

Chapter Nine

The significance of the social media for formal and informal education: A hermeneutical enquiry

Michael Maduawuchi Uzomah

Department of Philosophy,

St. Albert Institute, Fayit, Fadan Kagoma, An Affiliate of the University of Jos, Nigeria.

uzomahmikeabuchi@yahoo.com

Titi Christiana Falana

Department of Philosophy,

Ekiti State University, Ado Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria.

falanatit@eksu.edu.ng

Scholastica Jacob-Uzomah

Department of Philosophy,

St. Albert Institute, Fayit, Fadan Kagoma, An Affiliate of the University of Jos, Nigeria.

chichischola@gmail.com

Abstract

The most modern smart medium of education, especially informal education is social media. Social media sites are flooded with gargantuan sea of information. Whatever information one seeks concerning anything and everything is readily present in the social media, hence, formal and informal teaching and learning is now increasingly done online/offline. The chapter adopts the expository and hermeneutical methods to demonstrate that the social media as the new order of formal and informal education is doing good and at the same time doing great harm. This paradox makes these media of contemporary education (machine learning) relishing and at the same time palpably fraught. Relishing because they are endless sources of information, they make information swiftly handy and in real time. On the other hand, they fill humans with the feeling of fraught as a consequence of their lack of censorship and quality control and assurance. This fundamental limitation is responsible for the proliferation of inappropriate, disruptive, and destructive information that are causing negative social change globally. Consequently, the objectives of this chapter include to: review the extent to which technology has revolutionized education; expose the inadvertent negative impacts of social media to education; highlight the philosophical significance of social media to the character and intellectual formation in Africa; conclude that the overtly openness of the social media creates room for credibility, quality assurance and control issues. It is therefore recommended that there is the expedient need for the development of effective quality control and assurance mechanisms to forestall real and imagined destructive tendencies of the social media.

Keywords: Disruptive, Education, Informal education, Hermeneutics, Social media.

Introduction

Education and the process of education, though an indivisible continuum, have been classically categorized into informal, semi-formal and formal education. These forms of education have one function in view—they continually, at various stages and moments in man's development and life in the society develop, cultivate and keep him abreast with the skills, aptitude, knowledge, values and human qualities necessary for survival and coping with the vicissitudes of life. In lieu of this, these types of education are never inherently in conflict with each other, but mutually inclusive and complementary. In this sense, whatever disrupts one inevitably and invariably affects the others. As man lives to learn, and learns to live, if he pays proper attention to the legacies of education wherever opportunities abound (in the physical cum environment or on the virtual space) he is led to the path of happiness. Happiness constitutes the supreme good of society and as such, it is the ultimate pursuit and goal of humans in the society. This makes education expedient and inalienable for the survival, flourishing and perpetuity of societies and social intercourse.

In the modern world order, the social media provide enriched and state of the art virtual environments for (formal, semi-formal and informal) research, teaching and learning. They provide digital and smart space and contrivances for robust teaching and learning. The social media is flooded with gargantuan sea of information. This smart library consists of a plenum to such an overwhelming extent that whatever information one seeks concerning anything and everything is readily present in its digital shelves. Hence, teaching and learning in all the forms of education is now increasingly done online/offline. This chapter which consists of a philosophical cum literary qualitative discourses, adopts the expository and hermeneutical methods to demonstrate that what makes the social media such an enviable and veritable springboard for information or knowledge generation and dissemination is that social media is accessible, interactive, immediate and relevant.

Ironically, the social media as the new citadel and tool for education are doing good and at the same time doing great harm. This oxymoronic paradox makes these media of contemporary education relishing and at the same time profoundly fraught. Relishing because they are endless sources of information, they make information handy, swift and in real time. On the other hand, they fill man with the feeling of fraught as a consequence of their disruptive tendencies, stimulation of negative attitudes and habits and credibility issues (lack of censorship, quality control and assurance). These fundamental loopholes are responsible for the proliferation of destructive pieces of information that is causing negative social change globally. Consequently, the prime objects of the chapter is to review the extent to which technology has revolutionized education; expose the inadvertent negative impacts of social media to education in general; and, particularly demonstrate the philosophical significance of social media for the character and intellectual formation of the average African student and youth. This hermeneutical analysis reveals that the social media has far reaching moral and intellectual significance in

Africa, it signifies a tool for trans-socialization and trans-civilization. This implies that it traffics the culture of ethical relativism and subjectivism (liberalism and nihilism) that is apparently diametrically disparate to the objectivist and conservativist ethical consciousness of the African mind. Therefore, the chapter deductively concludes that the smart environment and contrivance provided by the social media is ineluctably expedient and priceless for the 21st century education. Consequently, despite the identified advertent and inadvertent negative consequences of this smart learning tool and digital territory, it remains an inviolable necessary evil that humans must invest in. Meanwhile, since the overtly openness of the social media creates room for quality assurance and control issues; it is therefore recommended that, inter alia, there is the expedient need for the development of effective quality control and assurance mechanisms to forestall real and imagined disruptive tendencies of the social media.

The meaning, nature, and essence of education

The whole vast spectrum of human knowledge, the processes by which humans informally, semi-formally and formally come into cognitive awareness of the sea of episteme, acquisition of skills, aptitudes, attitudes, frame of orientation, learning to and living useful and productive lives in the society (universe), and others, fall within what is typified by the nomenclature ‘education’. Education by its very nature is complex and exclusive. It consists of the universe of knowledge, and processes of experiencing (perceptual experiences) and living inside this universe of knowledge and taking cognitive, active and passive account of this living experience. The whole span of man’s life, existence and experience (from birth to death) is inexorably characterized by continuous and endless education. Each and every individual human person is born a stranger and a neophyte to the society with curious and innate inclination or disposition or capability to learn. In the course of time, in experience, humans learn how to exist and survive in the fleeting human society and world with its contingent challenges and prospects. The acquisition of the knowledge of the technical know-how of how to tame the forces of the environment to suite the taste of man, thereby making life more bearable and good, is the prerogative of education. Moreover, even the development and cultivation of core moral values and ethical frameworks that fosters harmonious and peaceful co-existence is the hallmark of education.

The resultant consequence of the limitless nature of education is that despite the conscious attempts that have been made by scholars’ overtime to conceptualize a comprehensive definition of education that would universally have the seal or signature of all scholars has continually been delusive. To define is to delimit or specify, and education is by its very nature enormously complex and all-embracing to be easily circumscribed or specified. The nature of education is comparable to the nature of law which Uzomah (2015: 1), described thus:

The concept of law is so simple, and yet has the same complexity with the concept of good which Moore declared as indefinable”. It has the same discomfoting impulse with the question, what is law? And what is truth? Immanuel Kant once

asserted that the question: what is law? is as embarrassing to the jurists as the well-known question 'What is truth' is to the logician.

In the same magnitude, the question, what is education is as embarrassing to the educationist, as the question, what is truth, is embarrassing to the philosopher. The puzzle of the ironic simplicity and at the same time complexity of education is further compounded by the very fact that "the word 'education' is also as sensitive to places as it bears different meanings in different countries" (Uzomah & Isanbor, 2019, 50). Moreover, the concept could be understood and presented in various trends and perspectives. These have been the major obstacles inhibiting the articulation of an exclusive and comprehensive definition of education, conscious of the fact that definitions delimit what they define. Bonsignore et al. (2007: 1), substantiates this truism as follows:

Definitions may be likened to statements of belief that has the nature of articles of faith, political philosophies, etc. The scholar who attempts to define only presents a flash of genius that immediately and temporarily makes the entire universe fall into place. Definitions delimit concepts and events to the perspectives and understandings of just those who present such definitions. This factor makes definitions fundamental and at the same time profoundly dangerous because they advance focused explications of the universe (term) thereby guiding against possibilities that may negate or distort the definition.

Applied to education, this means that definitions of education only describe aspects of the whole spectrum or facets of education based on the interests, currents or perspectives from which the definers perceive education. Part of the difficulties inherent in the definition of education is that it consists of varied forms and processes and aims at the integral formation or transformation of the whole self. Now, the question that begs for an answer and whose resolution is key to having a significant and genuine definition of education is, at what point, age, level or aspect of the individual learner's life would it be plausibly said education has fully taken place? In response to this question, the philosophical option becomes imperative-since education by its nature and complexity is a lifelong endeavor, one can loosely argue that total education is not possible since at every instance of one's temporal life, he/she is in need of education. We live to learn, unlearn and relearn; and learn to live; because the existence, survival and flourishing of humanity is tied to education. Life itself is education. This implies that outside human life, existence and experience, the concept, education cannot be substantiated or conceptualized. Based on this tokenism, the meaning, nature and essence of education is hermetically and existentially inherent in humans' social environment.

Notwithstanding the dilemmatic situation painted above, conscious of the phenomenology and hermeneutics of education, philosophers and other educationist scholars over the centuries have reflected on the concept, nature and essence of education and have variously given their impressions as to what education entails. Before proceeding to articulate and critically analyze selected incisive definitions by these authors, it is pertinent that we first and foremost attempt an expository analytical inquest on the etymology of this all-important existential concept.

The etymology and definitions of education

Most text on education usually and commonly trace the etymology of education to two different Latin words. These words include *educere* and *educare*. *Educere* implies to: draw out, lead out and to bring fourth. This etymology reveals that education harness the individual learners' innate potentials and powers and gives them scope to develop. *Educare* implies to: train, nourish, bring up, rear or mold. Like the plant in the garden, the human child is cultivated by the teacher via education through the harness and development of innate potentials and capabilities. From the above etymological description of education, there are two unique but indispensable senses of education that demand a closer analytical observation. These include the *educere* and *educare* origins of education. *Educere* means to draw out of, siphon, or to unleash innate potentials. It consists of the experiences and activities of drawing out latent or innate abilities, knowledge or innate capabilities, tendencies, talents, inclinations, and many more. *Educare* involves activities pertaining to forming or molding into maturity. The process of education involves harking into the recesses of human nature to excavate covert principles and seminal germs of human episteme hibernating there. The goal of this retrieval exercise is to unleash, develop and cultivate these internal potentials for the self-development and self-actualization of the child. This literal configuration of education from *educare* and *educere* represents the internalist perspective of education championed by the idealist philosophy of education. This philosophical system or movement limits education to the process of externalizing latent knowledge and innate capacities and potentials of individual learners for self-development and actualization. According to this system, teaching absolutely adds nothing to the learner, rather learning or education is only but a process of externalizing the internals.

