

The Negative Effects of Social Media on Youths and Peace Building

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Abstract

Social media is a website that enables users to create, share information and also interact with one another online, the widely used network is known as internet. Over the years there has been a daily increase on social media due to the numbers of people that have been registering every day on different social networking sites such as Facebook, twitter, Instagram, snapchat, YouTube, WhatsApp among others. This paper intends to look into the negative effect of social media on youth and the impact on peace building. Youth's perception/attitude on the use of social media has negatively influenced the peace and security of the relationships among various ethnic groups, politicians, religious society etc. These social media platforms are used to spread false information which reaches out to the larger audience and thereby creating tensions, causing conflicts and disturbing the peace of the society. The source of data for this paper was gotten from the internet and existing literatures, a quantitative research method was used. Findings revealed that most users use their social networks to spread fake news and rumors so quickly which leads to the destabilization of peace and creates conflict in the society. Some forms of measures are meant to be put in place so as to monitor the usage of the internet to be able to reduce the high rate of conflict going on in the society due to false information.

Keywords: Social Media, Youths, Peace Building, Negative Effect, Internet

Introduction

Social media is associated with different kinds of people, age, religion, ethnic group etc. Accordingly, social media plays a big role in our lives and society today as it has turned out to be part of our everyday life. There has been a stunning growth on social media due to the increasing usage of smart phones such as Android and I-phones, these smart phones have made it easy for individuals to access any social media platform from anywhere. As the saying goes "whatever that has an advantage, also have a disadvantage," as the disadvantage of social media have brought many negative effects on youths. Akram and Kumar (2017) this is pretty progressively clear that social networks have become part of people's lives, in this case many young people are using their laptops, tablets, computers and smart phones to check Tweets and status updates from their groups, friends and family. Due to the development in technology, people are pressured to accept different realities. Public networking sites can support young people to become more socially capable. Social media is a web-based form of data communication and message which makes it easy for interaction globally. Social media platform allows users to have conversations, share material and create web contents. Social media has different forms, together with wikis, social networking sites, blog, micro-blogs, photo-sharing sites, instant messaging, widgets, virtual words, video-sharing sites, podcasts and more. Higher population of persons around the world use social media to share information and make connections. On an individual level, social media allow us to communicate with our friends and relatives, gain knowledge of new things, entertain and to advance your comforts. Social media as a concept deal with innovative ideas with a very bright prospect with extra scope for developments. In this case, the improvement of social media, many establishments are making use of this medium to better their performances. Through the use of social interaction, we can communicate or advertise in a more effective means. Similarly, people don't have to rely on the TV or media to get their day-to-day measure of news it can all be gotten from social interaction. Social media can also be a basis of damage. According to Sander and Thomas (2013) in their study acknowledged two types of damage: social-psychological, Cultural and cognitive: forms of 'Attention Deficit (Disorder)' and business and macro-economic: forms of "Financial Deficit". Nowadays, a majority of adolescents are shifting

speedily from electronic media like as television viewers and radio listeners to the social media among all age of groups. Because of their limited capacity for self-regulation and susceptibility to peer pressure, adolescents are at some risk as they navigate and experiment with social media. Recent research indicates that there are frequent online expressions of offline behaviors, such as bullying, clique-forming and sexual experimentation, that have introduced problems such as cyber bullying, privacy issues, sexting, internet addiction and concurrent sleep deprivation (Patchin & Hinduja, 2006). It can be said that in the initial stage, the web turn to be much more privately used as social interacting sites were introduced and contained by the common people. In this case, social networking sites can be defined as web-based amenities that permit people to come up with a public or semi-public outline within a partial system and come up with a list of other users with whom they share a common connectivity with each other for a good course, and their interpretation and navigate the list of connections and those made by others within the scheme. In other hand, the nature and standings of these networks may vary from place to site. The focus for promoting social networking websites is unique and it allows people to encounter unfamiliar person, but slightly they enable users to coherent and make visible their social links.

What Is Social Media?

Social media is a form of communication between two or more persons through the use of an electronic device, where individuals get to interact with one another, creating and sharing their individual ideas, interest, content, exchanging personal details about their lives such as professional information, personal photos, biographical data, also other forms of expressions through virtual communities and networks.

