

Influence of Personality Traits on the Sexting Behaviour of University Undergraduate Students in Southwestern Nigeria

Güneybatı Nijerya'daki Üniversite Lisans Öğrencilerinin Sexting Davranışı Üzerinde Kişilik Özelliklerinin Etkisi

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ABSTRACT

The study determined the level of sexting behavior among university undergraduate students in Southwestern Nigeria. It further established the influence of personality traits (openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism) on the sexting behavior of the students. Sexting, which is a morality issue, may have negative effects on university students academically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The sample for this study consisted of 1200 university undergraduate students selected using a multistage sampling technique. The instrument used to elicit information from the respondents was the Sexting Behavior and Personality Traits Questionnaire (SBPTQ). The results showed that 66%, 24.6%, and 9.4% of university undergraduate students demonstrated low, moderate, and high levels of sexting behavior, respectively. In addition to this finding, it was determined that there is no significant relationship between sexting behaviors and the personality traits of openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, and agreeableness. However, a positive and significant relationship was found between neuroticism and sexting behaviors. The findings were discussed in the light of existing literature.

Keywords: Personality traits, sexting behavior, undergraduate students, influence

Öz

Bu çalışma, Güneybatı Nijerya'daki üniversite lisans öğrencileri arasında sexting davranışının yaygınlığını ve bu davranış üzerinde kişilik özelliklerinin (açıklık, sorumluluk, dışadönüklük, uyumluluk ve nevroitiklik) etkisini incelemeyi amaçlamıştır. Sexting, ahlaki bir sorun olarak kabul edilmekte ve üniversite öğrencilerinin akademik, sosyal, duygusal ve ruhsal sağlıkları üzerinde olumsuz etkilere yol açabilmektedir. Çalışma, betimsel araştırma desenini benimsemiş olup, örneklem seçiminde çok aşamalı örnekleme tekniği kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın örnekleme, 1200 üniversite lisans öğrencisinden oluşmaktadır. Veri toplama aracı olarak Sexting Davranışı ve Kişilik Özellikleri Anketi (SBPTQ) kullanılmıştır. Araştırma sonuçları, katılımcıların %66'sının düşük, %24.6'sının orta ve %9.4'ünün yüksek düzeyde sexting davranışı sergilediğini ortaya koymuştur. Ayrıca, kişilik özelliklerinden açıklık, sorumluluk, dışadönüklük ve uyumluluk ile sexting davranışları arasında anlamlı bir ilişki bulunmazken, nevroitiklik özelliği ile sexting davranışları arasında pozitif yönde anlamlı bir ilişki tespit edilmiştir. Elde edilen bulgular, ilgili literatür çerçevesinde tartışılmış ve sexting davranışının üniversite öğrencileri üzerindeki etkileri değerlendirilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kişilik özellikleri, sexting davranışı, lisans öğrencileri, etki

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Introduction

Sexting among young people is becoming increasingly widespread, becoming a critical issue that needs systematic investigation, mainly because of the negative consequences it brings, especially when its content is republished or shared, leading to humiliation, harassment, or insult (Barrense-Dias et al., 2017). Sexting is essentially defined as sending and receiving personal material with sexual content via mobile phones, social media, websites, and platforms. Particularly for young people, who, by definition, are in the phase of searching for and developing their sexuality and sexual identity, the frequency of sexting has increased (Barrense-Dias et al., 2017). Sexting is a play on the words "sex texting," which is a combination of the words: "sex" and "texting." Once the sext is sent, it may be shared by one or both partners with people outside the relationship. Sexting may also occur between people who are not in a relationship, perhaps with the hope of starting a relationship. Sexting can be used for cyberbullying. While sexts are generally sent voluntarily, they might be misused in cyberbullying to cause harm to the sender by being forwarded to persons who are not supposed to receive them. Sexting to some undergraduates may be seen as fashionable and a modern way of sustaining relationships, but at the same time, it could lead to various forms of deviant social interactions and abnormal sexual attitudes and behaviors at home, school, and society (Akinwale, 2019).

