

Disruptive social media: Towards a resilient social media ecosystem in Africa

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Preface

Social media's disruptiveness in Africa is evident in every facet of the life of Africans. Interestingly, these disruptions present opportunities that could stir up development. This book throws a spotlight on the tremendous significance of the disruption of social media in the fields of healthcare, politics, governance, conflict resolution, peaceful co-existence as well as communication and reporting. The freedom and influence of social media require that some monitoring mechanisms are put in place to guard against the unhealthy trend of invading privacy—a sting of social media. Each of the chapters in the book intelligently discusses social media disruption in an area of human endeavour and presents a scholarly probe into how resilience could be built. This book is a great resource for scholars who want to get a holistic understanding of the disruptiveness in the social media ecosystem in Africa and how resilience could be built to sustain its use on the continent.

Editors

Joshua Ebere Chukwuere

Dickson Adom

Justine John Dyikuk

Introduction

This special book titled, “Disruptive social media: Towards a resilient social media ecosystem in Africa” leans on how social media offers different avenues for people from different backgrounds in the African continent (global community) to connect with one another and harness vast opportunities for the overall development of the global south. Such vast opportunities include conducting research that in one way or another to other solves human problems in the African continent and contributes to the scientific body of knowledge. Harnessing the research opportunities associated with social media gave birth to this timely and organized textbook titled “Disruptive social media: Towards a resilient social media ecosystem in Africa” which provides holistic information for scholars in Africa and globally.

This publication edition enjoys academic rigour as a cream of scholars from institutions across the world edited the book chapters. The editorial team members are from North-West University, University of Free State, and Central University of Technology, all in South Africa; Imo State University, University of Jos, Afribold Capital Limited, Ikeja, Lagos, St. Albert Institute, An Affiliate of the University of Jos, Lead City University, and Edo State University, Uzairue, all in Nigeria; Western Philippines University, and Negros Oriental State University, all in Philippines; Superior University, and University of Gujrat, all in Pakistan; Laikipia University, Kenya; Government College of Engineering, Bodinayakkanur, India and University of Science and Technology, Ghana.

Chapter one highlights the impact of new media on Nigerians’ involvement in political and civil life in light of mediating democratic engagements. Chapter two, titled, "Personalized healthcare in Africa through social media” x-rays the factors affecting the adoption of social media in providing personalized healthcare services in Africa.

While chapter three critically analyses online YouTube news coverage of the Garissa University terrorist attack in Kenya, the fourth chapter is an evaluation of conflict resolution and peace through social media. Chapter five looks at disruptive social media linguistic elements in communication among Nigerian netizens, while chapter six features social media research methodology as it relates to conducting qualitative, quantitative, and mixed approaches. Chapter seven is a critical review of the effects of social media on the peaceful coexistence of African people.

Chapter eight explores religious activities through social media during the COVID-19 pandemic, the place of religious activities in the digital age (world), the roles of disruptive social media platforms in managing religious activities in crises, challenges in managing disruptive social media platforms in handling religious activities during health crises like the COVID-19 pandemic and managing religious activities in a health crisis period effectively through social media. Chapter nine features the significance of social media for formal and informal education.

In conclusion, this rich book is a huge resource for students, researchers, and scholars in the field of media studies and information and communication technology as well as policymakers and curriculum designers because it unpacks how disruptive social media offers insights into a resilient social media ecosystem in Africa. This epoch-making book is a must-read for all.

Foreword

It is often assumed that social media's net targets the younger generation. While this assumption is true, over half of the mid-older generation between the ages of 45-54 are increasingly getting entrapped in social media's claws. In Africa, social media's pervasiveness is a commonly experienced phenomenon among the young and old. The social media ecosystem is disruptive, that is, it challenges the status quo in all the activities carried out in the diverse spheres of the lives of Africans.

This book 'Disruptive Social Media: Towards a Resilient Social Media Ecosystem in Africa', scholarly describes using theoretical, empirical, and perspective modes of academic discourses, the relentless power and influence of social media. These remarkable influences of social media in the African geographical landscape projected by this book are in the areas of democratizing elections as well as the general political and governance structures, conflict resolution and peaceful co-existence, news coverage and reportage on terrorism in Africa, personalization of healthcare that brings healthcare to the doors of the ordinary African household, enhancing communication channels and the performance of religious activities.

While the disruptive power of social media's influence in Africa is seen as a helpful omen, there is the responsibility of heightening its value and maintaining its quality service to achieve a resilient social media ecosystem on the continent. A key remediation is maintaining trust via robust security strategies. While this is largely in the domains of service providers, individuals, and organizations must map up strategies and implement safety protocols to hold the fronts of social media's disruptiveness such that privacy is not compromised.

This book with its academically rigorous chapters that espouse social media's disruptive architecture on the African continent with several ramifications for the global social media scene is a must-read for all scholars from diverse academic disciplines as well as social media enthusiasts who have been impacted by the upsurge of social media disruption in Africa. It is hoped that the wide dissemination of this book among social media practitioners, researchers, students, and policymakers will lead to building a stronger resilience for social media's ever-growing disruption on the African continent.

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Chapter One

Mediating democratic engagement: The impact of new media on Nigerians' involvement in political and civil life

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Abstract

The new media has become a primary news stories hub in Nigeria in recent times. Stories about civic demonstrations, social crusades, public office holders, elections, political corruption, and police brutality are items that consistently make the news on new media platforms; hence, media audiences are greatly influenced with respect to political and civic matters. This study investigated the impact of new media in mediating democratic engagement among Nigerians. The study is anchored on the public sphere and social capital theories, and combined the qualitative desk and case referencing research approach. The study revealed that Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter are highly engaged platforms for democratic purposes in Nigeria as Nigerians now participate heavily in social demonstrations, contribute to political discussions, seek justice, and engage political leaders on democratic and social matters in the online space. The study also discovered that new media has improved the involvement of Nigerians in the electioneering process although much of the involvement in this area is purely online rather than at the polls where leaders are elected. The study suggests that Nigerians, especially youths, should add action to their virtual voices and move beyond holding demonstrations like we have seen in recent times, to actively getting involved in the process of electing leaders into political offices across the nation.

Keywords: Cyber journalism, Digital democracy, Government, Netizens, Nigeria, New media, Political participation

Introduction

Democracy has evolved to become a system of governance that is central in world politics owing to its provision for people-participation. The ideology behind the system is that government performs better when people are involved in the processes of their leadership. Nigeria transitioned to democratic rule in 1999, after stints of military and civil rule after the attainment of independence in the year 1960. Suntai and Targena (2017) contend that

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democracy is not sustainable unless the media is involved. This implies that the Nigerian media, as the fourth estate of the realm, has been involved in the democracy of the nation through the provision of a voice to the people, surveillance of the society, agenda setting, and framing of national issues that are covered for the understanding of the audience. The participatory nature of democracy necessitates the role of mass media as there is a need for constant information and dialogue, this explains the role of the media in a democratic state like Nigeria with an estimated population of 213 million (Worldometer, 2021).

Print, radio, and television were the dominant media platforms in Nigeria at the start of the fourth republic and they played the roles of public enlightenment, election campaigning, projection of government achievement, and interpretation of policies, among other things. One of the drawbacks of these old media is the lack of opportunity for instant and live interactions. Also, to a large extent, ownership interests and rigorous editorial processes meant that some level of 'richness' were removed from news stories before such made published on the broadcast. The new media has taken the center stage and now plays a crucial role in politics and democratic advocacy across nations, including Nigeria. McNair (2009) and Shadrach (2017) believe that this role of the new media is facilitated by its capacity to provide viable and interactive platforms for political awareness, political mobilization, political debates, and political advertising. Popular political cum democratic events where the new media has played a prominent role across nations of the world are; The US Presidential Election in 2009, The 2010 Arab Spring, The September Occupy Wall Street Protests, and the Military Takeover of Power in Egypt in 2013.

Chiefly, social media platforms such as the recently banned Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and blogging are major channels through which the global public is made aware of happenings in Nigeria today. According to The National Communication Commission (2021), the number of internet users' statistics in Nigeria as of November was 122 million. Facebook takes the largest share of this internet penetration with 83.27% sign-ups and is followed by Instagram with 10.51% (Global Stats, 2021). Africa Check (2021) pegs the number of Twitter users in Nigeria at 3 million, as of June 2021. These numbers explain why information travels fast on social media platforms. Consequently, Nigerians are more aware and involved in issues of public interest than they used to be. The 2020 #Endsars Protest, #JusticeforSylvester, and the 2015 & 2019 elections are cogent examples in line with this discourse.

New media in Nigeria have attracted the attention of research owing to its obvious effects on the socio-political domain of the life of the Nigerian citizenry. Studies such as Nwoke, Oyiga and Ihuoma (2013), Bello, Inuwa-Dutse and Heckel (2019), Suntai and Dargena (2017), Knoll, Mattes and Heiss (2020) examined the involvement of new media in .Nigeria's democracy and elections. In present-day Nigeria, dominant stories in the new media revolve around politics, civic demonstrations, social crusades, the conduct of public officeholders, elections, political corruption, police brutality, governance, and security. Consequently, there are noticeable improvements in Nigerians' involvement in political and civil demands. The study derives its

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justification from this premise and its thrust is to examine how the new media has helped to mediate democratic engagement among Nigerians.

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Examine the role of social media in democratic engagement in Nigeria,
2. Assess the dominant aspects of the political and civic life of Nigerians that the new media has helped to improve,
3. Identify the Nigerian government's responses to the use of new media platforms for democratic engagement.

Methods

This study adopted the qualitative desk research approach and case referencing. It critically reviewed secondary data from academic papers and published materials that are peculiar to the discourse. Case reference analysis is simply a detailed examination of the elements or structure of reference variables in a research activity. The study referenced eight (8) landmark cases of social media-driven democratic engagement action of youths in Nigeria.

Theoretical framework

This study is hinged on the public sphere and social capital theories. The public sphere theory evolved from the works of Jürgen Habermas (Habermas, 1989) and the assumption is “public sphere is a domain of our social life where opinions are formed”. Habermas argued that the public sphere consists of fora such as coffee houses or joints where upper-class members of society meet to discuss issues that are important and formulate opinions. Habermas' public sphere idea informed studies on public participation in and around national issues in the 20th-century global village. Social media provides a common ground for political dialogue and exchanges among users, regardless of orientation and social stratification. This study adopts the Public Sphere theory by arguing that platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram provide a public sphere for Nigerians to debate political issues and form opinions, thereby making informed decisions about democratic engagement.

Robert Putnam propounded social capital theory, and the theory explains the connection that exists among people and social networks, and the standards of mutual exchanges and trust that arise from them (Putnam, 2000). The theory represents the involvement of individuals in community engagement with a view to building networks aimed at achieving collective endeavors (Mustapha, Gbonegun & Mustapha, 2016). The social capital theory sees human relationships as a resource with the capacity to facilitate voluntary cooperation in order to achieve an endeavor or solve problems. This theory is applicable to the study as new media platforms have provided an avenue for people to converge and form communities to address challenges, despite the vast and diverse nature of contemporary Nigerian society where physical and direct contact can be difficult, if not impossible. The uniqueness of the new media is enshrined in its minimal or no gatekeeping approach, as opposed to the traditional media where there is a considerable level of control. Nigerian youths have seized this opportunity to

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actively engage the political systems, promote public concerns, call out culprits, and place a demand on leaders.

Literature review

Governance and democracy in Nigeria since 1999

Democracy is a pattern of governance, and it is a household name among international states across the world today. It is a system that allows for sustainable development when compared to authoritarian or military administration. Democracy is akin to the interests and aspirations of people, and their collective desires for change (Erunke, 2012). Democracy as a culture is rooted in the need for participation in the administration of a given state. The concept of democracy has been defined by scholars from different fields. Perhaps the most popular definition of all definitions of democracy was that which was advanced by Abraham Lincoln (Former US, President), he defined democracy as “government of the people, by the people and for the people”. Akinsanya (2000) had a broader view of the concept, to Akinsanya, democracy is not only a form of government in which rulership differs from monarchies, aristocracies, and gerontocracies; it also entails a state in which there is some form of political equality among the people. Odojin (2007), Bako (2007), and Akinsanya and Erunke (2010) contend that democracy going by its popular definition is debatable as power rests in the hand of few and there had been records of mismanagement by agents of the state through the instrumentality of force. This submission has obviously characterized the democratic governance in Nigeria since 1999.

Chisom (2021) opines that democracy defends fundamental national values such as equality, liberty, moral self-development, common and private interests, social utility, the satisfaction of wants and efficient decisions, an independent electoral umpire, a strong and vibrant judiciary, an enlightened populace, a robust and free press, democratic culture and atmosphere of peace, and security. The Nigerian Fourth Republic began on May 29th of 1999, after decades of switches between civil and military rule. Expectations were that the newborn ‘democracy’ will deliver Nigeria from the decades of oppression, and the stranglehold of greedy public officials (Erunke, 2012). Nigeria has had four administrations since the switch to democratic rule in 1999, but it is not clear if all administrations that have ruled have truly ensured transparency, accessibility, respect for the rule of law and human rights, and public accountability. After almost 23 years of democratic rule in Nigeria, the Nigerian state can be described as a disguised dictatorship manifesting in the form of disregard for the rights of the ordinary citizens of the country. The lubricator of the wheel of democracy, for example, the separation of power, can be described as a mirage in Nigeria. The “executive” crows both the “legislative” and the “judiciary” and the will of the people are manipulated in favor of a selected few. There are also documented cases of unilateralism in the affairs of governance, ‘godfatherism’, ‘god-sonism’ and/or ‘god-daughterism’, and election rigging in Nigeria (Erunke, 2012).

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Ideal democracy places a premium on people's participation, hence the prominence of the role of the media. Invariably, sustainable democracy cannot be achieved when a free press and freedom of information are not in place. This implies that a society that allows for mediated participation and unlimited access to information from the citizens is essentially a democratic society. Gambo (2013) stresses that liberal democracies rest on the capacity organs of mass media to gather and publish information that guides citizens in making rational choices.

New media in Nigeria

Peter Carl Goldmark - the then Director of Engineering and Research at The Columbia Broadcasting Service (CBS) Television Network proposed the “*New Media*” concept in 1967. In a business plan, Goldmark termed electronic video recording as “New Media” (Guo, 2021). At present, there is no unified conceptualization for the new media as scholars have attempted to capture it the best way it seems to them. Xiong Chengyu, a professor at Tsinghua University, regards new media as a dynamic concept that relies on computer information processing and internet technologies. Chengyu further notes that the new media is the summary of the communication function of the ICTs and the Internet (Mengmeng, 2019). Friedmann and Friedmann (2008) see new media as the different forms of e-communication that are made possible using computer technology. As a novel media of mass communication, new media has filled up the information gap that existed between disseminator and receiver as we have it in the traditional media. It makes for equality in information communication. Hui (2020) believes that new media is the medium that meets the information needs of the audience and provides an opportunity for user-generated content.

Technologies described as new media, according to Agboola (2014) are digital, with the characteristic of being manipulated and compressible. They are also networkable, dense, and impartial; allowing users to generate content and exchange same. This way, the content can be made available on-demand and can be viewed on any electronic device. People can interact and share the idea with friends in the virtual space; thus, opening new creative and communication horizons, with its useful inclusiveness. New media is relative, in that as a communication tool, it changes form constantly with the advancements in ICT. New media relies on digital media, the internet, mobile communication devices, and other emerging technologies to provide information services to the audience (Yang, 2019).

The foundation for new media platforms was laid in Nigeria when the country opened up its shores to ICT in the late 1990s and at the beginning of the new millennium (Wilson & Arinze, 2013). Precisely in 2001, mobile telecommunication was inaugurated in Nigeria, this laid the marker for mobile internet penetration. Web 2.0 which allowed for the assemblage and management of large crowds with common interests in social interaction was founded in 2004 (Heirmath & Kenchakkanavar, 2016). These developments allowed for the creation of new media platforms and Nigeria through these innovations began to birth novel ways of processing, disseminating, discussing, and reacting to information in the social space. The chief

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protagonists of new media, especially as a journalism channel; are blogs, social network sites, and e-news sites.

Social networks: Social networks are popular new media tools used to share content (texts, pictures, videos, and voice recordings) and experiences while facilitating electronic conversations between people or among a group of people. Besides from the primary utility of social media for social communications, Nigerians have used the medium to disseminate information on the go. People record videos and upload such for the view of people in the public space; this alongside opinions (in texts and/or pictures) can alter or consolidate perceptions of the public concerning issues. Additionally, full-fledged mass media organizations (for example, NigeriaInfo 99.3fm, Punch Newspapers, and Channels Television) also have social media platforms, especially Facebook, and Instagram, with which they complement their primary transmissions.

Blog: Blogs are websites on which personal opinions, activities, and experiences are written (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2021). Blogs contain personal experiences and commentaries that are in digital forms. Often, hyperlinks to other online articles are planted in blogs. Blogposts can be modified as events unfold. Blogs typically focus on unique themes, and they have comment sections where readers drop feedback. Many people use blogs as they would a personal journal or diary. When one writes on Facebook and receives comments, then the process of blogging has begun; tweeting a short sentence of 140 characters on Twitter also makes one a micro blogger. The same applies to a video blogger when one uploads a video on YouTube for subscribers to watch and send-in comments. Patel (2012) notes that the essence of blogging is that it gives greater room for self-expression and allows one to treat issues in greater depth. A blog can have a custom domain to distinguish the owner from the crowd on social media. Popular bloggers in Nigeria are Japhet J. Omojuwa, Bella Naija, and Linda Ikeji.

E-news sites: Otherwise called online newspapers are websites that are dedicated to the consistent publication of news stories that otherwise would have been fitted into pages of hardcopy newspapers. In Nigeria, the pioneers of online news sites are Omoyele Sowore and Dolapo Olorunyomi, the founders of Sahara Reporters and Premium Times (Igyuve & Agbele, 2017). Both platforms were launched in 2006 and 2011 respectively. Following up on the success of online newspapers, most traditional newspapers in Nigeria, if not all, now have online versions and this avails the citizenry an opportunity to access their news stories anytime and anywhere (Igyuve & Agbele, 2016). Internet penetration in the country has provided Nigerians the opportunity to run numerous weblogs; many of which provided the masses the opportunity to air their views and make a meaningful contribution to topical issue discussions. Legit.com, Nairaland, Naijapost, Naija.com, and Pulse Nigeria are among the popular news sites in Nigeria (Suntai & Targema, 2017).

The idea behind citizen journalism is enabled by new media platforms, according to Glaser (Glaser, 2006). It is a form of journalism where people without professional training in

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journalism use most tools of modern technology and the global distribution of the internet to create, augment or fact-check news content on their own or in collaboration with others. Radsch (2013) views citizen journalism as an alternative form of newsgathering and reporting that functions outside mainstream media institutions. Citizen journalism embraces new media platforms to achieve its aims, especially social media platforms such as Facebook (Individual Facebook Accounts, Pages and Groups), Instagram Handles, YouTube, and Twitter. It is also driven through the News sites like Sahara Reporters, Cable News and CNNireport; and blogs like Linda Ikeji Blog, and naij.com. Mainstream media such as Channels TV has also incorporated citizen journalism into its operation. Channels TV has the 'iWitness' reporter platform through which its audience submits on-the-go news content, especially videos, and photos. Submissions turned in are reviewed and when confirmed, are used to embellish their primary contents. This approach was useful during the 2015 general elections and the #EndSars protests.

New media and Nigerians' involvement in democratic and political engagement

At the heart of democracy is the participation of citizens. In societies that have come to be idolized for participatory politics, information has played a critical role. In developing nations like Nigeria, the new media offers spaces for the expression and mobilization of groups that have hitherto been marginalized. Hyun and Kim (2015) suggest that citizens need to be motivated to become politically active; this makes the communication of essential political information paramount. Journalism driven by social media platforms has helped improve the participation of Nigerians in politics and democratic engagement. Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube are social media platforms widely used for political participation by youths in academic environments, religious societies, and the general society. This stems from how well youths use these applications for social interaction. Dzandu, Gyamfi-Agyemang and Quansah (2016) confirm that the likelihood for youths to use social media platforms for political participation is high as they use the same social media for communication and socialization purposes. Some of these activities are political advocacy, blogging campaigning, discussions, monitoring, and reportage of electoral malpractices. Also, we have public consultations and writing to public officials (Omotayo & Folorunsho, 2020). As a space where citizens share information and discuss public affairs, social media serve as a viable platform for enhancing participatory democracy (Gil de Zúñiga, Jung & Valenzuela 2012; Kim, Shin & Kim, 2011).

Through new media technologies such as smartphones and social media platforms, individuals and groups across geographical locations receive news, share political information/news, communicate, form networks, collaborate on ideas, and make collective decisions on issues relating to their communities, towns, or cities. Mustapha and Omar (2020) add that through political discussions on social media platforms, citizens acquire political knowledge. Today, Nigerian citizens now have access to knowledge about issues that pertain to their constituencies, states, the nation, and happenings outside this shore. Events such as #OccupyNigeria, the 2015 and 2019 general elections in Nigeria, and #EndSARS movements

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are events that became successful owing to the involvement of social media. Nigerians participated in these events because they received information from online platforms. Using the #EndSars protest as a case, protesters were updated about events across the country, especially gathering points on online media (especially Twitter). This helped mobilization in different geographies. Also, during civic protests, social media provides information that helps to identify ways through which volunteering can be provided, this is called civic volunteering.

An election is a fundamental element of representative democracy. Through the election process, aspirants access public offices to represent those who invested their votes. New media technology helped to promote massive citizen participation in elections in the years 2015 and 2019 in Nigeria. Social media was used to promote candidates and manifestoes during the two elections. Personalized SMS and social media messages encouraged voting, this helped to increase individual political expression and voter-turnout on Election Day. In 2015, voters were electronically accredited on Election Day in major cities in the country. Also, social media platforms were heavily engaged by witnesses at polling booths to publish election results as votes were concluded and counted at polling units in different locations. People were calculating on their sheets, and at the end of the day when results were announced officially, the results tallied.

New media platforms have also provided the opportunity to engage political leaders. The traditional media offered a one-way communication route; this is not the case in the new media era where two-way communication is available. Public office holders and political aspirants now maintain profiles on social network applications which include Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Nigerians leverage these platforms to reach out to them. They can be sent directly or tagged on posts to call their attention. Direct e-mails can also be written to politicians. Political parties and aspirants in Nigeria, now run social media accounts to connect with the electorates and the constituents while taking feedback instantaneously. Xenos, Vromen and Loader (2014) conclude that people are shifting from a citizenship characterized by voting and writing to legislators to “a more personalized politics of self-actualization and expressive engagement”.

Social media and democratic engagement by youths in Nigeria - Landmark cases

Social media has grown into a formidable force and has undeniably influenced an appreciable number of civic & democratic engagement actions. It has formed the foundation and driven political events, civic concerns, social activism, and humanitarian movements which translated from the virtual to the reality and resulted in physical actions by concerned parties. Some landmark cases which explain the impact of social media in democratic and civic engagement by Nigerians are discussed below.

- **The #ENDSARS**

The #EndSars protest revolved around the popular Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) of the Nigerian Police - a unit created in 1992. Unlike other police units, SARS operatives worked in

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unorthodox ways and were allowed to go hard in their combat against organized crimes. Since 2016, there were registered cases of extortion, gross disregard for people's right, and unlawful arrests of innocent citizens by the SARS. Other allegations ranging from kidnappings, rapes, and extra-judicial killings were also documented against the unit. The #EndSARS hashtag was started in mid-2017 by Segun Awosanya @segalink (Techpoint, 2019). The movement gained momentum on October 3rd, 2020, when a video went viral. In the video, SARs officials were filmed shooting a young man and stealing his car (a white SUV) and leaving him for dead (abandoned him) on a road in Delta State (Abbo, Njidda & Baba, 2020). Shortly afterwards, youth-led protests scattered across different cities against police brutality spread within and outside Nigeria (Kazeem, 2020).

Shayera Dark in an Aljazeera report in October 2020 documents that for two weeks, thousands of young Nigerians, home and abroad took to the streets in their respective locations to call for the dissolution of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), owing to atrocities that officers of the unit had committed. It was the first time that these calls garnered such widespread support and international media coverage. Social media platforms played a prominent role in spreading this gospel as the EndSARS hashtag was the top trending hashtag in the world with over 2 million tweets on the 9th of October 2020 (Obia, 2020). The hashtag trended in a lot of countries including the US and the UK. Nigerian/International celebrities and high-profile personalities with large followings who jumped on the hashtag wagon, this boosted the hashtag trending.

This movement transcended the Nigerian borders and in a short time, Nigerians in the diaspora and those well-to-do within announced support to help cover the phone and data bills of demonstrators so they could afford to keep tweeting and sustaining the momentum. In South Africa, a Nigerian human rights lawyer, Omolara Oriye also orchestrated the protest via WhatsApp in Pretoria. She shared the video wherein Nigerian police officers manhandled demonstrators, as posted on Twitter. The information gap that existed as result of the weakness of local media channels were closed by social media influencers and celebrities who also participated and posted about the protest on their social media timelines.

The core of the protests included a call for the Nigerian government of to scrap SARS. Five demands were officially made on the 11th of October 2020 and published on different social media platforms by the protesters. These demands were for the release of all arrested protesters; justice for all deceased victims of police brutality and appropriate compensation for their families; setting up an independent body to oversee the investigation and prosecution of all reports of Police misconduct; psychological evaluation of disbanded SARS officers in line with Police Act before they can be redeployed; increase in police officers' salary. Lagos State felt the most impact of the demonstrations by thousands of youths at the Lekki Toll Plaza and the state secretariat for days. Other cities such as Port Harcourt, Ibadan, Kano, Cross Rivers, and the Federal Capital Territory experienced these demonstrations. The federal government responded to this movement by disbanding the unit. The IG of the Nigerian Police Force

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announced the disbandment of SARS and the commitment to advancing police reforms. A new security outfit – the Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT) was then set up (Adeleye, 2020).

▪ **#JusticeForSylvester**

In November 2021, a sad story about the death of a 12-year-old junior high school student in Lagos State headlined on new media platforms. The student, identified as Sylvester of Downen College, Lagos, died under controversial circumstances on November 30: it was alleged that he was bullied by senior students at the same school. According to the International Centre for Investigative Journalism (2021), the late Sylvester was rumored to have been attacked by some of his senior colleagues for refusing to join a cult group. He was reported to have been attacked and fed with chemical, this led him to sustaining internal injuries which resulted in his untimely death on November 30, 2021.

Using the hashtag #JusticeForSylvester, the story was the most profiled on social media in the last weeks of November in Nigeria, especially in Lagos. The traffic garnered on the online media helped to get the attention of the ministry of education, state government (Lagos and Delta states, Delta being the state of origin of the deceased student), federal legislators and the federal government. Downen College has since been shut down by the Lagos State Government (Africa News, 2021) while the police investigate the matter. Some concerned women also held a protest and candle light procession to express their grief over the death of the promising child. Primarily women, the protesters gathered in front of Downen College, Lekki, Lagos, on Wednesday morning (8th December 2021) in protest against the death of the 12-year-old. This protest was streamed live on the social media handles of on-ground protesters and even made it to BBC News Pidgin.

Before Sylvester's death, he was reported to have named five students who inflicted multiple internal injuries on him. The Lagos State police commissioner on Tuesday, 7th December disclosed that key suspects in the case have been arrested. The school has equally been heavily criticized for downplaying the severity of the issue, having denied that the injury that led to Sylvester's death was sustained in a football match. Students at the school have come out on social media platforms to deny this (PM News Nigeria, 2021). There are now petitions for the school to be investigated for acts of commission and omission, and if found culpable, be made to pay the price (Vanguard Newspaper, 2021). Through new media platforms, this event also provided an opportunity to create awareness about issues in the educational system in Nigeria, issues such as: The public-school problems of poor infrastructure, poorly paid teachers, poor learning environment and demoralized teachers. These problems have resulted in many families opting to send their children to private schools.