According to Vishranti and Prafulla (2016), social media is a platform that allows users to interact and converse with individuals; to create, share new forms of textual and edit, audios and visual contents.

In another development Shabnoor and Tajinder (2016) in their analysis submits that social media are computer apparatus that permits individuals to exchange or share images, information's, videos, ideas and more with other individuals through a specific network, and also a platform for individuals to deliberate on their opinions and issues.

Effects of Social Media on Youth

This paper seeks out to discuss the negative effects of social media on youth and also offers possible resolutions to these problems. Listed below are few possible effects the social media has on youth:

- **LEADS TO ADDICTION:** Extreme use of social media platforms has a high chance of leading one into addiction. This is caused by uncontrolled media usage. It can waste individual's time that could have been used for lucrative responsibilities and exercises, making an individual to become lazy and unproductive because of the time they spend in watching pictures, videos, playing games, surfing and chatting with friends online. This addiction can influence a person's academic performance, mental health and development.
- **LEADS TO CYBER BULLYING:** Cyber bullying is the use of information technology to reportedly bully a person in a deliberate manner, by sending intimidating and threatening messages to another person. It could also be as a deliberate or international act geared towards causing harm to an individual by also making them fell less important. Cyber bullying takes places on almost all the social media platforms and sites like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, WhatsApp, snapchat, where unpleasant information's, lies, danger, terrorizing messages, false accusations one a person are been sent to the general public. These actions can cause mental issues such as low self-esteem, loneliness, anxiety and suicidal tendencies among operators.

United States, Brazil, Nigeria and India happens to be the top four countries where cyber bullying is most prevalent although is a common incidence everywhere. Just like in the case of Megan Taylor Meier a teenager from O'Fallon, Missouri in the United States of America who on Monday, 17th October 2006, committed suicide as a

result of cyber bullying and harassment on the internet, her case is one among millions of reported cases of cyber bullying among youths.

Blessing Nwakaego and her accomplice Chimabia between December 2022 and July 2023 conspired to Cyberstalk and Cyberbully a Nollywood actress by name Eniola Badmus. Spreading false and offensive story about Eniola Badmus through Social Media platforms such as TikTok, Remedy blog, Gossipmill TV and other Social Media networks, using Nwakaego's mobile number. Evidence presented by the prosecutor states that over three million people viewed the malicious video online. The prey of the false story Eniola Badmus filed a petition with the police to investigate the matter and bring the offenders to justice (The Guardian newspaper, Aug 3rd 2023).

- **LEADS TO DEPRESSION:** Social media use is linked with emotional disorder like depression. A higher number of youths have lost their self-confidence due to extreme use of social media, as youths feel substandard to their peers on social media. Some youths get obsessed and often measure how popular they are by the number of friends they have on their Instagram, twitter and Facebook account, by how many 'likes' they get on their page since to most people, the more they get these 'likes' the more satisfying they fill. While as in a case where they don't get these 'likes' or 'comments' on their page, most individuals feel they are not recognized or socially fit which leads to loss of confidence and also leads to depression since they see themselves as having less value than their peers.

On 10th November 2022, a lady by name Adetutu Adedokun a staff member of the Department of State Service (DSS) committed suicide as a result of depression by jumping into the Lagos Lagoon (The punch newspaper, Nov 11 2022).

- **LEADS TO SLEEP DEPRIVATION:** One of the leading causes of sleeplessness in some youths is social media, they stay active on social media especially during sleep periods. This disturbs their sleep period and intensifies the dangers related with sleep loss. Lack of sleep can harm youths' health, leading to stress, viral illnesses, concentration, difficulty in learning, acne, restlessness and weight gain.
- **LEADS TO LOW SELF-ESTEEM:** Most youths come across numerous images and videos that portray perfection of another person on social media. Unrealistic standards of beauty impact the self-esteem of youths like images of models and non-models showcasing flawless skin and complexion can encourage insecurity among youths. Continuous exposure to unrealistic standards can influence how youths observe their own bodies, leaving a negative impact on their physical and mental health, which some youths end up going for liposuction to change their body or going for organic creams to have flawless skins.

