobile phones to access pornography and the gratifications they derive from this behavior. Students may consume pornography to fulfill various needs, including sexual gratification, curiosity, and stress relief. The anonymity and privacy provided by mobile phones make it easier for students to access pornography without fear of judgment or detection, which enhances the gratification they derive from this behavior (Greenfield, 2018). Additionally, the ease of access to explicit content on mobile phones allows students to consume pornography whenever and wherever they choose, further increasing its appeal. UGT also emphasizes that individuals actively choose media content based on their needs and preferences. In the case of students, mobile phones serve as a convenient and private medium for accessing pornography, which aligns with their desire for discretion and convenience (Peter & Valkenburg, 2018). This theory helps explain why students continue to consume pornography despite being aware of its potential adverse effects.

## **3. Methodology**

This study adopted a quantitative single-method research design to investigate the impact of mobile phones as potential inducers of pornography on the psychosocial wellbeing of undergraduate students. The approach facilitated the collection and analysis of numerical data to assess students' knowledge, attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors. The research will be conducted at Babcock University,

a private Christian institution located in Ilishan-Remo, Ogun State, Nigeria, known for its emphasis on moral and academic excellence. The target population comprised undergraduate students across various faculties, specifically those in their second (200 level), third (300 level), and final year (400 level) of study, aged between 18 and 24 years. Using the Taro Yamane formula at a 5% margin of error, a sample size of approximately 387 students will be selected from a population of 12,000. A multistage random sampling technique employed to ensure proportional representation across faculties and levels, enhancing the validity and generalizability of the findings.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire divided into six sections: demographic information, knowledge assessment, attitude assessment, perceptions of adverse effects, behavioral assessment, and suggestions for preventive measures. The instrument was reviewed by academic experts for content validity and subjected to a pilot test involving 20 students to assess reliability using the Cronbach Alpha method. A reliability coefficient of 0.777 was achieved, indicating strong internal consistency. Questionnaires were administered directly to participants with informed consent and assurances of confidentiality. Data were coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics, including frequency distributions and percentages, were also used to interpret the findings and draw conclusions about students' psychosocial responses to mobile phone-induced exposure to pornography.

## **Findings**

### **Results of Analysis**

#### **Introduction**

The table shows the analysis and interpretation of data collected in order to analyze the knowledge, attitudes and perceptions towards the adverse effects of mobile phones as inducers of pornography among students in Babcock University Ilishan-Remo, Ogun State. 383 questionnaires were returned and analyzed. This chapter focuses on the demographic features of respondents, followed by analysis of the research questions.

#### **Demographic Presentation**

Table 1: Frequency Distribution of respondents' Demographic Data

S/N	Variable	Category	Frequency (383 )	Percentage (%)
1.	Age	16-18years	59	15.4
		19-21years	260	67.9
		22-24years	44	11.5
		25 and above	20	5.2
2.	Gender	Male	301	78.6
		Female	82	21.4
3.	Level of study	100 level	51	13.3
		200 level	98	25.6
		300 level	143	37.3
		400 level	86	22.5
		500 level	5	1.3
4.	Faculty	Science	135	35.3
		Arts	101	26.4
		Social science	147	38.4

Source: Field Survey 2025

The table above shows that 15.4% of respondents fall under age 16-18years, 67.9% fall under 19-21years, 11.5% fall under 22-24years and lastly 5.2% fall under 25years and above. 78.6% of the respondents were males and the remaining 21.4% were females. 100 level students accounted for 13.3% of the respondents, 200 level students were 25.6% 300 level students were 37.3%, 400 level students were 22.5% and 500 level students were 1.3%. Furthermore, 35.3% of the respondents belong to faculty of Sciences, 26.4% belong to Arts and the remaining 38.4% belong to Social sciences. Overall, the high weighted average mean score of 4.22924 indicates that Babcock University students have a high level of knowledge regarding the adverse effects of mobile phones as facilitators of pornography consumption. The standard deviation of 0.793908 suggests that there is variability in their responses.