▪ **#BringBackOurGirls**

Bring back our girls is arguably, the most popular and biggest Twitter trend in Nigeria. It came about after the abduction of 276 female students from Government Girls Secondary School,

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Chibok, Borno State on April 14th, 2014. The popular terrorist group, Boko Haram claimed responsibility for this act. It was reported that 57 of them escaped from the trucks used to convey the students, hence, the terrorist group successfully escaped with 219 students. The issue was of national concern but the movement for bring back our girls started gaining momentum when it appeared that the sitting president appeared less concerned about the matter, having appeared at a campaign rally in Kano a day after the kidnap. His photos at the birthday party of a popular monarch were also posted on Twitter later that day. Techpoint (2019) records that the #Bringbackourgirls hashtag came about after a tweet by Oby Ezekwesili, former minister of education. The tweet reads

*‘Lend your Voice to the Cause of our Girls.
Please All, use the hashtag #BringBackOurGirls to
keep the momentum UNTIL they are RESCUED’*
— Oby Ezekwesili (@obyzeeks) April 23, 2014

Leaders across the world, international organisations, Nigerian music and movie stars, afterwards joined the campaign in solidarity. Aljazeera in 2019 reported that 107 girls, out of the 219 had been found or released after negotiations between the Nigerian government and the terrorist group. Voice of America on the 15th of April 2021 echoed the status of the hunt for the rescue of the remaining girls in its leading online article, titled: “More Than 100 Chibok Girls Still Missing Seven Years Later.” The search for the lost girls continues, with many questions still left unanswered.

▪ #RevolutionqNow Movement

Monday 8th August 2019, Nigerian activist, Omoyele Sowore, started the “RevolutionNow” movement (Roape, 2019). Organizers of the movement said the protest was intended to make the government improve the lives of Nigerians. The protest was tagged #RevolutionNow and its 5-key demands were: An economy that works for the masses; an effective and democratic end to insecurity; an end to systemic corruption and for total system change; The immediate implementation of the N30,000 minimum wage; Free and quality education for all. After mobilization on social media, hundreds of protesters in Lagos kick started the "RevolutionNow" movement which took the form of a march. Other states such as Ondo, Osun, Ogun, Cross Rivers and Abuja also experienced demonstrations by youths to the effect.

The Nigerian government condemned the protest, calling it a concealed attempt by those who lost elections to the ruling administration to destabilize the country (Adnan, 2019). In response to the protest, the federal government deployed security forces at strategic locations to douse demonstrations. The protest almost went south at some point when protesters charged security agents who responded with teargas. Two days before the start of the protest, Omoyele Sowore - convener of the protest was arrested two days by security forces, on the grounds that the protest was harmful to public peace. Sowore’s detention did not in any way halt the protest as members of the group to which the convener belonged, CORE (Coalition for Revolution) and Nigerians who bought into the movement insisted it was targeted at achieving system change

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and an end to oppression of the citizens by the ruling government. The #RevolutionNow campaign registered demonstrations in 14 cities across Nigeria. Channels TV reported that five people were arrested in Abeokuta by security forces while seven people were arrested in Ondo State. In Lagos, a Revolution Now protester was shot by the police, while nine others, including some journalists, were arrested. Pro-govt protesters and groups were equally mobilized online and offline to disrupt #RevolutionNow protest. The hashtag #RevolutionNow trended on twitter around that period and was greatly covered by news sites. The protest did not totally achieve its purpose, but it served as a forerunner to the #EndSARS protest in 2021.

▪ #OccupyNigeria protests

The occupy Nigeria protest was birthed because of the removal of fuel subsidy by the Nigerian federal government on January 2nd, 2012. The presidency on Jan. 1st, 2012, announced an increase in petrol pump price of petrol from 65 Naira to 141 Naira following the removal of oil subsidy. Subsidy is explained as the difference between the cost of importation and the locally regulated prices (Social Action, 2012) and the Nigerian Federal Government says it covers that payment on behalf of Nigerians. According to Hari (2014), Nigerians perceive the said subsidy as the only tangible benefit enjoyed from the state, hence, the gross disapproval towards its removal. Also, the hike in price of petroleum products also had negative effect on the cost of livelihood. Social media platforms which include Twitter and Facebook (Egbunike, 2015) were used to mobilize Nigerians, especially youths across major cities for demonstrations to express outrage on the increment of prices of petroleum products. Twitter's #OccupyNigeria trended massively and a hub where the torches of grievances were lit. Aborisade (2012) summed up the period as one when the country was soaked in a protest mood.

The protests left the safety of individual virtual platforms and became physical protests around popular cities in the country such as Lagos, Minna, and Abuja. Nigerians in diaspora also joined in the protests. The #OccupyNigeria drew from the Occupy Wall Street protest of New York in November 2011. It tapped the widespread sense that the people who form the basis of the society (equaling about 99%) are downtrodden. The #OccupyNigeria social movement stood against the exploitative and anti-masses policies of the Nigeria government. The government response was a reduction of the new petrol pump price by 30%, bringing it to ₦97 after days of protests.

▪ 2015 & 2019 Elections

The 2015 presidential election is perhaps one of the most keenly contested elections in Nigeria. One of the qualities that stood out the 2015 election is that it saw a large participation of users on Twitter, Facebook, blogs, and online news platforms. One of the platforms heavily engaged was Twitter. A few of the pro-Jonathan and pro- Buhari twitter handles and hashtags are outlined below:

Jonathan - @GEJ_Nigeria @presidentGEJ #forwardnigeria #gejvictory2015 #goodlucknigeria

Buhari - @buhariosibanjo @profosibanjo #ichooseGMB #GMB15 #febuhari #thisisbuhari

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Asides from Twitter, election candidates also relied on Facebook, SMS and WhatsApp to promote their campaigns. There was also the use of new media devices for the accreditation process by the Independent National Electoral Commission. This form of accreditation increased the credibility of Nigeria electoral process. Assibong and Oshanisi (2018) concluded that the use of ICTs such as card reader resulted in some debates before, during and after the 2015 Nigerian general elections. The impact of the reader device, regardless of its various challenges during the election cannot be quantified (Alhassan, 2018). The card reader for one thing made accreditation of voters faster in centers where it worked. Dare, in Eddings (2015) also submitted that the 2015 election was dominated and decided by social media. He advanced that social media played the watchdog role in maintaining the integrity of the election process. As voting were concluded at polling units and counted, the results were all over social media. Ordinary people, using excel sheets on their computer devices were tallying the counts, and when results were announced officially, the results were a match. Social media came alive for Nigerians as it was depended upon for the breaking news regarding the election.

For the 2019 elections, the Independent National Electoral Commission actively engaged social media for voters' education. Nwoke et al. (2019) notes that in the months leading to the election, INEC published professional messages on their websites and advised everyone, including people with disabilities and non-English speakers to go out and exercise their civic right. On election days, celebrities and politicians posted videos and images of themselves going to polling units to cast their votes, this in some ways encouraged people to turn-out for voting. The election trended on Twitter with the hashtag #NigeriaDecides and #NigeriaDecides2019. In some cases, anomalies such as underage voting, no and/or insufficient voting materials for certain offices and violence in some centers were also published online by witnesses. A big issue during this election was that there was unfortunate drop of 43.6% voter turnout compared to 2015. Also, Nigerians of Northern orientation, who were less dominant on social media voted massively as opposed to the elite southern Nigerian. This brought about the catchphrase 'Elections are not won on Twitter'.

▪ The UNIZIK School Fee hike protest

On July 12th, 2021, students of the Nnamdi Azikiwe University (also known as UNIZIK), Awka, Anambra State kicked against the hike in their school fees through public demonstrations. The students displayed different kinds of placards with inscriptions which had messages such as: 'Say no to school fees hike', and 'Reduce Unizik School Fees'. This protest was equally widely published and gained traction on Instagram platforms and the Twittersphere. Students barricaded a portion of the Enugu-Onitsha highway over the hike in school fees by the university authority. Some of the students who spoke to Sahara Reporters mentioned that school fee was increased from N20,100 to 56,700 for regular students while Year 1 students school fee ranged from N97,000 to N105,000, minus acceptance fee of N48,000. They bemoaned the hike in school fee and how some students were on the verge of dropping out. After 5 days of the protest online and offline, the school management had a meeting with the student union and reverted the school fees to the old rate. Tribune Newspapers

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(2021) reported that Vice-Chancellor of the University, represented by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Admin), Prof. Joseph Ikechukwu, in his address to journalist said 'for the sake of already existing peace between the school management and the students, the university under his leadership, had agreed to reduce the school fees, as demanded by the students.

▪ #FixOkunRoads

In October 2021, attention of Nigerians and the world was drawn to the state of the Kabba-Egbe-Ilorin road in Kogi State through the #FixOkunRoads that trended on the social media platform 'twitter'. According to Vanguard Newspaper (2021), N621.2bn was approved by the Nigerian Federal Executive Council for the reconstruction of 21 federal roads in the country. This allocation only covered some parts of the country without recourse to dilapidated roads such as Kabba-Egbe-Ilorin Road in Kogi State. The awareness campaign was an initiative set up by a concerned social cultural group called the Apapo Omo Yagba Peace Association. Through the hashtag, the group and youths from the Kogi West senatorial district called the attention of the Federal Government to fix abandoned roads in Okunland. They also appealed to Smart Adeyemi, the lawmaker, representing the same federal constituency, Kogi West senatorial district, and other distinguished individuals in the country to come to their aid. The said road is a major highway in Nigeria and is very crucial to the revitalization project ongoing at the Egbe Hospital. Kogi Reports (2021) noted that the said road was virtually closed to traffic because of complete dilapidation and wreckage which had left road users with no other option but to abandon vehicles that were stuck in the mud. Travelers coming through Lagos or Abuja to Egbe were advised against using the road. People were warned against using the road because of its bad condition as it was fast turning the area into a Kidnappers' den.

Social media platforms played a key role in all the events examined under this section. Obia (2020) submits that Twitter was engaged for information sharing with respect to the #EndSars protest venues across the country and keep protesters abreast on news events, which greatly helped coordination and mobilization in different geographies. Also, with hashtags like #EndSARS, #SARSMustEnd, #EndPoliceBrutality, #BringBackOurGirls, #OccupyNigeria, #RevolutionNow and #EndSARSNOW, there was an amplification of these movements through successive retweets and shares on platforms which include Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter. This made it easy for international new outlets to monitor the situation, as well as anyone who desired to know the present status of these events. Through these social media, protesters were also able to call-out brands and celebrities that went numb on the issues protested. During the #EndSars protests, some banks were called-out on Twitter for not tweeting about #EndSARS and not funding the campaigns in any way, as done by even start-up brands. There were also calls to unfollow the Nigerian President on Twitter due to his perceived laxity on the matter, this led to him losing 100,000 followers (Obia, 2020).

Government's response to utilization of new media for political and civil engagement

There have been several criticisms from the government with regards to how the new media has been engaged for political and civic engagement by Nigerians. The major response is the

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advocating that social media be regulated. Lai Mohammed (Minister for Information and Culture) contends that social media in Nigeria must be regulated. The minister's argument tends towards fake news being one of its fallouts and "the biggest challenge facing Nigeria today". Using the #EndSARS protest as an example, the minister described the #EndSARS protest as a social media "war" and that a social media policy was required so that social media can be shut down the moment it becomes a menace" (Obia, 2020).

The 1999 constitution of Nigeria recognizes the 'Freedom of expression' of the Nigerian citizen, in Section 39 (1). The Federal government of Nigeria has maintained that it respects the rights of individuals, however it has also advanced the idea that technology abuse which disturbs national security will not be allowed to fester (Tonye, 2019). Some of the measures taken by the government to control the use of new media platforms, especially the social media are Twitter Ban (June 2021), Social Media Tax, Hate Speech Bill, The Internet Falsehood and Manipulation Bill, and Harassment and Arrest of Key Players during social media driven protest/demonstrations.

The Nigerian President, Muhammadu Buhari on the 5th of June 2021 announced the indefinite suspension of Twitter after his verified account was suspended and one of his tweets was deleted. The said tweet referred to Nigerian secessionist group, the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) during their agitations. The tweet affirmed the presidency's intention to treat "those who misbehave today" in "the language they will understand." (Blakenship & Golubski, 2021). This announcement resulted in the removal of Twitter from among the list of applications that could be accessed in Nigeria. Twitter played a key role during recent demonstrations in the country, especially the #EndSARS. In appraising the influence of Twitter in Nigeria, Odia (2020) notes, "there has been barely any social media platform contesting with Twitter in hosting Nigerian conversations — whether protests, rants or energizing social movements". This implies that the ban, to some extent grounded the efficiency of mobilization for social crusades.

Another attempt to regulate the information space came to light in 2019 with the introduction of the Internet Falsehood and Manipulations Bill - a bill targeted at social media users, internet intermediaries and online media outlets. The bill, according to Nzewi (2021) seeks to curtail the spread of false information. The penalty of three-year jail term was spelt out for anyone involved in the abuse of social media or an option of fine of N150, 000 or both. It also proposes a fine of N10 million for media houses involved in peddling falsehood or misleading the public. The bill finally advised a fine of N300,000 or three-year jail term, or both for anyone found guilty of making statements that diminish public confidence in the Nigerian Government. This bill has not been passed into law. Like the social media bill, there exists the 'Hate Speech Bill' of 2018. The Bill prohibits the use, production, publishing, distribution, presentation, or direction of the performance of any visual or written material which is threatening, abusive or insulting or involves the use of such words in order to stir up ethnic hatred or from which ethnic hatred is likely to be stirred up against such person from an ethnic group in Nigeria (Eke, 2020).

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The hate speech bill proposes that persons pronounced guilty (by law) of any form of hate speech that leads to the death of another person shall die by hanging (Utomi, 2020). The penalty for hate speech was raised from N500,000 to N5 million in August 2020.

The Nigerian Federal Inland Revenue Service is also currently seeking to get online businesses on the social media to pay income tax net, through an amendment of the Finance Act and approval by the National Assembly (Adeyemi & Adedokun, 2021). The expectation is that social media platforms in registration in Nigeria register with the Nigerian government and remit tax. Another response of the government to the use of social media for mass mobilization and civil demonstrations is the harassment and arrest of influencers, activists, financiers, convener(s), and promoters of civil demonstrations. After the #EndSARS protests, the media reported the arrest of Peter Eromosele by the Nigeria Police Force operatives on Saturday November 7th, 2020. Sahara Reporters gathered that the Edo State-born graduate of Computer Engineering was arrested at his residence in Lagos. Additionally, Omoyele Sowore, who doubles as a journalist and activist was arrested for orchestrating demonstrations against the government using the social media. In the aftermath of the #EndSARS protest, some of the protesters had their accounts flagged by the Nigerian apex bank - the Central Bank, while some had their International Passports flagged.

Conclusion and Recommendations

New media is fundamental in the strengthening of democracy in Nigeria. The continued penetration of these platforms into the Nigerian society makes them important tools for communication and today, there are almost no communication gaps between people or social groups anymore. Through online platforms such as e-news sites, social media and blogs, instant and two-way communication is now possible. Social media have also given Nigerian citizens unique opportunities to obtain information directly rather than relying on traditional media channels. This possibility has helped to improve the democratic and civic engagement of the Nigerians, especially in the last 7 years.

This study documents evidence that there is an improvement in political participation and civic awareness among Nigerians. Some of the areas of political participation includes activities as political discussions in the online space, promotion of deeper political campaigns, observing turnout for elections, monitoring of elections and reportage of violation of the electoral process such as underage voting, rigging, thuggery, and monetary inducements. The new media has played key role in the mobilization of civic campaigns which have caught the attention of government and the international media, examples being the #EndSARS, #OccupyNigeria and #BringBackOurGirls. Nigerian youths are not as marginalized as they used to be, they now use the highly democratized social media to have two-way communication, mobilize and coordinate social action aimed at holding leaders accountable.

Despite the positives that can be drawn from the penetration of the new media into Nigeria, regarding democratic and civic engagement, new media platforms have been abused in some

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ways such as dissemination of outright disinformation, fake news and hate speech capable of brewing hatred among Nigerians, thus overheating the polity. This corroborates the position of Emetumah (2016) who notes that though social media facilitates political awareness among Nigeria's electorates; they also serve the purpose of propaganda and hate speech dissemination. This is not encouraging for the democratic and peaceful society that Nigerians dream and strive to achieve. Some of the protests witnessed in Nigeria have also turned-out sour owing to the damage of private and public properties, as well as the loss of lives recorded.

In some ways, most of the action experienced in the Nigerian society are usually online. The contribution on social media does not match the offline political participation: the place where the deal is sealed. There is less participation at the polling centers despite the noise in the online media. Youths are more active in online political participation and social media activism than they do offline politics. The study also discovered that government's response to the use of new media platforms for democratic engagement in Nigeria is not encouraging; with reactions coming in the form of ban on a social media platform (i.e., Twitter in June 2021), social media tax, hate speech bill and the internet falsehood and manipulation bill.

Consequent to findings of this study, this study makes the following recommendations.

1. Nigerians should be more engaged in offline politics.
2. Political stakeholders in Nigeria should renegotiate their engagement with the youths through online platforms.
3. The government should engage Nigerians more with a view to appreciating their concerns, harnessing their creativity and incorporating such into social reforms and policies to help create a better Nigeria.
4. Social media organizations should set mechanisms in place so that fake news and hate speeches can be blocked out from content published on their platforms.
5. The government and mainstream media stakeholders should embark on national orientation on the implications of promoting fake news, disinformation and hate speech in the online media space.

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Chapter Two

Personalized healthcare in Africa through social media

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Abstract

Social media is rapidly changing the nature of healthcare systems' interaction. As more and more people worldwide go online to search for health-related information, it also provides them with appropriate information that would assist them in saving lives. With social media technologies at their disposal, the healthcare system would be able to provide valuable peer, social and emotional support to the public and patients at large. Patients and the public can easily exchange their experiences through chatrooms, instant messaging, or even remote consultations with qualified medical personnel. There are a variety of benefits and limitations to social media usage within the healthcare system. Compared to traditional communication methods, a perceived benefit is the accessibility and enhanced access to health information for various population groups, regardless of age, education, race/ethnicity, locality, and location. However, social media also present potential risks to patients with regard to the distribution of poor-quality information, breaches of patient privacy, violation of personal-professional boundaries, and many more. Social media brings a new dimension to health care, offering a platform used by the public, patients, and health professionals to communicate about health issues and to potentially improve health outcomes. This chapter investigated the role of social media in administering personalized healthcare services in Africa. The study adopted a Narrative Literature Review (NLR) research methodology. It found that although there are benefits of using social media for health communication, the information needs to be monitored for validity and reliability, and confidentiality and privacy must be maintained. This chapter concluded that healthcare can be personalized through social media platforms while explaining how.

Keywords: Africa, Health, Healthcare, Patient, Personalized healthcare, Social media

Introduction

Advances in Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) have further improved the capacity of medical sciences in general, and healthcare in particular. ICT continues to redefine the landscape of social media in promoting healthcare accessibility which encourages what is now known as personalized healthcare. Personalized healthcare is a situation where social media users have the opportunity to consult for medical matters at any time, without locational barriers. It underscores the pros and cons of social media usage for accelerating health to all and sundry in Africa, while noting areas where it constitutes challenges and working towards proffering solutions as a way forward.

Today, more medical personnels like clinicians and patients around the globe consult social media to understand and access information about specific ailments. Personalized healthcare now leverages a person's medical history, diagnostic testing, and circumstances. What is more, people continue to gather information about genetics or tailor medical treatment and other preventative care efforts through various social media platforms. Personalized healthcare in Africa through social media is seeing a boom because of smartphone and WiFi Internet penetration. For those in the medical field, personalized healthcare constitutes a substantial advancement in how patients across various medicinal fields set up parameters for health management and improvements. Personalized healthcare on social media promotes patient education, which is faster and more efficient (PayrHealth, 2022). Personalized healthcare in Africa through social media can be regarded as a welcome development in the discipline and present a bright future as a result of a high rate of Internet growth on the African continent. Thus, this chapter uses NLR methodology to explore the role of social media in administering personalized healthcare services in Africa.

Problem statement

This chapter is predicated on the proliferation of social media networks across the world as tools for facilitating healthcare services in Africa. While these healthcare approaches seem efficient and effective in the West, they appear novel in the global south. This is because of limited access to electricity, the Internet, and other social media handles. Power outages and the cost of data constitute a huge gap despite social disruptions in Africa. The obsession with apprehensions about the negative use of social media has further reduced the capacity of people to see them as beneficial to humanity. This notwithstanding, the enthusiasm for medical personnel and patients in employing social media for various reasons seems not to abate.

According to Owoyemi, Owoyemi, Osiyemi and Boyd (2020), confronting the above challenges involve the use of digital technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI). While Olusanya, Ammar, Davis, Bednarczyk and Shaban-Nejad (2021) believed that personalized digital healthcare services will promote access to healthcare in the case of Human papillomavirus (HPV) and many others. As such, this study investigates the potential that social media presents for personalized healthcare services in Africa.

The rationale of this chapter

The chapter aspires to investigate the place of social media technologies in the healthcare system in Africa, more especially in promoting personalized healthcare services. Notwithstanding apprehensions about social media, it leverages on the gains of social media to argue that they remain huge assets that increase valuable peer, social and emotional support to the public and patients at large. More importantly, the chapter hopes to see how patients and the public can easily exchange their experiences through chatrooms, instant messaging, or even remote consultations with qualified medical personnel in the overall interest of an improved healthcare system in Sub-Sahara Africa.

Research method, objectives/questions

There are different kinds of research methods used in conducting scientific research: qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, systematic literature review (SLR), narrative literature review (NLR), and many more. However, this chapter employs the Narrative Literature Review (NLR) which collates and analyses data on the subject matter with the view of discovering the gaps in literature towards proffering valuable suggestions, that would engender the use of social media in improving healthcare in Africa.

According to Green, Johnson and Adams (2006) and Ferrari (2015), NLR is a non-systematic research methodology process, that provides a summary of a piece of information from different articles and presents them in a readable format for decision-making. The NLR uses keywords like personalized healthcare in Africa, social media healthcare, healthcare in Africa, the healthcare system in Africa, and a few others. This chapter aims to explore the role of social media in administering personalized healthcare services in Africa through the following research questions:

1. What factors affect the adoption of social media in providing personalized healthcare services in Africa?
2. How is social media used in promoting personalized healthcare in Africa?
3. What are the challenges and remedies in using social media in providing personalized healthcare in Africa?

Literature review

Healthcare system in Africa

Providing basic and advanced healthcare systems remains a challenge for many countries and across continents, and Africa is not exempted. The African continent faces growing social, economic, political, and healthcare inequalities. The growth comes with challenges that have shown Africa's weak healthcare system. Zekeng (2016) pointed out that the African healthcare system and the rest of the world face a growing challenge. The healthcare system in Africa continues to experience some changes in recent years toward addressing the growing healthcare challenges. Also, patients spend a long time in the healthcare center for appointments and consultations, which leads to aggravated health situations, patients dying and other sad

situations. Some changes have been implemented to confront the healthcare system challenges, which involves integrating technology and the improvement of physical infrastructures.

According to World Health Organisation (WHO), the healthcare system requires people and activities (actions) to deliver advanced health services (Mazibuko-Makena, 2021). The challenges confronting the healthcare system in Africa can be attributed to financial issues as a result of underfunding and neglect (Oleribe, Momoh, Uzochukwu, Mbofana, Adebisi, Barbera & Taylor-Robinson, 2019). These challenges continue to undermine the development and implementation of healthcare policies and transformation in Africa. However, achieving quality and advanced healthcare service remains a challenging task because of issues like funding, management, staffing, and infrastructure. The challenges directly affect patients because they spend a long time at healthcare centers which can lead to patients missing their appointments and many more (Mazibuko-Makena, 2021). Mitigating the healthcare challenges in Africa calls for the application of different majors that include technology devices and social media platforms. Through social media, personalized healthcare is provided by healthcare practitioners, centers, hospitals, and organizations to patients. Social media is commonly used in Africa across age, educational level, social and economic status.

Social media healthcare in Africa

Social media provides a platform for healthcare information and services to be shared with patients, health staff, and organizations. Social media has become a personal tool for information sharing across Africa and beyond, connecting billions of people to various activities, including healthcare. Regional and national government health agencies and departments (ministries) continue to adopt social media to provide healthcare services. The global adoption of social media in the health sector is growing (Moorhead, Hazlett, Harrison, Carroll, Irwin & Hoving, 2013). Twitter and Facebook have become popular social media platforms used by healthcare practitioners and students (Grobler & Dhai, 2016). The platforms have become an avenue for healthcare seekers to source healthcare services. Healthcare organizations and providers in Africa have adopted social media to render healthcare services to patients (Kituyi, Langmia, Moya, Tsuma & Mbarika, 2014). The services range from the posting of healthcare information to campaigns, job opportunities, consultation, and many more. The platforms empower people to always share healthcare information. Social media promotes healthcare services in South Africa (Mwaura et al., 2020).

The wider use of social media in promoting and providing healthcare needs and services is no longer a national issue but continental; for example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, health organizations and individuals in Africa depend largely on social media platforms to promote and provide healthcare services. Prasad (2013) found that social media can provide patient support, compliance with medication, consultation, medical education, enhance doctor-patient interaction and relationship, borderless medical services, and others.

The platforms can be used to promote and motivate patients to engage in medical programs and activities. Medical fundraising can be done on platforms, and clinical experiences, opportunities, and challenges can be shared with peers on social media (Prasad, 2013). However, using social media in providing medical services is difficult for patient confidentiality because exposing patients in public can constitute a breach of medical ethics (confidentiality) (Noakes, 2017). The author further noted that patients would not consult on Twitter because of issues. The issues can be attributed to the lack of policy to assist healthcare personnel in adopting social media (Kituyi et al., 2014). Nonetheless, personalized healthcare service through social media platforms is possible because many citizens (netizens) in Africa have adopted social media platforms as part of their daily lives. The platforms can provide consult-as-you-go medical services for patients. Patients can interact with their medical doctors (physicians) at any time without border or physical limitations.

Personalized healthcare in Africa: A qualitative analysis

From South Sudan to Morocco, Nigeria to Burkina Faso, and all over the continent, healthier recoveries are now associated with improved attention due to the advent of social media. The proliferation of medical data and individual patient discovery is seen as longer-lasting results of optimized healthcare systems. The concept of personalized healthcare means different things to different people. This section shall highlight what personalized healthcare means for patients and providers in Africa.

What personalized healthcare means for patients in Africa

Personalized healthcare means different things to different people. This implies that what it means to patients might be different from how providers conceive it. Leaning on recent studies (PayrHealth, 2022), the researchers highlighted the main issues regarding the patient's perspectives when it comes to personalized healthcare:

- **More confidence:** More than ever, personalized healthcare is increasing the confidence of patients in how clinicians treat them. In an unprecedented manner, extensive medical and Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) data are now collected across various patients. Personal diagnostics and sequencing assists in reducing stress in patients. It also minimizes discomfort that would have been accompanied by a series of physical tests and randomized trials in the name of treatment. In the end, it helps those who are sick to have confidence in the overall healthcare plan. Then, through social media, medical personnel can engage with their patients on the platforms in offering medical consultations and treatments.
- **Better treatment:** Personalized healthcare enables patients to receive monitored supplementary care. Specific dietary consultation, physical therapy, and support groups are part of the whole package namely, primary treatment plans. The process makes patients benefit from these services even as it helps doctors and nurses arrive at deeper insights into treating their patients successfully with improved methods. Better treatment is being accelerated on social media platforms as it improved quick access to medical services.
- **Increased patient engagement:** Preventative care rather than curative care is now trending in medical sciences. In line with international best practices, clinicians use

preventive care to address various health concerns thus satisfying the yearnings of their patients. Here, predispositions are kept at bay so as not to become conditions that would graduate into something worse. Improved tracking technologies such as biometric data, and monitoring of blood sugar results over time for diabetic patients, to keep them abreast with their health conditions are now trending. This is made possible in medical centers in Africa because easier management helps patients to know what is happening to their bodies and how to regulate what they eat. Patients and the public can easily exchange their experiences through chatrooms, instant messaging, or even remote consultations with qualified medical personnel. In all, proactive management helps keep a doctor-patient relationship which is better managed through social media platforms.

- **Reduction in costs:** Patients are now able to see the benefit of spending less through preventative and proactive health management, than spending huge money on treatment. The application of social media in the healthcare process, helps in cutting the spending which results from movement from one place to another, because medical personnel and patients can move from any place, at any time. For instance, with a clear insurance policy in place as in the United States of America and the United Kingdom, most African nations are beginning to encourage their citizens, especially workers to prioritize National Healthcare Insurance Schemes. Healthy citizens may need corrective procedures. It may be later in life that they might receive treatments for chronic diseases which would invariably decrease their bills over time. Where data, tracking, and personalization are rife, patients can enjoy improved healthcare with better and cheaper insurance (PayrHealth, 2022).