In the last decade, communication via technology has become an integral element of romantic relationships. Although many may use technology, teenagers and young adults, in particular, have readily integrated the use of a variety of platforms, including emails, cell phones, IM, social networking sites like Facebook, and videoconferencing, for instance, Skype and Facebook to initiate, manage, and end romantic relationships (Huntley, 2006). Recently, the media has directed a great deal of attention to sexting, where individuals create, send, and receive sexually suggestive or nude images and/or sexually suggestive text messages using their cell phones (Lenhart, 2009). Although sending and receiving sexually-laden images and messages are not new behaviors, what is novel is the use of the cell phone to do so and the ease with which one can engage in sexting with a cell phone.

The use of online social networking tools like Blackberry Messenger, Facebook, 2go, WhatsApp, Nimbuzz, Yahoo Messenger, and Instagram continues to increase rapidly among all age groups and segments of society, presenting new opportunities for the exchange of sexual information

as well as for potentially unsafe encounters (Asogwa & Ojih, 2013). The Internet and the World Wide Web are initially designed to move data and information from one location to another reliably and efficiently. Thus, after almost 20 years since Dr. Barnes-Lee created the web, the idea of sharing has taken on a whole new dimension. The success and popularity of social networking sites show that the idea of online sharing has been successfully taken to the social and personal level (Hamat e al., 2012). Since most mobile phones, computer systems, and other digital devices today have in-built cameras and Bluetooth; therefore, with this, fast and easy distribution of images is inevitable. In her study of internet infidelity, Katherine (2006) thinks that people are using the internet more frequently to form friendships and romances and to initiate inordinate affairs.

Social networking sites are gaining a lot of popularity these days, with almost all of the undergraduates using one or more sites. These have played a crucial role in bridging boundaries, crossing the seas, and enabling them to communicate on a common platform. It has also become a popular and a potential means for them to make friends and to increase their social circle, at least in terms of acquaintances. Similarly, with the advent of numerous social networking sites, such as Myspace, Facebook, Twitter, 2go, Friend finder, Blackberry Messenger, Yahoo Messenger, WhatsApp, and Instagram today, the socialization patterns of young people have changed dramatically as the internet and mobile devices are now used to mediate personal interactions and communications (Cachia, 2008). This instigates that the availability of different social media and phones has added to the state of socialization of undergraduates, which also leads to proper and improper use of the media and phones, as in the case of sexting.

Sexting can be divided into three types, which include the exchange of sexual images or messages solely between two romantic partners, the exchange of sexual images or messages between partners that are shared with others outside the relationship, and exchanges between people who are not yet in relationship, but where at least one hopes to be. Whether sexting is seen as a positive or negative experience typically rests based on whether or not consent was given to share the images. This means that sexting becomes a negative experience, affecting the victim when consent is not given to share the images and vice versa. In areas like Southwestern Nigeria, where gender roles traditionally expect men to initiate dating relationships or sexual encounters, sexting is used by females to offer nude images to male partners, allowing

women greater latitude to instigate relationships or sex (Akinwale, 2019). Sexting can also be used by those in intimate relationships to increase feelings of intimacy and closeness with one's partner. Sexting among undergraduates can also act as a prelude to sexual activity, as an experimental phase for those who are yet to be sexually active, and for those who are hoping to start a relationship with someone. To some students, sexting is part of their sexual culture as the majority of them have grown up being exposed to sex and sexual risk behaviors that they learn through a variety of media sources. Sometimes, some undergraduate students believe that engaging in this type of behavior is a form of entertainment when bored.

Some undergraduate students even go the extra mile to send their own nude pictures or sexual images to their partners or those they are in love with to show love to them. Unfortunately for them, those to whom the sext is sent may take it up and share it with others or third parties, resulting in emotional disturbance of the victims, thus affecting their academic performance. Also, the time that was supposed to be spent on reading and studying may be spent on sexting or regretting the act of sexting, getting carried away and shifting their focus from academics to fun or implications of sexting. This means those who enjoy sexting can be carried away with the fun, while those who suffer from it can also be carried away, losing their focus on academics, which may eventually result in academic failure (Akinwale, 2019).

The role of gender in sexting is controversial, in some studies, the prevalence of sexting is higher in boys, and in others, it is higher in girls (Görzig & Livingstone, 2014; Kerstens & Stol, 2014; VandenAbeelee et al., 2012). Several studies also indicated that boys and men were more likely to engage in sexting than girls and women (Gordon-Messer et al., 2012; Strassberg et al., 2013). The negative consequences of sexting in young people are numerous and can be summarized in four broad categories (Doyle et al., 2021): (a) psychological consequences (victimization, sexual bullying, mental health disorders, quality of life, and emotional disturbances); (b) behavioral consequences (sexual activity and risky behaviors such as aggression); (c) consequences on young people's relationships with others with these relationships being friends, family or personal; and (d) consequences on young people's personal lives by sharing or exposing their moments to third parties.

