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# **ELECTRONIC-MEDIA HARASSMENT AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL ADOLESCENTS IN IBADAN MUNICIPALITY NIGERIA: MYTH OR REALITY?**

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This pilot was conducted to determine the incidence and forms of electronic-media harassment among secondary school students. Students who owned a mobile phone and had access to the Internet were selected via multi-stage sampling. History of harassment in the 3-month period preceding the study was obtained.

**Results** A total of 129 students- 65(52.4%) boys and 59(47.6%) girls with mean age of 13.9( $\pm$ 1.9) years participated. Eighty-four(66.1%) were from private and 43(33.9%) government-owned schools; 65(51.2%) were in junior and 62(48.8%) in senior classes; 88.2% lived with both parents. All respondents had personal phones and 66(52.0%) had access to the Internet. Forty-three (33.9%) had suffered electronic harassment while 19(15.0%) had harassed others. Twenty-four (18.9%) were victims only, all 19(15%) perpetrators were also victims. The commonest modes of harassment were text messages 31(24.4%) and phone calls 25(19.5%). Of the 66 with Internet access, four each had experienced harassment through email and in chat rooms and two via websites. Twenty-one (16.5%) had harassed others via text messages, 21(16.5%) through phone calls and 6(4.7%) through picture or video clips. Perpetrators were mainly boys. The incident was often reported to friends, parents/guardians, other adults in school, class teachers. Factors predictive of being a victim were public schooling(OR 4.9, 95%CI 2.0 to 11.9), and being in a senior class(OR 3.5, 95% CI 1.6 to 8.6).

**Conclusion** This pilot revealed that electronic media harassment was occurring among the students. This phenomenon thus needs to be further investigated and efforts put in place to curb it.