What personalized healthcare means for providers on the continent

All the role players view personalized healthcare differently, but the section highlighted the perception of personalized healthcare to health providers.

- **Increased access to patient data:** In the field of medical sciences, doctors of other paramedics can generate data from different patients and analyze same. This enables them to get more insight in the decisions they take when consulting. As such, for healthcare providers, personalized healthcare means more access to patient data, and greater analysis and results. Then, medical caregivers can share patients' information and data using social media which increases access to patient data and medical services.
- **Quicker patient-recoveries:** Doctors and caregivers now target open treatment schedules for sophisticated technologies with Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) machines involving specialists. This is possible because providers reduce the time they consume in treating their patients through trial-and-error by assisting them to recover fast just as they can utilize their bandwidth, time, and resources. For instance, instead of spending the whole-time seeing patients physically one after the other, a doctor might just decide to see a Patient A, while allowing Patient B to access care faster. In this digital age, social media patients users can connect with other patients with a similar illness which assist in quick patient recovery.

- **Greater care-offerings/partnerships:** Most providers now increase their staff and offer additional health services. This is because they identify the best treatment options and are open to offering supplementary healthcare opportunities. This way, they can develop mutual and beneficial collaboration with other partners in complementary medical fields. The collaboration can be facilitated through the application of social media platforms. Currently, medical personnels in Africa and beyond depend on social media in deepening partnerships with each other. In the end, the partnership leads to growth in access to personalized healthcare services.
- **More fulfillment:** Personalized healthcare and its concomitant ingredient of precision care makes patients happier and, in the end, healthier. It has the potential of giving clinicians opportunities to assist a greater number of people. Patients who have positive feedbacks to give would often advocate for a specific provider because they felt cared for. Indeed, personalized care offers more opportunities for providers to value their careers while getting value for their service's revenue (PayrHealth, 2022). Through social media, healthcare personnel can be happy in carrying out their routine tasks.

Answers to the research questions

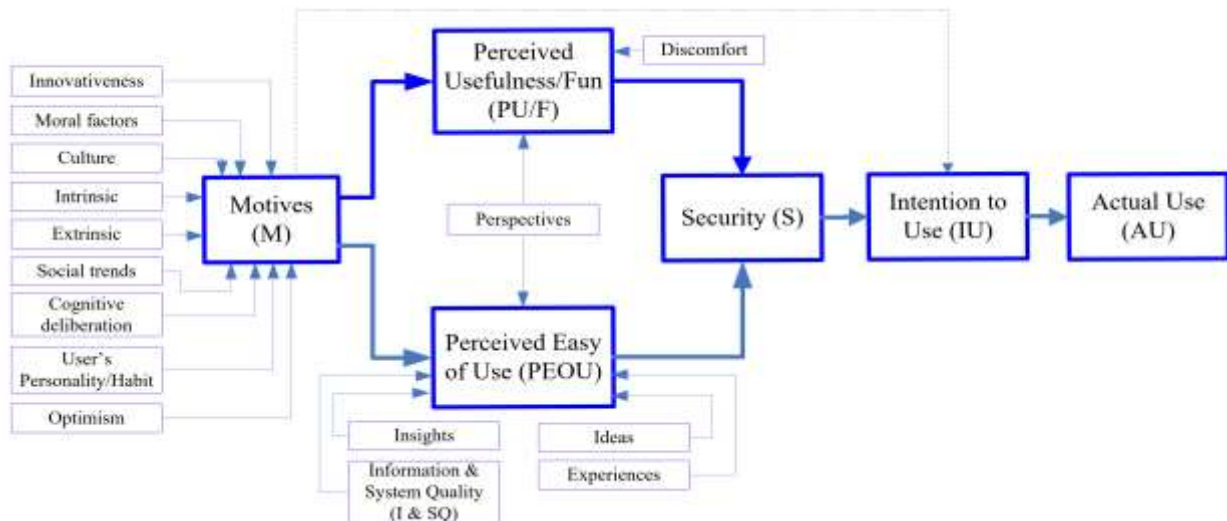
Personalized healthcare service through social media in Africa is possible as a result of the high rate of social media penetration in the African continent. The following are to be discussed for a better understanding of the possibility of offering personalized healthcare in Africa. This section of the chapter presents comprehensive answers to the proposed research questions guiding this chapter.

The factors affecting the adoption of social media in providing personalized healthcare services in Africa

There are a number of factors that impact the application of social media for personalized healthcare in Africa. According to Huo, Zhang and Ma (2018), among the factors that influence the adoption of social media in providing personalized healthcare services is health knowledge. Mwaura, Carter and Kubheka (2020) added that “developing personal skills”, developing public health policy and many others improves the adoption of social media in providing personalized healthcare. While Manyazewal, Woldeamanuel, Blumberg, Fekadu and Marconi (2021) understood that social, financial, or geographic factors affect medical health (mHealth) adoption. The above literatures and many more, shows various factors that inform the adoption of technology for social, personal, educational, and other usages. Through this, researchers depend on the existing framework (theoretical framework) to determine factors that inform the adoption of technology for social and sectorial use. Research writing is reinforced by applying an existing framework called the theoretical framework. Adopting a theoretical framework makes it possible for the current research idea to be built on existing and tested knowledge informed through the theoretical framework. This book chapter adopted a conceptual, social media banking (SMB) framework (Chukwuere & Ohei, 2019). A social media banking (SMB) framework is used to understand how social media can be used to provide personalized healthcare services. The SMB framework components provide factors that influence the users,

healthcare workers, and organizations' adoption of social media in providing personalized healthcare services. Through the SMB framework, the researchers determine “the factors that affect the adoption of social media in providing personalized healthcare services in Africa.”

Figure 2. 1: Social media banking (SMB) framework, adopted from Chukwuere and Ohei (2019)



The adoption of social media by patients, healthcare workers, and organization for personalized healthcare services are influenced by several factors, as proposed by Chukwuere and Ohei (2019):

- **Motives** – Anyone who wishes to use social media platforms must be motivated and have motives. According to Chukwuere and Ohei (2019), *motives* are an element that defines users' intentions and actions in acceptance or rejection of any given technology (social media for personalized healthcare platforms). Motives propel Africans to determine whether to accept or reject social media platforms, to access personalized healthcare services or not. Motives are influenced by *innovativeness* (the design, structure, and features of social media); *moral factors* (right and wrong principle); *culture* (personal background, environment, and tradition); *intrinsic and extrinsic* (inner and external factors like perceived benefits and design respectively); *social trends* (news and information around); *cognitive deliberation* (available information); *users personality/habit* (personal attributes that distinguishes one from another); and *optimism* (confident views and perceptions). All these subconstructs are different factors that define personal motives towards the adoption of social media platforms in accessing personalized healthcare services in Africa, to the general public and healthcare workers.
- **Perceived usefulness/fun (PU/F)** – The perceived usefulness or fun defines users' acceptance of social media for accessing personalized healthcare services from physicians or any healthcare worker. The perception is defined by *discomfort*, which deals with the unpleasant feeling about technology, in this case, social media adoption for personal healthcare service platforms.
- **Perceived ease of use (PEOU)** – The perception of users' ease to use social media will undoubtedly define their perception to adopt the platforms. This factor is defined by insights (clear view about the use of social media as a healthcare service provider);

perspective (defines users' view about the platforms); *ideas* (what users think about the platforms as a healthcare service providers); *experience* (previous insights and ideas about the platform in delivering healthcare services); and *information and system quality (I&SQ)* (the kind of healthcare information and service produced by the platforms).

- **Security** – Security stands as a big determinant factor in adopting modern technology. The security of social media platforms determines if patients (users), healthcare workers, and organizations will adopt social media as a healthcare delivery platform in Africa. Advanced and convincing security measures addressing the protection of the patient's (users) details will make them adopt social media platforms, to deliver personalized healthcare services on those platforms.
- **Intention to use (IU)** – This factor covers the ability of the users to adopt and use technology. The ability of patients, healthcare workers, and organizations to use social media in delivering healthcare services depends on their positive intention, which is influenced by other factors.
- **Actual use (AU)** – This factor shows the usage and adoption of social media to serve as a personalized healthcare platform. In a backward movement, the actual usage of social media as a personalized healthcare platform is influenced by other factors in the framework. Patients (users), healthcare workers, and organizations might use social media to access healthcare information, consultation, appointment, and other services when other factors are in place.

Role of social media platforms in promoting personalized healthcare in Africa

Exchange of information

In a world where people resort to social media to browse for information, especially that which relates to healthcare, experts have alluded to the fact that new media is a huge resource in the field of medical sciences. It is crucial to note that social media platforms are increasingly becoming a catalyst for promoting personalized healthcare, especially in Africa. For instance, in the article *Fighting Childhood Cancers through Digital Communication*, Dyikuk (2017a: 46) maintained that “In fighting child cancers, the exchange of information between kids suffering from the disease and their parents or doctors can become a true communication, develop into full-blown friendships and facilitate real communion.” The exchange of information promotes personalized healthcare services.

Career enhancement, fostering medical research

Clinicians now leverage the benefits of communication to manage their professional responsibilities (Phillips, Lewis, Bruce, 2013; Dyikuk, 2017a). Scholars have argued that digital media plays a critical role in providing information, education, mobilization, and indeed funding for medical or health research (Galadima & Goshit, 2013; Dyikuk, 2017b). For example, both medics and paramedics look to social media as a tool for career enhancement and fostering medical research as they surf the internet for relevant information on the latest innovations in learned journals which are shared on various social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram to mention just a few. Through Skype, Zoom, Team and

WhatsApp doctors in Africa can connect with their counterparts in other parts of the world. Also, during the COVID-19 pandemic, in Africa, both the old and young relied mostly on social media to access information on how to observe the protocols. It was also a resource for getting personal information towards mitigating the pandemic (Mwaura et al, 2020).

Borderless connectivity

Access to healthcare services is a personal endeavor and sometimes community base. But the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) positioned social media as a personal health gadget because of its effort to assist millions and billions around the globe to share and connect with health personnel and organizations in understanding the pandemic and its protocols. Preventing and controlling health crises involves promoting effective tools and creating a digital environment that engineers personalized health availability and usage in the social media age. Social media have the potential to promote personalized healthcare because of its availability, low cost, wider spread (coverage), accessibility, and borderless connectivity (Mwaura, Carter & Kubheka, 2020). Social media access improves health education and other health-related information (Fayoyin, 2016).

Medical consultation, scholar collaboration, knowledge transfer

Dyikuk (2017a) argues that social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Snapchat, and Skype provide leverage for medical sciences. Social media provide users across the continent of Africa the ability to communicate in real-time, in delivering credible, as well as untruthful information into the public domain. For example, social media promotes effective health access in South Africa (Mwaura et al., 2020). While Gani, Evans, Harryparsad and Sykes (2017), suggests that social media promotes collaboration among colleagues and the transfer of knowledge and skills among personnel and patients. In delivering content to the users, social media platforms break access to social, economic, and political information by simplifying easy access to information.

According to Mwaura et al. (2020), social media ensures access to healthcare information in breaking the digital divide and data cost. The COVID-19 pandemic challenged and exposed the world health system affecting different sectors of human and social lives. The COVID-19 pandemic made social media a panacea for sharing and distributing health information to the national and global populace in creating awareness and sensitizing all. Across the African continent, social media became the engine room for the younger and old to engage and share COVID-19 pandemic information and awareness in mobilizing the populace, and in observing the protocols. Many in Africa were able to depend on social media for personal information and consultation towards mitigating and managing the COVID-19 pandemic.

Meeting global health needs

According to Al-Dmour, Salman, Abuhashesh and Al-Dmour (2020), social media is used by healthcare organizations like the World Health Organisation (WHO) and continental health bodies to influence healthcare information, knowledge, perception, attitude, behavior, belief,

and outcomes of health information and needs of the populace. The platform is no longer used for entertainment for many, but it is used to access their doctors and healthcare personnel, and facilities. The question many will be asking is: does social media provide access to personalized healthcare needs in Africa? The answer is yes because users can be able to have virtual one-on-one consultations, access quality health information from reliable and reputable sources, verify infodemics, and many others. However, healthcare system providers and authorities in Africa need to understand the abilities, benefits, and opportunities of social media to assist in quick access to health information. Currently, many depend on social media for news and contents (Chukwuere, 2022).

Challenges and remedies for employing social media in personalized healthcare in Africa

Growing uncertainties

Globally, the healthcare system is facing huge pressure due to growing uncertainties such as the growing aging population, diseases (epidemic and pandemic), expensive medical treatment, technologies, population growth, and shortage of workforce (Mazibuko-Makena, 2021). The African continent is not exempted from global healthcare challenges. According to Oleribe et al. (2019), the African continent has suffered from human-made issues such as political, financial, climate, human resources, infrastructure, healthcare, and technical development for years now. Africa as a continent faces many socio-economic challenges that continue to promote social, economic, health, and technological divides. The challenges affect the development, implementation, and usage of social media for personal health services both for providers and users.

Basic infrastructure challenge

The challenges range from lack of access to basic infrastructure, poverty, lack of employment opportunities (high unemployment rate), lack of access to Internet facilities, high cost of data, and the list continues. Mazibuko-Makena (2021) found that healthcare system challenges involve the non-existence or functional technology, limited resources, supply chain issues, pharmaceutical problems, shortage of medicine, inexperience and unavailable health workers, and lack of access to quality and advanced healthcare services and funding. A study by Azevedo (2017) shows that the healthcare system is challenged by corruption at health centers (hospitals), empowerment, and citizens' participation in the decision-making process. However, some countries like Nigeria, Kenya, Ethiopia, Ghana, Rwanda, and others have implemented strategies to address the funding issues in their healthcare system (Oleribe et al., 2019). Though, the strategies face some hindrance and obstacles in developing, and implementing a quality health system for the citizens.

Data access and cost

Many technological ideas and inventions have emerged to address pressing healthcare challenges; such remedies are through social media platforms to provide and promote quick access to quality and affordable healthcare services. Social media is facing challenges even in the healthcare sector (Mwaura et al., 2020). According to Mazibuko-Makena (2021), ground-

breaking technological inventions are gearing up to provide sustainable solutions to healthcare challenges. The African health system uses modern technological artifacts to solve continental healthcare challenges (Fayoyin, 2016). Individuals using social media for personalized healthcare, and service purposes are confronted with access to data and the cost. Across the African continent, data access and cost remain a big challenge because of social and economic issues that many are confronted with.

Personal security and privacy issues

Again, patients are concerned about their personal information, security and privacy issues. According to Moorhead (2013), many studies highlight the concern for the security and privacy of users' information over social media. At the same time, Ndubuaku and Okerefor (2015) believed that technology adoption in Africa is hampered by poverty, illiteracy, electricity supply, Internet capacity, and many more. Despite these challenges, millions in Africa depend on social media daily for their health, education, entertainment, political, economic, business information and news.

Notable findings

- The study found that in Africa, obsession with apprehensions about the negative use of social media has further reduced the capacity of people to see them as beneficial to humanity.
- It made the point that social media increases valuable peer, social and emotional support to the public and patients at large.
- The chapter demonstrated that both patients and the public are able to easily exchange their experiences through chatrooms, instant messaging, or even remote consultations with qualified medical personnels in the overall interest of an improved healthcare system in Africa through social media.
- The obsession with apprehensions about the negative use of social media has further reduced the capacity of people to see them as beneficial to humanity.
- Although personalized healthcare means different things to different people, when leveraged on social media platforms, it leads to better healthcare services in Africa.

Recommendations

- Clinicians and researchers in the industry should maximize the potential attached to social media platforms in advancing healthcare services in the African continent.
- Media experts ought to indicate a genuine interest in promoting how social media can be used in promoting personal healthcare in Africa.
- Governments across the continent should mitigate the highlighted challenges associated with adopting social media for personalized healthcare services such as power outages, expensive data, and ensuring cyber security through improving infrastructure.
- Africans should take advantage of social media to improve their personal and general well-being.

- There is a need for more quantitative study on how social media platform aids personalized healthcare services in Africa.

Implications of the chapter

Social media makes healthcare communication and interaction easy, it also promotes and provide personalized healthcare for African citizens. Personalized healthcare through social media is a laudable call in making access to healthcare services easy and achievable. Many African populations are active in social media, making personalized healthcare social media realizable in the digital age. This book chapter provides a leading way to increase awareness and promote personalized healthcare services through social media platforms for the citizens of Africa. Through this chapter, African citizens understood the:

- Benefits attached to social media platforms in providing personalized healthcare services.
- Simplified potential attached to social media platforms in advancing healthcare services in the African continent.
- Ways by which social media can be used to promote personal healthcare in Africa.
- Highlighted challenges in adopting social media for personalized healthcare services.
- Remedies for using social media in providing personalized healthcare in Africa.

The implication of this chapter is to provide an in-depth understanding for users, health workers, and organizations of the ways social media platforms can be used in promoting and advancing access to healthcare services for Africans.

Conclusion

We saw that in Africa, patients spend a long time in healthcare centers for appointments and consultations. In the end, patients die without accessing basic healthcare. The advent of digital technology is now offering various options for the sick to get both medical advice or consult medics and paramedics of their choice. These changes in social media penetration and disruptions have involved integrating technology and improving physical infrastructure. The days of trial-and-error are fast fading as more efficient and effective methods are seen and read in the news about medical innovations in the West where social media is used maximally. The SMB framework components which provide factors that influence the users, healthcare workers, and organizations' adoption of social media in providing personalized healthcare services fit into the study. This is because, the framework, has indeed determined the aforementioned factors which affect the adoption of social media by both clinicians and patients in personalized healthcare services in Africa.

To this end, Africa must come out of its experimentation with social media and work towards a social media-savvy global south. For this to be done, there must be access to electricity, the Internet, and other social media handles. This means that various governments must work round the clock to put an end to power outages and make the cost of data affordable for the citizenry. With personalized healthcare at our doorsteps, social disruptions across Africa can knock down an erstwhile obsession with misgivings about the negative use of social media.

This would mean that both the young and the world would view social media handles with enthusiasm even as medical personnel and patients employ the same for their overall well-being and that of the continent.

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Chapter Three

A critical discourse analysis of online YouTube news coverage of Garissa University terrorist Attack in Kenya

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Abstract

Terrorism remains a global threat. The architects of terror attacks aim for maximum media coverage in order to attain multiplied shock effect on the citizens including those who might be far removed from the direct impact of a given attack. In covering terror attacks, the media should be aware of this desired goal of terrorists. News reports of attacks form mental models in readers and viewers. These become their reference point of understanding who is a terrorist and an evaluation of success of terrorists vis-à-vis counter terrorism efforts. This study sought to establish how the terrorists and the counterterrorist efforts are constructed on YouTube news reporting on the Garissa University terrorist attack. The study therefore draws data from online YouTube news headlines of the 2nd of April 2015 terror attack at Garissa University in Kenya in which 147 lives was lost. The study examined the presupposed knowledge of a terrorist and the counter terrorists' efforts brought out through the use of presuppositions as a language strategy. This was done through highlighting the emerging construction of terrorism, terrorists, and counter terrorist efforts on YouTube news videos in line with van Dijk's Socio cognitive framework of Critical Discourse Analysis theory (CDA). The use of presuppositions in the headlines brought out terrorists as very sophisticated. The security agencies on the other hand are constructed as impotent, poorly organized and always playing catch-up to the terrorists. The YouTube news on the Garissa University terrorist attack served to propagate the terrorist agenda instead of countering it.

Keywords: Discursive, Garissa, Linguistic, Mental model, Strategies, Terrorist

Introduction

The news media and violent extremism have a complex relationship. This is attributed to the fact that terrorism as a notion takes different interpretations and definitions based on differing forms of conceptualizations and perceptions. Terrorism is frequently applied to describe highly varied attitudes and behaviour ranging from anarchist, or revolutionary ones to criminal acts. It is also possible that terrorist's acts be interpreted either as fights for freedom or terrorism based on one's religious or political stand. Language use forms the basis for what should count as knowledge on terrorism and define what should be produced, communicated, legitimated and resisted (Stump, 2013). Journalists are therefore faced with the dilemma of deciding how to frame the news on terror without promoting the terrorist's agenda. This study aimed to

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critically analyse the social media discourse on terrorism to recognize and recommend elimination of biases.

The media is a source of information on terror attacks. The public relies on both the traditional and the social media coverage to get to know of the attacks in terms of the number of those injured and the death rates, the perpetrators and how the government security forces are responding to the attacks. The media therefore provides information that their consumers use to form or update their mental model of the event. It could be said that terrorists' acts aim at causing heavy casualties but also at raising fear with the public which thanks to the media, participates collaterally in every terrorist attack (Peresin, 2000). Without the media's coverage, the acts and the impacts are limited to the immediate victims of the attack.

Terrorists' attacks have frequently been witnessed in Kenya. A major attack in 1998 that involved the bombing of the American Embassy was followed by a bombing of the Paradise Hotel at Kikambala in Mombasa in the year 2012 (Mutua, 2013). According to Eboi (2015), there have been fifty terrorist attacks since late 2011 to 2015 when terrorists attacked students at Garissa University situated in the northern part of Kenya. Garissa University terrorist attack was the deadliest attack ever witnessed in Kenya with one hundred and forty-seven lives lost and several students' injured. The magnitude of the attack, therefore, attracted a lot of attention from both local and international media. The attack has happened in one of Kenya's institutions of higher learning symbolized an attack on Kenyan education and its future. It is against this background that the study was seen relevant.

The media constructs our understanding of the world we live in, when they use a given language. In effect, this language is not authentic since it is determined and administered by dominant world views or ideologies Fowler (1991) asserted that the world of the press is not the real world, but a world skewed and judged. This study limited itself to media houses' YouTube video reportage of terrorism news. Kenyans, as social media consumers, would make meaning of such attacks based on how the journalists frame their reporting. van Dijk and Kintsch (1983) explain that news makers have a model of each news event, and they will generally write their reports to suit their audiences' model of the event. In Kenyan social media, various terms such as *attackers*, *gunmen*, *Muslim extremists* and *terrorists* have been used by different reporters to refer to the perpetrators of the terror attacks. Such terms play a great role in determining the mental model readers make of who terrorists are and the measure of the counter-terrorists' efforts.

Terrorists' acts of violence on civilians are intended to create publicity. As earlier said, the media cannot be separated from what is happening in society. Internet tools such as Facebook, blogs, YouTube, and Flickr as well as traditional media occupy a major business and personal sphere of communication. They facilitate awareness, and news to audiences hence acting as a great communication resource to humankind with a wide reach. On the contrary, the media can provide platforms for global terrorists to convey their agenda to as many people as possible. It

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is argued that the media and terrorists have a symbiotic relationship (Bilgen, 2012). This is because while the terrorists seek attention and publicity, the media has a story to sell. Striking a balance between informing the public of the attacks and spreading the terrorists' agenda becomes a complex task for the creators of terror news content in social media. It is however possible to report in such a way that the newsmakers divert the attention from the core. This study sought to establish the role that YouTube news videos on the Garissa university terror attack in Kenya played in promoting the terrorists' agenda. The study was interested in bringing out the role of Kenyan social media in the fight against terrorism in Kenya.

An analysis of YouTube news channels found that the most popular ones are affiliated with news organizations (Pew Research Centre, 2020). The biggest chunks of these news organizations of all the popular YouTube news channels belong to television stations (TV). The survey further indicated that the YouTube channels that belong to news organisations tend to be neutral in their reportage. This is because news is expected to be objective. It is against this background that this study sought to analyse the reporting of the Garissa University terror attack in selected YouTube news channels associated with local and international TV stations.

Literature review

Olasya (2018) assessed the impact of social media on national security in Kenya. The study sought to establish the threats of social media usage on security and how social media can be utilized in preventing, limiting or eliminating the threats on Kenyan National Security. The study found that terrorist organizations use social media for radicalization and popularization of their action and also spread propaganda. This study informed the current study which sought to establish the role of Mainstream Kenyan media YouTube channels in promoting the terrorists agenda. Suvojit (2019) in his study of the terrorists' use of social media found that social media has been weaponized. That is to say the internet has become a weapon for terrorists to exploit in selling their agenda. Suvoit (2019) terms this *Social Media Terrorism*. He goes ahead to say that terrorists play psychological warfare using social media. The current study came in to find out the situation as far as YouTube news channels is concerned in Kenya. The big question being whether the terrorists are benefitting too from how terror reports are handled by journalists.

Oluwakemi (2020) critically analyzed news coverage of South African discourses on Xenophobia. The findings of the study indicated that there were narratives that termed the South Africans as 'we' against the migrant 'them'. The 'them' description of the migrants fuelled Xenophobia. This is a clear indication of the role of social media in promoting war. The terrorists attacks frequently witnessed in Kenya could also be as a result of the framing of the perpetrators and the counter terrorists in the news channels. The current study aimed to establish the role of Kenyan YouTube news channels in fighting terrorism in Kenya. Rewai (2014) in his study on the representation of HIV AIDS healthcare care policy in Zimbabwe examined the linguistic and discursive strategies used by the media regarding the implementation of the policy. The study revealed that linguistic strategies such as

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nominalization, positive politeness, thematization, and action verbs play a major role in the setting of the agenda in newspapers. The study showed how the linguistic features could either highlight or downplay certain aspects regarding the implementation to influence perception. This in turn would inform the knowledge of the readers of the news articles on the government's role in the implementation of the policy. The current study borrowed some of the linguistic strategies used in this study to set the agenda that guides the YouTube channels hearers' understanding of who a terrorist is using the tools of van Dijk's cognitive model of CDA as opposed to van Dijk's Ideological Square adopted in the study.

Owala (2013) studied language use in the reportage of terrorism news in a Kenyan newspaper called *Taifa Leo*. Employing the tools of CDA, the study revealed a lot of bias in the reportage of Terrorism news. The bias originated either from discourse access or the discourse structures. The researcher concluded that the news affected the readers since they were not able to get all the information they needed to know about terrorism in Kenya. The knowledge the readers had was therefore distorted. This is because the information provided forms the basis through which readers make meaning of the situation so as to build and update their model of the situation. If the reporting is biased as seen in this study, then the model of situation will also be biased. The present study sought to find out how this was handled in the Kenyan Mainstream YouTube channels.

Mutua (2013) examined the media's role in influencing the fight against terrorism in Kenya. Using CDA, the study analysed the reportage of terrorism news in Kenya. According to the findings of this study, the mass media and terrorism is that the media have come to constitute such a major portion of modern culture that most of today's terrorists and counter terrorists have factored into their tactics. The media can serve both the terrorists and the counter terrorists. He recommends that in order to minimize the reliance of terrorists on traditional media, it is important for the media to report objectively minding language use when covering news and stories on terrorism. The data analysed was from the reportage of the 1998 bomb-blast in Kenya. There are several attacks that have happened since then. The findings of the current study would tell whether like the traditional media, the social media is serving the terrorists' agenda.

Theoretical framework

The Socio-cognitive Model of Critical Analysis Theory (CDA)

The present study adopted the Socio-cognitive Model of CDA as proposed by van Dijk (2001). Whereas all approaches to CDA study the relations between discourse and society, a Socio-cognitive approach claims that such relations are cognitively mediated (van Dijk, 2001). According to Sanders (2005), cognition can be taken to mean unconscious mental processes involved in discourse processing. This is to say social structures and discourse structures being different can only be related through the mental representations of language users as individuals and social members.

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The mental representations of events, situations, acts spoken or thought about, observed or participated in by human actors are termed as models (Johnson-Laird, 1983; van Dijk & Kintsch, 1983). A model is an individual's or social members' construct of a situation or event they have read or heard of. Journalistic activities and interactions as well as the actual writing of news texts are inherently social (van Dijk, 1988). It therefore follows that for the news texts to make sense, it must be explained bearing in mind the social cognitions within social contexts. This is to also say there has to be a shared knowledge (model) of the news reports between the news makers and their audience. Since journalists write news as social members it follows that this can affect their knowledge, beliefs, attitudes or ideologies (van Dijk, 1989). Hence as they write the news they have to ensure that they remain faithful to the mental representations of particular situations and events of their audience. The production and processing of news texts is therefore subjective.

