Views and experiences with sexting among post-secondary young people in Ibadan, Nigeria

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Background: Sexting is the sharing of sexually suggestive or explicit text messages or videos using mobile phone. It has been associated with contrasting things ranging from risky health behaviours to maintaining romantic relationships. Due to the increase in cell phone possession among Nigerian young people, it is important to know their views and experiences with sexting.

Objectives: This study explored the experiences of post- secondary young people attending pre-varsity examination preparatory centers in Ibadan regarding sexting. Methodology: This was a qualitative study in which four focus group discussions and four in-depth interviews were conducted among purposively selected young people and those who engage in sexting respectively. Content analysis of the data was done after transcription.

Results: Sexting was described as rampant among young people and it occurs with peers, adults and international partners. Sexting occurs usually between opposite sex and it was mostly sent using social media with videos and photos commoner than texts. Males reported sending and receiving sext but are of the opinion that females request for them. All the females denied ever sending sext. Reasons for sexting include to initiate romantic relationship, imitate celebrities, get fame and feel acceptable by peers. Experienced and witnessed consequences of sexting include actual sexual intercourse, shame, blackmail and attempted suicide. Only two of the participants would allow their parents to see sext sent to them.

Conclusion: Sexting was common among these young people and it is sent across borders. The implication of sexting should be taught in schools to forestall its health and legal consequences.

Key words: Sexting, Young people, Social media