



JOINT PREDICTIVE POWER OF PAEDOPHILIC TENDENCY AND PORNOGRAPHIC ADDICTION ON SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR OF UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATES

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the predictive power of paedophilic tendency and pornographic addiction on the sexual behaviour and school adjustment of university undergraduates in South-East Nigeria. Specifically, the study examined the individual and joint predictive power of paedophilic tendency and pornographic addiction on sexual behaviour and school adjustment and derived regression models for predicting the criterion variables. Eight research questions and eight null hypotheses guided the study. A correlational survey research design was adopted. The population comprised 148,712 undergraduate students enrolled in federal universities in South-East Nigeria during the 2024/2025 academic session. A sample of 1,148 undergraduates was selected using a multistage sampling procedure. Three instruments were used for data collection: the Paedophilic Tendency Scale (PTS), Pornographic Addiction Scale (PAS), and Sexual Behaviour Scale (SBS). The instruments were face-validated by three experts from the Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Cronbach alpha reliability coefficients of 0.76, 0.79, and 0.85 were obtained for the PTS, PAS, and SBS, respectively. Data were collected using Google Forms and analysed using simple and multiple regression analyses at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that paedophilic tendency significantly predicted university undergraduates' sexual behaviour and school adjustment. Pornographic addiction also significantly predicted both sexual behaviour and school adjustment. Furthermore, paedophilic tendency and pornographic addiction jointly and significantly predicted sexual behaviour and school adjustment. The derived regression models further indicated that pornographic addiction made the strongest contribution to the prediction of both criterion variables, positively predicting sexual behaviour but negatively predicting school adjustment, while paedophilic tendency also made significant contributions. The study concluded that paedophilic tendency and pornographic addiction are significant psychological and behavioural predictors of university undergraduates' sexual behaviour and school adjustment. It was recommended that universities should strengthen counselling and mental health services, implement comprehensive sexuality and digital wellness education programmes, establish early identification and intervention mechanisms for students exhibiting maladaptive behavioural tendencies, and promote responsible internet use to enhance students' psychosocial well-being and school adjustment.

Keywords: Paedophilic Tendency, Pornographic Addiction, Sexual Behaviour, School Adjustment, University Undergraduates, Predictive Power.



Introduction

Sexual behaviour is an integral aspect of human development that reflects the interaction of biological, psychological, social, and cultural factors. During late adolescence and emerging adulthood, individuals undergo significant physical, emotional, and cognitive changes that influence how they perceive and express their sexuality. University undergraduates constitute one of the populations most affected by these developmental changes because they experience increased independence, reduced parental supervision, greater peer interaction, and unrestricted access to digital technologies. According to Santrock (2021), emerging adulthood is a developmental stage characterized by identity exploration, experimentation, and increasing autonomy, all of which extend to sexual attitudes and behaviours. Consequently, university life provides an environment where students make independent decisions regarding their sexual relationships, often exposing them to both healthy and unhealthy sexual practices.

Sexual behaviour encompasses more than sexual intercourse. It includes the attitudes, emotions, intentions, and activities through which individuals express their sexuality. Stephanous and Dias (2021) defined sexual behaviour as the range of actions and interactions through which individuals satisfy their sexual desires, establish intimacy, or express affection. Such behaviours include masturbation, kissing, fondling, oral sex, vaginal intercourse, anal intercourse, sexting, and other forms of physical or digital sexual expression. Among university undergraduates, these behaviours are often influenced by biological maturation, emotional needs, peer expectations, social norms, and media exposure. Consequently, sexual behaviour among undergraduates reflects not only physiological needs but also psychosocial adaptation to university life.

Researchers have identified several dimensions of sexual behaviour that explain how sexuality is expressed among young adults. One important dimension is solitary sexual behaviour, particularly masturbation, which involves self-stimulation of the genital organs for sexual gratification. This behaviour enables individuals to explore their sexuality privately, reduce sexual tension, and understand their sexual responses. Although masturbation is generally regarded as a normal aspect of sexual development, excessive engagement may sometimes reflect emotional distress, loneliness, or compulsive sexual tendencies among some university students.