Paper Question 1: What is the level of knowledge among Babcock University students regarding the adverse effects of mobile phones as facilitators of

S / N	Items	SA F(%)	A F(%)	N F(%)	D F(%)	SD F(%)	Mean	S.D
1.	I am familiar with pornography.	151 (41.5)	207 (54.0)	12 (3.1)	4 (1.0)	1 (0.3)	4.3551	.62183
2.	I am familiar with the potential negative effects of pornography consumption.	174 (45.4)	177 (46.2)	22 (5.7)	9 (2.3)	2 (0.5)	4.3420	.71666
3.	Mobile phones have made it easier to access pornography.	147 (38.4)	181 (47.3)	38 (9.9)	15 (3.9)	4 (2.8)	4.1906	.80750
4.	I am aware that excessive pornography consumption can lead to sexualisation of woman.	151 (39.4)	166 (43.3)	40 (10.4)	15 (3.9)	11 (2.9)	4.1253	.94894
5.	Mobile phones facilitate exposure to pornographic content.	140 (36.6)	183 (47.8)	37 (9.7)	17 (4.4)	6 (1.6)	4.1332	.87461
	Weighted Average						4.22924	0.793908

pornography consumption?

Table 2: Mean response of the respondents on the level of knowledge regarding the adverse effects of mobile phones as inducers of pornography.

Source: Field Survey 2025

Key: SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, N = Neutral, D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree

The table shows that most students are familiar with pornography, with a mean score of 4.3551. Students are also aware of the potential negative effects of

pornography consumption, with a mean score of 4.3420. They agreed that mobile phones have made it easier to access pornography, with a mean score of 4.1906. Also, students are aware that excessive pornography consumption can lead to the sexualization of women, with a mean score of 4.1253. Lastly, students acknowledged that mobile phones facilitate exposure to pornographic content, with a mean score of 4.1332.

Paper Question 3: What are the attitudes of students at Babcock University towards mobile phones being used to access pornographic contents

Table 4: Mean response on the attitudes of students at Babcock University towards mobile phones being used to access pornographic contents

S / N	Items	SA F(%)	A F(%)	N F(%)	D F(%)	SD F(%)	Mean	S.D
1.	I believe viewing pornography on a mobile phone is morally acceptable.	72 (18.8)	228 (59.5)	47 (12.3)	27 (7.0)	9 (2.3)	3.8538	.88592
2.	Pornography is appropriate within a university setting.	71 (18.5)	139 (36.3)	106 (27.7)	34 (8.9)	33 (8.6)	3.4726	1.14803
3.	Pornography is consumed at an alarming rate.	105 (27.4)	215 (56.1)	42 (11.0)	17 (4.4)	4 (1.0)	4.0444	.80938
	Weighted Average						4.790267	0.9477767

Source: Field Survey 2025

Key: SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, N = Neutral, D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree

The above table showed that many students believe that viewing pornography on a mobile phone is morally acceptable, with a mean score of 3.8538. Also, opinions are more divided on whether pornography is appropriate within a university setting, with a mean score of 3.4726. Lastly, students agreed that pornography is consumed at an alarming rate, with a mean score of 4.0444. Overall, the high weighted average mean score of 4.790267 indicates that Babcock University students generally have a permissive attitude towards mobile phones being used to access pornographic content.

Paper Question 4: How do Babcock University students perceive the impact of pornography consumption on their psychological, social and academic well-being?

Table 5: Mean response on the students' perception about the impacts of pornography consumption on their psychological, social and academic well-being?

S / N	Items	SA F(%)	A F(%)	N F(%)	D F(%)	SD F(%)	Mean	S.D
1.	Consuming pornography negatively affects mental health.	66 (17.2)	233 (60.8)	53 (13.8)	28 (7.3)	3 (0.8)	3.8642	.81050
2.	Pornography consumption impacts social relationships	95 (24.8)	197 (51.4)	59 (15.4)	27 (7.0)	5 (1.3)	3.9138	.89231

	negatively.							
3.	Pornography can lead to sexual addiction	87 (22.7)	188 (49.1)	70 (18.3)	34 (8.9)	4 (1.0)	3.8355	.91331
4.	Pornography consumption has a negative impact on overall well-being.	79 (20.6)	175 (45.7)	95 (24.8)	31 (8.1)	3 (0.8)	3.7728	.89390
5.	Pornography consumption can impact academic performance.	82 (21.4)	189 (49.3)	67 (17.5)	37 (9.7)	8 (2.1)	3.7833	.95858
	Weighted Average						3.8339 2	0.89372