In the case of news in social media, such shared knowledge of a situation or event between the news makers and the consumers can be expressed through the use of presuppositions. Presuppositions give a common knowledge ground. They serve to present information or knowledge of an entity as self-evident unproblematic and unquestionable. Presuppositions in text could easily go unquestioned or unchallenged as most of the presupposed knowledge remains implicit. According to van Dijk (2008), one of the most important properties of discourse is what is not said but remains implicit as in the case of presuppositions (Richardson, 2007). Van Dijk (1995, 1988) has it that media's power is persuasive because it has the potential to control the minds of the readers or viewers by developing truth beliefs that become part of their cultural knowledge. To achieve this, CDA focuses on those propositions that suggest that certain information is (accepted to be) true but in fact is not true at all or at least controversial van Dijk (2001). Our task therefore involved reconstructing the underlying models and especially opinions from subtle discursive properties (van Dijk, 1989).

It is expected that most Kenyans watch YouTube videos on daily happenings. This is true of the many terrorists' attacks that have been witnessed in Kenya. Social media consumers are able to understand the attacks based on the information relayed and how it is relayed in the social media platforms. Every time they watch an attack the information forms and also adds to what they already know. The knowledge acquired forms the basis through which they can make meaning of possible future attacks. The Social media can serve as a tool terrorists use through the use of sensational language in reporting the attacks. However, the content creators can choose to report critically by avoiding the use of sensational language. It is therefore important to find out the knowledge Kenyan social media users have on terrorism as this knowledge also codes for the readers' opinions, attitudes and emotions towards terrorism which in turn has an influence on the fight against terrorism in Kenya. Garissa University terrorist attack is the focus of this study based on the fact that it was the deadliest attack that followed several other attacks. The social media users' prior knowledge of terrorism from there that was applied in understanding the attack under study and their new knowledge on terrorism added in the selected YouTube videos formed the central focus of this study.

Data Analysis, Presentation and Discussion

Data for this study was drawn from YouTube news video headlines on the Garissa University terrorist attack. The news videos reporting from the 2nd of April 2015 (day of the attack) to the 30th of April 2015 were selected for the study. The selection was guided by such words as Garissa, terrorist, Kenya attack, Campus attack, and Alshabaab. YouTube news headlines with more than 100,000 views were purposively sampled. Eleven headlines were then analysed using van Dijk's Socio-cognitive model of Critical Discourse Analysis Theory. This analysis focused on the taken-for-granted information in the reportage concerning the perpetrators of the attack and the Kenyan Security Force. This is done critically with an aim of uncovering biases in the reportage.

The analysis and interpretation of the news headlines sought to bring out the common ground knowledge, taken for granted knowledge that the newsmakers and the news consumers had or formed concerning the terrorists and the Kenyan Security Force. This knowledge facilitated their understanding of the headlines without the need for more information. It is expected that the media audience's interpretation of possible future attacks will be based on the presupposed information in the news reports.

The followings are the findings and discussions on the study:

The headlines are identified with the TV channel associated with and are numbered systematically. The date, month, and year of the video production is also provided. For example, **K24 4.4.15** means that the YouTube Video News belongs to a TV station called K24 and the news was aired on the 4th of April in the year 2015. The analysis of data in this study found the following to have been presupposed in the headlines of the news videos.

1. Nation 6.4.15 Terror on Campus: Garissa attack response blunders as part of elite squad traveled by road

Presuppositions are all pieces of knowledge that language users must assume in order for what they say to make a literal meaning (Bekalu, 2016). The use of the verb *blunders* in the headline implies the response mission was not successful. This is attributed to the fact that the special unit of the Kenya Defence Force (RECCE) traveled by road. The unsuccessful mission is therefore framed as the cause of the many deaths witnessed.

2. EURO News 5.4.15 Too much time taken to deploy elite RECCE squad in Garissa

What is intended to be believed without questioning in headline 2 is that the RECCE squad was deployed late. What the headline presupposes is that had they been on the attack scene early, more lives could have been saved. The institution responsible for the deployment of the elite group is the government. It, therefore, goes without saying that the government of Kenya failed its people.

3. KTN News 4.4.15 The government transport RECCE squad by road to Garissa University

The referential meaning of headline 3 is that apart from road, there are other means of transport that the RECCE squad could have used to Garissa University. They arrived late meaning that it was possible to use a faster means like taking a flight. The take home message here is that the coordination of the transport means was poor hence the cause for the many deaths.

4. K24 TV News 18 RECCE squad members took 12 minutes to overpower terrorists

Quantifying nouns trigger presuppositions (Richardson 2017). The headline quantified the RECCE squad as well as the amount of time they took to overpower the terrorists. By so doing, the RECCE squad are construed as very sophisticated, winning the battle in 12 minutes. Other headlines prior to this one had however indicated that they arrived late at the attack scene. The glorification of their prowess at handling terrorists will not go down well with the news consumers having negative prior knowledge of them.

5. KTN NEWS 21.4.15 Top security bosses in Garissa University sent home over the Garissa University terror attack

The action expressed in headline 5 through the verb *sent* communicates common knowledge that the security bosses did a shoddy job in the attack. What is constructed in the minds of the news viewers is a picture of a disorganized K Kenyan security Force. This is a plus on the terrorists who on the contrary are seen as organized. Such knowledge according to van Dijk (2000) forms a referential basis for the Kenyan public interpretation of possible future terrorist attacks.

6. KTN News 30.4.15 Joseph Nkaisery reveals major security lapses during Garissa college attack

The headline in excerpt 6 discloses that there were security lapses in the response to the attack through the use of the verb *reveals*. The Headline quotes Joseph Nkaisery, the then minister for internal security as the source of the information. This downplays the role played by the government in the attack. This in turn negatively informs the public attitudes towards their government.

7. CNN News 3.4.15 Four gunmen took over the university in Kenya attack

The headline in excerpt 7 glorifies the attackers; they are constructed as being highly organized and sophisticated. The implicative verb *took over* construed the terrorists as powerful despite them being few in number. Quantifying the noun *gunmen* satirizes The Kenyan soldiers. The headline served to downplay the role of the government in the attack.

8. Aljazeera News 6.6.2015 Garissa attack: Could it have been prevented?

Headline in excerpt 8 presupposes that the attack may not have happened after all. Giving their audience a lee way to think of a possibility that the attack could have been averted creates in them a doubt on the government's efforts to protect its citizens. The headline questions the

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efficiency of security intelligence in Kenya. This again is a message that brings out the terrorists as an organized group that is able to operate without the Kenyan government's awareness.

9. Nation News 10.4.15 State admits mistakes in response to Garissa Massacre

The verb *admits* in the headline brings to full light the reason behind the deadly attack. It is common knowledge that the state made mistakes in its response to the Garissa University attack. The government, therefore, takes responsibility for the many lives lost. The Kenyan government's effort was inadequate.

10. Citizen News 5.4.15 Lawyer, Mandera chief's son among Garissa Alshabaab terrorists

The referential expression *Mandera's chief son among Garissa Alshabbab terrorists* points to the common knowledge that terror in Kenya is homegrown. It is also associated with the cream in the society that is a lawyer and son of a government official. This is another instance of glorification of terrorism which can encourage radicalization.

11. KTN News 30.4.15 Kenya ignored intelligence

Presuppositions give a common knowledge ground. They serve to present information or knowledge of an entity as self-evident unproblematic and unquestionable. Presuppositions in a text could easily go unquestioned or unchallenged as most of the presupposed knowledge remains implicit. According to van Dijk (2008), one of the most important properties of discourse is what is not said but remains implicit as in the case of presuppositions.

Headline 10 presupposes that there was intelligence that was ignored in Kenya. This is a high level of government security negligence. Again, the media served to downplay the role of the government in securing its citizens. How can a caring government ignore intelligence on such a deadly matter? The Kenyan government is portrayed to have failed its citizens in its response to the attack.

12. CGTN Africa 2.4.15 Kenyan security fighters kill two terrorists in Garissa attack

The verb *kill* in refers to Kenyan security fighters. What is presupposed is that they killed the terrorists. Quantifying the terrorists killed questions their ability to handle terror situations. They were able to kill two terrorists while the terrorists killed 147. The terrorists are therefore said without saying that they were more sophisticated than the Kenyan soldiers.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the YouTube news headlines on the Garissa University attack highlighted the sophistication of the attackers while downplaying the role of the government in its response to the attack. YouTube as a social site forbids any content that would be regarded as an incitement to violence. This study points to the language strategies used by reporters during times of crisis. The presupposed meaning of every utterance cannot be taken for granted. YouTube responds to calls from governments to remove the videos of radical groups. The Findings of

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this study reveals that even the mainstream news channels propagate the terrorist agenda. It is advisable then that the creators of news contents on terrorism pay attention to the language strategies they employ bearing in mind that the subtle meaning of utterances informs their consumers attitudes and opinions about the government's and its agencies efforts in countering terrorists attacks. Downplaying the role of the government makes the situation worse. This is because the terrorists aim at using the media to pass such information.

The researcher recommend this study to journalists with the aim of helping them understand that the language they use in their reporting influences their readers' understanding and emotions toward what they are reporting. Based on the fact that terrorism is a psychological war makes their word choice a key feature in their reporting. It is therefore important for them to use words, phrases, and sentences that do not terrorize the readers who then would become secondary victims of the terrorists' attacks.

The researcher also recommend this study to print media consumers. This study will help them know that news is subjective. They should therefore be critical in reading to decipher the writer's intentions and be able to make their own meaning instead of consuming news as gospel truth.

This chapter connects the fight against terrorism to social media use. It implies that YouTube news can serve both the terrorists and the counter-terrorists. Language use is key and attention should be given to the meaning that every headline implies. Journalists' model of attacks can promote the agenda of the terrorists as seen in the findings of the study. The social media news can however be an avenue to downplay the terrorists by highlighting the role of the counter-terrorists.

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Chapter Four

Conflict resolution and peace through social media

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Abstract

The twenty-first century brought about communication advances that allow individuals to send and receive messages instantly and with feedback. Social media aid in the propagation of peace by facilitating dialogue among individuals of all ethnic origins and nations. It has the potential to influence perceptions of ethnicity, shift attitudes, and foster tolerance and mutual understanding. The objectives of this chapter is to look at the potential of social media in conflict resolution and peace-building and also to determine if social media has been adopted by governments and organizations in the promotion of peace and conflict resolution. The Spiral of Silence theory and Peace theory were adopted as theoretical frameworks. The survey design was used, and three hundred copies of the questionnaire were distributed. The findings of the study stated that social media have helped in conflict resolution and peace. The study recommended that Social media has the potential for peace building, so it will be a valuable tool in the adoption of social media platforms for sharing real-time peace messages.

Keywords: Social Media, Conflict Resolution, Peace

Introduction

The advent of the twenty-first century brought about communication advances that allow individuals to send and receive messages instantly and with feedback. Interaction becomes more immediate and intimate, bridging the temporal divide. According to the World Bank, Sub-Saharan Africa currently has nearly 650 million mobile phone customers, outnumbering the United States and the European Union, indicating an exceptional surge in the growth, use, and popularity of modern communication technologies in the developing world. Adepetun (2020) notes that in the year 2020, platforms for social networking such as Facebook, Instagram, and, most notably, Twitter were major mobilization tools used by young Nigerians demanding that the government dismantle SARS, cease police brutality, and reform the Nigerian police force. It has evolved into a call for Nigeria to be reformed. Many Nigerians use social media constantly to discuss their own and their family and friends' experiences, which is fueling the demonstrations. Social media is a hot topic right now. People nowadays rely a lot on social media platforms for the latest news and information.

Social media is an interactive platform used to share information to vast users. According to Kietzmann, Hermkens and McCarthy (2011), Individuals and groups employ mobile and web-

based technology to construct highly interactive platforms where they may share, produce, talk, and change User-Generated Content. Arens, Weigold and Arens (2011: 522) mentioned that “these sites are called social, primarily, for their ability to connect like individuals in a manner that have never been seen before”. People can use social media to communicate personal remarks, political opinions, business ideas, and commercial messages through various internet platforms such as blogs, microblogs, and social networks. People believe that with the way the social media space is developing, it has become critical for individuals to build their own area on social media. According to Rohwerder (2015: 23) “the extensive social conflicts in Nigeria have frequently played out against a backdrop of profound poverty, illiteracy, and poor governance systems weakened by unfavorable trade conditions, debts, and administrative incompetence”.

Over the years, social media platforms have given rise to disinformation, resulting in the propagation of fake news, which in turn has led to hate speech among citizens, which snowballs into confrontations. It was on this premise that On 5 November 2019, the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria presented the Anti-Social Media Bill to criminalize social media's use to spread false or harmful information. The bill's original title is the Protection from Internet Falsehood and Manipulation Act of 2019. The law was met with angry protests, and a number of civil society organizations, human rights advocates, and Nigerian individuals uniformly condemned it. According to Rohwerder (2015), although empirical data is limited, there is good anecdotal evidence that social media can contribute to peace building by boosting interaction and understanding between opposed groups and enhancing knowledge for conflict avoidance. Social networking platforms like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and blogs, among others, have become an essential aspect in conflict resolution and peace-building. In countries such as Kenya and Nigeria, social media has been used to crowd source information in conflict hotspots as part of different conflict prevention strategies, particularly around elections. Political violence can also be reduced through social media, a practical step was taken during the 2019 elections, when the “Vote no Fight” was shared on various social media platforms online. Youths may use social media to launch their own peace projects and engage in interactive discourse.

Statement of problem

Misinformation, sometimes known as "fake news," has become a convenient instrument for the dissemination of hate speech, increasing ethnic and religious divides in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country such as Nigeria. Although studies on the impact of false news on the Nigerian political scene have been conducted, the impact on national security has received little attention. As a result, it is critical to do research on how to regulate fake news spread on social media in relation to Nigerian disputes. Fake news, if not dealt with properly, has the potential to exacerbate Nigeria's escalating insecurity in many sections of the country. In light of the foregoing, it is important to stress that failing to halt the stream of false news in Nigeria may result in many more crises across the country. Against this context, this study set out to examine

how false news is regarded in Nigeria and why some residents are so readily swayed by it that they become embroiled in violence.

The goal of this research was to examine the conflict resolution and peace through social networking platforms. The study examines the following specific objectives:

1. To study the potentials of social media in conflict resolution and peacebuilding,
2. To determine if social media has been adopted by governments and organizations in the promotion of peace and conflict resolution.

Social media

Achor (2015) asserted that social networking platforms are online platforms that encourage contribution, openness, discourse, public, connectivity, and interaction, cooperation, and information exchange. Social media is a kind of communication that allows people to communicate with one another. They are user-generated content platforms that permit people or assemblies to develop content and engage in dialogues and content conversation. Without a question, social media is influencing and reinventing the nature of communication between individuals all over the world (Nyekwere, Okoro & Azubuike, 2014). As long as the frontiers of information communication technologies or computer mediated platforms continue to advance, social media will continue to evolve. Social media are user-generated online media (websites and applications) aimed at forming online communities of individuals who have common interests and/or activities, or who are curious about others' interests and activities. Forums, groups, blogs, and other such quasi-websites are examples. They are online tools designed to engage individuals, motivate and urge them to be better people and build better lives for themselves while communicating and sharing knowledge. The terms "social media" and "these services" are frequently interchanged. Instant Messaging Apps are a form of social media platforms that uses smartphones and other technical devices to share text messages, photos, audio, and short videos are all examples of information shared on social media platforms (Afolaranmi, 2020).

Social media platforms are divided into:

1. Collaborative projects (Wikipedia),
2. Blogs and microblogs (Twitter, LinkedIn),
3. Content communities (YouTube and Daily motion),
4. Social networking sites (Facebook),
5. Virtual gaming environments (World of Warcraft),
6. Virtual social environments (Additional Life) (Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) (wikis).

One among the most significant advantages of social media over conventional media outlets is that it allows people to find information and share it with their own networks. People may follow and recommend material based on their prior behavior or interests, as well as inside their network, thanks to sophisticated algorithms (Tufekci, 2015). This increases the power of persuasion by allowing the material to be targeted at and personalized for relevant audiences.

Furthermore, rather than passively following or receiving elite messaging, social media allows regular folks to reply in kind via hashtags or actively communicate with elites. Finally, the speed with which tweets and postings are rapidly disseminated around the world on social media has accelerated the news information cycle, allowing stories to "trend" and "go viral" far more swiftly (Garfield, 2011).

Conflict resolution

To various individuals, conflict resolution implies different things. To a military strategy, it might entail the most advanced measures of deterrence, including a first strike against a potential opponent if it is vital to avoid a longer conflict. For the lawyer, resolving dispute may entail a court decision based on legal standards and legal reasoning; in other cases, the death sentence may be considered a settlement. For an industrial negotiator, resolution is reaching an agreement via negotiating, even if it means losing employment. For the conventional mediator, this may include pressing for a sensible settlement, despite the fact that weaker parties may see injustice (Burton, 2010). For our purposes, conflict resolution entails resolving disputes using analytical methodologies that go to the bottom of the problem. Conflict resolution, as opposed to "management" or "settlement," refers to a result that the parties involved believe is a long-term solution to the problem.

In this sense Iroka (2016) argues that resolving conflicts, in theory, evokes a sense of completion, when the parties to a disagreement are content with the conclusion of a settlement and the problem is truly settled. Miall et al. (2001:21) state "in conflict resolution, it is expected that the deep rooted sources of conflict are looked into, settled, and behaviour is no longer violent, nor are attitudes hostile any longer while the structure of the conflict has been changed". In other words Conflict resolution is defined as the settlement of matters in an existing skirmish by a solution that is mutually acceptable to all sides, long-term self-sustaining, and generative of a new, constructive connection between formerly antagonistic rivals. The cost of violence is enormous, inflicting pain and poverty, hurting economic progress, and depriving people of their fundamental requirements.

The conflict resolution aspect of social media are enormous. Social media aid in the propagation of peace by facilitating dialogue among individuals of all ethnic origins and nations. It has the potential to influence perceptions of ethnicity, shift attitudes, and foster tolerance and mutual understanding. As a result, it has the potential to bridge the gap between ethnic groups who would otherwise be unable to interact with one another. Most peacebuilding agency adopt the use of social media platforms to reach warring parties, since majority of agent that participant in conflicts are youths, this platforms are used to reach them. For example activities of peace dialogue by the Plateau State Peace Building Agency are posted there. Furthermore, political violence can also be reduced through social media. Conflict resolution aims not only to resolve the immediate social conflict, family or ethnic dispute, but also to provide insights into the generic nature of the problem, thereby contributing to the elimination

of its sources and the prevention of future instances, because it aims to get to the source of problems. In a nutshell, it's problem-solving through analysis.

Social media and promotion of conflict resolution

Social media is being utilized to supplement and magnify the messages of more conventional kinds of media. New communication tools provide up new lines of communication and provide new chances for locals to become more actively involved in conflict prevention and peace building initiatives. Peace-building organizations' social media accounts, such as Search for Common Grounds, International Alert, and Peace Direct, have aided in post-conflict reconciliation and healing through their collaborative design process and usage of multimedia. This approach highlights real-life experiences of those touched by violence and encourages citizens to practice peace (Schoemaker, 2014). Social media has created new chances for public to be involved and interactive in discourse that brings about conflict resolution, as well as altered the relationship between nations and citizens. Although several problems exist, social media has the ability to play a role in the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of peace building programs by making it faster and permitting geo-referencing. Through digital surveys and direct reporting, social media may be utilized to aid the process. The advantages of employing new media for monitoring and evaluation of peace building initiatives include that it saves time, allowing evidence-based choices to be made more swiftly.

Best, Long, Etherton and Smyth (2011) points out that social networking sites are usually used for peace building projects, when this peace messages are shared users participate in peace initiatives in their own way of sharing these messages this on the long run have an immense effective. They accomplish this without the assistance of outsiders, utilizing platforms such as Facebook and Twitter to bridge differences between entrenched groups. There are peace-related Facebook groups and initiatives. Social media may also aid in the provision of information and monitoring in order to offer early notice of possible problems. Social media and information and communication technologies (ICTs) have made it simpler for people to express and share their opinions in public, opening up new avenues for public participation (Rohwerder, 2015).

Social media and conflict management

Apart from their fundamental purpose as a source of information, picture sharing and tools for personal communication for the general public, social media also play a role in the resolution of political concerns, malevolent, religious, and personal disputes. These duties are based on the core principles of the international peace agreement, which are meant to begin, facilitate, and effectively finish the conflict resolution process. According to Yildiz (2020), social media serves as a link between opposing sides, an unbiased diplomat, policymaker, and peacemaker in the process of settling a dispute. While performing the diplomatic function, social media facilitates contact between the conflict's opposing groups, particularly when formal avenues of communication are unavailable. The audio visual media successfully becomes a bridge to settling disputes by conducting live interviews via Skype and zoom meeting, by reaching out

to leaders of contending parties, and enabling physical meetings to find a solution to the problem.

As Vladimir and Schirch (2007) note out, social media has been effective in drawing attention to terrible humanitarian situations across the world, and natural catastrophes and wars are frequently reported in a timely and responsible manner. The government respond as the media actively engages in the formation of remedial policies; moreover, throughout the peace development process, social media plays a critical role in peace messages, special news releases, and events aimed at conflict settlement. Social media plays a critical role in shaping public perceptions about the conflict, making sense of the ensuing events during the conflict situation using factual data, accurately appropriate imagery, and captions, in resolving grievances towards establishing sustainable peace and tranquillity or tolerance between warring groups. The central role of social media is to strike a balance between the facts of a conflict, the desired public perception of the conflict, and the true public perceptions of the conflict, as well as the ensuing public actions or reactions. While keeping the masses informed about events in the conflict, moral and human rights are paramount, and ways of upholding the same through social media are unavoidable. The role of social media in agenda setting, shaping perceptions, influencing policy making, facilitating mediation, forming a bridge between warring factions, as well as upholding fundamental human rights and morals, necessitates responsible behavior during conflict resolution (Imtihani, 2014).

Theoretical framework

Peace theory

Peace theory was coined by Johan Galtung in 1976, Johan Galtung, a peace researcher from Norway, introduced the idea of peace to academic literature for the first time and distinguished between positive and negative peace. The key idea behind peace theory is that relationships between two or more parties are what make for peace. The parties may be pulling in separate directions inside an individual, a state, a country, a region, or a civilization. Peace is a relationship between parties, not just a quality of one party. That is not meant to minimize the importance of the party's desire and ability to forge amicable ties (Anderson, 2015). Peace theory has two typological namely; Positive and Negative peace. Negative peace is so-called because it lacks or is not characterized by these harmful social and political events, not because it is an undesirable ideal. On the other side, "positive peace" is defined by the presence of favorable social and political phenomena including justice, human rights, equality, and wellbeing. Additionally, it is proposed that positive peace creates the prerequisites for negative peace because the absence of positive peace leads to war, armed conflict, and political violence. Positive peace, in accordance with Ian Harris, is a state in which social fairness, ecological sustainability, and nonviolence are used to eradicate the root causes of conflict (Harris, 2004: 12). Social media can promote peace by fostering communication between individuals of various ethnicities and ethnic origins.

The latent potential of social media and how it may be utilized to influence societies, people, and even governments must be exploited in the development of peace in society, taking the peace theory into consideration. Social media can promote peace by fostering communication between individuals of various ethnicities and ethnic origins. It can alter how people perceive ethnicity, alter attitudes, and foster tolerance and understanding between people. As a result, it can facilitate communication across ethnic groups that otherwise would not be able to do so. NGOs like Search for Common Grounds, International Alert, and the Plateau State Peacebuilding agency assist young people in organizing intercultural events and peace programs like multi-ethnic youth festivals, as well as monitoring and putting a stop to hate speech on social media.

Spiral of Silence Theory

This study is anchored on the spiral of silence theory. Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, a political scientist from Germany, first put forth the spiral of silence theory in 1974. According to this mass communication theory, an individual's willingness to express their own political opinions is influenced by how they perceive the distribution of the general public's opinions. The main idea is that social interactions among individuals affect each other's willingness to voice opinions. According to Glynn's (2015) spiral of silence theory, people will become more outspoken and secure in expressing their opinions once they discover that those opinions are held by everyone in the group. However, if the person senses that the group does not share their opinion, they are more likely to be reserved and keep quiet. The importance of the individual over his own judgment is that of "not isolating himself" (West, Turner, & Zhao, 2010: 122). This is an act of self-expression that has the power to alter the "global environment of opinion," altering how others perceive others and their desire to express their own thoughts (Eveland & Glynn, 2022), the major components of the spiral of silence include:

1. An issue of public interest,
2. Divisiveness on the issues,
3. A quasi-statistical sense that helps an individual perceive the climate of opinion as well as estimate the majority and minority opinion,
4. 'Fear of isolation' from social interaction,
5. An individual's belief that a minority (or 'different') opinion isolates oneself from others, and
6. A 'hardcore' group of people whose opinions are unaffected by others' opinions.

Social media users frequently are unaware of the beliefs of their friends and are shocked to learn about their true opinions via social media. As a result, they are reluctant to share their minority opinions for fear of disappointing their friends, starting conflicts, or breaking up with them. Some people could choose not to express their opinions on social media because their posts can be seen years or even decades later, at times when they might jeopardize them. This shows that while there is a free exchange of information and opinions on social media, people with opposing views may decide to keep quiet or may be persuaded to acquire bad opinions about those who have been subjected to hate speech. People's conscious or unconscious belief

that expressing unpopular thoughts will have bad effects is the central tenet of the spiral of silence. For a variety of reasons, these ideas might not be prevalent online.

Some social media creators and supporters have hoped that social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter might produce different enough discussion venues that those with minority views might feel freer to express their opinions, thus broadening public discourse and adding new perspectives to everyday discussion, social media offers new perspectives in understanding conflict contexts, informing the way interventions are designed. This includes mapping people and conversations, gathering data about conflict dynamics and overcoming traditional programme design challenges. It can amplify peaceful voices and shape the public and political narrative. This includes countering fake news and threat narratives and addressing potential trigger points through rumor management. In order to motivate action, it can also serve as a bridge between local, national, and international sectors. It may open up fresh venues for people to interact, plan, and mobilize in support of peace. It can serve as a means of group coping, supplement conventional dialogue events, involve participants in discussion who might not often take part in offline activities, and boost peacemaking efforts. Social media users who disagree with the prevailing opinion tend to keep quiet and avoid face-to-face discussions out of concern for social isolation. Therefore, the minority opinion becomes more elusive when the dominant view rules the public space. However, as social networks and anonymous online spaces proliferated, millions of people moved into cyberspace to become online users. As a result, an increasing number of men and women share their ideas online, regardless of whether they are a minority or not, as long as their identities are concealed (Campbell & Howie, 2014).

Research methodology

Research design

Survey research was employed in the study's implementation, which was based on a quantitative research design. The survey research technique was chosen above other approaches because it allows researchers to concentrate their efforts on representative samples drawn from the whole community. This form of data collecting allowed the researchers to get insight into and a wealth of experience from young people who are frequent users of social media sites.

Sampling technique

The youngsters who were sampled were chosen using a purposive sampling. Because some of the teenagers had been exposed to exchanging peace-building messages, the approach was deemed acceptable for the study. As a result, only individuals from whom the researcher could obtain the essential data had to be included. Okeke's (2001: 143) statement that "purposive sampling should be utilized if the investigator is interested in some trait that only a few individuals are aware of, and if the purpose of the survey is to acquire strong insight and experienced critical assessment" supports this. The subject of the inquiry requires critical evaluation by active social media users, and these teenagers function as both peace mediators and conflict generators.

Sample population

The population for the study composed of youths in Jos south, specifically youths in Fwawei, Yingi and Gold and base. The population of Jos south based on the projected records of the National Bureau of Statistics in 2020 is 445371. 7. The sample size for this study was 400 respondents. The sample size was determined using Taro Yamane's (1967: 886) simple formula for calculating sample size. The equation is written as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n = sample size, N is the population size, I is constant and e is the error margin of 0.05. As a result, when this formula is applied to the combined population of Jos South, which is 445371. 7, we obtain the following:

Sample size =

$$\frac{445371}{1 + 445371.7 (.05)^2}$$

$$\frac{445371}{1 + 445371.7 (0.0025)}$$

$$\frac{445371}{1 + 445371.7 (0.0025)}$$

$$\frac{445371}{1,113.43} = 399 \text{ approximately } 400$$

400 sample size.

Method of data collection/ presentation

Frequency tables and percentages are examples of descriptive statistics. A five-point Likert scale was used for further investigation. The respondents' thoughts or views on the research questions were measured using a five-point Likert scale.