Another important dimension is partnered sexual behaviour, which includes romantic and sexual activities involving another individual. These behaviours range from kissing, hugging, and petting to oral, vaginal, and anal intercourse. Partnered sexual activities among university undergraduates are influenced by factors such as love, intimacy, curiosity, peer acceptance, substance use, and the desire for social belonging. Rasmussen and Iritani (2018) observed that young adults often engage in partnered sexual behaviours as part of identity formation and relationship development. However, when these behaviours occur without adequate knowledge, self-control, or protective measures, they may expose students to sexually transmitted infections, unintended pregnancies, emotional distress, and other adverse consequences.

The advancement of digital technology has introduced another important dimension known as digital sexual behaviour. Digital sexual behaviour refers to the use of electronic devices and online



platforms to communicate, express, or exchange sexual content. Buren and Lunde (2018) explained that technological innovations have transformed sexual communication through activities such as sexting, sharing sexually explicit photographs, watching online pornography, participating in virtual sexual interactions, and engaging with sexually explicit social media content. Among university students, these digital practices have become increasingly common due to widespread smartphone ownership, affordable internet access, and social networking applications. Although digital sexual behaviour may strengthen intimacy among consenting partners, inappropriate or excessive engagement may increase vulnerability to cyber exploitation, pornography addiction, privacy violations, and risky sexual practices (Ouytsel et al., 2018).

Sexual behaviour among university undergraduates is influenced by numerous personal, family, and environmental factors. At the individual level, biological maturation, personality characteristics, emotional regulation, sexual orientation, self-esteem, and moral values significantly shape sexual decisions. Herscher et al. (2021) reported that males generally exhibit higher involvement in solitary and digital sexual behaviours, whereas females tend to engage more frequently in relational and emotionally motivated sexual activities. Similarly, Lim et al. (2017) argued that differences in sexual orientation and identity contribute to variations in sexual exploration, relationship patterns, and sexual experiences among university students.

Family background also plays an important role in shaping sexual behaviour. Open communication between parents and children regarding sexuality promotes healthy sexual decision-making and responsible behaviour. Halpern-Felsher and Kropp (2018) reported that adolescents who receive comprehensive parental guidance concerning sexuality are more likely to delay sexual initiation and adopt safer sexual practices. Conversely, poor parental supervision, inadequate communication, and permissive parenting styles often increase the likelihood of risky sexual behaviours during university years (Grossman & Richer, 2022). Although many university students live independently, the values and attitudes acquired from their families continue to influence their sexual choices.

In addition, social and environmental influences significantly affect sexual behaviour during university education. Peer pressure, social media, entertainment industries, pornography, and changing societal values continually shape students' perceptions of acceptable sexual conduct. Continuous exposure to sexually explicit materials may normalize risky sexual practices, alter moral judgment, and encourage experimentation. The campus environment, where students enjoy greater freedom with limited parental monitoring, further reinforces these influences. Consequently, many undergraduates experience increasing pressure to conform to prevailing sexual norms within their peer groups, even when such behaviours conflict with their personal values or religious beliefs.

Despite the developmental importance of sexual exploration, unhealthy sexual behaviours may produce serious academic, psychological, and social consequences. Risky sexual behaviour has been associated with sexually transmitted infections, unintended pregnancies, emotional instability, relationship conflicts, poor academic performance, and reduced psychological well-



being. Excessive engagement in sexual activities may also interfere with concentration, academic commitment, and students' ability to adjust effectively to university life. Consequently, researchers have increasingly sought to identify psychological factors that predict sexual behaviour among university undergraduates. Among these factors, paedophilic tendency and pornographic addiction have recently received considerable scholarly attention because of their potential influence on students' sexual attitudes, behavioural regulation, and overall adjustment within the university environment.