The internalist (idealist) view which combines *educare* and *educere* as the etymological definition of education is incomplete, because it delimits education exclusively to exercises targeted towards the development of only innate abilities and molding the individual with the same. In other words, education consists in only externalizing the internals for the self-development and self-realization of the learner. Does that mean nothing comes into the learner from outside? The obvious answer to this is definitely not positive but negative. Consequently, there is the compelling need to consider the externalist understanding of education by adding the concept *educatum* as the third etymological root of education.

The term *educatum* is a Latin word which means imposed from external. In this sense, education consists of an external growth through activities and experience. The basic thesis of the externalist understanding of education is the view that the teacher provides ideas, principles,

facts and through instructions and directions molds the abilities of the learner (Onyechi, 2020, 58). According to this view about education, the social and physical environments of the child contribute a great deal to the nourishing, nurturing and transforming of potential knowledge to actual knowledge. Hence, the process of education is only possible with information furnished from within and without of the learner. Education does not only consist in developing and cultivating inner stuffs, it also has to do with imbibing or internalizing external values, attitudes, dispositions, civilizations and orientations from one's social and physical environments. In a word, education consists of both externalizing the internal and internalizing the external. In lieu of this, a good account of the meaning of education must take into cognizance both the internalist and externalists interventions. In the light of this basic logic, a good account of education must integrate or synthesize the internalist and externalist conceptualizations or theorizations.

From a harmonized or synthesized etymological perspective, education forms the learner and shapes the character of the learner by exposing, imposing and disposing the individual learner to skills and human qualities and worthwhile values expedient for healthy inter-personal relations in a harmonious social intercourse. It helps the individual to harness and develop inherent and latent abilities in order to develop the same to their fullest extent. From the philosophical point of view, education entails a transmission of intellectual and moral values and skills that society considers worthwhile in line with practical reasonableness, for useful and productive living and for flourishing and peaceful coexistence in the society.

Against this backdrop, it is logically plausible to argue that a closer glance and analysis of this synthesized etymology of education (that combines *educare*, *educere* and *educatum*) reveals that it commands a high level of sophistication of wit. It combines both the realist, idealist and pragmatists perspectives of education. In fact, the doctrines of all movements in philosophy of education concerning the meaning, nature and essence of education are embodied in this synthesis. Genuine education does not only consist of siphoning innate potentials, it must also be necessarily matched with acquisition of skills, attitudes, habits, and many others, from the external. The tending, cultivation and molding which education presupposes should empower children with the ability not only to face the problems and endless challenges of social life but also to tackle them. Consequently, both what is siphoned from within and what is imposed from without pulled together transforms and empowers the learner integrally. And this transformation must predispose the individual for useful and productive living and ultimately, it should foster the flourishing of societal life. The latter is only achievable, when those who have been transformed by the illuminating and vitalizing furnace of education are able to effectively make use of their hands, head and heart.

Talking about selected definitions of education, first and foremost, the definition of education to be considered is that which is postulated by Socrates (Definitions of Education, 2021). For Socrates, the aim of education consists of an effort towards dispelling error and a process towards discovering truth that is innate in the human soul. From the realist perspective,

education was simply defined by Aristotle as the creation of a sound mind in a sound body. It develops man's faculty, especially his mind, so that he may be able to enjoy the contemplation of supreme truth, goodness and beauty. He observed that the human mind is the center of thought and activities, hence, education must seek to develop the mind from the cradle to a matured frame in order for his faculties to be fully developed to appreciate truth, goodness and beauty, so that ultimately, happiness which is the supreme good every man seeks would be attainable. Education must seek to ultimately make man happy by first of all creating a peaceful atmosphere. Imbued with Aristotelian sentiments, Uzomah (2015: 9) expatiated on the cardinal value of happiness to man thus:

It is a self-evident fact here and everywhere in the universe that the greatest good every man seeks is happiness; and happiness is necessarily leveraged on peace. Peace nourishes the soul, man prefers peace to chaos. It is within the state of peace that man becomes exceptionally productive; he is able to think perspicaciously; he is able to reason astutely, he is able to display a high level of shrewd in his life's endeavor, and he is able to will sagaciously.

Hence, the ultimate goal of education should be to transform the learner for a happy living. It also consists in making the child who is a potential adult into the best possible adult he could be. To form a child into the best possible adult, he/she must attain self-realization, self-development and self-actualization. The strength of Aristotle's realist conceptualization of education is that he reconciled and synthesized the internalist and externalist dichotomy by designating education as the process of getting acquainted with one's natural environment and getting integrated to the social environment through the sustained internalization, cultivation and development of virtues. Moreover, education understood in Aristotelean perspective, consists of an attempt to make the child develop a critical mindset, sound reasoning and good judgment.

Rousseau (Definitions of Education, 2021), taking what could be described as a moderate idealist point of view, defined education as the act of developing the child from within. Rousseau's definition of education is premised on his basic belief that every child is born with innate abilities, potentials and capabilities; hence, education must aim towards fostering in the child self-realization, self-development and self-actualization. Development of the child from within could also be interpreted to entail developing the capacity of the mind for intellectual rigors. Pestalozzi (Definitions of Education, 2021), corroborated Rousseau's emphasis on the vital importance of mental development as the summit of education. Moreover, he extended or gave a more comprehensive definition of education when he designates education as "the harmonious and progressive development of all the innate powers and faculties of man, the physical, moral and intellectual capacities" (Pestalozzi, 2021). This definition unarguably reflects the true essence and nature of education. A worthwhile and meaningful education ought

to integrally develop the human person. The tripartite distinctive character of man should not only be developed, more importantly they ought to be continually and harmoniously developed. In a situation when a child's intellectual development is exclusively focused on at the expense of his or her moral and physical powers, such education becomes disoriented. This is because such education would create intellectual giants that are morally bankrupt; this of course would be nuisance to the society. Regrettably, most students who graduate from our present-day educational institutions, especially from boarding schools are intellectually sound but morally empty. The three main domain of education according to psychologists are cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. These areas must be progressively and harmoniously developed; without the holistic development of these three educational domains, education will be deficient.

Another aspect of Pestalozzi's comprehensive definition that requires emphatic stress is the aspect of developing the physical power of man. This point of view concurs with Aristotle's definition of education as the development of a sound mind in a sound body. Here lies the strength of this definition, if the body which houses both the intellectual and moral faculties of man is weak and fable, education would be impossible. Development of the physical powers of man is key to a holistic and sustainable notion of education; owing to the fact that it is the physical self that provides the platform for the existence of the moral and intellectual elements of man. Therefore, genuine education plausibly consists in the harmonious and progressive development of all three human faculties/powers. Education in Nigeria (Africa) today seems to be counter-productive, perhaps, because either one or two of these human faculties have either been deliberately or negligently jettisoned. By the letters of this definition, it therefore implies that ideally, for an individual to be certified learned/educated he/she must have witnessed a considerable harmonious development of his/her moral, intellectual and physical faculties. The *Uzomahian-Isanborian* hermeneutical model of education defined education as:

The knowledge and skill about oneself, society and all in nature in relation to human life, survival and flourishing. The process and method by which rational animals come to know what they know concerning these factors that are expedient for human survival, flourishing and attainment of their supreme goal and focus is to be considered as education. Learning to survive and flourish is a lifelong lesson and exercise in the bosom or domain of education (Uzomah & Isanbor, 2019: 2).

The main thesis of this novel theory is; to live is to learn, to learn is to live. According to this hermeneutical configuration of education, this is a concise, yet full description of the enduring nature and prime essence of education to the survival and flourishing of man and the society. As the supreme value of human existence, he who has education as a life companion has little or nothing more to wish for, and he who does not want it is either a savage beast or an inanimate object or a dead rational animal. The supreme good and ultimate pursuit of the rational animal

in society in particular and on earth (in the universe) is intrinsically yoked to education (Uzomah & Isanbor, 2019: 2). Being an inexorable co-traveler of humans, education continually impacts humans as they perpetually live to learn, unlearn and relearn. This brings us to the five transformative impacts or functions of education. The five specific cumulative impact or functions of education to the human person include; informative, formative, reformative, therapeutic and empowering impacts (IFERT).

From the foregoing critical analysis of definitions of education from selected scholars, we hereby articulate some concise descriptions of education, bearing in mind its pedagogical, existential, functional and hermeneutical attributes.

- The mind, being the center of activity and the stuff of the human personality is the center of education. As such, education is the vital force of the mind,
- Education conditions, cultures and prunes the mind; thereby inscribing in the mind indelible characters (virtues),
- Education exposes and infuses man with essential qualities that foster healthy and harmonious interpersonal relations,
- Education equips, furnishes and defines the sum total of man's life in the society,
- Education nourishes and nurtures the human mind; hence, it has the propensity of making the human person humane and genial.
- Education activates, induces, infuses, prunes and develops the three most sublime and fundamental faculties and powers of the human person (physical, intellectual and moral); thereby fortifying man to survive and excel in the physical and social environments and in one's chosen career,
- Universally, education is the inexorable or inadvertent life companion of the human person in his existence in the planet earth characterized by perpetual flux. Particularly, it continually teaches humans how to live in the human society,
- Humans are born into the bosom of education and they depart in the hands of education- humans live to learn, unlearn and relearn; and learns to live,
- A man is worth not even an inch more than the education he possesses,
- The creation and development of credible skills, aptitudes, attitudes, habits, dispositions, expositions, qualities and human capital development are the exclusive fruits of good education,
- The two cardinal pillars of education are moral formation and intellectual formation, with the formal been the ultimate goal of education. Genuine education consists of not just producing erudite, but in addition, and perhaps more importantly, forming men with integrity and character,
- Information, formation, reformation and empowerment are the essential transformative fruits of qualitative education.