Similarly, sexting may be a kind of behavior related to overall problematic cell phone use. Problematic cell phone use has been likened to behavioral addiction, inclusive of

excessive use, intrusive use, and distress upon separation (Bianchi & Phillips, 2005). Problematic cell phone use has been linked with extraversion and low self-esteem (Bianchi & Phillips, 2005), higher sensation seeking, low self-esteem, and greater leisure boredom (Leung, 2008), females' high self-monitoring and high approval motivation (Takao et al., 2009), and somatic complaints, insomnia, and social dysfunction (Jenaro et al., 2007). One study specifically found that heavy users of cell phones for texting, calling, instant messaging, and social networking associated with being more likely to send or receive sexts (Lenhart et al., 2010). Given the risky behavior and personality-related constructs related to problematic cell phone use, it is likely that sexting behaviors may be part of the larger behavioral repertoire for individuals who have high levels of problematic cell phone use.

There are a variety of reasons undergraduates engage in sexting. Some students may want to show off in front of their friends by forwarding nude pictures of their girlfriends or boyfriends. Sexual images and messages could also be sent by some students to their partners to initiate sexual activity, have fun, experiment with what they have seen others doing or what is in vogue, entice someone, and show interest in someone. Other reasons for sexting are to flirt with someone they hope to be in a relationship with, get along with their peers because someone has already sent them an explicit photo, and feel pressured to return the favor. Also, some sext to enhance their current sexual relationships, while others send it to gain male or female attention. Others share nude pictures to prove commitment or instead of face-to-face sexual activities, and yet others try to entice a prospective girlfriend or boyfriend by sending sexts (Okoli, 2015). Sometimes, sexts are also used to embarrass or humiliate someone and could lead to social isolation. This happens when the person whose nude picture is being shared with people who were not supposed to see it feels humiliated and thinks that the only way to avoid shame is through social isolation, he or she may even go to the extent of dropping out of school at the moment, thus affecting his or her academics. Sexts can also be shared by people who were formerly dating after a break-up, the ex-boyfriend or girlfriend may share the sexual image of the former partner with a third party or even the new boyfriend or girlfriend to blackmail or harass him or her, leading to social insecurity for the individual and the family which in turn could affect the victim psychologically (Drouin et al., 2013).

Media often report sexting among adolescents as problematic. Given that participants are minors, sexting of

images may be treated under child pornography laws (Ostrager, 2010). Among emerging adults and adults, sexting is often portrayed as part of a general attitude of sexual permissiveness or, for those in a relationship, of infidelity (Wysocki & Childers, 2011). However, studies of the prevalence of engagement in sexting indicated a broad range. Mitchell et al. (2012) indicated that, based on a national sample of over 1500 youth aged 10–17, 9.6% had appeared in or created nude or nearly nude images or received such images in the past year. In another study of over 600 high school students, between 9% and 27% had ever sent a sexually explicit cell phone picture, and between 24% and 65% had received a sexually explicit cell phone picture (Strassberg et al., 2013). They also noted sexting behaviors were more frequent as participants increased by age.

In addition, relationship status was also found to be linked to sexting, where married participants were the least likely to sext, whereas those who were single or never married were the most likely to sext (Lenhart et al., 2010). Drouin and Landgraff (2012) indicated that, among college romantic couples, 67% sent sexually explicit text messages, and 54% sent sexually explicit pictures or videos to their relationship partner. In addition, among emerging adults, those in a relationship were more likely to have sent a sexually suggestive text and to have sent a text message propositioning sexual activity than those who were single (Weisskirch & Delevi, 2011). Taken together, gender, ethnicity, and relationship status may relate to engagement in sexting and attitudes toward sexting in general. Sexting may also be one of many risky behaviors for those who tend to engage in high-risk activities. For example, adolescents who had engaged in sexting also reported a high rate of having engaged in anal sex, having had four or more sexual partners, not using contraceptives at last intercourse, having engaged in oral sex, and having ever had sexual intercourse (Dake et al., 2012). Using marijuana, smoking cigarettes in the last 30 days, binge drinking, as well as suicidal thoughts and depressive symptoms were associated with sexting among adolescents (Dake et al., 2012). Among young adults, recipients of sexually laden images in sexting were three times more likely to be sexually active than non-recipients of those images (Gordon-Messer et al., 2012). Sexting was associated with greater sexual activity (Gordon-Messer et al., 2012). Ferguson (2011) indicated that sexting was associated with having unprotected intercourse and with pleasure in sex among female Hispanic college students. Sexting may be a component of a propensity for risky and high-intensity activities.