Data presentation and analysis

A total of 400 copies of the questionnaire were issued. Three hundred copies, on the other hand, were dutifully finished and returned to the researcher. This signifies that the sampled respondents were unable to provide 100 copies of the questionnaire. As a result, the data will be analyzed based on the number of completed questionnaires. To assess the research topics under inquiry, raw and unprocessed data from the sampled population was thoroughly reviewed. The data acquired was depicted in tables below, which shows the frequency counts of respondents with the compilation.

The data of respondents shows that the majority of respondents are male 198(66%) while the females are 102(34%). The lowest education was Diploma with 120(40%), those who possess B.SC/ B.A/ HND were about 140(47%), and then 13% (40) of the respondent had Masters.

80% of the respondents are single due to the fact that they are youths, while the remaining 20% are married.

Table 4.1: Social media have helped in conflict resolution and peace.

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	149	50
Agree	110	37
Indecisive	21	7
Strongly disagree	11	4
Disagree	9	3
Total	300	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

A chunk of respondent representing 50% strongly agreed that social media have helped in conflict resolution and peace. 37% agreed that social media have helped in conflict resolution and peace. 7% were indecisive, 4% strongly disagreed. 3% disagreed that social media have helped in conflict resolution and peace. From the data above 50% strongly agreed that social media have helped in conflict resolution and peace.

Table 4.2: The use of social media by peace building organizations have helped youth to see the positive potentials of social media.

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	144	48
Agree	104	35
Indecisive	32	11
Strongly disagree	11	4
Disagree	9	3
Total	300	100

Source: Field Survey 2022

The statistical analysis above 48% strongly agreed that the use of social media by peace building organizations have helped youth to see the positive potentials of social media. 104 respondents representing 35% agreed that the use of social media by peace building organizations have helped youth to see the positive potentials of social media. 11% were indecisive, 4% strongly disagreed. 3% disagreed that the use of social media by peace building organizations have helped youth to see the positive potentials of social media. This connotes that 48% strongly agreed that the use of social media by peace building organizations have helped youth to see the positive potentials of social media.

Table 4.3: By fact checking news on conflicts, social media can help in the reductions of fake news and misinformation.

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	119	40
Agree	100	33
Indecisive	19	6
Strongly disagree	30	10
Disagree	32	11
Total	300	100

Source: Field Survey 2022

These findings show that representing 40% strongly agreed that by fact checking news on conflicts, social media can help in the reductions of fake news and misinformation. 33% agreed that by fact checking news on conflicts, social media can help in the reductions of fake news and misinformation. 6% were indecisive, 10% strongly disagreed. 11% disagreed that by fact checking news on conflicts, social media can help in the reductions of fake news and misinformation. This suggests that 40% strongly agreed that by fact checking news on conflicts, social media can help in the reductions of fake news and misinformation.

Discussion

Results of this study which surveyed youths in Jos south local government of Plateau State, 50% strongly agreed that social media have helped in conflict resolution and peace. Nigeria's social sphere is being opened up in unprecedented ways thanks to social media. It is now the new equalizer that is shattering the government and privately owned mainstream media's monopoly on information generation, distribution, and consumption. As seen by the growth of bloggers, social commentators, digital activists, and social critics, it is also showing latent journalistic qualities. These are members of a new generation of social activists in Nigeria who have embraced new media tools and are now utilizing them to raise awareness, mobilize, network, share ideas, critique, vent frustrations, and, eventually, create a new agenda for conflict resolution and peace. Those who were previously silent may now have a voice; voices are conceivable and many once everyone may join up for a social media account. Because social media can help awareness creation, sensitization, and social mobilization, a new era of information democracy is sweeping the globe. Downing (2008), cited in Olorunnisola and Martin (2013), mentioned some of the features of emerging media technologies that include the ability of people in diaspora to form disadvantaged groups, new social and political links strategically using new media to sway mainstream media coverage of certain issues and promoting open citizen journalism.

48% strongly agreed that the use of social media by peace building organizations have helped youth to see the positive potentials of social media. Social media is being utilized to supplement and magnify the messages of more conventional kinds of media. New communication tools provide up new lines of communication and provide new chances for locals to become more actively involved in conflict prevention and peace building initiatives. Peace-building organizations' social media accounts, such as Search for Common Grounds, International Alert, and Peace Direct, have aided in post-conflict reconciliation and healing through their collaborative design process and usage of multimedia. This approach highlights real-life experiences of those touched by violence and encourages citizens to practice peace. (Schoemaker, 2014).

Social media may assist reduce false news and disinformation by fact-checking stories about conflicts, according to 40% of respondents. Another thing to remember is that social media may be used to distribute breaking news and first-hand experiences of crisis situations across the country. Due to a multitude of issues, traditional media may not be ready or equipped to

cover these topics. Some sectional news items have been proven to be inaccurate and unsupported, resulting in exaggerated and unneeded representations of crises and conflicts that could be prevented if citizen journalists could be trusted to offer first-hand facts a synopsis of what occurred. There is a wide audience and a lot of room on social media. Social media uses just the virtual environment, and the virtual space's major quality is its vastness and ability to be everywhere at once. This potent trait might be exploited to aid the country's peacemaking efforts. Because social media has erased geographical barriers, citizens are no longer limited by the availability of traditional media. The new (social) media have been credited with the capacity to provide a platform that is available to a greater variety of persons due to a reduction in geographical distance and the economic and physical limits of political activity (Olorunnisola & Martin, 2013). This spatial potential might be exploited to transfer and spread developmental signals between different local and segmental settings.

Recommendation

The following recommendations were reached:

- The adoption of social media platforms in sharing real-time peace messages, is a valuable tool for organization in peace-building they should adopt. When social media platforms are used for peace building, users especially youths should be thought peace education on these platforms since they are regular users of these platforms, by so doing it will help youths in the promotion of peace messages on social media,
- Using Artificial Intelligence (AI), in fact checking information on social media should be adopted, it will help in the reduction of false and fake messages.

Conclusion

In today's environment, social media plays a vital role in a variety of industries. For example, in the field of information transmission to humans. There are several social media accounts via which we may share and receive information to the rest of the globe. As a result, it's important to promote the use of social media in conflict settlement. It is not costly, and as a result, it is widely used may be utilized to easily settle conflicts when face-to-face difficulties are not involved. Social media can help in the resolution of disagreements in this area. Before this can happen, however, appropriate and social media that is used in peaceful participation must be advocated for and pushed for. Peace education utilizing digital media technologies is crucial in this regard. Digital media technology may be able to help improve the efficacy of peace education. To act as preventative measures, policymakers in Nigeria should consider providing educating for peace due consideration and embarking on emerging digital media-based peace advocacy projects. Part of peace education must involve raising awareness; this will require conventional media to play a role in raising awareness about the undeniable power of social media and how user-generated material can be used to either spark conflict or build peace.

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Chapter Five

Disruptive social media linguistic elements in communication among Nigerian netizens

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Abstract

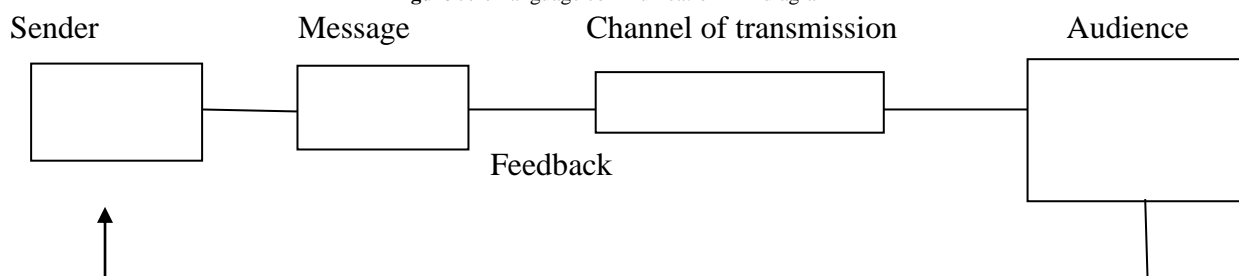
This paper examined the disruptive social media linguistic elements in communication among Nigerian netizens. The study made use of the interactionist theory and the principles and parameters theory to investigate the relevance of social media language, the scope of reachability and the non-acceptability of the social media linguistic elements in the construction of formal language situation. Domiciled in the domain of syntax, the descriptive research design was used to collate data from relevant sources on which thirty-three linguistic elements were tested. The findings show that although the media language and the British language which is the language of education in Nigeria are both in the English language domain, Nigerian language policy has not accepted the use of the British and any other variety of the English language concurrently in a formal situation. The position of this paper is that the social media play a huge role in information dissemination, influencing public opinion and behaviour in the face of modern realities and has become eminent for language policy makers in Nigeria to consider the moderation and inclusion of the new media communication elements in the academic curriculum in line with the dynamism of language. The study has utilized the interactionist theory and the Principles and Parameters theory as frameworks to synergise language syntax with sociolinguistics, sociology and anthropology in the new normal.

Keywords: Communication, Disruptive, Grammaticality, Language policy, Netizens, Social media

Introduction

The study on disruptive social media linguistic elements in communication among Nigerian netizens investigates the linguistic elements used by netizens in social media that dislocates communication. Conventionally, certain units are involved in communication, they include: the messenger, the message, the channel of transmission, the audience and feedback. Linguistic elements in communication are usually contained in the message which moves from the messenger to the audience. The message in any communication is guided by the rules of the grammar of the language in use.

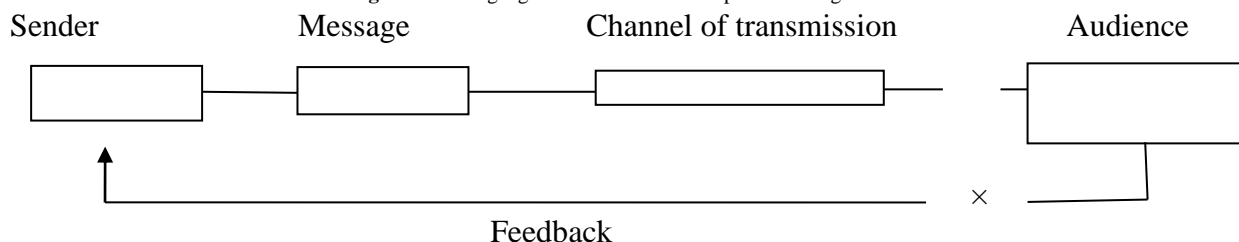
Figure 5.1: Language communication link diagram



In language communication, certain basic systems exist. The basic systems enfold the communicative links and communicative facilities. The communicative links study the process on how the message moves from the sender through the channel of transmission to the audience and their feedback while the communicative facilities study the personality and knowledge of the messenger; the language, aim and objectives of the message; the type of facility utilized in sending or transmitting the message; the type and size of audience and their reactions or feedback.

It follows that the messenger is required to have a good knowledge of the language they make use of in sending their messages to suit the audience set for the message. Consequently, there are also channels available to transmit the message to the audience, such as letter writing, radio and television broadcast, direct discourse and social media platforms. A common instrument used for communication in any of the channels of transmission is language.

Figure 5.2: Language communication disrupted link diagram



The diagram in figure 2 illustrates what happens when the language transmitted does not suit the audience. The diagram shows disruption marked ‘x’ between the channel of transmission and the audience, and again, between the audience and the feedback link. It simply demonstrates what happens when a less standard, a much higher standard or an unapproved variety of a language is sent to a given audience; an example is the use of informal variety of a language in a formal language situation. Similar situations usually transpire both in local, national and international domains of language use.

Countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, Botswana, Cameroon Gambia, Kenya, South Africa, Uganda, among other African nations have their experiences that led them to second language users of the English language. As trade and diplomatic activities increased, the use of English language in Africa further embraced other English varieties other than the British English

(Adetugbo, 1984; Umera-Okeke, 2017). The different varieties of English through modifications differ from British English in pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and spellings of words. These modifications have a great negative influence on second language (L2) users of English in Africa (Gilbert & Ogum, 2020).

English language in parts of the world is also rule guided. It became rooted in Nigeria from the sixteenth and early seventeenth Century when merchants and Christian missionaries settled in coastal towns and the subsequent British settlement. There was no earlier trace of any record of the use of English language prior to this period or of linguistic research in Nigeria preceding the late 18th century (Eyisi, 2006; Gilbert, 2019). The synergy between the Nigerians and Britain which led to colonization planted, watered and grew the English language in Nigerian soil. Currently, the British English has been adopted as the language of education, commerce, legislation, diplomacy and for other official purposes. Suffice it to say that the British English is the language for formality in writing and reading as contained in school curriculum in Nigeria (Fafunwa, 1974; NPE, 2004). As such, the use of any other language or variety of a language in formal discourse is usually unaccepted as it disrupts formal communications.

From oral history, the study of language linguistically in Nigeria began in the late 1950s in the then University College, Ibadan. The study of linguistics then was under the sub-department of phonetics in the department of English language and literature with the award of only postgraduate diploma. Upon the elevation of the university, the department of linguistics and Nigerian languages was created and subsequently established (Fafunwa, 1974; Nwala, 2015). In linguistics (scientific study of language), the structure of the language, the grammar of the language and the sound segments of the language under examination are usually investigated. Within comparative linguistics (a branch of linguistic study), the infiltration of another language in a certain domain or a concurrent mix-up of different varieties of the same language is usually unacceptable and viewed as ungrammatical. As a result of this norm, students in Nigeria who concurrently make use of British and American Englishes in external examinations organized by WAEC (West African Examination Council), JAMB (Joint Admission Matriculation Board), NECO (National Examination Council of Nigeria), and others, are usually discredited (Gilbert, 2020). Following the established view, the place of English language in Nigeria cannot be over emphasized; hence, English is the language of communication officially recognized and therefore performs all socio-political, cultural and linguistic roles in Nigeria (Amuseghan, 2007).

Statement of the problem

Recently, the world advanced to digital era where events and discourses are usually curtailed to a précised graphic representation of codes and sounds for easy and fast communication. This development led to the grammar rules normally associated with formality being unconsciously displaced. This development became more pronounced through the recent introduction of the use of the social media and its type and style of internet languages. It follows that the social media and internet languages has shifted the pattern of speech and the structural rules of the

English language in communication. Through the newly introduced language shift, certain acronyms, neologisms and abbreviations which contain linguistic items that are not in alignment with the formal English language grammar were embraced (Chopra, 2013), for examples:

1. BAE: “Before Anyone Else,” (typically referring to a person's significant).
2. BFF: meaning “Best Friends Forever.”
3. BRB: meaning “Be Right Back.”
4. BTW: meaning “By the Way.”
5. FBO: meaning “Facebook official.”
6. OMG: Stands for “oh my god.”
7. FOMO: “Fear of missing out.” And others.

Chopra identified the influence of the Internet in shifting the words used for speaking to one another beyond the ways traditionally made for communication. It also influences the simple act of talking – out loud and writing. The veracity of this situation led to Dorcas, Nyamanya, Omari and Nyanga’U (2017) stating that social media has penetrated the cradles of popular culture recently and over 1.5 billion citizens globally have joined online communities in the use of social platforms. As a result, industries from all walks of life have also resorted to the use of social media platforms for their transactions. Indeed, social media is relevant in all industries of the world; even in the domain where it is judged unacceptable, it is still a subject of investigation.

Following this situation as it is obvious in Nigeria, the current study investigates the linguistic elements contained in the language of Nigerian netizens that disrupt communication using the under listed objectives as a guide.

Research objectives

The objectives of this study are:

- i. To identify social media communication,
- ii. To categorise Nigerian netizens,
- iii. To investigate social media linguistic items used by the Nigerian netizens,
- iv. To find out how the social media linguistic item disrupt communication.

Methodology

The study employs the qualitative research method as a less structured method of data collection and certainly more suitable for handling social phenomena. Vital information was got from various publications and documents of many organizations and scholars arranged according to the researcher’s intuitive knowledge as a normal native speaker and the various interactions with other competent native speakers of the language as it relates to this subject under investigation.

Review of related Literature

The print, radio and television were the leading media platforms in Nigeria at the beginning of the Fourth Republic and they played the roles of official documentations, public enlightenment, campaigns, advertisements, interpretation of policies, among other things. One of the hitches of these old media was the lack of opportunity for instant and live interactions. To a large extent, ownership interests and meticulous editorial processes could lead to some level of 'richness' being removed from the original news stories before such is made public on broadcast. It follows that new media platforms has addressed most of those rigorous situations across nations, including Nigeria.

According to Hiradhar and Gray (2008) cited in Anika (2014) MySpace, a well-identified social networking locations has got a number ranging to 110 million users on board. Some other locations making wave globally are the Facebook, having over 69 million users; the Friendster, having 58 million active users; the Hi5, has 70 million active users; the LinkedIn, has 20 million users; the Xanga actively engages 40 million users and the Flickr which has 9.6 million users. Furthermore, McNair (2009) and Shadrach (2017) in their separate opinions aver that the new media facilitated the capacity to provide viable and interactive platforms for political awareness, political mobilization, political debates and advertisements. Indeed, social media platforms such as the Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, blogging have been major channels through which the global public is shown the happenings in modern Nigeria. Statistically, internet users in Nigeria have greatly increased to the height of 122 million users: Facebook has 83.27% sign-ups and Instagram with 10.51% (Global Stats, 2021) and Africa Check (2021) states that the number of Twitter users in Nigeria is at 3 million, as of June 2021 (The National Communication Commission, 2021). The statistics shows that a greater number of Nigerians are internet users which have helped in prompt dissemination of information within and outside the residents of the nation.

On this note, Arroyo (2012) cited in Anika (2014) posited that once the social media was brought on board, it introduced a fresh system for people, principally among the youths, to relate with each another, based on their common interests. It is an indication that the emergence of social media and digitalization has brought about a linguistic paradigm shift among the 20th and 21st Century users of the English language. This recent developed technology is actually a medium that enables swift scholarship among students and their teachers/lecturers to fabricate social connections that will enhance distance learning. Again, Anderson (2008) sees the use of social media and its language for online learning which is a detachment of all distance education with the responsibility to provide access to education that is easier in time and in space than campus-based education. Contrarily, even though the internet language is an English lexifier language, the Nigerian language policy through the National policy on education (1977, 1981, 1998, 2004) made a major advance on educational language.

Apart from the National policy on education, various statements on language use in Nigeria favours the British English as contained in Federal Republic of Nigeria 1979, 1989, 1999 and

2011 constitution, Section 55 (as amended); the considerations and statements of government on the findings and suggestions of the Political Bureau, 1987; Cultural Policy for Nigeria, 1988; A Handbook on Nigerian Culture, 1991 (particularly the segment on the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria). In the programme of notion on the role or status of a language in a given nation, three categories are usually considered:

- i. Official language policy,
- ii. Educational language policy,
- iii. General language policy.

As it were, the official language and educational language policy of Nigeria favours the British English while the internet language belongs to the general language; that is the reason for non-acceptance of any other variety of English in the official and educational domain.

Netizens and linguistic elements of Nigerian netizens

The word Netizen is a recent coinage got from the blend of “net” and “citizens” (net + citizens = Netizens). The blending of the said morphemes was done by Michael F. Hauben in 1987. The internet pioneer and author is credited with the blending and popularization of the term netizens to refer to the people inhabiting the electronic commons of the internet (CNC magazine, 1987). By implication, internet users in any part of the world fall within the category of Netizens and their Nigerian counterparts.

Notably, Nigerians inhabiting the electronic commons of the internet like their equals in parts of the world make use of certain acronyms, neologisms and abbreviations which contain linguistic items that make their communication apparent, relevant and prompt in business transactions, advertisements and social discourse. As it were, to find out how the widely accepted language style could interrupt communication in the domain of the same English language requires the use of a theoretical framework as a guide.

Theory

The current study adopts the interactionist theory and the principles and parameters theory as the theoretical frameworks. The interactionist theory states that people have always had the innate desire to interact with others in the society (Sarem, 2014) and the only instrument that can be used to satisfy this desire is the language spoken in the immediate environment. This view suggests that the interactionist theory acknowledges the role of the language of the immediate environment in achieving the aims of every human society. On the interactionist approach, Nwala (2015) states that the keywords in interactionist theory are ‘interaction’ and ‘environment’. In his opinion, interaction and environment play significant roles in the acquisition or learning of language.

Subsequently, the use of the interactionist theory as a framework in this study will assist in the investigation of how social media linguistic elements are identified in the communication/interactions of Nigerian English language users. On the other hand, the

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principles, and parameters (henceforth, P&P) theory was set out by Noam Chomsky in 1983 during his study of the universal grammar of language. The universality of language grammar simply explains common features found in language grammar studies in different languages of the world that shows similarities and dissimilarities.

The principles according to Chomsky (1995), Ndimele (1999) and Gilbert and Isaac (2021) refer to hypotheses which capture a syntactic feature shared by all languages, while parameters refer to the measure of variations from or adaptation to the general principles. The principles usually address specific areas of the grammar, because of the modular nature of syntax. Principles and parameters as a framework within generative linguistics, study's the syntax of a natural language, describing in harmony with general established principles and specific parameters.

As a result, the use of the principles and parameters theory in the current study will describe the harmony of generally established principles of the native English language used in Nigeria and the specific parameters found in the linguistic structure of Nigerian netizens that disrupt formal communication. It follows that the theories have a strong grip on this study because every language policy needs to understand the linguistic structure and situation of the immediate environment for effective implementation.

Data analysis

Table 5.1: Data analysis

S/NO	Native English language	Media English language
8	As far as I know	AFAIK
9	Ask Me Anything	AMA
10	Age/Sex/Location	ASL
11	Because	b/c, bc
12	Business-to-business	B2B
13	Before	B4
14	Before Anyone Else	BAE
15	Best Friends Forever	BFF
16	By the way	BTW
17	Carbon copy	CC
18	Content Management System	CMS
19	Cost per click	CPC
20	Direct Message	DM
21	Face to face	F2F
22	Flashback Friday	FBF
23	Fear of Missing Out	FOMO
24	Got to go Ex. "Talk to you later! G2G!"	G2G
25	Great	Gr8
26	Happy birthday	HBD
27	I don't care	IDC
28	In my opinion	IMO

Social media linguistic elements in formal communication

29. The government and people of the state wish our governor an **HBD**.

30. The marketing department of the bank had got the **FOMO** in the start of 2022 business year.
31. We humbly solicit for your **Gr8** input in the documents presented.
32. Our application requesting a **F2F** meeting with the director is yet to be replied.
33. Ensure that all protocols are duly observed **b4** the meeting.

Sentences 28 to 33 contain elements of social media linguistic items at some points in the string of construction. Although, the statements are formal, but the insertion of the highlighted linguistic elements (which the netizens will not find difficult to understand) are not usually acceptable in formal statements in the view of education language policy in Nigeria (NPE, 2014). In the researcher's opinion, since the current reality accepts the social media linguistic items when parenthesized and their full graphic representation clearly inscribed; is an indication that language planning has the ability to provide for the use of such linguistic items un-parenthesized in a string of formal construction.

Findings

From the beginning of the Fourth Republic till date, the use of radio, newspaper and letter writing have played major roles in communication in Nigeria. The said media played the roles of official documentations, public enlightenment, campaigns, advertisements, interpretation of policies, among other things. One of the hitches of these old media was the lack of opportunity for instant, live interactions and ownership interests in editorial processes. The new media facilitated the capacity to provide viable and interactive platforms for wider reach to parts of the world through the internet. However, the identified linguistic paradigm shift from the rule guided English language usage, associated with formal speeches, letters and addresses to the use of acronyms, neologisms and abbreviations in order to catch up with the internet style of language use has introduced styles that are unacceptable in the formal sequences of English language structures in the domain of the English language formality.

It follows that when new words are used on social media, the existing formal linguistic elements are used less, pushed to create obstacles in communication and cause poor vocabulary development. Although the new normal has ability to swift communication through symbols, the language barricade ha a way of preventing the message communicated from being understood by the audience. The un-moderated digital media contain language variables and semantic hurdles that hinders effective passage of information formally and the simplification of the English language by the netizens have negative effects that disrupt academic and formal documentations.

Contribution to knowledge

The recommendation of this study to moderate and include the social media communication elements in academic curriculum is in line with the dynamism of language. The study has utilised the interactionist theory and the principles and parameters theory as frameworks to

synergise language syntax with sociolinguistics, sociology and anthropology in the new normal.

Conclusion

In modern society, the new media play a huge role in information dissemination, influencing public opinion and behaviour in the face of modern realities. It becomes eminent for language policy makers in Nigeria to consider the moderation and inclusion of the new media communication elements in academic curricula in view of its relevance in the Nigeria immediate environment to quashing the disruption of social media linguistic elements in formal communication.

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Chapter Six

Disruptive social media in elections, governance and politics: Evidence from Nigeria

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Abstract

The current explosion in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) has turned the world into a rollercoaster for information and disinformation. Marshall McLuhan's concept of the world being a "Global Village" (1964) tells the story better. No thanks to social media, governance, politics, and elections face informational and discursive crises. Recent studies indicate that news organisations exaggerate or fabricate information to support their ideology. The global health challenge, COVID-19 ushered in an era of massive infodemic and disinformation. Smartphone technology and the advent of citizen journalism have further heightened the level of disruptive social media in Nigeria's nascent polity. This qualitative study which employed critical discuss analysis investigated disrupted social media in elections, governance and politics in Nigeria and found that social media disinformation, hate speech and fake news are now common commodities. It also discovered that new media is contending with misinformation and government at all levels seems concerned with their officialdom thus is gaging the press. It maintained that digital authoritarianism occasioned by propaganda sandwiched in political correctness has created constant face-off between the government, the media and the citizens. Concretely, Nigeria's President, Muhammadu Buhari and former US President Donald Trump were banned by the micro-blogging platform Twitter for allegedly inciting violence. An attempted social media bill was thrown out of legislation. To mitigate informational discursive crisis in the nation's political process, the study concluded that policy formulation is a catalyst for nipping disruptions in governance occasioned by social media usage.

Keywords: Disruptive media, Disinformation and misinformation, Political correctness, Nigeria's governance.

Background

The advent of social media has debuted disruptions in various fields of human endeavour. Disruptive social media constitutes new technology that assists in creating new terrains or value chains by disrupting existing values. No thanks to the current explosion in Information and Communications Technology (ICT), the world has become a rollercoaster for information and disinformation. Increasingly, Marshall McLuhan's concept of the world being a "Global Village" (1964) reveals how technology connects people. On a global scale, despite connecting people and playing a significant role in governance, politics and elections, social media is faced with challenges such as disinformation and discursive crises. For example, a recent study found that fifty nine (59) percent of people believe that new organisations exaggerate or fabricate information to support their ideologies (Djordjevic, 2021). The United Nations' Secretary-General, M. Antonio Guterres, described the massive infodemic, including disinformation and misinformation that followed the COVID-19 health crisis as a promoter of the crisis itself (UNESCO, 2020).

On a large scale, Osinbajo (cited in Vanguard, 2021) stressed that the democratisation of information which accompanies the information-age has brought about related risks with implications for economic and social-political stability in Nigeria. He lamented that fake news which warps reality is now being trafficked on a large proportion by many people leading to social conflicts. To be sure, disinformation, hate speech and fake news are now common commodities in society. While the news media is battling misinformation, government at all levels - federal, state and local government in their officialdom are gagging the press on the grounds of fake news and hate speech. Smartphone technology and the rise of citizen journalism have further heightened the level of disruptive social media in Nigeria's nascent polity. Before journalists get a crime or scene of violence, eyewitnesses would have used their smartphones to take pictures and record what is happening and posted it on various social media handles. Digital authoritarianism laced with propaganda is creating constant face-off between the government, press and citizenry (Dyikuk, 2021). For example, in Nigeria and the United States of America, President Muhammadu Buhari and the former US President were banned by the micro-blogging platform Twitter for allegedly inciting violence (Vachhatani, 2021). In fact, an attempted social media bill was thrown out of legislation.

This chapter employs the critical discuss analysis to investigate how disruptive media technology creates a competitive society where emerging trends disrupt the existing value networks in Nigeria's polity. From the standpoint of political communication, the study would ascertain how social media disruptions positively or negatively impact Nigeria's governance which encapsulates election and politics. After a systematic review of relevant literature, the study would make valuable recommendations for policy implementation to catalyse further social media research in Africa.

Clarification of concepts

The following concepts will be explained to understand better this chapter: disruptive social media, governance, politics, election, and Nigeria.