Types of education

Ordinarily, education as a lifelong human exercise and activity is a single continuum and as such indivisible into forms or types. However, for the purpose of studies, scholars over time have distinguished education into some forms, bearing in mind the conscious attention paid to the organization, planning, systematization and design of the contents and environments of a given education. Moreover, the most essential measuring rod or canon for categorizing education into different types are the mode of the settings, methods and procedures through which one experiences, participates and appropriates education. Consequently, the keyword that leverages or forms the basis of the classification of education into different forms is the formality or non-formality of such education. The formality or non-formality of education chiefly has to do with whether or not such system of education adheres to established conventional rules or procedures rather than referring to the content of such education.

Consequently, inspired by the above parameters, education has been traditionally and classically canonized into two types. Based on the formality or non-formality of education, it has been chiefly categorized into (i) informal and (ii) formal education. Further, based on the level of formality and to eradicate the gargantuan space in between the latter and the former, formal education has been subdivided into semi-formal and purely formal education. In the light of this subdivision, education can be categorically divided into three types which include informal, semi-formal and formal education. These forms of education have one function in view-they continually, at various stages and moments in man's development and life in the society develop, cultivate and keep man abreast with the skills, aptitude, knowledge and human qualities necessary for survival and coping with the vicissitudes of life. Therefore, these types of education are never inherently in conflict with each other, but mutually complementary. As man lives to learn, and learns to live, if he pays proper attention to the legacies of education wherever opportunities abound (in the physical environment or on virtual space) he is led to the path of life and happiness- his ultimate pursuit and goal in life. In view of the intrinsic unity of these distinguished forms of education, whatever affects any of the forms of education inescapably affects others.

Informal education

In virtually all texts on education, formal education is treated first. However, we decided to consider informal education first because, it is the oldest and more enduring form of education. Most fundamentally, it is the root and seat, the cradle and perpetuity of education. This form of education can be properly designated as a continuum because it begins from birth and endures to death. By the very nature of this form of education, it is basically labeled as informal because it strictly follows no established conventional method or procedure or rule. The uniqueness and perhaps the most fundamental value of this form of education lies in its salient and subtle, but yet highly potent and indispensable informative, formative, reformatory and therapeutic impacts. It precedes, accompanies and proceeds formal and semi-formal education. Education chiefly conceived as an inexorable lifelong human exercise and activity refers chiefly to informal education. In informal education, one finds the philosophical significance

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of the *Uzomahian-Isanborian Thesis*-to live is to learn; to learn is to live (Uzomah & Isanbor, 2019. 78).

Informal education is naturally designed in line with the ontological social nature and fate of man to constantly avail man the exclusive privilege to live to learn and learn to live and flourish in the society in particular and in the universe at large. To say, to live is to learn implies that at every moment of man's life in the society and in the universe, informal education avails him/her some pieces of information or cognition of something new about social life and about the external or physical (nature or universe) environments. On the other hand, to say, to learn is to live, means that essentially, most of what makes existence and human flourishing possible at all, is acquired informally. The question now is, what are those things or those essentials without which societal life in particular and life in the larger universe would be almost impossible that informal education epitomizes?

The specific answer to this question is the fact that first, informal education is principally responsible for the sustained formation, enlightenment and empowerment of people, and it does this without any identifiable methodology or rules. Second, it portrays society an agent of socialization as informal education gives- the roles of parents, elders, families in the community towards their members' moral and intellectual socialization to enable them adapt to their environment is considered informal education. And third, the pertinence of education is encapsulated by the fact that from birth to death humans are perpetually and progressively students. Humans' studentship commences at the moment of birth and it is their natural biological consequence. Humans have in-built in their imperfect nature an inexhaustible space for learning. This inexhaustible space, coupled with the self-evident fact that human knowledge is boundlessly vast and progressive, make human longing for knowledge insatiable. In turn, the reality of human's insatiability is the seat and root of their curiosity.

Moreover, it is germane to postulate that humans' comprehension and or appropriation of informal education is not only made possible by the empirico-psycho-cognitive natural phenomenon just described, but also their existence and experience of their social and physical environments naturally imposes on them a great deal of knowledge of or about something and everything they experience. In the present day world order, their access to boundless sea of information from the social media also incredibly expands the possibility and sources of informal knowledge. As a result, whether man likes it or not, so long he is continually open to perceptual experience of his social, physical and virtual environments in one time or the other, he is inevitably and inexorably involved in informal education. This is the core of the *Uzomahian-Isanborian* theory of education.

Although scholars argue that this form of education is not organized, we bet to disagree. This is not true for every aspect of informal education; for instance, the traditional pedagogical system for socialization and social integration is systematic because at every stage of a child's development, particular morals, expected manner of behaviour, attitudes, gender lore and

certain skills or aptitudes on how to survive in a given socio-cultural, political and religious environment are inculcated on the child. For instance, in Africa, sexuality education is reserved for only young ladies just before their marriage rites are performed. Before this, the girl child, at various stages of development and cognitive capacity is socialized into the court of womanhood through the various stages of age grades. This socialization is a continued and sustained systematic adventure. The knowledge that is made for adults is never divulged to infants or children whose level of maturity is incapable of properly comprehending, fathoming, or digesting such information. However, this sort of education is called informal because there is no formalized system or institution from which it is acquired. Also, the content of this system of education is conventionally and loosely fixed by the family and the society. Apart from daily random moral and practical instructions and experiences, this form of education is transmitted traditionally through folktales, parables, riddles, proverbs, daily experiences, and others.

Apart from the traditional pedagogical system of education that constitutes society's framework for socialization and orientation; informal education is largely non-systematic. It can take place anywhere, anytime, and under any condition. It takes place in the marketplace, motor parks, churches, places of worship, in the bedroom, living rooms, workshops, glossary shops, offices, toilet, while in the farm, traveling, etc. In the contemporary order, the social media and broadcast media also constitute veritable sources of informal education. Wherever one is at any point in time, so long he or she is conscious of learning, education can take place. Sometimes, it is deliberate and at other times, it is simultaneous and unsolicited for. Education is not limited to activities within school environments. Hence, because education is a continuum, informal education precedes, accompanies and proceeds formal and semi-formal education. It would not be logically incorrect to argue that in this form of education, the enduring nature of education finds its summit.

Basic characteristics of informal education

- a. In informal education, there is no well-cut out planned system,
- b. Casual and spontaneous,
- c. No prescribed time-table or formulation and implementation of curriculum,
- d. Traditionally, for lack of proper documentation, the contents of informal education are orally transmitted. However, in this modern times, they are transmittable in written forms through various media (social media inclusive),
- e. In the traditional setting, teaching and learning is basically done my memorization,
- f. No formal trained teachers in informal education (this may not be true for all instances of informal education),
- g. Provided by any specialized agency,
- h. No organized school system,
- i. The focal object of informal education is the inculcation of mores, values and moral rectitude and basic technical and vocational skills,
- j. Informal education is a continuum, accompanying humans from birth to death,

- k. Through informal education, basic scientific, technological, engineering, vocational artistic skills are acquired,
- l. In the case of learning the art and skill of trading and other related artisanship, teaching and learning take the form of apprenticeship,
- m. Taught and acquired through surfing the interment, social and electronic media,
- n. The social media and the internet are the contemporary platform and rich sources for global informal education.

In summary, in informal education, there is no well-cut-out planned system. Here, learning from personal experience and the experiences of elders, others and the social media is the teacher. Also, mimicking the experiences of elders and the experiences of sagacious and versatile individuals is the way to wisdom. Generally, learning skills under informal setting involves learning by practical experience under someone who is very good at that job or skill. Generally, all humans are involved in informal education under the tutelage of Professor Practical Experience, whether solicited for or unsolicited, consciously or unconsciously, actively or passively, voluntarily or involuntarily.

Moreover, informal education is said to be sometimes casual and spontaneous because mostly no conscious effort is involved in it. As a result, the content of informal education is never constant and can be modified by any one at any given time based on his discretion and disposition (this is one of the most fortunate/unfortunate attributes of the social media). As a result of this, in informal education, there is no prescribed timetable or curriculum. This characteristic proceeds immediately from the fact that informal education is casual and spontaneous. What makes up the content of informal education consists of personal and collective experiences emanating from daily living in the family and the society at large. In other words, it is based on lived experiences (hermeneutics).

Furthermore, instructions in informal education are not undertaken or impacted by any specialized agency or school system. Owing to the nature of this form of education, it is not discharged by any specialized agency or system like primary, secondary, or tertiary school systems. Acting as informal education instructors is not a skilled labour, therefore, does not require specialization or systematic formal training. Suffices to assert that informal education in general has no specified duration; if it has any duration at all, it lasts as far the life of the individual person subsists. As it stands today, the increasing obsession of young minds with social media networking, suggests that the latter is steadily displacing traditional sources of informal education. The social media is rapidly becoming the veritable and versatile sources for informal education, and it is responsible for the re-orientation and re-civilization of young and older minds. Wherever one is at any point in time, so long he or she is in possession of a smart phone, education can take place. We make bold to assert that the social media is revolutionizing the old world and creating a new world order through the trans-orientation and trans-civilization of people.

Formal education

Ironically and erroneously too, formal education is the system of education that is commonly recognized as education itself; and when the concept of studentship is mentioned, one thinks of only learners in formal schools. Little wonder then, many scholars underscored education and schooling to be one and the same. Unlike informal education, formal education is the kind of education that takes place mostly within the fore walls of established school systems. Hence, this kind of education is usually designated as schooling. In lieu of this, laymen and even some scholars erroneously misconstrued schooling with formal education, so they interchangeably use both.

Formal education is designed to attain particular goals and objectives. This form of education is carried out in pre-schools, primary schools, secondary and in tertiary institutions of higher learning; whereby a deliberate attempt is made to achieve direct schooling, instruction and tuition. This form of education is limited to specific periods or stages of human development. Also, it is guided by extant rules and regulations to make it effective and efficient. Online schoolings and Open Universities affiliated to former educational institutions both locally and internationally all qualify as former education. Today, most universities worldwide run both campus-based programs and online based programs. Depending on one's convenience, he/she makes a choice. Meanwhile, whether campus based or online based, both systems follow established rules, curriculum and contents. Like informal education, formal education nowadays depends heavily on the social media (internet) as a major source of information and knowledge. Most academic journals, periodicals, research reports, textbooks, and other study materials are now published in the internet and accessible in social network sites for wider coverage. Specifically, that you are reading this text right now is a practical affirmation that the internet is a viable and wealthy modern sources and resources of informal and formal education. Meanwhile, the problem of the reliability of the information sourced from the Internet as well as the social media is of crucial concern to formal educationists.