Personality traits may also predict sexting behavior among undergraduates. Personality is concerned with the most important and noticeable parts of an individual's psychological life. It has to do with whether a person is happy or sad, energetic or apathetic, smart or dull, emotionally stable or unstable (Ekundayo, 2014). Personality traits are also seen as the unique combination that defines an individual, the product of both genetic predisposition and experience. A key determinant of sexting is an individual's pattern of psychological processes arising from motives, feelings, thoughts, and desires. The big five personality traits (agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness, extraversion, and neuroticism) may also predict engagement in sexting; certain aspects of sexting may appeal as risky behavior for those individuals with personality traits toward high-risk activities.

Personality traits as psychological factors in terms of conscientiousness measure the tendency to be organized, disciplined, act dutifully, and be careful. Individuals who score high on conscientiousness are organized or careful about what they do and may not engage in sexting behavior, while individuals who score low on conscientiousness are not organized or careful about what they do and may easily sext (Burch & Anderson, 2004). Agreeableness measures the extent of a person's warmth and kindness; individuals who score low on agreeableness are more willing to manipulate others through a variety of tactics, seeing these tactics as necessary social skills in getting along with people, which makes them engage in sexting behavior (Lebowitz, 2016a). Neuroticism measures the tendency to experience negative affect. Individuals who score high in neuroticism are prone to have irrational ideas and to be less able to control their impulses, anger, and hostility (Delevi & Weisskirch, 2013). They tend to experience anger and associated states, such as frustration and bitterness, especially when the partner opts out of the relationship, which makes them resolve to send explicit or nude pictures of the partner to a third party. Moreover, individuals who score high on openness are curious and seek new experiences, and they are intellectuals (Clarke & Robertson, 2005). Therefore, with these characteristics, they tend to experiment with youthful exuberance sexting because they do not want others to see them as novices but as a student who is current and blends with everything going on in his or her environment. Individuals who score high on extraversion personality traits are sociable and assertive; they are more likely to participate in different types of social activities, thus increasing their exposure to situations associated with technology, especially sexting.

Those with this personality trait see sexting as fun and a seeking attitude (Robbins et al., 2009).

Beyond demographic characteristics, personality may relate to how individuals decide to engage in sexting. Although there is scant research linking sexting and personality traits, a limited number of studies have been conducted to see how personality was linked to the use of technology in relationships. In one study of Hispanic female college students, histrionic personality traits predicted sexting. Furthermore, neuroticism, extroversion, and low conscientiousness were found to be related to more text messaging (Butt & Philips, 2008). In addition, participants who reported higher scores of social anxiety and shyness felt more comfortable with text messaging as opposed to face-to-face interactions (McKenna et al., 2002; Reid & Reid, 2010). Furthermore, low levels of agreeableness were found to be related to more time spent on phone calls and instant messaging, whereas extraversion and neuroticism were linked to increased time spent on text messaging (Ehrenberg et al., 2008). Given the connections between aspects of personality and behaviors related to technology use in previous studies, it appears that personality may trigger how individuals use technology in communicating with others, including romantic relationships.

Given this, it is imperative to investigate the level of sexting behavior among university undergraduate students in Southwestern Nigeria and identify the influence of personality traits on undergraduate students' sexting behavior. Therefore, it is imperative to investigate why university undergraduate students in Southwestern states participate in this new phase of communication involving the exchange of nude or partially nude and sexually suggestive text messages of themselves with others. From the foregoing, the objectives of the study are to:

1. investigate the level of sexting behaviour among university undergraduate students in Southwestern Nigeria.
2. establish the influence of personality traits on university undergraduate students' sexting behavior.