Disruptive social media

Disruptive social media is a phrase coined to describe how new technology assists in creating new value chains by disrupting existing values in society. Disruptive means preventing something from operating or continuing in a usual way (Collins Dictionary, 2022). Accordingly, “Disruption” encapsulates a situation where existing reality is overthrown by new realities. In their explanation, Christensen, Rayner and McDonald (2014) opined that disruption focuses on improving goods and services due to new demands. Social media refers to new types of media which give room for interactive participation. They include various platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and amongst others which enable users to gather information and interact with one another towards regulating the community (Christensen, Rayner & McDonald, cited in Manning, 2014).

In this study, the word “disruptive” is used in reference to how social media influences users. As such, disruptive social media refers to those interactive media that enter and expand the means of social communication thus catalyzing the political landscape. Although they could improve with time, they attack established means of social communication thereby disrupting the traditional pattern of transforming information or communication between people. In fact, they are now replacing traditional means of social communication.

Governance

The World Bank was the first body to use the term governance when it conceived it as the way in which power is exercised to manage a country's socio-economic resources by the government. It captures it beautifully when it states that: “Governance is the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development” (World Bank, 1992: 6). This signifies that governance means more than government. According to Mehraj and Shamim (2020), governance is the process of decision-making and how decisions are implemented. Governance is also seen as a system of managing a country's resources while exercising political power. It refers to exercising political control over a group of people who are part of a social contract which binds them as leaders and the led (Sahni, 2010). In this chapter, governance would be used to encapsulate politics and elections which constitute a process of exercising political power over a community or state in which they masses are partners in progress for the betterment of society.

Politics

Politics is seen as the struggle for power among actors who are after conflicting desires regarding issues of public interest. It involves the use of attempts by one person to use power to influence others to behave in a manner that they would ordinarily not do (Worsley, 2014,

cited in Ajayi & Fashagba, 2014). In his explanation, Worsley posits that political gladiators strive to secure political power to influence the direction or path their society or organisations should go. In this chapter, politics is associated with governance of a country including politics and electioneering campaigns.

Election

In this chapter, election is conceived as a decision-making process through which specific populations choose certain individuals to occupy public office for a particular period. It is also the formal process of selecting people for public office or accepting or rejecting a political proposition. As the electorate, through the ballot box, citizens are responsible for those who will represent them at the helm of affairs.

Nigeria

Situated between the Sahel in the North and Gulf of Guinea in the South, Nigeria is a West African country that has a landmass of 923,769 square kilometers with above 200 million people. As the most populated country in Africa, Nigeria has a Northern border with Niger, a southern border with Chad, an eastern border with Cameroon and a Western border with the Benin Republic. With the seat of Central government in Abuja, the nation's capital, Nigeria has 36 states (Blench, 2019; The World Factbook, 2022).

Theoretical framework

The *Uses and Gratifications Theory* studies how the public consumes and uses the media. This theory posits that consumers utilise the media to gratify specific needs. In this context, media consumers may decide to use the media to seek for entertainment, find information and relate with like-minded individuals. Such needs satisfy specific users whose motives can also easily be distinguishable. Each of the uses meets a particular condition and these needs, in turn, determine how social media is used. Scholars can determine the motivations behind media use through the different groups' media choices (Media Effect Theories, n.d).

For instance, a person watching a film and tweeting simultaneously may be watching the movie to entertain himself while tweeting to pass across information on the movie. In other words, the individual satisfies the needs of entertainment and information dissemination at the same time while coming to both media (Media Effect Theories, n.d). In particular, the internet enables us to meet needs that previously were unthinkable. Since the turn of the 21st century, social media, particularly Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp, have become an avenue to satisfy various needs. One of such is the entertainment dimension and another is an alternative platform to express themselves. In some cases, social media provides a platform for people to galvanise around shared interests. This is true in cases of mobilisation for protests and social action (Egielewa, n.d).

Social media are also employed to mobilise candidates during elections, organise rallies and even protests against other candidates. For instance, Barack Obama is said to owe his electoral victory as President of the United States of America in 2008 and 2012 to his use of social media (Aaker & Chang, 2009). President Donald Trump was also elected because of his use of Twitter. He personally attributed his victory to the use of social media particularly Twitter (Baynes, 2017). In like manner, the Arab Spring which led to the fall of regimes in North Africa and the Middle East occurred because of the influence of social media (Wolfsfeld, Segev & Sheafer, 2013). Therefore, social media can be called “disruptive.” It is disruptive because it can help upset the status quo in politics, particularly regarding elections in Africa, including Nigeria.

Katz, Gurevitch and Haas (1973) maintain that *Uses and Gratifications Theory* has five categories that are related to human needs namely cognitive, affective, personal integration, social integration and tension release. This makes for the deliberate use of the media and the gratifications users obtain thereof. The theory is relevant to this chapter because people use social media for various reasons. Politicians exploit it to mobilise for elections and their parties and candidature. By contrast, voters use social media to not only rally supporters and voters for their candidates and parties but to also protest against candidates they do not like.

Literature review and discussion: Disruptive social media in modern-day

The pace at which people access social media websites in our world today is unprecedented. This has increased significantly with Smartphones’ development, making it easy for people to access the internet at ease. Creation of Social media users’ accounts have had a significant increase (McAfee, 2006; Wigand, 2010). For instance, in 2021, Facebook recorded over a 2.91 billion users worldwide and Twitter has over 396.5 accounts in use (Dean, 2022). This makes social media an indispensable tool that can be used to connect and interact with large audiences. These tools are ‘social’ because they enhance interaction among users (Asongu & Nicholas, 2018).

Communication through social media has turned the world into a “Global village.” Individuals can interact with different people at ease. There is a shift from the analogue process of communication to a digitalised communication process. This makes interaction and communication easy. With the digitalisation of the communication process, people can quickly sell their ideas, opinions, observations and comments to bigger audiences. This includes information on the politics and government policies. According to Asongu and Nicholas (2018), digitalising the communication process enables people to employ social media as vehicles for discussing political issues which affect them. Before now, most people had a relaxed attitude with respect to political discussions.

Political participation was left to men who had an idea of how the country was governed. Consequently, the landscape of politics has changed. Women and youth are now participating in political discussions. Instructively, social media communication is now replacing the

analogue process of interactions about politics and disseminating political information. Political communication has been made easy (Asongu & Nicholas, 2018). Accordingly, politicians also use these digitalised media for political communication. They use them to propagate their ideologies, sample people's opinions, campaign, gain support and votes (Iyengar & Simon, 2000; McNair, 2017). According to Olorunnisola and Douai (2013) mobile phones are a potential for increasing political participation. The scholars contend that they can add or reduce meaning and more understanding in political circles.

Asongu and Nicholas (2018) noted that the digitalisation of communication in politics has helped to make and sustain a better democratic community characterised by broader involvement of the people in the governance and decision making in the state, compared to what was in practice before where politics was left in the hands of specific groups of people. Then, it was difficult for citizens to democratically checkmate government policies and activities (McNair, 2017). The demands and interests of the electorates were quickly put off. This shows the limitation of the old pattern of political communication. However, with the digitalised communication process in politics, many people and groups now have the opportunity to engage more actively in political affairs (Asongu & Nicholas, 2018).

Consequently, social media communication has also made it possible for political parties to influence their audience quickly. According to Omotayo and Folorunso (2020), employing social media for political communication means accessing popular online social media platforms for political campaigns and activities. Such social media include WhatsApp, Facebook, TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, and others. Political parties use most of these platforms for campaign and political programmes, sample people's opinions, and disseminate information. Social media websites have become robust platforms for interactive communication and sharing information. It has also developed strong powerbase to influence and change political values and enhance political socialisation (Omotayo & Folorunso, 2020).

Asongu and Nicholas (2018) hold that social media have also influenced political strategies among politicians. It provides opportunities for those in politics to interact with the masses. Constituents can quickly be oriented on specific governmental policies anytime, anywhere. Indeed, there is a shift in the communication pattern adopted by political parties and government agencies compared to ten years ago. The scholars maintain that information from social media affects voting behaviour among youths because the electorates can search for information about their choice of candidates on the internet before voting for them.

The social media applications are fertile interactive ground for users to make their comments and observations. Social media users can make comments and observations about political aspirants through these platforms, thereby sampling other people's opinions, information and ideas about certain political aspirants. He also argued that politically, informed-voters gather information about the candidates who want to contest elections. This, they do by sampling

other people's comments and observations about the candidates. Consequently, social media is gradually changing the voting behaviour of the electorate and the younger generation (Asongu & Nicholas, 2018).

According to Biswas (2014), the use of social media handles for political discussion is no longer new in some Asian countries like India. This is obvious in the way politicians avail themselves on social media platforms for easy interaction with the people and to attract prospective voters. The electorates do not need to wait for their constituent's representative to come back home before airing their grievances and registering their satisfaction or displeasure; they simply do this through social media. This has served efficiently for them. Furthermore, most young electorates now view social media as an easy and effective medium through which they can be politically active. From the above, it is notable that social media does not only enhance political communication but also promotes political socialisation and participation. It enhances greater involvement of the masses in the political affairs of their country (Bimber & Copeland, 2011). It is an essential tool for political socialisation, mobilisation and participation (Omotayo & Folorunso, 2020).

Elections, governance, and politics in Nigeria: A historical approach

No discussion on elections, governance and politics in Nigeria will be complete without mentioning the invaluable contributions of nationalists like Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Anthony Enahoro, Herbert Macaulay, Nnamdi Azikiwe and Obafemi Awolowo. These were the founders of Nigeria who fought to liberate the nation from western colonialism. From Tafawa Balewa, Nigeria's first prime minister, to Nnamdi Azikiwe, the country's first elected president; these nationals struggled to ensure Nigeria's independence (Asadu, 2020). With a federal constitution, three regions, and four regional structures in place, Nigeria operated as a parliamentary democratic state that emphasised majority rule. Unlike other countries of Africa, which had a one-party system after their independence, Nigeria had a written constitution that gave way to a multiparty system.

The first election in the country was held in 1923. There was, however, no popular participation in that election; the provision of the 1922 Constitution, which introduced elections in Nigeria, laid the concrete for electoral laws in the country. As it were, elections were based on income male suffrage rather than universal adult suffrage. Accordingly, elections until 1954 were based on the electoral laws that the colonial state imposed on citizens. Notwithstanding, the enactment of Lytleton's Constitution of 1954 began to liberalise politics and governance in Nigeria (Orji, 2021). The idea of a democratic state could not guarantee the survival of the First Republic. This was due to structural weaknesses, especially the disproportionate power of the north in the federation.

This Constitution replaced the erstwhile electoral laws based on income male suffrage by providing a new legal framework based on adult suffrage. As it were, the Constitution

diversified the elections by making provisions for different polls in the regional and central legislature. It also provided other electoral laws for the three regional structures in the country. In the Eastern Region, only people above 21 years were allowed to vote. In the West, only adult males who paid taxes could vote. The indirect college system that limited voting to adult male taxpayers was used (Orji, 2021).

Since 1954, transition elections have been organised by departing from the colonial system. It is instructively to note that between 1967 and 1970, Nigeria went through a civil war. There was no party politics at the time. However, a rebirth of participatory democracy between 1979 and 1983 gave birth to the 2nd Republic (Udogu, 1992). However, elections held in 1979, 1993 and 1999 were conducted by military regimes. More so, consolidation elections organised by a civilian government but were meant to consolidate civil rule took place in 1964/65, 1983, 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015 and 2019 (Agbaje & Adejumo 2006; Orji, 2021). Between 1954 and 2019, Nigeria conducted twelve general elections.

A new form of political struggle was birthed in the 1950s when the “nationalists” opposed the British colonialists to demand exit. Sadly, the former political opposition would soon engage in fierce political battles by turning around to confront themselves in deadly political battles after the colonialists had departed our shores. It is on record that the calm recorded during the 1979 elections was due to the fear of military retribution in case of a breakdown of law and order. The landslide victories recorded by the ruling parties in 1964/65, 1983, 2003 and 2007 elections were attributed to a deliberate attempt by the ruling party to monopolise the electoral process through fraud, thereby moving the country toward a one-party system (Orji, 2021). First Republic (1964/65 elections) collapsed because the NPC, in its desperate attempt to manipulate the election to their favour, monopolised political power in Western Nigeria; they used the NNDP as a proxy, resulting in political chaos. The Nigerian Election of 1983 was viewed as a sham. In that election, the NPN, which controlled 7 of the 19, wanted to expand to 12 states through rigging (Post & Vickers, 1973; Tijani, 1986).

During the 1999 elections, three political parties clinched seats at the state and national levels. The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) won the Presidential seat with Olusegun Obasanjo as President. Subsequent elections in 2003 and 2007, which saw PDP victorious at the federal level, were said to have been rigged. The PDP, All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP), and Action Congress (AC) challenged the elections at the national and state levels. The general elections in 2003, which returned Obasanjo as President, witnessed a more sophisticated version of electoral fraud than the 1964/65 and 1983 elections. To this end, Election Observers in Nigeria observed that the 2003 elections marked the beginning of another pattern of electoral-fraud in the country (Jim-Nwoko, 2019). Fake news and hate speech through traditional media played a role. This GSM was new at the time.

However, the worst type of electoral impunity took place in 2007 when Umaru Musa-Yar'Adua was elected President under the PDP. In his remarks concerning the ruling PDP, President Olusegun Obasanjo declared that the election would be a "do-or-die affair" (Suberu, 2007). Dubbed the "direct capture of the people's mandate", the 2007 election was characterised by competitive rigging and crude accumulation of votes (Ibrahim & Ibeanu, 2009). Another commentator noted that: "The flaws that characterise the conduct of the 2007 elections severely dented Nigeria's image and electoral integrity" (Orji, 2021: 13). When Yar'Adua died, Goodluck Jonathan completed his tenure. Then came the 2011 elections, which were keenly contested between the incumbent of the PDP and Gen. Muhammadu Buhari, who was the presidential candidate for the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC). When the latter lost, his utterances led to the loss of lives and livelihoods (Jim-Nwoko, 2019). The advent of Chinese Smartphones contributed to spreading fake results and fear of attacks following the outcome of the general elections.

In 2015, the Presidential candidate of the new political alliance, namely the All Progressives Congress (APC), General Buhari, defeated the incumbent, Goodluck Jonathan. The latter conceded defeat before the results were announced by congratulating General Buhari. Jonathan did not challenge the election in court (Jim-Nwoko, 2019). There was another general election in February and March 2019. The polls which claimed lives were described as inconclusive in various places. Like the 2003 and 2007 elections, there were alleged cases of massive rigging. Although General Buhari, the Presidential candidate of the ruling party (APC), won against the presidential candidate of the opposition (PDP), Atiku Abubakar, the Supreme Court upheld the result of the election in favour of the incumbent (BBC, 2019).

Counting from when Nigeria returned to civil rule, there have been six general elections in 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015 and 2019. Since 2015, the incumbent Muhammadu Buhari, who was re-elected on the ticket of the ruling APC, has been President. The APC and Buhari led administration used digitalised communication and social media communication as a tool to ascend power twice. This they achieved by targeting the youth with the change mantra, which went viral on WhatsApp, Twitter, and Facebook. Ironically, the same administration would attempt the passage of a failed notorious "Social media bill of Nigeria", which sought to give the government license to control how the masses use social media. Due to mass protests, the bill was thrown out by the National Assembly.

Disruptive social media in the political process in Nigeria: Perspectives

Over the years, the pace at which Nigerians subscribe to different social media applications has increased. Nigerians are avid users of social media who spend an average time of 3 hours and 41 minutes on social media daily. The percentage of Nigerians who are active on different social media platforms increased by 22% in 12 months - January 2020 - January 2021 - higher than the usual global increase (Jacob, 2021). A study in 2021 showed that about 33 million Nigerians are active on social media. Among these Social media applications, WhatsApp was

rated the most popular in the country, having more than 90 million users; this is followed by Facebook, YouTube and Instagram in that order (Kamer, 2022). Another analytical research showed that, over 109 million people use the internet in Nigeria. As of January 2022, internet penetration in Nigeria stood at 51.0 percent of the total population (Kemp, 2021). From the above, social media is a fast means of disseminating information.

The rate at which social media platforms are now used as an easy step to rally political support cannot be overemphasised. This is as a result of many people who access social media websites daily. Its interactive platform makes it encouraging for people to comment on their ideas. In Nigeria, political and opinion leaders had increasingly used social media applications to gather support from the people compared to what was obtainable in the past, when traditional media was widely used (Faith & Ijeoma, 2016). This growing usage among both political and opinion leaders has become imminent because the audiences that access social media websites daily. Campaign planners now see social media communication as an essential channel to mobilise political support.

Faith and Ijeoma (2016) maintained that during the 2011 Nigeria's General Elections, political groups and civil organisations used different social media platforms to communicate election processes to their members and the general public. They explained that President Barack Obama's victory in the 2008 US election was attributed to his successful use of Facebook to garner political support. Eventually, this became a huge motivation for politicians in Nigeria. Notably, Nigerian politicians are gradually taking their campaigns to the social media network and other online platforms. They believe they would sell their political ideologies to the populace through social media. For instance, almost all political aspirants who are coming out for the 2023 General Elections already have social media pages that they are using to mobilise support for their political ambition.

This is effective because social media applications provide interactive platforms that enable users to gather followers. Notably, social media applications such as YouTube, MySpace, Blogs, Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram, etc., have witnessed citizen journalism (Eledan, 2011). Scholars like Carson (2016) and Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy and Silvestre (2011) have advanced the argument that understanding the functional building blocks of social media is critical to appreciating new technology in advancing research and overall developments in Africa. Individuals without proper training and knowledge of journalism now record, video, and share information with the cyber world. Some people also use social media to spread hate speech and false news. However, this prompted the consideration to make policies that will regulate the use of social media and blog sites to curb hate speech and false news.

Eledan (2011) noted that former Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan also joined leaders who used social media platforms to gain political support. The expert further asserted that during

the 26th Convocation ceremony of the University of Port Harcourt, Jonathan promised to open a Facebook Page to connect with millions of Nigerians for achieving this dream of being elected. The then President saw the possibility of gaining political support through social media, and he explored that opportunity. According to Nwafor, Chinedu, Egwu, Nwankwo and Nweze (2013), Nigeria first experimented with social media to monitor elections during the April 2011 General Elections.

Officials of the Nigeria Independent National Electoral Commission had, earlier in March 2011, welcomed the assistance of civil society volunteers with their medial social accounts and a new media situation room that received feedback from those in the polling units and later began to provide accurate time information and answer questions from constituents. Nigerian politicians have actively used social media for political campaigns. They sent bulk text messages and voice messages in large quantities. They do all these to win support and solicit votes (Nwafor et al., 2013). More so, stand-by organisations such as “ReclaimNaija,” “WangoNet,” “Enough Is Enough Nigeria” established platforms where citizens can report election-related issues with videos, evidence, voice messages and pictures. At the same time, already existing media houses such as Channels Television, 234Next and Punch newspaper also used new social media platforms to share information and garner feedback from viewers (Nwafor et al., 2013).

These scholars further note that during the 2011 elections, many Nigerians used their blackberries and Twitter feeds to disseminate information. Among them was Gbenga, a 33-year-old IT consultant and activist. His team designed a Smartphone application called Revoda which allowed voters to immediately upload reports of delayed ballot materials. Through their Revoda website, they also posted reports about gangs who were intimidating voters and a daily summary of events to electoral officials, Western observers and Nigerians. Pictures, photos, details and videos from various polling stations were quickly uploaded to Facebook and YouTube. This gave many people at home and abroad the opportunity to follow the election process (Nwafor et al., 2013).

In addition, another group, the “ReclaimNaija” used text messages and e-mail reports to compile live online mapping for trouble spots. As well, individual “Twitter activists” looked out for polling stations where there was widespread rigging and warned about bombings at polling stations (Nwafor et al., 2013). This exhaustive use of social media may have led to the success of the 2011 General Elections. The single narrative of using social media to propagate hate speech or fake news is now overtaken by an avalanche of social media enthusiasts who employ new technology to complement the work of professional journalists. Through citizen journalism, people are able to give an eye-witness account of what is happening around them by reporting such to traditional media organisations which confirm and broadcast to heterogeneous audiences.

Contribution of the chapter

First, the chapter has demonstrated that political communication which replaces the analogue process of interaction in disseminating political information (Asongu & Nicholas, 2018) now makes it possible for people to actively participate in the political process. It further reveals the limitation of the old pattern of political communication which was linear while highlighting the importance of digital communication that is participatory.

Second, social media disruptions embolden political stalwarts from different parties to propagate their ideologies, sample people's opinions and initiate campaigns to gain votes (Iyengar & Simon, 2000, McNair, 2017). As in most parts of Asia and Africa, politicians now employ social media platforms to interact easily with the electorate (Biswas, 2014).

Third, in a society where politics was left in the hands of few individuals making it difficult for citizens to checkmate government (McNair, 2017), the study found that digitalisation of communication has paved way for citizens to be more involved in the political process by holding government accountable. Also, various groups are now more actively involved in the political affairs of the country (Asongu & Nicholas, 2018). This means that the electorate do not have to wait for their representatives to return home before holding them to account for their stewardship. Often, they take to social media to air their grievances or register their satisfaction.

Fourth, the chapter discovered that social media are critical components of disruptions as websites provide robust interactive communication for the masses. Increasingly too, this strong power-base influences and changes political values while enhancing political socialisation (Omotayo & Folorunso, 2020; Asongu & Nicholas, 2018).

Fifth, the studies also found that social media now affects the voting behaviour of young people. This is because the electorate are able to search for information about candidates of their choice on the internet before voting for them. This is further informed by the current shift in the communication pattern adopted by political parties and government agencies. Indeed, social media changes the voting patterns of the electorate and the younger generation (Asongu & Nicholas, 2018).

It is, therefore, safe to conclude that the chapter has contributed to knowledge because it has demonstrated how social media enhances political communication by promoting political socialisation and participation. It equally enhances greater involvement of the masses in the political affairs of their country even as it engenders political mobilisation (Bimber & Copeland, 2011; Omotayo & Folorunso, 2020).

Recommendations

Robust investment in e-accessibility (social media): All stakeholders in the media industry should invest heavily in providing e-accessibility for all Nigerians. The recent disclosure by the Minister of Communications and Digital Economy that digital economy projects (E-Accessibility) were inaugurated in Bauchi, Lagos, Enugu, Abuja, Katsina, Delta and the Kebbi States should be sustained. Consequently, these infrastructure and skills would benefit residents of these states and the nation. Indeed, it is a bold step in improving governance, politics and electioneering in the country (Olafusi, 2022). More should be done, especially in improving communication and Information Technologies (ICT) facilities and making data cheaper for Nigerians. This will make more Nigerians patronage various social media handles. For The World Bank (2019), e-accessibility is possible through improving digital infrastructure, strengthening digital platforms, increasing access to digital financial services, improving the policy environment for digital entrepreneurship and closing the digital skills knowledge gap.

Sustaining a digital economy: There is an urgent need to diversify the nation's oil-based economy for a digital economy. Current efforts by the Ministry of Communications and Digital Economy to diversify the economy by creating a new leading digital economy (Aginam, 2017; Dyikuk & Chinda, 2017) should be further maintained. The Minister of Communications and Digital Economy, Isa Ali Ibrahim Pantami should invite local and foreign investors to invest in the tech industry. It was in the news that in two years, the ministry of communication generated over N1trn revenue (Olafusi, 2022). This effort should be continued. Although the nation has made some giant strides in strengthening Nigeria's digital space, there is a need for public and private sector players to further push the Nigeria's Economic Recovery and Growth Plan 2017–2020 (ERGP) which recognises the importance of implementing the digital-led strategy towards growing the nation's economy for a more competitive 21st-century global market. The digital economy is a crucial driver for economic growth and sustainability in Nigeria (The World Bank, 2019).

Social media regulation: Although the social media bill was overwhelmingly thrown out by public opinion, Honourable members of the National Assembly can still work in collaboration with their constituents, media scholars, experts in the media industry and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to come up with a people-oriented media regulation which holds people responsible for sharing hate speech and fake news that relates to governance, politics and elections. There is an urgent need for a balanced solution irrespective of the masses' biases against the political elite. This is because almost everyone is a victim of media machinations. At this crucial moment in which Nigeria's statehood is threatened, the erstwhile notorious "social media bill of Nigeria" should be replaced with a balanced regulation. This is indeed crucial (Dada-Qadri, 2020). This would curb acts of treasonable felony, electoral fraud and shenanigans in governance.

Responsible use of media: Social Media disruptions in every sphere of life are a call for responsible use of such platforms. Based on *Social Responsibility Theory*, it behoves every individual to verify the information before sharing. This can be achieved by searching suspicious information on Google Search for verification. Only news or content published by credible sources should pass for credible information. It falls to the National Orientation Agency (NOA) to educate and mobilise the public on the dangers of using social media to disseminate fake news and or hate speech. In the light of media, law and ethics, citizens need to act responsibly regarding information-sharing. As such, “media leaders must leverage the considerable influence of the media to seek ways of achieving a common position on the legal and acceptable way to use social media” (Osinbajo, cited in Vanguard, 2021).

Sustaining electronic voting: Today, the digitalisation of almost all aspects of modern life is the fruit of a revolution in technology (Jacob, 2021). Due to the impact of social media penetration in the country, the recent passage of the electoral bill by an Act of the Parliament was a right step in the right direction. INEC must move a step further by ensuring that the requisite infrastructure for live transmission of the election results is in place. Perhaps it is crucial to learn from international best practices. If this is sustained, it will enhance good governance and fair play in politics for credible elections. Undoubtedly, any electoral law that accommodates electronic voting and direct transmission of results would fully “Safeguard Nigeria’s democracy” (Premium Times, 2021).

Conclusion

This qualitative study has made a modest attempt at filling the gap in the literature regarding the lacuna in policy formulation and direction to nip disruptions in governance as a result of social media. It has demonstrated that social media is a veritable tool for political engagements. The valuable recommendations in this work aim to mitigate various disruptions towards creating an informational discursive crisis in the nation’s political process. This is to curb the harmful disorders of social media in Nigeria’s fledgling polity. In addition, the study revealed that the various dangerous social media disruptions are, making leeway for fake news and hate speech as well as perpetuating electoral fraud.

Notwithstanding the negative impact of social media in the country, the scholars found (Asongu & Nicholas, 2018) that social media disruptions could also positively create a new avenue for sharing values capable of knocking off erstwhile value orientations. Importantly too, the ever-growing desire among mass communication scholars for social media research is critical. Experts such as Carson (2016) and Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy and Silvestre (2011) have developed new methods of social media research. What is more, we saw that the single narrative of employing social media to propagate hate speech or fake news is being overtaken by an army of social media enthusiasts who use new technology to complement the work of professional journalists. This they do through citizen journalism – a phenomenon that

allows them to give an eye-witness account of happenings around them by reporting it to traditional media outlets.

Interestingly, Osinbajo emphasized that “the very meaning of the term media owner is changing and no longer refers to persons with the profile of those who have studied journalism” (cited in Vanguard, 2021). On the contrary, he maintains that “in this era of citizen journalism, every citizen has a voice, whether through blogs, website or online publications among others” (cited in Vanguard, 2021). This voice complements what traditional media does that checkmate criminality, rigging during elections and enhancing good governance. In conclusion, against all misgivings, disruptive social media gives voice to the voiceless in Nigeria for improving elections, politics and government.

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Chapter Seven

Effects of social media on the peaceful coexistence of African people: A critical review

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Abstract

There have been many ways of communication in Africa that contributed positively to the peaceful coexistence of people before the arrival of the Internet and social media as new means of communication. While these new means of communication have contributed immensely to the peaceful coexistence of people in the continent, they have also had adverse effects on the peaceful coexistence of people. This paper aims to critically review some of the effects of social media as it affects the peaceful coexistence of African people, especially those in Nigeria. The theoretical framework for this paper is based on Media Ecology Theory. It has been discovered that social media has both positive and negative impacts on the peaceful coexistence of African people. Since social media has become a significant factor in people's relationships, it is concluded that people should embrace the usage of social media and learn how to use it responsibly to promote peaceful coexistence and reduce societal conflicts.