Popular Social Media Sites

- **INSTAGRAM:** Instagram is a graphic online networking stage. The site has more than 400 million active regulars and is influenced by Facebook. A substantial amount of its regulars uses it to post information about travel, form, sustenance, workmanship and comparable subjects. The stage is likewise known for its amazing channels composed with videos and photograph altering highlights (Kaya & Alhaji, 2019).
- **FACEBOOK:** Facebook is the major social media network on the internet, both in terms of total number of operators and name recognition. Facebook emanated into existence on February 4, 2004, Facebook has within 12years succeeded in collect more than 1.59 billion monthly active operators and this inevitably makes it one of the greatest means for linking people from all over the world (Shibuya, 2020).
- **TWITTER:** We might be thinking that limiting our posts to 140 characters is no way to publicize our business, but we will be surprised to know that this social media phase has more than 320 million active monthly operators who can build use of the 140 characters bound to pass on information (Somanchi, Jayanthi, Parnab, Ashish, Gopinathan & Pratibha, 2022).
- **WHATSAPP:** WhatsApp messenger is a cross-platform prompt messaging user for Tablets, PCs and smartphones. This application requires internet connection to share images, documents, texts, video and audio messages to other operators that have the app installed on their devices. Launched in January 2010,

WhatsApp Inc. was bought by Facebook on February 19, 2014 for around \$19.3 billion. Nowadays, more than 1 billion individuals make use of the administration to communicate with their companions, family, friends and even clients (Akram and Kumar, 2017).

- **YOUTUBE:** YouTube is the biggest and utmost well-known video founded online networking site, which was established on February 14, 2005, by three former PayPal workers. It was later bought by Google in November 2006 for \$1.65 billion. YouTube have more than 1 billion site visitors for every single month and is the second most well-known internet searcher behind Google (Somanchi et al., 2022).
- **SNAPCHAT:** Snapchat is an image updating application training article that was made by Reggie Brown, Evan Spiegel and Bobby Murphy when they were undergraduates at Stanford University. The request was confidently cleared in September 2011, and inside a limited ability to focus time they have developed hugely registering a regular of 100 million every day active customers as of May 2015. More than 18 percent of every social media client uses Snapchat (Akram & Kumar, 2017).

The Negative Effect of Social Media on Youth and Peace Building

Concept of Peace Building

Peace building can be defined as the development of constructive personal, religious, class, racial boundaries, national, group and political relationships across ethnic. Its goal is to resolve injustice in nonviolent ways and to transform the structural conditions that generate deadly conflict (Adhikari, 2021). Peace building is an action that aims to resolve injustice in pacific ways and to alter the structural and cultural situations that generate deadly or unhelpful conflict. It rotates around developing helpful personality, group and political relationships across ethnic, religious, class, national, and racial boundaries (Barnett, Kim, O'Donnell & Sitea, 2007). The process includes violence deterrence, conflict organization and resolution or alteration, and post-conflict settlement or shock healing before, during and after any given case of strength (Adhikari, 2021). Peacebuilding can also be defined as the implementation of actions intended to sustain and create peace, particularly in a zone affected by conflict.

In a related development scholars such as Fisher, Abdi, Matovic, Ludin, Walker, Mathews & Williams (2000) argues that peace building is not mainly concerned with conflict conduct but discourses about the underlying background and attitudes that give rise to violence such as discrimination, fear, mistrust, prejudice and unacknowledged responsibility for past crimes, unequal access to employment, discrimination and hostility between groups. Based on Fisher et al. thought, peace building initiatives builds bridges, creates trust and creates a platform where numerous groups and individual are allowed to express themselves over problems which are known to give escalation to conflict. Peace building places the basics that aid the welfare of the people. Peace should be built on economic, political, social and ecological basics ought to be placed for strong peace to serve the test of time. Peace building includes undertaking programmes intended to address the reasons of conflict and the complaints of the past and to encourage lasting justice and stability

The Impact of Social Media on Peace Building

Social media can be used to enable peace building through the following ways: sharing of contents amongst operators, communication and building connections between groups and individuals, it is a platform enabling collaboration, henceforth permitting viewers to shape their pre-expectations based on the data they obtain irrespective of who is the creator that shares the data. Numerous social media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube and Snapchat among others can be used as a device to constructing communication gaps amongst followers of a community and impact peace. Also, digital technology has made it possible for individuals to get data in real time and in numerous cases through digital video evidence (Ekoh & George, 2021).