Source: Field Survey 2025

Key: SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, N = Neutral, D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree

Table 4 showed that students believe that consuming pornography negatively affects mental health, with a mean score of 3.8642. Also, they agreed that pornography consumption impacts social relationships negatively, with a mean score of 3.9138. Students acknowledged that pornography can lead to sexual addiction, with a mean score of 3.8355. They believe that pornography consumption has a negative impact on overall well-being, with a mean score of 3.7728. Lastly, students agreed that pornography consumption can impact academic performance, with a mean score of 3.7833. The weighted average mean score of 3.83392 suggests that Babcock University students perceive pornography consumption as having a negative impact on their psychological, social, and academic well-being.

Paper Question 5: What factors influence the continued engagement of Babcock University students with pornography despite awareness of its potential harmful effects?

S / N	Items	SA F(%)	A F(%)	N F(%)	D F(%)	SD F(%)	Mean	S.D
1.	Ads or pop ups of sexualize women increase tendency to consume pornography	57 (14.9)	218 (56.9)	89 (23.2)	19 (5.0)	- (-)	3.8172	.7400 4
2.	My exposure to pornography on a mobile phone is often accidental.	59 (15.4)	156 (40.7)	125 (32.6)	34 (8.9)	9 (2.3)	3.5796	.9341 1
3.	I can abstain from pornographic content	102 (26.6)	181 (47.3)	54 (14.1)	39 (10.2)	7 (1.8)	3.8668	.9817 8
	Weighted Average						3.7545 33	0.885 31

Table 6: Mean response on the factors that influence the continued engagement of Babcock University students with pornography despite awareness of its potential harmful effects?

Source: Field Survey 2025

Key: SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, N = Neutral, D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree

The table above showed that students agreed that ads or pop-ups of sexualized women increase the tendency to consume pornography, with a mean score of 3.8172. Also, they reported that their exposure to pornography on a mobile phone is often accidental, with a mean score of 3.5796. Lastly, students believe they can abstain from pornographic content, with a mean score of 3.8668. Overall, the weighted average mean score of 3.754533 showed that Babcock University students continue to engage with pornography due to factors such as ads or pop-ups, accidental exposure, and their belief in their ability to abstain.

Paper Question 6: What strategies can be implemented to mitigate the consumption of pornography and promote responsible mobile phone usage among students at Babcock University?

Table 7: Mean response on the implemented strategies to mitigate the consumption and promote responsible phone usage among students at Babcock University?

S / N	Items	SA F(%)	A F(%)	N F(%)	D F(%)	SD F(%)	Mean	S.D
1.	Implementation of educational programs to control the risks of pornography.	54 (14.1)	207 (54.0)	66 (17.2)	45 (11.7)	11 (2.9)	3.6475	.95913
2.	Provision of counselling services to assist students with pornography related issues.	63 (16.4)	112 (29.2)	84 (21.9)	102 (26.6)	22 (5.7)	3.2402	1.18000
3.	Introduction of stricter policies on mobile phone usage to reduce exposure to pornography.	25 (6.5)	91 (23.8)	82 (21.4)	95 (24.8)	90 (23.5)	2.6501	1.25235
	Weighted Average						3.179267	1.1304933

Source: Field Survey 2025

Key: SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, N = Neutral, D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree

Table 6 showed that students believe that the implementation of educational programs to control the risks of pornography is an effective strategy, with a mean score of 3.6475. Students agreed that the provision of counseling services to assist with pornography-related issues is beneficial, with a mean score of 3.2402. Lastly, students are less convinced about the introduction of stricter policies on mobile phone usage to reduce exposure to pornography, with a mean score of 2.6501. The weighted average mean score of 3.179267 indicates that Babcock University



students believe that educational programs and counseling services are more effective strategies for mitigating the consumption of pornography and promoting responsible mobile phone usage, compared to the introduction of stricter policies.