The hallmark of formal education and perhaps that which distinguishes it from informal education is that it boasts of systematic and well-defined curriculum. The formal education's curriculum necessarily acts as a blueprint or framework, and it is leveraged on certain aims and objectives which ideally represents the practical needs of the given society. This characteristic is germane to pragmatic education because education as the bedrock of the nation ought to serve the integral needs of the society. The nature and sophistication of informal education curriculum require that it should be discharged by specific qualified teachers. Teaching in formal educational system requires skill. Hence, instructions, teaching or tuition in formal education is carried out by qualified personnel who have undergone formal training and have been certified by the relevant institution of the state. It remains to add that teachers are trained because teaching is an art and science that requires training. By the extant laws regulating education in Nigeria, individuals are certified to teach at the various levels having at least attained minimum qualifications for the respective levels.

Formal education is not the exclusive preserve of activities within the school environment; rather, it includes activities outside the classroom. Although, in the past, formal education may have been restricted to the classroom; however, in the modern era there have increasingly been innovations, as teaching and learning have been extended outside the confines of the classroom to include some extra-curricular activities that takes place in places other than the school environment; these include field research, excursions, e-learning and online open system of education, etc. These enrich and enhance teaching and learning. Most recently, there is emphasis on traveling and site seeing for students as they constitute ways of learning. In the present dispensation of social media networking, virtual space is another smart environment where formal education thrives. As a matter of fact, in view of the ranging revolutions of the social media that leverages on the relishing attributes of the social media (immediate, swift, flexible and relevant) it is subtly and drastically displacing physical formal education.

Basic characteristics of formal education

- a. Organized school system,
- b. Formal education is planned, and it has specific ends in view,
- c. Formal education is limited to specific timeframe or period,
- d. It has well-specified and systematic curriculum,
- e. Educational programmes and timetable are well-structured,
- f. Discharged by specialized qualified instructors (teachers/lecturers),
- g. Observes strict discipline,
- h. Documentation,
- i. Includes activities outside the classroom (extra-curricular activities),
- j. Educational programme go with age and stages of learners' development,
- k. Examination is statutory/ it is guided by extant rules and regulations establishing the particular institution,
- l. Formal education can be scientifically and consistently given to a large number of people simultaneously,
- m. Formal education has the development of the three powers or faculties of man for his ultimate goal,
- n. Runs campus-based programs and online- based programs.

The main distinguishing factor of formal education from informal education is that while the former is time-bound, the latter is for life. However, both forms of education are complementary and reinforce each other. It remains to add that most of what is taught in formal education is generated informally via practical experiences (from observations of our social and physical environments). Most fundamentally, the assertive stance of the social media in the extant digital civilization positively impact both formal and informal education; and certain disruptive tendencies that are advertent and inadvertent aftermaths of indiscreet and irrational use of social media contents equally affect both forms of education.

Semi-formal/Non formal education

This form of education is relatively recent, and it is neither formal nor informal. Semi-formal education bridges the gap between the informal and formal education. Whatever skill or knowledge not acquired informally or formally are acquired from semi-formal education; and even some skills acquired respectively from formal and informal education are improved upon or consolidated by semi-formal education. Like the formal education, non-formal system of education is planned. However, it does not exist within the regular formal educational system. It is called quasi-formal because it stands in-between formal and informal education. In the words of an expert in educational matters Dushi (Types of Education, 2022), non-formal education is, “any organized, systematic education activity carried outside the framework of the established formal system whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broad activity, that is intended to serve identifiable learning clientless as learning objectives”.

This kind of education is received in the form of workshops, seminar, retreats and other training for professional bodies, chief executives of businesses, captains of industries, government officials and personals, etc. This form of education is organized for a specific homogeneous group to meet their identifiable specific needs. This accounts for the reason why this form of education is said to be ad hoc-necessitated by specific needs and in relation to the latter semi-formal education becomes significant and relevant. It is necessitated by special needs of a given society, institutions, organizations, firms, cooperate bodies, etc. when challenges and prospects arise from the inevitable flux that characterizes the human society, challenges and prospect not envisage by the education offered at the established and regular formal educational systems where personnel are trained; as an improvised mechanism, instructional and training sections are organized by the affected cooperate bodies or government agents mentioned above given any of the above appellation. Human knowledge grows or advances, hence, personnel trained years back may not be well fitted to automatically upgrade to novelties. These personnel are therefore upgraded through training and retraining in workshops, seminars and other allied semi-formal arrangements.

Basic characteristics of semi-formal/non formal education

- a. Falls outside the purview of informal and formal education,
- b. Conscious and deliberate,
- c. Ad hoc and serves the needs of a given identified group, aims at addressing issues not envisaged or covered by formal education,
- d. Usually organized for a homogeneous group,
- e. Usually has training and re-training of human capital as its goal,
- f. It is the bridge between informal and formal education,
- g. In a way, it also shows that education is a continuous experience.

It should be noted that despite the apparent differences between the three forms of education, they are substantially mutually inclusive and dependent. It is informative to observe that, there is some sort of symbiotic relationship existing among them (especially between tertiary

institutions and cooperate bodies requiring semi-formal education). Most of the resource persons and training materials used in workshops, seminars, etc. are sourced from the pool of research carried out in higher institutions. On the other hand, some experiences and knowledge gathered from workshops and trainings are introduced into the formal school curriculum to improve and foster effectiveness and efficiency in teachers' competencies and students' learning experience; thereby improving the standard and quality of education. Moreover, experience, they say, is the best teacher; most of what instigate changes in the curriculum of formal education is learnt informally everywhere and instances where learning is possible. This accounts for why formal educational curriculum is never static nor rigid, but dynamic, flexible, and subject to review from time to time in accordance with social, cultural, economic, political, religious necessities or needs.

The relationship subsists between semi-formal education and the social media is that although the former was traditionally carried out within a physical environment, however, with the recent social media revolutions, semi-formal education also takes place in the smart virtual environment provided by social media sites. Moreover, like informal and formal education, relevant materials for semi-formal education are sourced from the inexhaustible pool of social media contents or library.

The social media as an effective tool for teaching and learning in formal and informal education

One fundamental element that undergirds teaching and learning is communication. "Communication is the process of sending and receiving information from one part (sender) to another (receiver). The basic communication model consists of five elements: the sender, the receiver, the message, the channel and feedback" (Jacob, 2018, 143). Learning could only be considered achieved when the learner sends a clear feedback through the appropriate channel to the teacher. Traditionally, the appropriate channel of excommunication as far as teaching and learning are concerned is the physical classroom (in the case of formal education) or at any physical space (in the case of informal education) where face to face teacher-learners, parents-children or master-apprentice interactions take place. Although the classroom has served this purpose for the better part of human civilization and surgeon on earth, yet its main lacuna is that it is often rigid and monotonous (ritualistic).

Consequently, in order to alleviate the rigidity of the physical classroom and informal physical interactions, the social media are being increasingly incorporated into the educational system or teaching and learning activities. The social media can now be plausibly considered the alternate synthetic classroom or complementary virtual classroom or village square. It is also considered "a foundation for a more flexible way of passing knowledge and changing the knowledge-base of the learner - a social learning where the learner is comfortable in his/her environment and can contribute to learning materials which will help all the participants" (Sanusi, Adelabu & Okunade, 2014: 25). The social media allow for relative freedom and

liberty of the learner in the process of teaching and learning. The term social media is an amalgam of two words-social and media. Let's attempt a brief definition of the two concepts.

Social media

Social: Scores of scholars have attempted to conceptualize their understanding of the term "social"; hence there are countless definitions of the term. However, a significant definition of the concept views it as an essential attribute of living things. Mathur (2012: 1), designated the term as the intercourse of a specie of living beings with other living beings. The essence of this intercourse is to foster collective co-existence not minding whether or not such interaction is voluntary or involuntary. Humans are gregarious animals, as such they can neither exist nor live nor survive nor flourish outside the context of social intercourse or dialogue. Little wonder then Aristotle designated humans as social animals. Therefore, the term social ontologically refers to people's interactions, relations, activities and collective experiences as humans. This interaction may be situated within a geographical area or clime and may not also be limited to any identifiable physical space or place (this interaction can happen in virtual environments). Humans enjoy an ontological social cobweb or networking that simply indicates that each and every individual human being's life, survival and flourishing are inexorably yoked to this ontological social cobweb. Hence, aided by the quantum or mega shift in communication and information technologies we can now talk about virtual social interactions. To be specific, humans' interactions or dialogues at the virtual space provided in the cloud and made possible by various medium called (social) media.

Media: The concept 'media' can be simply delineated as referring to the chief methods of mass communication. The term mass communication describes communication between large numbers of people in a given time. There are basically two types of media-print media and electronic media. The electronic media is further divided into broadcast media and social media; and the latter falls under the ambience of the thrust of this chapter.

Social media: The term "social media' is formed by the amalgamation of the words 'social' and media' or by placing both side by side. Literally, the term social media can be interpreted as the media for the peoples' interaction or the media of social dialogue or activities. It could also be described as the platform for social activities outside the natural physical environment or space. There are countless definitions of social media advanced by scholars from different fields or disciplines and by social scientists. For instance, social media has been described as Internet-based software and interfaces that allow individuals to interact with each other through the exchange of certain details about their lives-such as biographical data, personal photos, professional data and current ideas (Social Media, 2022). The keywords in the above definition are internet-based, software and interfaces. These words leave us with the impression that first, social interactions at this level are enabled by the internet in the virtual arena (software); second, it also involves networking, or it integrates networks (interfaces of networks). Another important definition of social media worth noting is the definition advanced by Kumar and Bobby (2022: 5), that describes it as the "activities that integrate technology, social interaction

and content creation... micro blogs and more”. Examples of the social media include Facebook, WhatsApp, Messenger, Telegram, Yuletide, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, Tiktok, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Flickr, Wechat, Vimeo, Viber, Bizsugar, Zoom, Google Classroom, and many other. In order to achieve a concrete conceptualization and significant graphic portrayal of the nature and essence of the social media, it is pertinent to discuss the main characteristics of the social media.