Keywords: African people, Means of communication, Peaceful coexistence, Social media

Introduction

Africans have many ways of communicating with one another before the advent of modern means of communication, especially social media. Although conflict is inevitable in any society, as evident in many African societies, Africans had ways of resolving conflicts among themselves. However, the advent of modern means of communication, especially social media, impacts the peaceful coexistence of people in Africa, especially in Nigeria. The thrust of this article is not to explore the traditional ways of conflict resolution in Africa but to explore the effects of social media on the peaceful coexistence of African people, especially people living in Nigeria. These effects include some advantages and disadvantages of social media in relation to the peaceful coexistence of African people.

Theoretical framework: Media Ecology Theory

The theoretical framework for this paper is based on Media Ecology Theory. According to Moreno and Koff (2016: 134), this theory aims "to understand the social impact of technology and communication". The theory studies how media and communication processes impact human opinion, sensitivity, understanding, and value and focus on communication studies

(Islas & Bernal, 2016). There are three main assumptions that this theory upholds. They are: “media is infused into every act and action in society, media fixes our perceptions and organizes our experiences, and media tie the world together” (Moreno & Koff, 2016: 134). This has made the world become a “global village” or “digital village” where people get information almost instantaneously (Murthy, 2018: 1).

Social media

Although the thrust of this paper is not to discuss extensively what the term “social media” means, some things will be said briefly about the term. Terms used intermittently with social media are alternate media, new media, and online social network services (though this term is mainly used for a type of social media) (Aslam, 2016). Other terms used with social media are Web 2.0, digital media, peer media, and “NextGen PR” (Auwal, 2018: 57). Social media can also be referred to as an expression of “participatory culture” (Solmaz, 2017: 37). Social media have been defined simply as “digital Web 2.0 platforms that facilitate information sharing, user-created content, and collaboration across people” (McFarland and Ployhart, 2015: 1655). The term “Web 2.0” means “the type of web site where people can retrieve, share, write, and store information as desired” (Ngai et al., 2015: 770). As asserted by Lin et al. (2021: 3), “With the development of [this] Web 2.0 and GNSS-enabled portable devices, social media platforms, [for example], Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram have become increasingly popular worldwide for sharing feelings and discussing ‘what’s happening’.”

Peaceful coexistence

Galvanek and Planta (2017) opined that peaceful coexistence is paramount to a healthy and developing society and, in the words of Adegbami (2020: 59), “the most treasured and the greatest asset of a man”. What, then, is peace, and how can it be attained and sustained? Against the backdrop that “peace has a multidimensional nature” (Ossai, 2021: 426), the concept of peace is construed differently across cultures and social values, with changeable levels of importance given to individual and communal well-being (Jeong, 2000). This concept of peace has been in existence from time immemorial. However, it became a real focus after World War II (Ogbonna, 2018). Etymologically, the Latin word for peace, “*pax*”, means “freedom from civil disorder” (Aguilar, 2013: 2). In contrast, the Hebrew word for peace, “*shalom*”, designates “not only the reduction of conflict but rightness, completeness and wholeness” (Nsengimana, 2015: 36).

Jonah, Abdullahi and Olawale (2018: 80) have generally defined peace as “freedom from disturbance, tranquility, absence of war, fear, conflict, anxiety, suffering, violence, and about peaceful coexistence”. Likewise, Chukwu (2021: 255) defined it as “justice, development, respect, tolerance and love among people”. Furthermore, Enaigbe and Igbinoghene (2016) described peace as a manifestation of harmony with the absence of violence, conflict behaviours and freedom from fear or violence. It also means a state of quiet or serenity, freedom from uproar or protest, general order or tranquillity, freedom from violence or uprising, a state of reconciliation after conflict or hostility. However, Blumberg (2006) argued that peace does

not mean the absence of conflict but the absence of *violent* conflict. Albert (2021: 5) corroborated this by asserting that peace is “the absence of physical, psychological and structural violence with justice presence”.

There is another argument that peace is more than where there is no physical violence. The proponents of this argument believe that “a deeper or 'positive' peace includes changes in the attitudes of conflicting parties and the transformation of the systemic and structural elements that form part of the reasons for why the tensions that are present in every society spill over and become violent” (“Promoting Peace through the Sustainable Development Goals”, 3). Arifeen and Semul (2019: 234) argued that “peace as an opposite of war is easily recognized; however, it is peace as the prevalence of justice that is harder to achieve”. So also, Samson and Dauda (2021: 25) viewed peace sociologically as “a condition of social harmony in which there are no social antagonisms, there is no social conflict and individuals, and groups are able to meet their needs and expectations”. Nevertheless, in the words of Kaur (2021: 51):

Peace is a universal and wide-ranging value. It has no religion. It takes place in humanity, fraternity, and harmony. Peace is of two types that are internal peace and external peace. Internal peace involves the peace of mind, thinking, knowledge, and understanding and believes etc. External peace is in relationships with the humanity and adjustment in the society.

African people

African people live in the continent of Africa or descendants of any African society, culture or language living in any other part of the world. However, the description of African people is broader than that simple definition. A broader definition or description is beyond the scope of this paper. There are many peoples in different parts of the continent. Therefore, for this paper, the term “African people” refers specifically to people in Nigeria.

The use of social media in conflict resolution

It was the opinion of Denskus (2019) that there is no particular or general way that social media has contributed to peacebuilding. However, Aslam (2016) argued that social media networks are fastly modifying war and conflict reporting philosophies and procedures. This is against the backdrop, as Tarmaeva and Narchuk (2020) asserted that conflicts are essential to communication in social media. Technological tools have changed the information space around conflict by providing an increasing number of people with the instruments to record and share their experiences with others in the world (Widmer & Grossenbacher, 2019). Esberg and Mikulaschek (2021: 1) have identified and explained four areas where social media, in particular, is influencing conflict dynamics. These areas are: “incitement to violence; the spread of misinformation, disinformation, and propaganda; recruitment into armed groups; and the growing role of social media to suppress opposition”. Nonnecke et al. (2021: 1) opined that “...while social media platforms hold great promise for promoting an inclusive public sphere, they are simultaneously susceptible to nefarious manipulation, including rampant harassment and echo chambers that silence political debates and amplify the spread of disinformation”.

Furthermore, Achkar (2021) made a distinction between misinformation and disinformation. While misinformation is “when false or out-of context information or facts are shared and reported as truth,” disinformation, in contrast, is “the deliberate fabrication of information designed for nefarious purposes” (Achkar, 2021: 2).

There have been arguments about whether social media is good, bad, or neutral. This is against the backdrop that social media “can be used for social good, such as overturning oppressive regimes or bringing income inequality to the forefront of national and international discussions. At the same time, there will always be those who leverage technology in ways that were unintended by the designers” (Hemsley et al., 2018: 3). In supporting this, Lunga (2020) chronicled some illustrations of activities on Facebook and Twitter that demonstrated how social media is an abode for both positive and negative conflict resolution. These illustrations include “the Arab Spring (2011), #BlackLivesMatter (2013), #BringBackOurGirls (2014) and #MeToo (2017), among others” (Lunga, 2020: 6). The most recent one is the #EndSARS – a protest against Police ruthlessness in Nigeria – that almost paralysed the country in 2020. (Being a recent event, many articles, opinions and commentaries exist on the #EndSARS movement – a movement against Police brutality in Nigeria that started on Twitter – on many prints and social media platforms. However, among the earliest scholarly written articles are Uwazuruike (2020), Dambo et al. (2020), Ojedokun et al. (2021), Talabi et al. (2021) and John et al. (2022). In a recent study about the role of social media, especially Facebook, on the #EndSARS protest, it was revealed that social media has become a major means of disseminating information (especially about conflicts) (John et al., 2022). Furthermore, it was recommended that social media users be enlightened on how to use social media responsibly so that it will not escalate the conflict it has been used to report (John et al., 2022).

Recently, a study was carried out to understand how “the interplay of online and off-line dynamics creates opportunities for social media narratives to gain traction and contribute to conflict” in some countries, including Nigeria (Proctor, 2021: 3). Parts of the findings of the research are: threats of social media are not limited to users of social media; trust in social media narratives are usually informed by offline social networks; and access and vulnerability to social media vary across class, age, gender, and geography (Proctor, 2021). Another research discovered that social media could play a more significant role in building peace in many ways (International Alert, 2020). Among these ways are providing new perceptions in understanding conflict contexts and informing how interventions are designed; magnifying peaceful voices while influencing the public and political description; and forming new spaces for people to connect, coordinate and mobilise around peace (International Alert, 2020). Nevertheless, another research discovered that print and digital media contribute positively and negatively to conflict resolution (Mbima, 2021). As Musaeva (2021) summed up, media, generally, and social media, particularly, have both positive and negative roles in escalating or de-escalating conflicting situations.

Advantages of social media

Iroka (2016) gave some advantages of social media concerning conflict resolution. Among them are:

- i. social media prevent possible physical combats during conflict resolution,
- ii. social media allow people to be bolder in expressing their grouse as social media reduce open confrontation,
- iii. social media are becoming more popular means of communication, though not necessarily the “best communicative means”,
- iv. the fact that people can conceal their real identity on social media makes social media means of expressing one’s opinions to the higher authorities without the fear of being known,
- v. social media have turned many media stations from one-way communication channels to interactive channels where people can express their views about any conflict through the social media platforms of such media stations, and
- vi. social media have become so exceptional as a place where people appear freer and settle the slightest conflict with their antagonists as fast as possible (Iroka, 2016: 16-17).

Baytiyeh (2019: 76) also asserted,

Social media can facilitate a resilient people-centered approach to conflict prevention and enables people around the globe to share firsthand witness reports of violence, social unrest, human rights infringements, election fraud, and political instability, empowering them to become agents of change within their own communities.

Tarmaeva and Narchuk (2020: 84) have also written extensively on how to “use tactics of justification, consent, persuasion, switching attention, suggestion, jokes and postponement of conversation to finish conflict situations” through social media.

Negative effects of social media

Social media has adverse effects on its users in general and conflict resolution and peacebuilding in particular (Mensah et al., 2017). The adverse effects of social media on their users, especially youths, cannot be ignored. According to the Nigeria Internet Registration Association (NiRA) (2018), if not controlled, social media can have dangerous effects like:

1. Lack of control of and over personal information: Youths post private information online without realising the associated risks.
2. Cyberbullying,
3. Mental Health issues,
4. Lack of Morals,
5. Spread and ability to amplify Fake News,
6. Exposure to adult information,
7. Indirect encouragement of high rate of scams on social media,
8. Poor grades from the academic pursuits,
9. Long hours on Social Media platforms,

10. Peer pressure,
11. Addiction to social media.

Hate speech

Uzuegbunam and Omenugha (2018) have discussed these social media menaces in Nigeria with specific examples. Some particular ways social media negatively affect conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Nigeria are fake news and hate speech. Auwal (2018) extensively explained the term hate speech. In his words,

Hate speech denotes any speech, gesture, conduct, writing or display which could incite people to violence or prejudicial action. Essentially, such speeches rob others of their dignity, including: (a) all dissemination of ideas based on racial or ethnic superiority or hatred, by whatever means; (b) incitement to hatred, contempt or discrimination against members of a group on grounds of their race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin; (c) threats or incitement to violence against persons or groups on the grounds in (b) above; (d) expression of insults, ridicule or slander of persons or groups or justification of hatred, contempt or discrimination on the grounds in (b) above, when it clearly amounts to incitement to hatred or discrimination; (e) participation in organisations and activities which promote and incite racial discrimination. Additionally, hate speech refers to all communications (whether verbal, written, symbolic) that insults a racial, ethnic and political group, whether by suggesting that they are inferior in some respect or by indicating that they are despised or not welcome for any other reasons (Auwal, 2018: 58).

Fake news

As extensively defined by Herrero-Diz et al. (2020), fake news is

...an information disorder with different formal characteristics and intentions: satire/parody (ridicule and irony content to criticize elements of society without the intention to harm), false connection (headlines, images, or captions do not confirm the content), misleading content (misleading use of information to frame an issue or individual), false context (genuine content shared with false contextual information), imposter content (when genuine sources are impersonated), manipulated content (genuine content manipulated), fabricated content (new content 100% false to deceive and to harm), clickbait (tabloid or misleading headlines), and propaganda (true or false information spread to persuade an audience with economic, political, religious, racist purposes among others) (Herrero-Diz et al., 2020: 1).

The fact that the reach and impacts of information spread are considerably intensified and happened at such a fast pace on social networking websites makes fake news and hate speech remarkably possible to cause significant influences for countless social media users within minutes (Figueira & Oliveira, 2017). Pate and Ibrahim (2020: 91) thought that “fake news and hate speech ... are gaining ground in the Nigerian polity, especially in the social media and

broadcast media spheres”. This is so “because of the de-centralised nature of the social media platform [which] has become a perfect place for amateurs and professionals alike to create and share ideas, information, images, videos, art, [and] music” (Auwal, 2018: 55). However, as Figueira and Oliveira (2017) noted, the Federal Government of Nigeria has started a campaign against these social menaces. A report specifically has it that “In August 2017, the Nigerian government announced the monitoring of social media to identify and deal with hate speech, anti-government and anti-security information” (European Asylum Support Office, 2019: 53).

Fake news is also referred to as “misinformation” and “disinformation” (Herrero-Diz et al., 2020: 1-2), “malinformation” (Khan et al., 2021: 7) or “various forms of harmful content” (Ceron et al., 2021: 1). It is regarded as “a global phenomenon” (Esberg & Mikulaschek, 2021: 2). It is being encouraged on social media, especially on WhatsApp Messenger, because of the easy-to-read opportunities that many social media like the WhatsApp instant messaging service give in that “text, photos, memes, audio and video notes, files in different formats (Word, Excel, PDF), emoticons, stickers, GIFS, contact numbers, and even geolocation, or direct access to the camera of the mobile device from which it is used” can be easily manipulated on these social media (Herrero-Diz et al., 2020: 3).

Referred to as junk news by Savolainen et al. (2020), fake news is also easily spread on Facebook because of social media’s accessibility. While Ceron et al. (2021) thought that there seems to be no simple antidote to this information menace, to curb this menace, Goolsby (2013: 7) advised, “All social media users need to develop a healthy skepticism about the messages that they receive, learn to check sources, and refine their skills of discernment”. Another particular way that social media are having negative effects on conflict resolution and peacebuilding is that social media are making real-time friends less realistic as many social media users “are more concerned with Facebook friends, videos on YouTube, posts, twits and other online communication than they are with face-to-face friends” (Ngonso, 2019: 32).

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying (or digital bullying) mentioned above, as one of “dangerous effects” of social media, is “an act of being mean to others by using information and communication involving electronic technologies to facilitate deliberate and repeated harassment or threat to an individual or group which can be done by an individual or group” (Balogun et al., 2017: 102). Cyberbullying (also referred as “online harassment”) has been described as “purposefully abusive, unwanted, often repeated interactions with another person online” (Cross, 2019: 327). In the words of two scholars, “Cyberbullying can occur in different ways be it online harassment, posting offensive or abusive messages or pictures, privacy violations, and exclusion from online platforms/groups” (Nazir & Thabassum, 2021). Cyberbullying has negative effects on conflict resolution and peacebuilding as shown in a study that even though most people who use social media in Nigeria do so to “keep in touch with family and friends” (Balogun et al., 2017: 103), many of them are ending up being cyberbullied. A law was enacted to combat this social menace in 2015. The law is known as the “Cybercrimes (Prohibition,

Prevention, and many more) Act, 2015”. Nwufu and Nwoke (2018) have also given some recommendations to curtail the menace.

Misuse of information

Moreover, if mishandled or not handled carefully, the Internet generally and social media specifically can expose users to great risks of exposing private information. Farrah et al. (2018: 1) corroborated this by noting that “information stored on cell phones, laptops and social media accounts can – if stolen, lost or inadvertently leaked – expose sensitive and extremely private information to large audiences”. Thus, carefulness in using the Internet generally and social media specifically is the watchword. However, this information exposure may not be due to the carelessness of the users, but the “increasingly sophisticated methods of government censorship and surveillance” of the Internet and social media in some countries, thereby putting the Internet users at risk because data might be revealed that could compromise the safety of these users (Widmer & Grossenbacher, 2019: 9). Kirea et al. (2018: 89) reiterated this by concluding

... information credibility is essential if social media as a tool is to be effective in conflict prevention and peace building. The nature of social media which allows for anonymity of identity gives room for unverified information to be floated around the social media networks; this can be detrimental to the conflict prevention and peace building initiatives. There is therefore need for information verification and authentication by a trusted agent, to offer information appertaining to violence, conflict prevention and peace building on the social media platforms.

Schlichthorst et al. (2019) have indicated growing evidence that social media in particular and the Internet generally influence suicide-related behaviour both positively and negatively. These scholars gave many factors responsible for this. They later gave some remedies to the negative effect (Schlichthorst et al., 2019).

The weaponization of social media

Furthermore, Schlichthorst et al. (2019: 3) have tagged social media “an information confrontation battlefield”. This is against the backdrop that social media could be useful to support military operations. This has made Fisentzou (2019: 65) refer to social media as “a modern weapon”. This “weaponization of social media, which means transforming social networks into a field of hostile information activities carried out on target audiences in the gray zone between peace and war” (Biały, 2017: 6). The weaponization is “from disinformation campaigns to electoral manipulation and online recruitment by violent extremist organizations, digital threats exacerbate conflict drivers, open new avenues for spoilers, and increase polarization, complicating efforts to prevent or counter violent conflict” (Proctor, 2021: 3). Biały (2017: 76) has identified six ways of doing this thus: “intelligence collection, (geo-) targeting, cyber operations, command and control, defense, and psychological warfare (inform and influence)”. Moreover, against this trend of the activities of “bad actors” on social media, Biały (2017: 87) gave some recommendations:

1. Be present on vsocial media with attractive, well-tailored content,

2. Use what technology offers,
3. Advance your own narrative and develop attractive branding,
4. Build your brand and narrative advocacy,
5. Immunize your audience against psychological operations.

Cyber peace

Because of many of the aforementioned cyber vices in and through cyberspace, many scholars and stakeholders in world peace and information communication technologies have started arguments that brought about the concepts of “cyber security” and “cyber peace”. These stakeholders are the World Federation of Scientists, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), and Suzanne Mubarak Women’s International Peace Movement (SMWIPM) (Wegener, 2011). Another organisation is the CyberPeace Foundation (CPF) of India that “...is an award-winning civil society organization, think tank of CyberSecurity and policy experts with the vision of pioneering CyberPeace Initiatives to build collective resiliency against cybercrimes & global threats of cyber warfare” (CyberPeace Foundation, para. 1). According to Gençoğlu (2021), the most recent organisation is the Cyber Peace Institut which was founded in Geneva in September 2019.

Of concern to this study is cyber peace. Since it is difficult to define peace clearly, scholars have also found it difficult to give a precise definition of cyber peace. Instead, attempts are being made to describe it. As cited in an online source, cyber peace is “a universal order of cyberspace built on a wholesome state of tranquility, the absence of disorder or disturbance and violence” (Shackelford, 2013: 3). While Inversini (n.d.) discussed how cyber peace could be achieved globally, the World Federation of Scientists determined some essential operational elements of cyber peace in August 2019 (Gençoğlu, 2021). These elements are:

1. The free circulation of information and ideas guaranteed by international law to individuals also applies to cyberspace. Restrictions should be within the legal process and to the extent necessary,
2. All countries should work together to develop a common code of cyber conduct and a harmonized global legal framework, including provisions on judicial investigation cooperation that respects confidentiality and human rights,
3. All users, service providers, and governments should work to prevent the use of cyberspace, especially young and vulnerable users, in a way that could lead to violence or exploitation,
4. The private sector, including governments, organizations, and individuals, should implement and maintain comprehensive security programs that leverage privacy and security technologies based on internationally accepted best practices and standards,
5. Software and hardware developers should strive to improve resilience and develop secure technologies that are resistant to vulnerabilities,
6. Governments should actively participate in the efforts of the United Nations to support global cybersecurity and cyber peace, as well as prevent the use of cyberspace for conflict (Gençoğlu, 2021: 247).

Some recommendations

As part of the recommendations extracted from the proceedings of a conference held recently, social media was recommended as “a space for dialogue” (Trowbridge et al., 2018: 124). These recommendations were made:

1. When seeking to promote dialogue on social media, we need to focus on building bridges through compassion and peaceful communication,
2. Information, media literacy, ethics and critical thinking are prerequisites for responsible social media use,
3. Social media is just one tool in the communications toolbox. Therefore, it is also important to network with other institutions with common areas of interest, including traditional media and education,
4. We should work to develop strategies to pressure online platforms to act in socially responsible ways,
5. Ignorance is the main cause of hate speech. It is caused by a lack of information, misinformation/disinformation, and cognitive dissonance
 - It is important to know the who, what, where and how of communication, including the issues at stake, the narratives addressing them, the influencers involved, and the channels and tools available for use.
6. We need to build credibility as voices of peace. One should listen before engaging, piggyback on multipliers, and then finally contribute with one’s own message,
7. It is important to build capacity through the use of marketing skills, analytical tools, the engagement of creative communities, and the involvement of schools and universities (Trowbridge et al., 2018: 124).

Conclusion

Conclusively, social media has become a constant phenomenon. It will continue to have an impact on the way people relate with one another. While people should be encouraged to embrace social media use, it should be used responsibly. The “e-illiterate or “e-semi-literate” people should be trained to become “e-literate” people. This training will be a conscious effort of the people. Through this, social media will enhance the peaceful coexistence of African people instead of promoting or escalating conflicts among them.

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Chapter Eight

Religious activities through social media during the COVID-19 pandemic

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Abstract

Social media remain one of the big disrupters in human and organizational interaction and communication in the 21st century to make effective crisis management controllable in Africa. The disruption is seen across different continents of the world, and Africa is not left out. The disruptiveness of social media has been witnessed during crisis periods such as earthquakes, pandemics, and many others. A crisis is disruptive, and it requires crisis management to control and mitigate the effect. For instance, the COVID-19 pandemic threw religious institutions in Africa and globally into a crisis that disrupted the activities of religious institutions. Many African countries went into total and partial lockdown and put measures to mitigate the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis on society. Most conventional (face-to-face gathering) religious activities were stopped, and many adopted digital or online (social media) platforms to continue their activities. Social media provided a disruptive means for religious institutions to engage and conduct their activities. The chapter focuses on determining the role of social media platforms in managing religious activities in crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The chapter adopted qualitative research by applying the interview data collection method in addressing the chapter's objective. The chapter shows that the COVID-19 pandemic forced religious bodies to adopt online activities using different social media platforms. It is shown that social media provide a mechanism for religious organizations to conduct their activities online.

Keywords: COVID-19 pandemic, Social media, Health crises,

Introduction and background

Health crises create uncertainty. Crises are an uncertainty that includes natural disasters, diseases, and many more (Snoussi, 2020). Religious (church organizations are affected by world uncertainties and embracing digital culture (Dyikuk, 2017) to manage the effects. Social media is used in a crisis to create and share quick information and communication. Social media provide communication and information-sharing channel for users (people), empowering them to generate content and be able to share them (Reuter, Hughes & Kaufhold, 2018; Ramluckan, 2016). Religious institutions use social media to influence persons' behavior during crises (Barua, Barua, Aktar & Kabir, 2020). Religious institutions, especially Christianity, provide the base for people to build their faith and hope of survival in a midst of crises. In the health crisis (COVID-19 pandemic), social media became an integral part of information sharing and effective communication. Social media has become a center point for information sharing and communication tools in crises for religious institutions to engage with congregants. Institutions in different sectors, including religious organizations (Churches and even Mosques), have accepted the use of social media platforms to conduct their religious activities. The COVID-19 pandemic increased the dependence on social media platforms by Christian institutions, in this case, churches. Churches of different denominations use social media to share church information, communicate (Sircar & Rowley, 2020), and engage in live services (activities) (Lewis, 2016). However, the role of social media as a disruptive technology in managing religious activities during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic is missing in the literature. This chapter aimed to determine the role or impact of social media platforms in managing church gatherings and activities during the COVID-19 pandemic health crisis. According to Ramluckan (2016), there are limited academic materials on social media platforms for crisis communication.

Literature review

The place of religious activities in the digital age (world)

Social media platforms hold the possibility to augment emergency warnings, and crisis response actions (Bunker et al., 2015). The platforms have revolutionized how communication is managed in the period of crisis as evidenced in the COVID-19 pandemic. In the past, religious organizations were done in a traditional way that communities were able to participate without hesitation. Currently, due to the crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic, the world has moved to digitalization, which now changes the systematization of information and decision-making amongst religious organizations. Religious activities are effective where there is a human touch, although there can be implications when social media is used. Congregants heal on an eye for eye church services, tithes are better offered traditionally than using digital banking systems. Furthermore, the use of online banking for religious offerings does not accommodate everyone in the church community, demographically, elder congregants are unable to pay tithes during this time of the COVID-19 crisis, however, it is easy for the young congregants.

Amid this catastrophe, religious activities are in the middle place in the digital world as compared to when things were done traditionally before. Therefore, church leaders and other church committees find it hard to commence with normal church activities and decision-making techniques.

The emergency health crises

The COVID-19 pandemic created a global health crisis, and the mitigation and coping strategies mainly were done online/virtually (via social media) (Abbas, Wang, Su & Ziapour, 2021). According to Burkle Jr (2019), a health crisis or emergency is defined as a crisis that affects the function and operation of the public and private health systems. Today's health crisis is increasing more than ever seen in human history and affecting millions globally (Kohrt, Mistry, Anand, Beecroft & Nuwayhid, 2019). The emergency health crisis is challenging for national and international healthcare systems and providers. Individuals are confused and traumatized in dealing with and coping with healthcare crises. Modern society is faced with healthcare challenges resulting from natural disasters, climate change, urbanization growth, insecurity, national and international terrorism, war and conflict, and many more (Burkle Jr, 2019). These challenges lead to health crises affecting developing and developed countries. The emergency of health crises is so overwhelming for local and international healthcare systems and providers in the case of the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed global weak healthcare systems and brought them to a standstill human activities. Religious institutions were badly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and global lockdown. Face-to-face religious activities were shut down, and some resulted in online services using social media platforms and other channels to engage with the congregation.

The emergency health crises exposed the weak health system and digital divide in the African continent. Several strategies were used to conduct religious functions and activities across the continent of Africa to mitigate the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic national lockdowns to keep the spiritual well-being of the people alive. Ramluckan (2016) believed that social media platforms provide direct communication during crisis periods.

The roles of disruptive social media platforms in managing religious activities in crises

African society and its religious institutions are gradually becoming human-centric by the day. The COVID-19 pandemic pushed the transformation into a human-centric society by providing a lot of innovations and technological dependence through social media and other forms of digital media. Social media disrupts the dissemination of information about any disaster in defining individuals and organizational perceptions and decision-making (Mirbabaie, Bunker, Stieglitz, Marx & Ehnis, 2020). Social media platforms disrupted traditional religious (church) gatherings during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic, allowing online religious (church) activities. Religious (church) worshipers gather in various places (small groups or individuals) through their social media to listen and participate in their church activities. According to Ramluckan (2016), social media provides a disruptive and improved communication channel during a crisis. The platforms were disruptive because they changed and transformed how

individuals, health organizations, and other institutions communicate and share health information in a crisis period. Individuals and organizations have moved to use social media platforms to communicate and manage a crisis in health crises. The inception of social media has revolutionized and transformed how communication is carried out in a crisis period, as seen in the emergency of the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced national and international lockdowns and shutdown of human movements and other activities, including religious activities in the African continent. Religious persons and organizations used social media platforms and other online platforms to conduct services while members were locked in their homes and places without movement.

Social media is a technological disrupter that changes and disrupts religious (church) activities. The disruption was felt less pre-COVID-19 pandemic and more during the COVID-19 pandemic due to the different national and international lockdowns. According to Ramluckan (2016), communication patterns are changed in crisis periods because of social media. The changes allowed religious bodies and individuals to connect to their spiritual leaders (Pastors, Iman, Bishop, and others) for their spiritual works and services. Social media platforms positively disrupted the function of church activities during the COVID-19 pandemic and allowed congregates to engage in the services virtually continuously.

The challenges in managing disruptive social media platforms in handling religious activities during health crises like the COVID-19 pandemic

With the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, social media usage increased more than before as a result of massive reliance on the platforms for news sources including health information for themselves and their loved ones. Bergquist, Kiani and Manda (2020), state that the egress of the COVID-19 pandemic developed into a global public health crisis. Having said that, religious activities are delayed due to the mental distress that the pandemic has caused. Although social media platform provides easy access to information, it is also contributing factor to the mental health of the church leaders, this brings risk to decision-making on how to manage the religious activities in the churches. Yayan (2019) affirms that in recent times, the online environment challenges the traditional authority model to transform into new religious authorities that influence and impact traditional boundaries.