In view of these concerns, the present study investigates the predictive power of paedophilic tendency and pornographic addiction on sexual behaviour and school adjustment among university undergraduates. Understanding these predictive relationships is essential for developing effective counselling interventions, sexuality education programmes, and institutional policies aimed at promoting healthy sexual development and positive adjustment among students.

Research Question

What is the joint predictive power of paedophilic tendency and pornographic addiction on sexual behaviour of university undergraduates?

Hypothesis

There is no significant joint predictive power of paedophilic tendency and pornographic addiction on sexual behaviour of university undergraduates

Research Method

The study employed a correlational survey research design to investigate the predictive power of paedophilic tendency and pornographic addiction on university undergraduates' sexual behaviour and school adjustment. The choice of the design was informed by the nature of the study, which sought to determine the direction, strength, and predictive relationships among naturally occurring variables without manipulating them. The design was appropriate because it enabled the researcher to establish the extent to which the predictor variables accounted for variations in the criterion variables.

The study was carried out in South-East Nigeria, one of Nigeria's six geopolitical zones, comprising Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo States. The zone hosts several federal universities with large undergraduate populations drawn from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. The area was considered suitable because of the increasing use of digital technologies among students and the growing concern about behavioural and psychological issues affecting undergraduate adjustment and development.

The population of the study comprised 148,712 undergraduate students enrolled in federal universities in South-East Nigeria during the 2024/2025 academic session. These students formed the target population because they possessed the characteristics relevant to the objectives of the study and were capable of providing valid information regarding paedophilic tendency, pornographic addiction, sexual behaviour, and school adjustment.



A sample of 1,148 undergraduate students was selected using a multistage sampling procedure. Although Taro Yamane's (1967) formula produced a minimum sample size of 399 respondents, the researcher deliberately increased the sample size to improve statistical precision, enhance representativeness, and increase the reliability and generalizability of the findings. The multistage sampling procedure ensured that respondents were selected fairly from the participating universities.

Data were collected using three instruments: the Paedophilic Tendency Scale (PTS), Pornographic Addiction Scale (PAS), and Sexual Behaviour Scale (SBS). The PTS was developed by the researcher following extensive review of relevant literature, while the PAS and SBS were adapted from standardized instruments developed and validated by previous researchers. The instruments consisted of structured Likert-type items designed to measure the major variables of the study. Together, they provided comprehensive information required to investigate the predictive relationships among the variables.

The instruments were subjected to face validation by three experts from the Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. One expert specialized in Measurement and Evaluation, while the remaining two specialized in Educational Foundations. The validators assessed the relevance of the items to the study objectives, clarity of language, adequacy of content coverage, grammatical accuracy, and suitability of the research questions and hypotheses. Their observations and recommendations were incorporated before the final administration of the instruments. To establish reliability, the instruments were pilot-tested on 50 undergraduate students from universities in South-South Nigeria, a region outside the study area but with similar educational characteristics. Cronbach Alpha statistics were used to determine internal consistency reliability. Reliability coefficients of 0.76 (PTS), 0.79 (PAS), and 0.85 (SBS) were obtained, indicating satisfactory reliability since all the coefficients exceeded the minimum acceptable value of 0.70 recommended by Cohen et al. (2018).

Data were collected electronically using Google Forms. The researcher collaborated with students' representatives who assisted in distributing the questionnaire links through WhatsApp groups and other social media platforms commonly used by undergraduate students. The online method was considered appropriate because it ensured anonymity, minimized social desirability bias, protected respondents' privacy, and encouraged honest responses on sensitive issues relating to sexuality and pornography.

The data collected were coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Multiple Regression analysis was employed to answer research question and to test Hypothesis. The strength of the relationships was interpreted using Schober et al.'s (2018) correlation coefficient classification, while the hypothesis was tested at the 0.05 level of significance.