Key characteristics of social media

Charles Wankel outlined the basic characteristics of the social media to include:

- i.** Free Web Space,
- ii.** Unique Web Address,
- iii.** Possibility of Building Profiles,
- iv.** Virtual Connection with Friends and Relatives,
- v.** Real Time Content Upload Facility,
- vi.** Feedback,
- vii.** Time Stamp.

Free web space

The social media have created a limitless virtual space for the free dwelling of all humans. Social media websites or links users take advantage of the free virtual space provided by the internet to upload their contents. There is just enough space for any and every content and soft material one may wish to upload into this web space provided by the internet and social media. Unlike the limited physical space, so long such baggage is soft and one has internet subscription, he or she can occupy whatever amount of space they want in the virtual estate provided by the social media.

Unique web address

The users of social media have to opportunity to have personalized unique web address and unique identity that enable them to share their e-content in real time (Wankel, 2010: 242). This unique or personalized web address may be likened to private physical address obtainable in the regular world.

Possibility of building profiles

One unique feature of the social media is that it creates the possibility for people to build personalized profiles. Based on this possibility, the social media grants the individual access to like-minded people to interact with each other (Wankel, 2010: 242). In other words, speaking with specific reference to the educational industry, respective professionals from different fields are granted access to various platforms where they meet in the cloud for the purpose of enriching their professional experience for optimal productivity. To achieve this lofty possibility, “social media spaces have recently been integrated into the tertiary educational system (curriculum). Educationists take advantage of these sites to synergize and harmonize informal and formal education. They take positive advantage of these sites to create personal

online profiles, interact with their colleagues and to share ideas useful to their field and discipline. In order to maintain the core essence of creating these online profiles, these users define boundaries and choose specific individuals with whom they may connect to and definitely for exchange of relevant knowledge (Boyd and Ellison, cited in Khanam, Quraishi & Kausar, 2022: 28). These boundaries became necessary to forestall the intrusion of unwanted contents and individuals that are capable of derailing the core values and essence of creating such specialized profiles.

Virtual connections with friends and relatives

This is one of the stronghold and core significance and essence of the social media. It's websites and links constitute the arena for virtual meetings. Individuals who are miles apart are now able to communicate (in audio or video) through such website-enabled chat engines. One of the most interesting things about these websites is that they even provide the possibility for people to exchange ideas stuffs and contents (Wankel, 2010: 242). This fact was affirmed by Ramanigopal, Palaniappan and Hemalathan, who disclosed that the social network provides the arena where people converge for friendship, exchange of ideas and images, argument, promotion of business and to establish associations without their physical presence (Khanam, Quraishi & Kausar, 2022: 28). The possibility for sharing these stuffs is not limited to just family and friends, it is also opened to those who have not known each other from Adam. Strangers meet in social media sites and eventually become friends to the extent of exchanging pleasantries, valuables and stuffs. The possibility of people from places far apart to meet, interact and share pleasantries and other soft materials are responsible for the continual shrinkage of the globe. It is based on this tokenism that people now refer to the world as a global village.

Real time content upload facility

This feature leverages and furthers the possibility provided by the social media for people to build personalized profiles. The social media provides the capacity and enablement for users to upload their profiles and personalized contents because social media render twenty four hours services through the year (Wankel, 2010: 242). Real time also implies that people can upload their contents as they are happening live and events of the moment also immediately find their way into this supra geographical synthetic environment. Apart from offline services, the social media also provides the marvelous opportunity for real time services and relations between people.

Feedback

The phenomenon or reality of feedback is one of the hallmarks of the social media, because as noted earlier, feedback is a very vital element of communication. What is most fundamental about social media that makes it fascinating and relishing is the fact that in the social media arena feedback is immediate as it happens in physical or face to face communication, in as much as the person or people or responder at the other end is equally online when the sender initiates the interaction (Wankel, 2010: 242). Moreover, interactions in this electronic-enabled

space become more relishing for the fact that it allows both audio and video interactions and text-messaging.

Time stamp

Time stamp indicates whether or not a given post or online content recent or old. This feature characterizes every post in the social media as it points out whether or not such post is current or stale. Hence, the status of a given post influences the response of a given user. He or she may decide to either respond or withhold response (Wankel, 2010: 242). This is also a good characteristic of the social media because it would help users to distinguish between current and past information.

These characteristics of the social media discussed above leave one with the soothing euphoria and nostalgia for the social media as a fundamentally pragmatic tool for teaching learning in both formal and informal education in the contemporary society. Social media sites epitomize good environments for quality educational activities for they offer limitless educational materials. In recognition of this great prospect Khanam, Quraishi and Kausar (2022: 28), are optimistic that if social media spaces and contents are meaningfully and productively utilized for educational purposes, this may reduce the incidence of tertiary education dropout rate because of the vast sea of instructional materials and the flexibility of study time they offer. This optimism seem not to be a mere wishful thinking about the aptitudes of the social media, it is actually a practical reality. It is graphical portrayal of the relishing benefits of the social media to formal education. This assertion finds its philosophical footing on the findings of a research conducted in 2013 in Zimbabwe by Ngonidzashe. Participants in this research submitted that social sites provide elastic, verse, attractive, robust and innovative educational environment and activities (Uzma & Shabana, 2022: 27).

Moreover, another index that positions social media sites as conducive environments for learning is accessibility. Unlike the traditional media, social media sites are open to the public without government restrictions (Sanusi, Adelabu & Okunade, 2014: 26). This factor of free access enables whoever wishes to move into its space for education-related activities to do so anytime and anywhere. There are other two attributes of the social media that makes them suitable for contemporary education. These factors are immediacy and impermanence. The social media is the brainchild of the astonishing phenomenal revolution of science and technology in information technologies. “Judging from the monumental and trail-blazing posture or characteristic of science and technology, the nickname, if at all, that may suitably code name science and technology is ‘ultra-radical progress’ (Uzomah, 2022: 18). Since humans started living in the society, science and technology has been the cornerstone of human and societal evolution and development (Uzomah, 2022: 18). Consequently, In view of the prospects of the social media towards fostering qualitative and standard education for optimal educational attainment, as indicated by the foregoing characteristics of the social media, what follows is a critical discourse on the significance of the social media sites to informal education and formal education.

The general implications of social media for 21st century global education

This segment examines the general implications of the social media for the 21st century global education. On the one hand, it ruminates certain relishing factors as far as the future of education is concerned, and on the other hand, it brainstorms on certain disruptive attributes associated to the social media that global educational systems have to contend with. It is very important to state here that the foregoing hermeneutical philosophical discourse demonstrates that the most modern medium of informal and formal education powered by the phenomenal revolution in information technology is the social media. Ours is the digital age of information. Like the internet, social media are flooded with gargantuan sea of information and knowledge. Whatever information or knowledge one seeks concerning anything and everything is readily present in the social; hence, the popular slogan, ‘garbage in, garbage out’. The lion’s share of human population globally are virtually living and doing almost everything online. Being offline definitely is being out of existence in the new world order of global networking created by the social media. As the newest agent of socialization and civilization, people’s behaviour and frame of orientations is today continuously subject to change because of the vast see of information accruing from the social media. Global character formation that was hitherto the prerogative of traditional formal and informal educational systems is today largely inadvertently left to the mercy of the social media. One of the main indexes that have made the social media so powerful and so epistemologically penetrating is the fact that they allow their audience to interact with one another in a way that is fascinating, enticing, engaging, immediate and relevant. As a result, social media are the contemporary most formidable catalyst of social change and the bulwark of moral and intellectual formation. Young people who are of school age spend more time engaged in social media chatting and they barely give limited time to studies because of countless fascinating and enticing contents that distract them. The present generation’s intellectual and character formation is overwhelmingly influenced by the social media than traditional systems of formal and informal education.

According to a recent study in the US, time spent by users on social media sites rise to 83 each year. Nielson’s recent study revealed that on the global scale, young people spent more than 6 hours on social networking sites. Mostly, people of this age grade take advantage of these sites to connect and interact with family and friends (Sanusi, Adelabu & Okunade, 2014: 26). A more recent study in 2008 of students in the age range of 1-18 in 13 urban high schools in the US demonstrated that 94% used the internet, 82% go online at home and 77% have a profile on social networking site. Concerning what young minds learn whenever they are involved in social media networking, select students outlined communication skills, technological skills, docility towards new trends and views and creativity skills as the utmost skills that make the social media irresistibly attractive to them. Subsequent studies demonstrate that social media usage enables students the avenues to practice twenty first century skills that are expedient for proactive living in the prevailing contemporary society. Consequently, the study concludes that:

Students are developing a positive attitude towards using technology systems, editing and customizing content and

thinking about online design and layout. They're also sharing creative original work like poetry and film and practicing safe and responsible use of information and technology. The Web sites offer tremendous educational potential (Sanusi, Adelabu & Okunade, 2014: 26).

In Nigeria, Nwosu (Sanusi, Adelabu & Okunade, 2014: 27), in 2011 carried out a study basically on the uses of social media sites. The result of this study demonstrated similarity between Nigerian and US. According to the result of this study, out of the 200 samples, 170 respondents asserted that they use social media as a platform for connecting with friends and family, e-mailing, dating, chatting and sharing of photos and videos. Only 30 out of the 200 samples asserted that they use social media sites sometimes as means for searching for information. This goes to show that of all the times spent social networking, less than 20% is spent in educational related activities. This unfortunately suggests that the social media could constitute some sort of disruptions or troubling distractions in teaching and learning.

No doubt, the social media provides information on a wide range of issues relating to life, relationship, health, politics, religion, science and technology, morality, ethics, news, etc. Therefore, because the social media traffics and proliferates limitless information that influence peoples' worldviews, behavioural patterns, attitudes, values, and others. it is the most viable source and agent of contemporary informal and formal education. These days, not having internet subscription in one's mobile phone is like not existing. Experts working for multinational telecommunication networks have taken advantage of people's obsessive attachment to the social media to articulate an advertorial slogan. The slogan is, 'data is life'. The simple implication of this slogan is that when your mobile data subscription is active, you are indeed connected to the world and thereby living in the new order of the network of global citizens. However, if your data subscription is inactive, you are cut off from the new order and isolated like one who is almost non-existent.