Furthermore, technology can be helpful to religious bodies to enrich the collective aspects of religion, and communal aspects but challenges abound. Certainly, other aspects of technology disrupt religious activities such as online evangelism, publicity, and many more. According to Yayan (2019), disruption establishes a new strategic model and innovation across different fields like information, business, religion, education, and many more. However, church leaders and the community at large should bring active participation in religious activities using social media platforms. Yayan (2019) explains that one of the best ways to evaluate the vitality of religious activities is determined through the process of distributing knowledge. This practice will eliminate most of the challenges found on disruptive social media platforms.

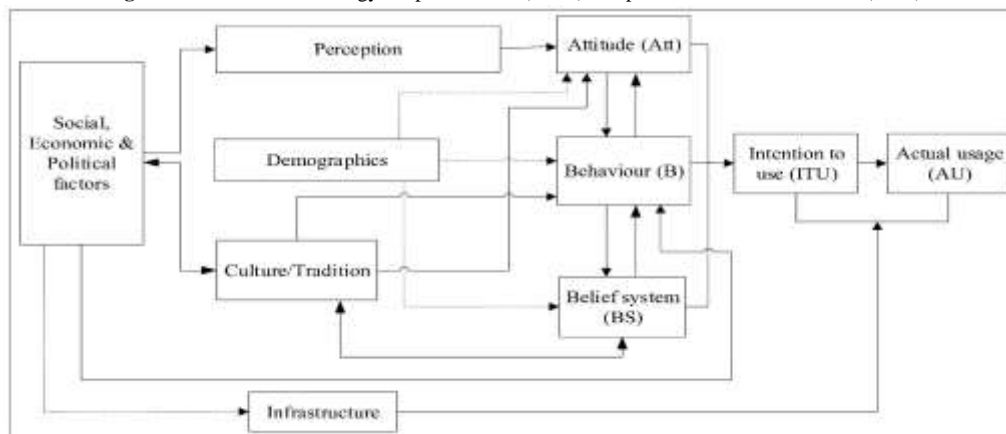
Managing religious activities in a health crisis period effectively through social media

Mirbabaie et al. (2020) and Snoussi (2020) believed that social media affects the dissemination of information in times of crisis. Many infodemics have been spread in a time of crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. These infodemics are spread and rectified on social media. The role of social media in the time of crises is no longer in doubt due to how it is used to manage information flow from the health care personnel to the people and vice versa. According to Reuter and Kaufhold (2018), social media provide a critical role in a time of difficulty since the 2001 9/11 attack. Natural disasters such as hurricanes, tsunamis, earthquakes, diseases, and many more saw individual and organizational dependence on social media to mitigate and manage the consequences on the people and society. In modern history, the COVID-19 pandemic was a health crisis that shocked the entire world (Anwar, Malik, Raees & Anwar, 2020), causing panic and loss of lives and livelihood. At the same time, church (religious) institutions were grounded, and other human activities and movements were grounded to a full halt that worshipers could not gather except for essential services. However, social media platforms were a relief for churches and other religious institutions to be connected virtually. Religious (church) activities were conducted on social media platforms allowing wider connectivity between the congregates. Churches (religious) bodies use social media platforms to provide traditional services (Sircar & Rowley, 2020; McKinney, 2014) such as counseling (consultation), prayers, church services, offerings, and other activities. Social media platforms provide churches an avenue to remain connected in faith with wider coverage for church activities; however, many were marginalized in Africa due to the digital divide.

Theoretical framework

The research process is built on an existing framework called the theoretical framework. The theoretical framework provides the basis for framing the research process, research objectives, problem statement, and research methodology. There are different kinds of theoretical frameworks to choose from in conducting information systems (IS) research, and one of them is revised TAM. Revised TAM focuses on individual and organizational factors affecting the indigenous acceptance of modern technology (Chukwuere, Ntseme & Shaikh, 2021). Revised TAM is arranged into five (5) layers: Social, Economic & Political (SEP) factors, perception, demographics, culture/tradition, infrastructure, attitude (Att), behavior (B), belief system (BS), intention to use (ITU), and actual usage (AU). These define factors and components that affect technological adoption in developing countries (Figure 8.1).

Figure 8.1: Revised technology adoption model (TAM), adopted from Chukwuere et al. (2021)



Research method for the chapter

This study adopts the qualitative research method using interviews. While the content and document analysis were used to interpret primary and secondary data. The primary data were collected in three Christian denominations within Mahikeng of the North West Province, South Africa to showcase and evaluate existing academic materials covering this chapter. The Christian denominations that participate in the study are from the following churches: Baptist, Pentecostal, and Catholic. The participants were drawn using convenience sampling. It allows the researchers to collect data from those accessible in the church congregation. According to Edgar and Manz (2017), convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling method that allows researchers to collect data from participants who are located within the study. While Etikan, Musa and Alkassim (2016) suggest that convenience sampling is used where the targeted population meets some criteria like accessibility, availability, willingness, and geographical proximity. The collected data were analyzed using the content and document analysis approach. Sometimes, both content analysis and document analysis are interchangeable in meaning.

According to Brown (2009), document analysis provides a systematic review and evaluation of academic materials in answering research questions or addressing the research gap. While content analysis involves an examination of words written in a document. In recent years, document analysis or qualitative text has emerged as the most used qualitative method of research (Rasch, 2020). While Morgan's (2022) document analysis is an underused method of qualitative research, which allows researchers to carry out an impossible study. The adopted research method was used to study the role of social media platforms as a disruptive technology in managing church services (religious activities) during health crises in the case of the COVID-19 pandemic. The participants were conveniently selected because they are reachable and have the necessary interest, knowledge, and characteristics to produce the correct data for the study. The participants comprise church pastors (ministers) and congregants, N=20.

The documents to evaluate are accredited and peer-review documents directly dealing with the research questions and the topic. Document analysis aims to elicit meaning and interpretation

of existing documents to elicit to build understanding, knowledge, and arrival at empirical conclusions and direct decision-making. While content analysis evaluates and interprets the meaning behind the interview data collected. The data was collected, evaluated, and analyzed in line with the pre-structured open-ended questions using statistical tools like ATLAS.ti. ATLAS.ti was applied to analyze the collected data. Table 8.1 presents the association between the theoretical framework adopted for the chapter and the research questions used.

Table 8.1: Revised TAM vs. Research questions

1	What are the roles of social media platforms in managing religious activities in crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic?	Layers 2, 4 and 5
2	What are the challenges in managing social media platforms in handling religious activities during health crises like the COVID-19 pandemic?	Layers 1, 2 and 3
3	How can disruptive social media be used to manage religious activities in a health crisis period effectively?	

In this study, document analysis draws academic papers and documents through different online databases like Google Scholar, ResearchGate, Scopus, ScienceDirect, and many other \others. These databases provide the researcher with high-profile and peer-review documents to inform the chapter and address the chapter's research questions while the content analysis assists to interpret the meaning of the collected data.

Steps of document analysis (Rasch, 2020):

1. **Research question defined** – the chapter research questions are defined to guide the research as provided in table 8. 1 and the section below,
2. **Gather (collect) and sample data** – the researchers consider the kind of data source/s to answer the chapter research questions. Data can be collected and sampled using observation, interviews, surveys, and documents. In this case, documents were suitable to answer the chapter’s research questions,
3. **Select and prepare data** – gather (select) appropriate data and prepare them for quantitative descriptive analysis (QDA) like the transcription of data (interview data), selecting appropriate parts of the document for analysis,
4. **Code development** – develop code,
5. **Unitizing and coding guide** – set rules and guidelines on the coding,
6. **Training and reliability** – test the codes, test coding reliability, and possibly train other coders,
7. **Revise and modify** – revise code and modify were necessary,
8. **Coding** – the entire data is coded and revised in the process,
9. **Analyze and make a comparison** – draw meanings and conclusions from research questions, notice important issues and content, and many others,
10. **Interpret and present findings** – interpret the data findings and make presentations.

Problem statement and rationale of the chapter

There are diverse areas where social media can be incorporated into religious activities for sustainable church development (Sircar & Rowley, 2020; Lee, 2018; McKinney, 2014;

Badmos, 2014) but this has not been fully explored within the context of the study. Social media is seen to enhance daily life activities in real-time today, although it is a disruption in terms of the COVID-19 crisis. Social media studies are available in showing the role and impact of the platforms on human and organizational well-being and activities. However, little is known about the disruptive role of social media on religious activities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Research questions

1. What are the roles of social media platforms in managing religious activities during the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. What are the challenges in managing social media platforms in handling religious activities during the COVID-19 pandemic?
3. How can disruptive social media be used to manage religious activities in a health crisis period effectively?

The challenges in adopting social media in health crises

According to Park et al. (2019), social media allows individuals to improve their understanding of health by sharing health information, experience-based opinions, and health-related current events. Some users are endorsed experts, including the aforementioned researchers, as well as providers. In addition, Wong et al. (2021) state that professionals, organizations, and individuals who engage on social media platforms continually have increased in recent years. There remains significant debate as to the merits of social media in terms of actual learning and improvement in the quality of care provided. An innovative application of social media as a means of location-tracking and hence contact tracing has materialized directly because of the pandemic.

Furthermore, the massive usage of social media platforms to rapidly distribute expert opinions and consensus by medical personnel and organizations is considered an additional capacity to the pre-existing social media features and serendipitously coincides with the growing necessity for both users and medical personnel to work remotely (Wong et al., 2021). Abbas et al. (2021) suggest that through social support it is now clear in practical terms how social media care for those who are within the platforms. However, Wong et al. (2021) emanate from the previous discussions that the rate at which the pandemic affects the global community, combined with the volume of online content, communication, and daily generation of data can present various problems to the healthcare systems, professional who adopted social media usage. Notwithstanding the challenges opposed by the application of social media in the healthcare sector, social media continue to drive innovative communication and content in bettering the healthcare system, especially during the health crisis period. In summary, researchers believed that confidentiality concerns, misinformation (infodemic), disinformation and inaccurate information, poor quality of information, privacy issues, damage to professional image, licensing, and legal issues, and many more are health-related issues that remain challenges affecting the adoption of social media (Park, Bowling, Shaw, Li & Chen, 2019; Ventola 2014),

especially in a healthcare crisis. While Ghalavand, Panahi and Sedghi (2020) attributed challenges to the lack of willingness of medical professionals (doctors) in engaging with the public, privacy concerns, inadequacy to follow medical principles, ethics, and standard, and inability to manage negative social media comments.

Results and interpretation of chi-square of demographic information, frequency, and percentage analysis

Section A: Results and interpretation of Chi-Square analysis of demographic information

The Chi-Square Test for Association is applied to determine if there is any association between two variables. The Chi-Square Test is a hypothesis test of independence among variables. The null hypothesis shows that the two variables are not associated with each other, for example, independent variables. The alternate hypothesis shows an association between two variables. The Chi-Square Test of Independence determines whether there is an association between categorical variables (for instance, whether the variables are independent or related). It is a nonparametric test. This test is also known as the Chi-Square Test of Association. A Chi-Square (χ^2) statistic determines the difference between the observed outcomes and the expected frequencies of a set of variables or events. Chi-Square is critical for analyzing those differences in grouping variables, for example, those nominal in nature.

This section addresses the influence of demographic variables such as Age, Educational level, and gender on social media usage. Hence, test for the association of demographic information and social media usage during the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa. To determine whether the variables are independent, the researchers compare the p-value to the significance level. Often, a significance level of 0.5 (denoted as α or alpha) is acceptable. A significance level of 0.05 (5%) may risk researchers concluding an association between the variables exists when there is no real association. In this section, SPSS Version 20 was used for the Chi-Square analysis.

In Chi-Square Test Analysis, **P-value $\leq \alpha$** ; The variables have a significant association (Reject H_0) If the p-value is less than or equal to the significance level, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the conclusion will that there is a significant association between the variables. Furthermore, **P-value $> \alpha$** : Cannot summarise that the variables are associated (Fail to reject H_0). If the p-value is bigger than the significance level, the researchers fail to reject the null hypothesis because not enough evidence to conclude that the variables are associated.

Table 8.2: Demographic factors influence social media usage for religious activities during the COVID-19 pandemic

S/N	Question	P-Value	Remark
1	Is Age associated with Social Media usage	0.569	No association
2	Is Educational level associated with Social Media usage	0.770	No association
3	Is Gender associated with SM usage	0.089	No association

Interpretation:

Since **P-value (0.569, 0.770, and 0.089) $> \alpha$ (5%)** Cannot conclude that the variables are associated. Hence, there is no association between age, education, gender, and Social Media

usage. Therefore, the researchers conclude that demographic factors did not influence the use of social media usage in church activities during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Section B: The roles of disruptive social media platforms in managing religious activities in crisis periods such as the COVID-19 pandemic

The Results and Interpretations of Frequency/Percentage Analysis. This section is a frequency and percentage analysis of the respondents based on research questions and objectives, using SPSS Version 20 also.

Table 8.3: Kind of social media used in church services during the COVID-19 pandemic

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Facebook	12	60.0	60.0	60.0
	Zoom	2	10.0	10.0	70.0
	Youtube	2	10.0	10.0	80.0
	Instagram	1	5.0	5.0	85.0
	Microsoft	1	5.0	5.0	90.0
	None	2	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation:

From table 8.3 above 60% of respondents were using Facebook, while Zoom and Youtube had equal usage of 10% each. There was also an equal usage of 5% each for Instagram and Microsoft whereas 10% indicated they use none of the social media platforms. The finding indicates that Facebook was mostly used for church service during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 8.4: Reasons/intentions of using social media during church service during the COVID-19 Pandemic

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Communication	9	45.0	45.0	45.0
	Comfortability	1	5.0	5.0	50.0
	Be Safe (infection of COVID-19 pandemic)	6	30.0	30.0	80.0
	Spiritual Life	3	15.0	15.0	95.0
	Others	1	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation:

Table 8.4 shows the respondents’ main intention for using social media. 45% of the respondents said it’s for the purpose of communication, and 30% said it is because of the need to be safe during the pandemic. 15% said it’s to help their spiritual life. 5% of the respondents indicated that it’s for comfort, whereas Others (5%) reported that it is for other reasons. The study revealed that most of the respondents use social media for church services for church service for communication reasons.

Chapter Eight | Religious activities through social media during the COVID-19 pandemic

Table 8.4: The role of social media in conducting church services during the COVID-19 pandemic

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Reach out to people	11	55.0	55.0	55.0
	Be safe (infection of COVID-19 pandemic)	3	15.0	15.0	70.0
	Continuation of worship	6	30.0	30.0	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation:

The role of social media in conducting church services during the COVID-19 pandemic was represented in table 8.5. The majority (55%) of the respondents indicated that the role of social media in conducting church service is to reach out to people, 30% of the respondents indicated that it is for a continuation of worship, while 15% indicated it is for safety. The study shows that many of the respondents suggest that the role of social media in conducting church services during the COVID-19 pandemic is to reach out to many people (church members).

Table 8.6: The roles of social media in managing church services and activities during the COVID-19 pandemic

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Continuity of Worship	9	45.0	45.0	45.0
	Be Safe (infection of COVID-19 pandemic)	5	25.0	25.0	70.0
	Information dissemination and communication	3	15.0	15.0	85.0
	None	3	15.0	15.0	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation:

Table 8.6 shows the roles of social media in managing church services and activities during the COVID-19 pandemic. 45% indicated it is for continuity of worship. 25% indicated it is to ensure safety. 15% believe it is for information dissemination and communication while 15% indicated no role. According to the finding, the study revealed that managing church service during the COVID-19 pandemic in providing continuity support for worship.

Table 8.7: Participants' perception of the use of social media in managing religious activities during the COVID-19 pandemic

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very useful	6	30.0	30.0	30.0
	Useful	11	55.0	55.0	85.0
	Undecided	1	5.0	5.0	90.0
	Less useful	1	5.0	5.0	95.0
	Not Useful	1	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation:

The perception of the use of social media in managing religious activities during the COVID-19 pandemic is presented in table 8.7. 30% of the respondents said it's very useful. More than half of the respondents (55%) indicated that it is useful. However, 5% of each of the respondents were undecided, another 5% feels it was less useful and the remaining 5% is of the opinion that social media is not useful at all in managing religious activities during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The finding shows a positive perception (very useful) of the use of social media in managing religious activities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 4.8: Demographic factors (gender, age, and education) affect the adoption of social media in church activities during the COVID-19 pandemic

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Unaffected	3	15.0	15.0	15.0
	Less Affect	7	35.0	35.0	50.0
	Undecided	5	25.0	25.0	75.0
	Affect	2	10.0	10.0	85.0
	Highly Affects	3	15.0	15.0	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation:

Table 8.8 shows the demographic factors (gender, age, and education) affecting the adoption of social media in church activities during the COVID-19 pandemic. 15% of the respondents indicated that demographic factors do not affect the adoption of social media during church activities. However, 35% of the majority of the respondents indicated that demographic factors have less effect on the adoption of social media in church activities. 25% of the respondents are undecided, 2% said demographic factors affect social media adoption, as well as 3% of the respondents, stated that demographic factors highly affect the adoption of social media during church activities.

Table 8.9: The use of social media in the church during the COVID-19

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Meetings	8	40.0	40.0	40.0
	Church services	7	35.0	35.0	75.0
	Sermons	4	20.0	20.0	95.0
	None	1	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation:

Table 8.9 shows the responses to what social media is used for in church during COVID-19. 40% of the respondents indicated that it is used for meetings, and 35% indicated that it was used for church services. However, 20% of the respondents believe it is used for preaching sermons and 5% feel it is none of the above. The finding indicates that respondents use social media for a religious meeting during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Section C: The challenges in managing disruptive social media platforms in handling religious activities during health crises like the COVID-19 pandemic

The Results and Interpretations of Frequency/Percentage Analysis. This section is a frequency and percentage analysis of the respondents based on research questions and objectives, using SPSS Version 20 also.

Table 8.10: Challenges of Church using social media during church activities

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Poor/Unavailability of network	7	35.0	35.0	35.0
	Limited number of participants	3	15.0	15.0	50.0
	High cost of data	5	25.0	25.0	75.0
	Poor revenue	1	5.0	5.0	80.0
	Literacy of some members	4	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation:

Responses on the challenges the church faces using social media during church services are presented in table 8.10 above. 35% of the respondents being the majority indicated poor or unavailability of a network as a challenge. 15% of the respondents stated that a limited number of participants was a challenge, while 25% believed that the high cost of data was the challenge. However, 5% of the respondents in their view saw the poor revenue of the church as a challenge whereas 20% believed that the literacy of some members of the church posed a challenge to the church in using social media during church activities. It was indicated from the findings that poor/unavailability of a network was the most challenge for the church in using social media during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 8.11: What challenges do church congregants face in using social media for church services and others?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	High cost of data	8	40.0	40.0	40.0
	Poor/Unavailability of data	7	35.0	35.0	75.0
	Limited participants	1	5.0	5.0	80.0
	None	2	10.0	10.0	90.0
	Others	2	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation:

Table 8.11 above presented the challenges church congregates face in using social media for church services and activities. The majority of the respondents (40%) identified high cost of data, 35% said poor network and unavailability of data, 5% says it encouraged limited participation of her members in church services, 10% feel it poses no challenge while 10% of the respondents indicated other challenges church congregate face in using social media during church activities. The findings prove that the high cost of data was the most challenge the church congregates were facing in the use of social media for church services and activities.

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Table 8.12: Social, economic, and political factors that affect the use of social media for church activities during the COVID-19 pandemic

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Money	12	60.0	60.0	60.0
	Poor connectivity	3	15.0	15.0	75.0
	Restrictions on SM use	2	10.0	10.0	85.0
	None	3	15.0	15.0	100.0
Total		20	100.0	100.0	

Interpretations:

The responses on social, economic, and political factors that affect the use of social media for church activities during the COVID-19 pandemic are presented in table 8.12 above. 60% which is more than half of the respondents believe that money is a factor affecting the use of social media for church activities during the COVID-19 pandemic. 15% of the respondents said poor connectivity was a factor. 10% of respondents which is the least indicated that restrictions on the use of social media either by government policies or service providers affect the use of social media for church activities, whereas 15% indicated none. Among different social, economic and political factors which affect the use of social media for religious activities during the COVID-19 pandemic, money (lack of money) was the most factor that affect the usage.

Table 8.13: Culture/tradition affect your adoption of social media in church activities during the COVID-19 pandemic?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	3	15.0	15.0	15.0
	No	17	85.0	85.0	100.0
Total		20	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation:

Table 8.13 shows the responses on whether culture/tradition affects the adoption of social media in church activities during the COVID-19 pandemic. The majority of the respondents (85%) disagree while 15% of the respondents agree that culture/tradition affects the adoption of social media in church activities during the COVID-19 pandemic. The finding indicates that users' culture/tradition doesn't affect the adoption of social media for church (religious) activities.

Table 8.14: Adoption of social media during the COVID-19 Pandemic and its effect on infrastructure

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Unaffected	1	5.0	5.0	5.0
	Undecided	2	10.0	10.0	15.0
	Affected	15	75.0	75.0	90.0
	Highly affected	2	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total		20	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation:

From table 8.14 above, 5% of the respondents indicated that the adoption of social media during the COVID-19 pandemic has no effect on the church infrastructure. 10% were undecided. However, 75% feel that the adoption of social media for church activities during the pandemic

has affected and should affect the church infrastructure while 10% said it has highly affected the church infrastructure. The finding proves that the level of the church and personal infrastructure available affected the adoption of social media platforms for church (religious) activities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 8.15: The use of social media in church during the COVID-19 pandemic affects attitude, behavior, and belief

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Positive	11	55.0	55.0	55.0
	Negative	4	20.0	20.0	75.0
	No effect	3	15.0	15.0	90.0
	Undecided	2	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation:

Table 8.15 shows the responses of the respondents as to if the use of social media in church during the COVID-19 pandemic affects attitude, behavior, and belief. 55% which is more than half of the respondents indicated that the use of social media in church during the COVID-19 pandemic has a positive effect while 20% of the respondents indicated it has a negative effect. 15% said it has no effect at all while 10% of the respondents were undecided. The finding established that attitude, behavior, and belief were positive in adopting and usage of social media in church (religious) during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 8.16: How to address the challenge

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Reduce the cost of data	4	20.0	20.0	20.0
	Improve network connection	7	35.0	35.0	55.0
	Return to physical service	2	10.0	10.0	65.0
	Awareness/training on the use of SM	3	15.0	15.0	80.0
	Nothing	4	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation:

The ways to address these challenges associated with the use of social media are presented in table 8.16 above. 20% of the respondents said a reduction in the cost of data, 35% being the majority believes an improved network can address the challenge, 10% believe returning to physical service will address the challenge, while 15% of the respondents said that creating awareness and training on the use of social media will go a long way to address these challenges, 20% feels that nothing can be done to address the challenges. Among the solutions to address the challenges, improving the network was the most among them according to the respondents.

Summary of analysis

The COVID-19 outbreak in 2019 became a global pandemic that was checked through many means to curtail its high spread and death rate in many countries. Among many measures employed to check this deadly pandemic was a sit-at-home, hence the global order by the World Health Organization (WHO) and other international health organizations to sit-at-home affected many outdoor activities including religious institutions in almost all countries of the world.

This chapter analysis is aimed at carrying out a research survey, data analysis, and inference through an empirical study to determine the role or impact of social media platforms in managing church gatherings and activities during the COVID-19 pandemic health crisis. Furthermore, the study evaluated both percentage and frequency analysis of the following:

- a. Kind of social media used in church services,
- b. Reasons/intentions of using social media during church service, the role of social media in conducting church services,
- c. The roles of social media in managing church services and activities,
- d. Perception of the use of social media in managing religious activities,
- e. Demographic factors (gender, age, and education) affect the adoption of social media in church activities,
- f. The use of social media in the church,
- g. Challenges the church faced using social media during church activities,
- h. Challenges church congregates face in using social media for church services and activities,
- i. Social, economic, and political factors that affect the use of social media for church activities,
- j. Culture/tradition affects the adoption of social media in church activities,
- k. How adoption of social media affect church infrastructure,
- l. How social media affects attitude, behavior, and belief during the COVID-19 pandemic
- m. Suggestions on how to address the challenges in the use of social media during church services.

Summary of findings

The summary of the research reveals the following:

- a. Based on the p-values (**0.569, 0.770, and 0.089**) $> \alpha$ (5%), there is no association between age, education and gender, and social media usage. Therefore, we conclude that demographic factors did not influence the use of social media usage in church activities during the COVID-19 Pandemic,
- b. The Facebook platform has the highest percentage (60%) of using more than its counterpart Zoom and YouTube platforms with 5% each respectively. It means Facebook is more popular with South African social media users,

- c. 45% of the respondents being the highest said the reasons/intentions for the usage of social media during church activities are for communication and comfort, however, 30% said it's for their safety and 15% noted that it was for their spiritual life,
- d. On the role of social media in conducting church services, 55% indicated it helps to reach out to people, 15% stated it is for safety, and 30% for the continuation of worship. Basically, its role is to reach out to the church congregation for continuity in worship with the safety of the people in mind,
- e. The majority of the respondents of 85% cumulatively have the perception that social media was useful in managing church activities during the pandemic,
- f. 50% of the respondents stated that Demographic factors like age, gender, and education do not/less slightly affect the adoption of social media usage, whereas a cumulative of 25% indicates that it affects,
- g. Table 4.8 above shows that 40% indicated that social media is used for meetings, and 35% indicated for church services. 20% for sermons. It, therefore, means that social media is used for various church activities,
- h. From table 8.9, challenges the church faced using social media during church activities can be traced to the high responses of the respondents such as poor/unavailability of Network (35%), high cost of data (25%), and literacy levels of some members. (20%),
- i. The challenges the congregation faced while using social media during church services are somewhat similar to the challenges faced by the church 40% complained of the high cost of data, and 35% stated poor/unavailability of a network,
- j. The social, economic, and political factors affecting the use of social media for church services are money (60%), poor connectivity (15%), and political restrictions on social media usage (10%),
- k. Table 4.12 show that culture and tradition almost do not affect the adoption of social media usage in church activities as the majority (85%) of the respondents indicated that it does not affect whereas a very small number 15% indicated that culture and tradition affect social media adoption,
- l. From table 8.13, a cumulative of 85% indicated that the adoption of social media during church activities has an effect on the church infrastructure,
- m. Regarding, the use of social media in church activities as shown in table 8.14, 55% of the respondents indicates that it positively affects attitude, behavior, and belief whereas a few respondents, 20% said it affects it negatively. Therefore, it has a high positive effect and a slightly negative effect on attitude, behavior, and belief,
- n. In addressing the challenges, reduction of data cost (20%), improvement of a network (35%), and creation of awareness and training on the use of social media (15%) were identified by the respondents as a way to address the challenge of using social media platforms for church activities.

Recommendations

For the purpose of this research, the following recommendations are proffered:

- Moderate charges of mobile data by the telecommunication industry should be encouraged by the government for effective usage of social media platforms, especially during a health crisis,
- Quality and effective data networks should be introduced like the 5G network at a global scale,
- A high level of awareness and training on the use of various social media platforms should be encouraged as it will enhance the use of social media in church activities as well as other functions/Programmes.

Conclusion

The above findings indicated that social media plays a good role in allowing church members to connect with their members as well as various religious (church) activities and programmes in the Church during the pandemic. Social media also helped to promote Church events and the continuous running of the church during the sit-at-home. Therefore, we can conclude that social media plays a great role in both conducting and managing church activities and reaching out to the church congregate, for continuity in worship without going against the safety protocols of the various world international health organizations.

Social media continue to improve the social and healthcare of the people. The chapter provided an in-depth evaluation of the role of social media in disrupting religious activities in times of health crisis. Going forward, the chapter made a way to how social media can be used in disrupting religious activities during a period of a health crisis.

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Chapter Nine

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

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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 natured 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 internet, 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 other 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 decline and less time and concentration is given to studying within and outside classrooms. In agreement with inductive logic there would be 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 in Africa is the quick money syndrome (cybercrime) known as “yahoo yahoo” or its rebranded G+. Every now and then the social media and the Nigerian online and print dailies are 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 devise 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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