#### **4. Discussion of Findings**

The study revealed a high level of awareness among Babcock University students regarding the adverse effects of mobile phones as facilitators of pornography consumption. With a weighted average mean score of 4.22924, the respondents' demonstrated strong knowledge of the risks, including addiction, sexualization of women, and psychological harm. Despite this awareness, many students continue to engage in pornography consumption, reflecting a gap between knowledge and behavior. This supports findings by Oshodi et al. (2018), which noted increasing exposure to pornography among Nigerian university students via mobile phones.

Attitudinal responses showed a generally permissive stance toward mobile phone use for accessing pornographic content. The weighted average mean score for this section was 4.790267, with 78.3% of students considering it morally acceptable and 83.5% acknowledging its alarming consumption rate. Specific mean scores included 3.8538 for moral acceptability and 3.4726 for appropriateness within a university setting. These findings align with Olley et al. (2019), who observed that students often express curiosity and lack guilt about pornography consumption, despite recognizing its negative effects. The division over its appropriateness in academic settings suggests cognitive dissonance, where students' behaviors conflict with institutional or personal values.

Students also perceived significant negative impacts of pornography on their psychological, social, and academic wellbeing. The overall weighted average mean score was 3.83392, with specific concerns including mental health (mean score: 3.8642), strained social relationships (3.9138), sexual addiction (3.8355), and diminished academic performance (3.7833). These perceptions echo Owens et al. (2012), who linked excessive pornography consumption to distorted views of sex, objectification, and harmful sexual behaviors. The findings suggest that while students are aware of these consequences, they may lack adequate support systems or coping strategies to address them.

Despite their awareness, continued engagement with pornography was influenced by both external and internal factors. The weighted average mean score for this section was 3.754533, with accidental exposure scoring 3.5796, sexualized advertisements 3.8172, and belief in self-control 3.8668. These findings reflect overconfidence and rationalization, as noted by Ševčíková et al. (2019), where students downplay potential harm when they perceive peer engagement. For mitigation, students preferred educational programs (mean score: 3.6475) and counseling services (3.2402) over stricter mobile phone policies (2.6501), with an overall mean score of 3.179267. This preference supports Wolak et al. (2018) and Peter & Valkenburg (2018), who found that literacy and counseling programs foster healthier digital habits and greater help-seeking behavior. Universities should prioritize empowerment-based strategies while considering restrictive policies only as a last resort, ensuring student autonomy is respected.

#### **5. Conclusion**

This study provides valuable insights into the issue of mobile phone-facilitated pornography consumption among university students. While high levels of awareness exist regarding its adverse effects, permissive attitudes and external

triggers perpetuate engagement despite perceived negative impacts on well-being. By addressing these challenges through targeted interventions such as education, counseling, technology solutions, and further research into underlying factors, universities can foster a healthier digital environment for their students while promoting their overall academic success and personal development.

## **6. Recommendations**

*Universities should integrate digital responsibility into moral education curricula. This includes ethical discussions around online behavior, critical thinking about media content, and the psychological risks of pornography consumption.*

*Collaborate with IT experts to deploy ad-blockers, safe browsing tools, and content filters across campus networks. These tools can reduce accidental exposure and limit access to explicit content without infringing on student autonomy.*

*Create peer-led support groups where students can share experiences, discuss challenges, and learn coping strategies. These groups foster community accountability and reduce stigma around seeking help.*

*Campaigns should emphasize the addictive nature of pornography and its long-term effects. Resources for counseling and self-regulation should be made visible and accessible*

*Enforcing strict mobile phone bans, universities should promote responsible use through guidelines and student-led initiatives. Empowerment-based approaches are more effective and better received, as shown by the low support for restrictive policies.*

## **7. Limitation of the Study**

The study was limited to 383 respondents from Babcock University. While the sample size is adequate for the institution, the findings may not be generalizable to other universities or populations with differing cultural or technological contexts.

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