Advantages of social media as tools for learning in the contemporary world

Sanusi, Omowale and Okunade (2014: 28), outlined some of the benefits of using the social media as veritable means of teaching and learning to include the following:

1. Exposure to modern technological skills,
2. Student support learning,
3. Fun and easy and creative way to learn,
4. Social Bookmarking.

Exposure of students to modern technological skills

It is obvious that when students and non-students alike take to the social media networking sites as a tool for learning they may be exposed to new technologies and technological aptitudes. Also, by engaging these sites, they develop creative skills-ability to edit and personalize content. Moreover, social media sites provide educational users the rare privilege

to share innovative and original works as well as the opportunity to practice safe and responsible use of information and technology (Sanusi, Omowale & Okunade, 2014: 28). Social scientists and technology optimists have consistently predicted that with the exponential acceleration of the mega revolution of information technologies in the current digital dispensation, the future of works and commence are computer-interment related jobs. They are of the view that sooner than expected traditional jobs would give way for computer-based (technology) skilled jobs (teaching jobs inclusive). Hence, social media sites has the potentials of formally and informally raising the young minds for the future that is being envisaged by equipping them with the prerequisite skills, aptitude and abilities.

Student support learning

Teachers, tutors, or lecturers can take advantage of the opportunity the social media's teaching and learning environment provides to offer support to learners. Sanusi, Omowale and Okunade (2014: 28), are of the view that this learning support is only possible when educators have good knowledge of the skills students learn and the experience, they get exposed to while on social media spaces. Aware of the latter, educators could enhance and improve those skills by guiding them towards the appropriate and enrich sites. However, this can only be achieved if tutors are digital and social media literates and if digital and social media literacy is incorporated or integrated into the curriculum. With regard to informal education, parents, guardians and other social institutions and structures of socialization can only appropriately monitor and facilitate critical and meaning use of social media by their children and wards if they are media and digital literates. This parental and filial support is essential to ensure that what their wards consume from this machine learning are morally worthwhile and intellectually edifying.

Fun, easy and creative platform for learning

Common sense practical experience amply demonstrates that learning is more fascinating, interesting and relishing when it is carried out in a free, flexible and less structured environment. Prominent philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, Rousseau, Montessori, etc. have consistently advocated for the play-way method or fun-filled method as a veritable method of teaching and learning. Fun or humor has a soothing or relaxing effect on the psyche of students and therefore favorably disposes them towards learning. The relaxed aura fostered by the social media induces the right frame of mind necessary for learning on its users. Consequently, social media dynamic and creative platform provides suitable vicinity for fun and easy educational activities. As such, this machine learning environment and tool is suitable for both formal and informal education.

Social bookmarking

Bookmarking is considered one of the benefits derivable by teachers and learners if the social media is incorporated into the educational system. Specifically, the significance of using bookmarking is that bookmarks could be saved online so that teachers as well as students can access them from any computer anywhere and everywhere. Moreover, bookmarks also come with the options either marking the bookmarks public or private. The chief functions of

bookmarks to teaching and learning is that if made public, it offers students the opportunity to discover their uses (Sanusi, Omowale & Okunade, 2014: 10). These benefits derivable from integrating the social media into the curriculum of formal education and informal education make the social media relishing and fascinating. Hence, without any iota of equivocation, one can assert that the social media is a bolding source and springboard of and arena for both informal and formal education.

The disruptive impact of the social media on education: formal and informal

The social media as the new order of informal and informal education are doing good and at the same time doing great harm. This paradox makes these sources of contemporary education relishing and at the same time fraught. Relishing because they are endless sources of information, they make information handy, swiftly and in real time. On the other hand, these sources of informal and formal education fill man with the feeling of fraught as a resultant consequence of their lack of censorship, quality control and quality assurance. This fundamental limitation is responsible for the proliferation of fake news and other destructive and disruptive information and materials that are causing negative social change globally. The new global civilization that is being created by this oxymoronic phenomenon is totally redefining the meaning and essence of human existence and the social essence of humans. Through this emerging technology enabled by the satellite, the world is gravitating towards a mono-culture. But a culture that redefines everything we have ever known and thought about human values and knowledge, human nature, life and living in the society. A culture that is more or less a trans-valuation of core values of the traditional society. For the conservative minded segment of the society, this trending trans-socialization and trans-civilization is profoundly troubling and inimical to the focal teleology of education as far as human values and social coercion is concerned. Parents and the society are no longer authorities as far as formal and informal education is concerned as young minds now see the social media as an infallible authority.

The mindset and behaviours of young folks are formidably influenced and shaped by social media. Hence, the social media is steadily and rapidly sidelining traditional modes of formal and informal education. Whether or not this would be a suitable paradise for humans or totally destructive of their core essence and values, is currently subjected to wild speculation and heated debates. Be that as it may, it is germane to opine that what is most certain now is the fact that the social media is a bolding instrument and institute for formal and informal education; and second, the future of human knowledge and life is pregnant and no one has developed the ultrasound machine to reveal what the future is pregnant of. Against the backdrop of the general ironic and dilemmatic significance of the social media in particular, it behoves to look at the specific disadvantages (disruptive consequences) of the social media respectively. There are a number of disruptive issues that are the advertent and inadvertent consequences of the social media. However, only few that are of crucial concern to this study are discussed below.

Naivety and lack of comparing views, critical thinking and mindedness

A popular cliché has it that no man is an island. If this cliché is anything to go by, it extols and recommends the virtue of cross-fertilization of ideas. However, this human and academic virtue is apparently lacking in the virtual environment of the social media. According to the findings of Brabazon's (2014: 21), most students who use social media sites do not search for diverse opinions to enable them present constructive judgments; instead, they drift into the fallacy that presumes that if something appears online it is automatically true or correct. For Brabazon (2014: 21), this makes students to assume rather than think, then cut and paste rather than read. This negative phenomenon which may be plausibly considered a juvenile naivety and gullibility results from the palpable lack in digital and media literacy skills-the critical prowess to appraise contents and ideas to establish their truth values, credibility, accuracy and significance. It is germane to assert without any iota of equivocation that the vice of 'copy and paste which has become a common habit among the contemporary day students is responsible for plagiarism. Therefore, this is quite a serious drawback to the attainment of the goals and purposes of education of civilized people.

However, one may validly argue that this is not of the making the social media, hence its solution also does not lie with the social media. This claim is factual because experience has also shown that a good number of adolescents tend to see parents, elders, books and teachers as unquestionable authorities. Based on this, they exhibit a high level palpable gullibility that leaves one to wonder whether or not they are rational entities. Consequently, there is the dire need for school curriculum to introduce courses and subject in philosophy and logic that would stimulate the desired critical mindedness in an average student or learner. From the informal perspective, parents and significant others who are stakeholders to informal education are also expected to raise generations of critical thinkers. They are to treat children and youths as rational beings and device means of stimulating critical thinking and consciousness in them so as to guide against gullibility and naivety.

Information overload and lack of quality assurance and control mechanisms

The social media consists of a gargantuan database. This massive database is a profoundly rich educational resort and source. Based on this tokenism, parents, teachers and learners have an unlimited access to the boundless sea of information it provides. Ordinarily, this would have been counted as exclusively advantageous to the education industry and economy. However, even why this is ineluctably good for teaching and learning, yet it also represents a dangerous disruption to proper teaching and learning and the optimal attainment of the goals of both informal and formal education. This empirical assumption is founded on the fact that the unrestricted flow of information into the world of virtual environment of the social media and the subsequent free entry and exit of users without supervision undoubtedly give rise for quality assurance and quality control issues. The overtly openness of the social media creates room for quality assurance and control issues. These sources of informal and formal education fill man with the feeling of fraught as a resultant consequence of their lack of censorship, quality control and quality assurance. This fundamental limitation is responsible for the proliferation of fake

news, hate and malicious speeches, unverifiable and inaccurate information and other destructive pieces of information that are causing negative social change globally.

Most students and other armature researchers and users who trope into the social media space to source for data to attend to various academic assignments and projects may not have acquired the requisite digital and media literacy skills needed to adequately make informed choices, appropriately locate, access and share information, and even comprehend information they retrieve. It is also possible that they may not also have the requisite skill to analyze ideas and opinions in a variety of forms in order to establish the author's purpose and the proposition such author is asserting. The criticality needed to appraise the quality and credibility of such content may also be obviously lacking. Moreover, the destructiveness that may also be attributed or be a fallout of the information overload of the social media is the issue of ethos. Most students who approach the virtual space provided by this technologically enabled synthetic environment may not have developed the level of ethical decorum and stamina required to exhibit appreciable social responsibility and responsiveness. The most worrisome phenomenon about the issue of overload and lack of quality control and assurance is the saturation and proliferation of adult materials (pornographic audios, videos and pictures) and information in the social media sites. This constitutes a formidable distraction to young and impressionable minds who daily trope to the social media. The danger this portends to the moral and intellectual formation of these young chaps is better imagined.

Consequently, students lacking the requisite digital/media literacy skills and the moral stamina to resist the enticing and enthralling dangerous and fake information that saturate social media sites, alongside good and sagacious pieces of information, are negatively affected. When they approach this good and at the same time dangerous virtual terrain unaided and unsupervised, the possibility of achieving disastrous ends is not only immanent but highly certain. The aftermath of this is the various disruptive behaviours, antisocial behaviours and maladaptive behaviours that are now commonplace among youths and other age grades. Against this backdrop, it could be deductively concluded that one of the grave disruptive tendencies of the social media machine learning environment is the proliferating and entrenching of negative socialization and civilization. Today, social media influencers overwhelmingly control the moral consciousness of an average youth.

The social media and the raising of the contemporary day African child

This last segment critically examines the implications of disruptive social media for the African formal and informal education. The African continent like other continents of the globe has rented a residence in the synthetic social media environment. "With the ever-increasing numbers of people from this birthplace of humanity (Black race) using social media, Africa, no doubt is progressively gaining fame in the spheres of social networking. African youths have completely fallen for this catchy and trendy new technology of social media" (Ephraim, 2013). Youths in Africa make use of social networks multi-purposely. They use it for personal connection, entertainment, gossip, research, and others. According to Ephraim (2013), statistics

emerging from research carried out in three African countries (Egypt, Nigeria and South Africa) indicate fascinating patterns of social media use amongst adolescent youths. Consequently, the social media has become a powerful and innovative tool for moral and intellectual education of young minds in the present dispensation. As a formidable tool for informal education, the African people are now consciously and unconsciously learning, unlearning and relearning values and patterns of orientations. As such, the social media is smartly displacing traditional systems of formal and informal education in Africa and asserting itself as the extant innovative agent of African re-socialization and re-civilization. As it stands today, one cannot deny that the character and intellectual formation of an average African child is profoundly influenced by what he/she learns from social networks. And this makes proper parental and societal upbringing of children in the African world today more herculean than ever.