Presentation and Interpretation of the Data

Research Question: What is the joint predictive power of paedophilic tendency and pornographic addiction on sexual behaviour of university undergraduates?

Table 1: *Regression analysis of the joint predictive power of paedophilic tendency and pornographic addiction on sexual behaviour of university undergraduates*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	N
1	.717 ^a	.514	.513	9.73636	1148

a. Predictors: (Constant), Pono_Addict, Pedo_Tend

b. Criterion Variable: Sex_Behav

Hypothesis: There is no significant joint predictive power of paedophilic tendency and pornographic addiction on sexual behaviour of university undergraduates

Table 2: *Regression ANOVA and coefficient tests of significance of the joint predictive power of paedophilic tendency and pornographic addiction on sexual behaviour of university undergraduates.*

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	114638.620	2	57319.310	604.655	.000 ^b
	Residual	108542.182	1145	94.797		
	Total	223180.801	1147			

a. Criterion Variable: Sexual Behaviour

b. Predictors: (Constant), *paedophilic tendency*, *pornographic addiction*

The findings revealed that pornographic addiction had a moderate predictive relationship with school adjustment among university undergraduates ($R = 0.411$). The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.168$) indicated that 16.8% of the variation in students' school adjustment was explained by their level of pornographic addiction, while the remaining 83.2% was attributable to other factors not examined in the study.

The hypothesis test further showed that pornographic addiction negatively and significantly predicted school adjustment ($\beta = -0.411$, $t = -15.244$, $p < 0.05$). Since the probability value (0.000) was less than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis, which stated that there is no significant predictive power of pornographic addiction on school adjustment of university undergraduates, was rejected.

The negative beta coefficient (-0.411) indicates an inverse relationship between the two variables. This means that as the level of pornographic addiction increases, the level of school adjustment decreases. Conversely, students with lower levels of pornographic addiction are more likely to demonstrate better adjustment to the academic, social, emotional, and institutional demands of university life. The finding therefore suggests that pornographic addiction is a significant predictor



of university undergraduates' school adjustment, with higher addiction levels associated with poorer adjustment outcomes.

Summary of the Findings

The findings of the study were summarized based on the research questions and hypotheses as follows:

1. Paedophilic tendency significantly predicted the sexual behaviour of university undergraduates. A moderate positive relationship ($R = 0.687$) was found between paedophilic tendency and sexual behaviour. Paedophilic tendency accounted for 47.1% of the variation in sexual behaviour ($R^2 = 0.471$). The regression coefficient showed that paedophilic tendency positively and significantly predicted sexual behaviour ($\beta = 0.687$, $t = 31.965$, $p < 0.05$).
2. Paedophilic tendency significantly predicted the school adjustment of university undergraduates. A weak relationship ($R = 0.357$) was observed between paedophilic tendency and school adjustment. The predictor explained 12.7% of the variation in school adjustment ($R^2 = 0.127$). The regression analysis further revealed that paedophilic tendency negatively and significantly predicted school adjustment ($\beta = -0.357$, $t = -12.943$, $p < 0.05$).
3. Pornographic addiction significantly predicted the sexual behaviour of university undergraduates. The analysis revealed a moderate positive relationship ($R = 0.639$) between pornographic addiction and sexual behaviour. Pornographic addiction explained 40.8% of the variation in sexual behaviour ($R^2 = 0.408$). The regression coefficient indicated that pornographic addiction positively and significantly predicted sexual behaviour ($\beta = 0.639$, $t = 28.142$, $p < 0.05$).
4. Pornographic addiction significantly predicted the school adjustment of university undergraduates. A moderate relationship ($R = 0.411$) was found between pornographic addiction and school adjustment. Pornographic addiction accounted for 16.8% of the variation in school adjustment ($R^2 = 0.168$). The regression analysis showed that pornographic addiction negatively and significantly predicted school adjustment ($\beta = -0.411$, $t = -15.244$, $p < 0.05$).
5. Overall, the study established that both paedophilic tendency and pornographic addiction were significant predictors of university undergraduates' sexual behaviour and school adjustment. While both variables positively predicted sexual behaviour, they negatively predicted school adjustment, indicating that higher levels of paedophilic tendency and pornographic addiction are associated with poorer adjustment to university life.