Methods

Research Model

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design which entails the process of gathering information from a representative sample of a population.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample comprised 1200 university undergraduate students, which were selected using a multi-stage sampling procedure. The sample size was considered appropriate and adequate for the study, given the sample size formula developed by Barlett et al. (2001) specified a minimum of 1532 at a 95% level of confidence level. Three states were selected from the six states in Southwestern Nigeria using a simple random sampling technique. Two universities were selected from each state, making a total of six universities. Three faculties were selected from each university using a simple random sampling technique, making a total of 18 faculties. One department was selected from each faculty, making a total of 18 departments.

Data Collection Instruments

The instrument to be used to elicit information from the respondents is titled Sexting Behaviour Questionnaire and Personality Traits Questionnaire. The instrument was made up of three sections. The first section consists of the demographic characteristics of the respondents; the second section consists of item on the questionnaire for sexting behaviour while the third section consists of personality traits questionnaire.

Sexting Behaviour Questionnaire

The items were adapted to identify sexting behavior among undergraduate students. After reviewing various instruments used to assess sexting behaviors (Bianchi et al., 2016), items were created, and factor analysis procedures were carried out. Participants rated each item on a 5-point Likert scale, from 1 (*Never*) to 5 (*Frequently or daily*).

Reliability analysis was conducted on 11 items developed to measure sexting behaviors. The results show an acceptable internal consistency with Cronbach Alpha = .86, suggesting that the items are reliable and consistently measure the construct of the Sexting Behavior Scale (SBS). To test the validity of the measurement tool, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted. In the factor analysis procedures, maximum likelihood analysis was used as the extraction method. As a result of the analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value was found to be .855. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($X^2 = 1121.941$, $p < .001$) was found to be significant. If the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy is equal to or greater than .60, the sample used is considered adequate. If Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is significant ($p < .05$), we should proceed with the Exploratory Factor Analysis (Field, 2013). The analysis revealed that the 11

items accounted for 44.11 % of the total variance. The items and factor loadings are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Items and Factor Loadings

Items	Factor loading
4. I send a sexual message to someone via email.	.756
5. I post a nude picture of myself to my partner.	.700
6. I send a naked picture to my partner.	.662
1. I engage in sexting.	.629
9. I send a sexual message to a guy/girl I'm interested in.	.593
7. I receive nude pictures from others.	.586
3. I send sexual messages to the public online.	.579
10. I publicly post sexually provocative videos about someone I know on social media.	.557
8. I forward a sexually suggestive message to someone I'm interested in.	.526
2. I post a nude picture of myself on someone's online profile on social media.	.506
11. I intentionally post someone else's nude picture online.	.463

Personality Traits Questionnaire

The personality traits questionnaire was conducted using the instrument developed by Rammstedt (2007). It was used to measure students' personality traits. The scale items are rated on a range from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The reliability analysis of the scale measuring personality traits has been conducted. The results show that the Cronbach Alpha values for the openness dimension are .90, for the conscientiousness dimension are .87, for the extraversion dimension are .73, for the agreeableness dimension are .86, and for the neuroticism dimension are .76, indicating acceptable internal consistency. As a result, it suggests that these items are reliable and consistently measure the construct of personality traits.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from the participants were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses. Specifically, simple percentages were used to answer research question 1, while hypothesis 2 was tested using multiple correlation analysis. Frequency and mean were used to reach a conclusion. Validity and reliability analyses were conducted. The collected data were coded and analyzed using statistical software SPSS (Statistical Package for the

Social Sciences).

Results

Research Question 1: What is the level of sexting behaviour among undergraduate students in South-western Nigeria?

Table 2

Sexting Behaviour Level of Undergraduate Students in South-western Nigeria

Level of Sexting Behaviour	Frequency (F)	Percent (%)
Low	792	66
Average	295	24.6
High	113	9.4
Total	1200	100

Table 2 shows the level of sexting behaviour of university undergraduate students in South-western Nigeria. As shown in the table, the level of sexting behaviour of 66% of the students in South-Western Nigeria could be described as low. The result also showed that the level of sexting behaviour of 24.6% of the undergraduate university students in South-western Nigeria could be described as average whereas, 9.4% of the students' sexting behaviour could be described as high. There is an indication from this result that the sexting behaviour of most of the undergraduate students in secondary schools in South-western Nigeria is hovering around the low level of behaviour.