Everything that has advantages, they say, invariably has disadvantages. This is true about social networking in Africa. The disadvantage of social media use is that its abuse is causing maladaptive and abnormal behaviours among youths in and out of the physical school environments. “For instance, as it is the case with other globalizing continents of the world, the African states are now confronted by negative effects of social media technologies (Ephraim 2013). These negative effects fundamentally impact both their formal educational attainment and their proper value orientation and socialization. Generally, social networking sites arrest students’ attention and divert it to non-educational and inappropriate interactions and worthless chatting (Ezumah, 2013: 28-29). An outline of these malaise include increase in antisocial behaviours, abnormal or maladaptive classroom behaviours, decline in reading culture, disrupt in English Language proficiency, increased failure in academic achievement and increase in exam malpractices and cybercrimes. The cumulative effect of these malaises is the ironic increasing poor performance of students and the rebellion of young folks against traditional institutions and the widespread moral decadence in the African continent today. It is germane to place on record here that whatever affects formal educational formation, inevitably affects the informal educational sector. Therefore, (as it shall be made explicit below) the cumulative effect of the disruptions in informal education is the antisocial and vicious behaviours that constitute a formidable pushback to effective informal education in Africa. Let’s take close look at these main disruptive tendencies that are of great concern.

Abnormal or maladaptive classroom behaviours

As far as formal schooling is concerned, social media has the tendency of disrupting the moral formation of learners. Many students in African schools today consciously and unconsciously exhibit traits of abnormal or maladaptive behaviours that are antithetical to their schools’ moral codes or normative expectations; thanks to their inordinate and obsessive social media networking. The school as a crucial agent of socialization has moral codes, norm or standard of behaviour or behavioural patterns or normal behaviours expected from students. Hence, “normal behaviour is that behaviour that is supportive and responsive to the desired demands of academic and social activities in the school” (Amaechi-Udogu, Chukwunonyenim &

Ovensehi, 2020: 236). Going by the dictates of the polar concept, abnormal behaviour becomes a behaviour that deflects from expected behavioral patterns. Abnormal behaviours are considered maladaptive and disruptive in nature. According to Ekechukwu and Amaeze (2016: 19-27), disruptive behaviours are those voluntary or involuntary actions of students that are capable of inhibiting effective teaching and learning in an academic environment. Practical examples of disruptive behaviours outlined by Honolulu Community College and cited by Ekechukwu and Amaeze (2016: 19-27), include physical, verbal psychological harassment or threat to the teacher, lecturer, a member of staff or towards fellow students. For Ekechukwu and Amaeze (2019: 19-27), verbal assault, bullying, gaming, eating, sleeping, singing, incessant or inordinate movement from one point to another, passing notes to friends during class sections, writing of love letters, poking and excessive talking are to be seen as disruptive behaviours in the classroom. In addition, passiveness and inactive participation in the class can also be categorized as a disruptive behaviour in the classroom.

At this point, the question that ensues is, what is the relationship between social media networking and disruptive behaviours in the African classroom? In response to this question Oporum (2017: 20-29 43-57), opined that the social media is responsible for most disruptive behaviours amongst students. He contended that contemporary day students swiftly adopt all manner of abnormal behaviours owing to quick access to internet facilities. The contention that social media networking is responsible for most disruptive behaviours that undesirably impact behaviour of students in Africa as in elsewhere in the globalizing world is not based on mere speculations. This assertion has been validated by several studies in Africa. For instance, a study carried to ascertain the nexus between social media and students' disruptive behaviour in faculties of education in three Rivers State Universities, Rivers State, Nigeria established that there is a positive high connection between the use of Facebook, Instagram and students' disruptive behaviours. The use of e-mail and WhatsApp has deleterious connection with students' disruptive behaviours (Amaechi-Udogu, Chukwunonyenim & Ovensehi, 2020: 236). On the strength of these findings, the study plausibly predicted that increase in the use of Facebook and Instagram will result to a corresponding increase in disruptive classroom behaviours (Amaechi-Udogu, Chukwunonyenim & Ovensehi, 2020: 236). It must be quickly submitted that social media in themselves are not automatically the causes of disruptive behaviour rather the uncritical, indiscreet and abuse of them in the form of addiction is responsible for abnormal behaviour that ensue. This factual claim is justified by the findings of a study carried out by Uzonna (2018: 15-25), which reveals that inappropriate and habitual students' use of Facebook is causing grave problems in their academics because of addictions. Moreover, the addictive use of Instagram for sharing images and photos is also causing avoidable distraction to students both at home and within their school environment.

Recent studies have lucidly established that disruptive behaviours which are consequences of abuses and inappropriate use of social media by students in Africa have of recent become one of the most formidable classroom problems militating effective classroom control, management and teaching achievement (Amaechi-Udogu, Chukwunonyenim & Ovensehi,

2020: 237). Teachers, tutors and lecturers in the today African schools would agree no less that effective classroom control and management is increasing becoming difficult if not herculean. This quagmire is not the exclusive preserve of the classroom and school environment. The home and the larger society also unfortunately notice all sorts of deviant behaviour in the children and wards. The latter are becoming more and more un-teachable and uncontrollable; thereby frustrating the attainment of the lofty goals of informal education in Africa.

Decline in reading/studying culture

One of the disheartening maladies of indiscrete social media usage in most African countries today is the growing decline in the reading culture of students in Africa. One of the greatest significant harms, it might be argued, the existence of the social media (the Internet) has done to the modern student and scholarship is the unfortunate and catastrophic steady decline of reading culture. That there is a steady drastic diminishing of the culture of reading among students and even their teachers in Africa is no longer a matter of speculation but an overwhelming empirical fact. For instance, in Nigeria, various studies have revealed a drop in the reading culture of an average Nigerian student and child as a result of the desire for entertainment contents and other sensual titillating materials in the social media. In the words of Shabo and Usofia (2009: 259-269), the reading culture of most (if not all) students in Africa has decline in view of the advent of social media. A 2018 study targeted towards establishing the effects of social media on the reading culture of tertiary students in Ghana reveals that social media has become an essential factor of the daily life of tertiary students and it is progressively and stably taking over the consciousness of adolescents. And the constant and excessive use of social networking sites is statistically impacting negatively on their reading culture (Dukper, Agyekum & Arthur, 2018: 47). Some student respondents conceded to the fact that they spend most of the hours of the day on social media environments. This invariably disrupts their classroom and library concentration and has drastically reduced time spent reading and therefore, diminished their reading culture (Dukper, Agyekum & Arthur, 2018: 53). This Ghanaian experience is also replicated in other African countries.

Adeniyi (2022: 126), is of the view that the inability of students in Nigeria to read is traceable to the procrastination among students owing to their increasing daily involvement with social media. Thousands of Nigerian secondary school folks see spending less than twenty minutes reading as burdensome even when they could spend hours on idle chats. Therefore, he concluded that there is a tendency which portrays that thousands of students in Eastern, Southern and Northern Nigeria have the same problem. In other words, unfettered use of social media has steadily declined their reading culture and one of the major factors that explains this unfettered obsession with the social media is the ugly fact that majority of African (Nigerian) students deeply see social media materials as sacrosanct irrespective of their credibility (correctness or wrongness) than reading their books.

The unfortunate drop in reading habits that is of concern is not just a drop in reading printed educational materials (text) or materials related to students' courses of study, the corresponding

drop in studying such materials virtually is also of great concern. This is one of the principal factors responsible for the increasing decline in students' educational achievements and outcome. It is philosophically significant to observe that the unavoidable resultant consequence of this decline in the reading habit of students is a corresponding decline in writing culture. The art and science of writing (prolific writing) is not merely a product of reflection on ideas proceeding from within the individual writer, rather it is more essentially a product of the individual writer's reflection on the vast materials he/she read. Extensive reading, research and wider consultation enhance students' educational achievement. Therefore, this unfortunate disruptive reverse culture is a significant pushback towards accepting the social media as a good digital and smart environment for teaching and learning in Africa.

Increases plagiarism

Before the advent of the social media and the subsequent explosion of information and knowledge, students were accustomed to digging deep into the recesses of published materials for knowledge or information in order to properly carry out their take-home school assignments and projects. However, with the advent of the social media and the internet in the post information and digital age, students developed the bad habit of laziness, procrastination, indiscipline and dishonesty. The development of coldness towards reading and its attendant consequence of unwillingness to think but assume, dastardly gave rise to the habit or practice of copy and paste. The natural and logical inference from this is that this is responsible for the high level of plagiarism experienced today in scholarship in general. Hitherto, students go to tutors and also consult books to help them do their assignment, but now they browse or page through relevant websites for ready-made papers and other academic works. The high level of decreasing educational attainment today and the general malpractices that characterize internal and external exams globally is also attributable to this degeneration of learning rates among students. To say the least, this is an arduous destructive consequence of the social media. This of course constitutes a significant disruption in informal and formal education in Africa.

Disrupts English language proficiency

One area the social media has unfortunately made a bad in-road is the area of English language proficiency among youths in English speaking African countries. Most African countries, especially West Africa, adopted English as their lingua franca not because it is their mother tongue but because it was their colonizers' tongue. So, English is but a vestige of colonization. Be that as it may, proficiency in English language essentially depends on frequent usage and adherence to the rules of grammar especially in writing and reading. Invariably, the reverse distorts and militates against fluency and proficiency in its usage. Studies have convincingly established that the latter is the case in Africa where youths have devised certain and numerous unconventional and funny social media shorthand writing. Adeniyi's (2022: 127), studies indicate that Nigerian students are of the habit of using short-handwriting to chat with friends. Being accustomed to this habit, they knowingly or unknowingly employ same short-handwriting in their interactions outside social media and even in their academic works. The habitual use of unconventional shorthand writing by African young folks has adverse effects.