Discussion of the Findings

The findings of the study revealed that undergraduate students' sexual behaviour is jointly predicted by paedophilic tendency and pornographic addiction. Further analysis showed that both paedophilic tendency and pornographic addiction made significant independent contributions to predicting undergraduate students' sexual behaviour. This indicates that when these two variables are considered together, they exert a significant influence on students' sexual behaviour.



A plausible explanation for this finding is that excessive exposure to pornographic materials may shape students' sexual attitudes, fantasies, and behavioural expectations by normalizing risky or inappropriate sexual practices. When such exposure coexists with deviant sexual interests, including paedophilic tendencies, the likelihood of engaging in maladaptive sexual behaviours may increase. University students often experience greater personal freedom and reduced parental supervision, which may create opportunities for risky behavioural expressions. In addition, both paedophilic tendency and pornographic addiction may be associated with underlying psychological factors such as poor impulse control, ineffective coping strategies, identity-related challenges, or previous adverse experiences. These factors may contribute to compulsive sexual thoughts and behaviours. Furthermore, peer influence, unrestricted internet access, social media exposure, and academic or emotional stress may reinforce these behavioural patterns among undergraduates.

The finding of this study is consistent with the findings of Klein et al. (2015) and Briken et al. (2017), who, in their separate studies, reported that paedophilic tendencies were significantly associated with higher levels of sexual compulsivity. Similarly, the finding supports the reports of Bóthe et al. (2020) and Rahman and Saxena (2024), who found that pornographic addiction significantly predicted maladaptive sexual behaviour. The agreement between the present study and previous empirical studies suggests that paedophilic tendency and pornographic addiction are important behavioural factors associated with undergraduate students' sexual behaviour.

Overall, the combined predictive influence of paedophilic tendency and pornographic addiction suggests that these variables are important correlates of undergraduate students' sexual behaviour. This finding underscores the need for university authorities, counsellors, psychologists, and other student support professionals to develop early identification strategies, counselling interventions, and comprehensive sexuality education programmes that promote healthy, responsible, and socially acceptable sexual behaviour among university students.

Conclusion

The study concluded that paedophilic tendency and pornographic addiction are significant predictors of university undergraduates' sexual behaviour and school adjustment. While both variables positively predicted students' sexual behaviour, they negatively predicted their school adjustment. The findings imply that higher levels of paedophilic tendency and pornographic addiction are associated with increased maladaptive sexual behaviour and poorer adjustment to the academic, social, emotional, and institutional demands of university life. Therefore, addressing these behavioural tendencies through counselling, sexuality education, and preventive interventions is essential for promoting healthy development and improving the overall well-being and adjustment of university undergraduates.

Recommendations

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

1. University management should strengthen counselling and psychological support services by establishing functional counselling centres and organizing regular awareness



- programmes on healthy sexual behaviour, responsible internet use, and the dangers of pornographic addiction to enhance students' school adjustment.
2. University counsellors and lecturers should implement preventive and intervention programmes that promote self-control, emotional regulation, digital literacy, and positive coping strategies to reduce maladaptive sexual behaviours and improve students' academic, social, and emotional adjustment.
 3. Parents and guardians should maintain open communication with their children on sexuality, responsible internet use, and moral values while providing appropriate guidance and supervision to minimize exposure to harmful online content and unhealthy sexual tendencies.
 4. Government, university authorities, and future researchers should collaborate to promote digital safety policies, strengthen student support systems, and encourage further research on paedophilic tendency, pornographic addiction, sexual behaviour, and school adjustment among university students in different educational settings.

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