Research Question 2: What is the influence of personality traits on university undergraduate students' sexting behavior?

To investigate the impact of personality traits on sexting behaviors among university students, a correlation analysis was conducted to identify the relationships between the variables. Before the correlation analysis, the normal distribution properties of the variables were tested using skewness and kurtosis coefficients. At this stage, the skewness and kurtosis values for the variables, along with the results of the Pearson correlation analysis, are presented in Table 3. Negative and statistically non-significant relationships were identified between sexting behaviors and the personality traits of openness ($r = -.069$, $p = .237$), conscientiousness ($r = -.087$, $p = .133$), extraversion ($r = -.048$, $p = .412$), and agreeableness ($r = -.100$, $p = .084$). On the other hand, a positive and statistically significant relationship was found between sexting behaviors and the personality trait of neuroticism ($r = .143$, $p = .014$).

Table 3*Descriptive Values And Results Of Pearson Correlation Analysis For The Variables*

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sexting	1					
Openness	-.069	1				
Conscientiousness	-.087	.603**	1			
Extraversion	-.048	.420**	.553**	1		
Agreeableness	-.100	.663**	.705**	.466**	1	
Neuroticism	.143*	-.502**	-.501**	-.532**	-.558**	1
Skewness	.72	1.01	1.41	.97	1.26	-.89
Kurtosis	.73	.21	1.04	.90	1.61	-.22

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

As a result of the correlation analysis, it was determined that there is no significant relationship between sexting behaviors and the personality traits of openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, and agreeableness. On the other hand, a positive significant relationship was found between neuroticism and sexting behaviors. In other words, it can be suggested that an increase in individuals' neuroticism traits may lead to an increase in sexting behaviors. This finding concludes that personality traits such as openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, and agreeableness do not significantly influence the sexting behavior of undergraduate university students in Southwestern Nigeria.

Discussion

The result of this study suggests that sexting is 34% prevalent in young adults while 66% show a low level of sexting behaviour and the behaviour is found among girls and boys. From the result of this study, the level of prevalence of sexting behaviour among university undergraduates is relatively low; this contrasts with the expectation of the study. The contrast might be due to their inability to disclose their sexting status because they might feel their privacy is being intruded on or they might be embarrassed to disclose their sexting status. It can also be inferred that a high level of sexting behaviour may also affect the productivity of the students in their academics. One can then infer that students' level to sexting may increase or decline from either a higher level to a lower level or from moderate level to lower level or even from lower level to higher level if their personality traits set in. Therefore, the influence of personality traits to students' sexting behaviour cannot be underestimated.

Another finding of this study is that most personality traits have no significant effect on sexting behaviors. It can be concluded from the study that students' differences or

individual characteristics do not necessarily have an impact on their sexting behaviors. This suggests that the level of students' sexting behaviors cannot be explained based on the personality traits they possess. This finding aligns with the results of a study by Olatunde and Balogun (2017), which reported a low correlation between the Big Five personality traits and sexting behaviors. However, a study by Englander and McCoy (2017) suggests a significant relationship between sexting behaviors and personality traits. Therefore, the differences in these results could be attributed to cultural differences or the locations where the studies were conducted. This suggests that future researchers may need to focus on factors other than personality traits that could influence students' sexting behaviors. Additionally, this result closely aligns with the findings of Akinwale (2019), who reported no significant relationship between personality traits and sexting behaviors. It can be suggested that other factors, such as students' experiences, gender, interpersonal relationships, and parental influence, might play a role in this variation. The results of the study indicate that the independent variable does not have a positive effect on the dependent variable.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Sexting can have serious implications on schools, perpetrators, victims, nation and the society at large. Sexting behaviour among undergraduates is gradually increasing at a low rate and this can pose a danger to the holistic development of the students. However, the findings of this study can be used to inform and shape prevention and intervention efforts.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Sexting education should be incorporated into the school curricula. Students should also be encouraged to

disclose cases involving sexting.

2. To address sexting behaviour in schools, school lecturers and administrators should be trained to deal with the act of sexting without regimentation and coercion.
3. Sexting policies should provide guidelines and procedures on appropriate and inappropriate uses of phones, internets and computers.
4. Regular seminars, lectures, interventions and sensitization should be developed and conducted for students, lecturers, school management and parents on dangers of sexting and recommend ways to prevent and respond to school sexting incidents.

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