For instance, a 2016 study on the impact of social media on students' academic performance established that most student respondents witnessed negative effects like late submission of assignments, poor grammar spelling, less study time and poor academic performance (Haseena & Rasith, 2016).

A chat with most educationists (teachers and lecturers) in Africa reveals that the use of unconventional shorthand writing by most African students has had adverse negative impact on their English language fluency and proficiency. An average African youth today cannot speak good English or write articulately and expressively in English, thanks to social media disruptive unconventional shorthand writing. Experience has shown that taking dictation for an average secondary and most alarming tertiary institution student in Africa is becoming more and more difficult because of the inability of most students to spell even simple and common words. As it would be established shortly, this distortion of English language in the guise of social media dictions affects the overall experience and performance in school because language is the only vehicle through which we communicate our ideas. Good and qualitative ideas cannot be communicated except via good language. Therefore, language disruption in general and English language in particular should be taken seriously by all stakeholders to education in Africa. Recent studies have established a strong relationship between disruptive social media shorthand writing and the increasing educational attainments and performance. It is plausible to agree with Adeniyi (2022: 127), that the error of using shorthand writing during exams also accounts for why most students perform abysmally in examinations.

Increase in exam malpractices and failure in academic achievement

A study in Ghana on the use of social media and its impacts on academic performance of tertiary students, discovered that majority of students in Ghana got entangled in social networking sites; and that most users of social networking sites employed them for chatting and downloading materials that are not relevant to their studies and this resulted in poor academic performance (Hamid, Waycott, Kurnia & Chang, 2015: 1-9). Another strong reason responsible for the increasing abysmal performance of students in African was pointed out by Adeniyi (2022: 127), who argued that many students perform woefully because of their inability to spend quality time studying. The logic is simple, students' reading culture has declined and less time and concentration is given to studying within and outside classrooms. In agreement with inductive logic there would be an increase in exam malpractices and failures.

Anti-Social Deviant Behaviours

Antisocial and deviant behaviours constitute the zenith of the disruptive consequences of inordinate and morally repressible use of social media in Africa. The most essential and fundamental goal of formal and informal education is proper value orientation and moral formation of students. This is why character or moral formation is seen as not just one of the cardinal pillars of education but the foundation of education. However, as it stands today, the prevailing culture of social networking and the trans-valuation of values (unlearning of traditional socialization and civilization and relearning social media's trans-socialization and

trans-civilization), is unfortunately militating against this wholesome goal of formal and informal education in Africa.

Inordinate social media usage has grave implications not just for the school environment but also for informal education and the larger African society. Most antisocial and deviant behavioural traits or vices prevalent in the larger African society today are aftermaths of imprudent social networking by young folks. Using Nigeria as a case study, Adeniyi (2022: 126), observed that today a teeming population of secondary school students in Nigeria learnt certain antisocial behaviours like fraudulent habits, bad attitudes and other related character traits and vices which are unique to social media. Citing a concrete example to substantiate his claims, he alluded “four Nigerian teenagers who murdered a girl in Ogun state in early 2022 for ritual in their confessional statement held that they learnt such abominable act from the social media (Adeniyi, 2022: 127). Similarly, a 2018 research in Ghana established that social media fosters disruptive behaviours among students of Tamale Technical University. The study revealed that students of this tertiary institution are exposed to fraud, drug use and abuse, pornography and other vulgarities that disrupt students’ academic attainments (Dukper, Agyekum & Arthur, 2018: 47).

One of the major social vices that is rampant among Nigerian youths and elsewhere is Africa is the quick money syndrome (cybercrime) known as “yahoo yahoo” or its rebranded G+. Every now and the social media and the Nigerian online and print dailies are a washed with news of youths and even under age boys and girls involved in ritual killings and selling of human parts. Human parts are required for the ritual fortification of those involved in the G+ internet cum social media fraud. Some other fraudulent vices African students learn from the social media nowadays are cybercrimes like cyber violence against women and cyber bullying (Basson et al., 2011: 392). Cyber bullying is today rampant in the African society, thanks to the social media. By definition, cyber bullying occurs when:

Kids use any social medium to intimidate, harass, embarrass or demean others. Bullies may upload embracing pictures or information on social sites, send threatening or unpleasant messages, trick kids into divulging personal data on instant messenger or impersonate someone else to send mean messages (Cybercrime, 2022).

These antisocial and abominable behaviours are profoundly antithetical to the African normative system and everything that the African traditional philosophy of education represents. In an article titled, *Religio-cultural perspectives and their contributions to the historical development of education and civilization of nations*, Uzomah (2022: 9), makes sense of the African traditional education thus:

The African traditional concept of education was erected on the concept of the African mind. The African

mind is an ideology that believes in the cyclic nature of the world. This consists of three worlds- the world of the unborn, the world of the living and the world of the living dead. The hallmark of the African education is for moral development and a harmonious communitarian living. An upright living is necessary to maintain harmony between these three worlds. Since African morality and worldview is theo-centric, the child is to believe in the continuum of life, the unity of the worlds: world of the living, world of the living dead, and the world of the unborn. One is to be conscious against committing abominations, for this upsets the moral order and immanently spells doom for both the offender and the mother earth.

The disruptive and deviant behavioural traits synonymous with the prevailing social media culture deflect from the mode and goals of the traditional African education system. “In ancient Africa, there was no formal mode of teaching, rather, time honoured cultural values, attitudes, expected pattern of behaviour, gender lore, morals and norms were veritably communicated through folktales, parables, riddles, proverbs etc., in family gatherings and at moon light plays. Girls were instructed by their mothers on how to be well behaved, be of high moral probity and rectitude. They are to be meek, gentle, chaste, obedient, submissive and genial. They were taught that purity (preservation of one’s virginity before marriage is a supreme norm of purity), is the womanness of the woman” (Uzomah & Isanbor, 2019). “The education of women was to make them virtuous to form them into perfect homemakers. Hence, they were trained to be submissive in all things and to be morally upright. In other words, through education, women were socialized to be good home keepers. The men were educated to be strong, hardworking and honest. Generally, integrity was the supreme value which education instills or bequeaths to the learner” (Uzomah, 2022: 9). However, today the availability of the social media is undermining this teleology of African informal and formal educational ideology. Boys as well as girls, men and well as women are now exposed to sensational information that construes traditional episteme and value system as obsolete and ridiculous. The intellectual and moral formation of the African child is now profoundly influenced by social media bloggers and influencers. Celebrities are powerful social media influencers. As such, their ostensible lifestyles and licentious living have far reaching influence on the teeming population of social media users, especially youths. This is revolutionizing virtually all we have ever known about human values and the essence of society.

Parents as well as their children are distracted by social media, although not in the same magnitude. Parents are seen most times glued to their phones instead of spending quality time educating their children morally. Most African children today regard the social media as a valuable source of moral education instead of relying on their parents. It is unfortunate that

contrary to the objectivist and conservative view of morality that the African parents epitomise, the social media traffics the civilization of ethical relativism, subjectivism and moral nihilism. This extant normative culture of the social media ought to be most worrisome to every well-meaning African mind and educationist because it distorts the proper essence of the African formal and informal educational sensibility and object. “It is germane to assert that, if education has just a sole aim, object or goal, this would be that the essence of education is to transmit accumulated human experience and knowledge epitomized or reposed in the reservoir called culture to the present generation and posterity (Uzomah, 2022: 1). The foundation of the African culture is its conservative and objectivist normative system. This normative system is the custodial and reservoir of core moral values and ethical frameworks of antiquity that foster moral rectitude and peaceful and harmonious co-existence of the African people. The school system (whether formal or informal) is saddled with the noble responsibility of transmitting these inestimable legacies to posterity by coercively inducing adolescents to walk in the path constructed by this rubric.

Conclusion

The forgoing philosophico-literary discourse in this chapter is a hermeneutical attempt towards conceptualizing the meaning, nature, types and essence of education in juxtaposition with the practical significance of the social media. Among other feats attained, the discourse has lucidly demonstrated that education is a lifelong human activity and process that naturally align with the nature and fate of man in the society in particular and in the universe at large. As an experience and activity that affords man the continual opportunity to live to learn and learn to live; education is the bulwark of human flourishing amidst the odds, vicissitudes and encompassments that odiously characterize human life. Continually working on the three powers of man, education is and grants power. The cardinal pillar of education is the integral formation in moral and intellect.

No doubt the gradual and sustained integration of the social media into formal and informal education as demonstrated by this treatise has pragmatic and relishing prospects because they provide states of the art digital and smart estates for quality and standard education. However, pursuant to the identified disruptive issues, the overtly openness of the social media that creates room for credibility, quality assurance and control issues; and the deviant and maladaptive behaviours that have become inadvertent and advertent aftermaths of the social media, there is sufficient reason for agitation about the future of informal and formal education especially in Africa. However, notwithstanding these genuine concerns, the social media smart learning is a necessary evil that humans cannot but embrace in this extant digital and smart age and society. Indeed the future of mankind’s knowledge or education economy is in the bosom of information technologies. The social media emerging technologies in particular and the technology in general, per se are not ontologically disruptive or destructive rather it is the abuse or inappropriate use of technologies that gives rise to real and imagined disruptions and destructions. Therefore, the chapter recommends thus:

- i.** Humans must cultivate the discipline and virtue expedient for the use of the social media digital classroom productively for standard and quality education,
- ii.** Digital and media literacy for all levels of education should be integrated into the curriculum to foster in students the critical mindedness for the critical analysis and appraisal of social media contents,
- iii.** Regardless of the identified advertent and inadvertent negative consequences of this smart learning tool and digital territory, it remains an inviolable necessary evil that humans must invest heavily in,
- iv.** There is the expedient need for the development of effective quality control and assurance mechanisms to forestall real and imagined disruptive and destructive tendencies of the social media,
- v.** Parents and other informal institutions of education should rise up to their responsibility and device formidable modalities to counter the negative trans-socialization and trans-civilization going on in the social media,
- vi.** All stakeholders to the African educational economy must be actively involved in social media networking so as to be conversant with the happenings in that terrain, in other to be well-fitted to counter undesirable and deleterious tendencies associated the social media networking.

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