Furthermore, Denskus (2019), noted that social media tools can contribute to peacebuilding through cautioning and policy change. It can advance knowledge for conflict prevention, increase communication and understanding among opposite groups. Social media can likewise be useful to crowdsource data for conflict prevention measures

that permit individuals to involve their individual creativities for peace and communicating discussion. And as a motivator for action to encourage peace, Lanz and Eleiba (2018) declare that new technologies gradually form the atmosphere of peace mediation, as conflict parties' mediators' resort to technology for different purposes. Social media is a valuable device for mediators to widen a process, hearing the opinions of a board range of participants, without unavoidably expanding the negotiation stand as such. Lunga (2020) maintains that social media can be used to encourage peace and tolerance if used cautiously.

Review of Literature

Youth are known as the builders of nation, and in this period, they are grown-up as part of the net age group. Youths can effortlessly use the modern technology in numerous forms, this includes video games, electronic readers, mp3 player, smart phones, iPad, personal computers, digital cameras and electronic readers. Social media have negative effects on youths which have affected them in divers' ways. This research work is focused on secondary data gathered from the online sources, different research journals and from the Google search machine. In this research work, I also used data gathering tools on site observations, for putting together information's about the usage of social media. In this article I learned numerous social networking sites, which aid in my research work. Social media is widely used in these eras with its positive and negative characteristics and rules for managing the negative effects of social media youth.

According to Madhur and Palak (2012), submits that the effect of social networking sites in the altering approaches of youth on social issues. Youths in our contemporary society involves actively in participating and also raises their speeches in order to prompt their thoughts and ideas on social matters. The findings also state that even though the youth respond to these actions they still do not take up deliberations outside working and overlook critical issues before going offline.

In a related development Tim and David (2018), in their analysis submits that an impression of 'social media and peace building: Plotting the Area', it gives an insight of the present state of study on social media and peace building. This study identifies the major themes and areas of investigation which includes the role of social media in preventing conflicts, post-conflict reconstruction and negotiating peace. In my own point of view, it's also pointing the essence for extra experimental research and the expansion of moral strategies for using social media in building peace.

In another development Darynell and Zupan (2019), on social media and peace building: they give an impression of the potential of social media to add to peace building hard work, with an attention on the context. It deliberates the impact of social media in encouraging discussion, raising awareness about peace building initiatives and mobilizing support. In their views the study observes the encounters and restrictions of using social media for peace building, as well as issues connected to the control and spread of hated language.

Methodology

The main aim of carrying out the study with diverse individuals was to be able to measure the usage of existing media sites by youth, their knowledge of the concept of peace building and their understanding around the kind of energies that can be put in peace building events by people of their age grade. It is descriptive research and therefore aims to define the present status of the spectacle role of youth in peace building task. The model was carefully picked after critical opinion of the present trends in social media practice and its negative influence on youth. The source of information for this research work was gotten from the existing literature and internet, a quantitative research technique was used in the study work. The scholar used desk research assessment methodology also known as the desktop study in which papers from secondary data were studied. This study focused on quantitative research technique in which the research thoroughly collected current related literature and the internet which is measured, deliberated on and properly planned. In other words, as compared to other methods, this does not require going to field. Looking at the benefit and good side of using desk research review

is that it is economical and less time consuming compared to other methods that require field survey, while its disadvantage is that it could be a wasted effort if the researcher lacks the adequate know-how in organizing and synthesizing the information collected. This is so because a meaningful assessment and conclusion can only be reached with proper knowledge of the method. Desk research review is important in carrying out assessment such as the case in this paper in which the proper usage of media will be seen and particularly youths as the drivers of social media in peace building is being discussed and in addition the control of social media also; hence, its submission as an appropriate methodology for this research work.

Findings

The key purpose of the study is to assess the usage of social media and its negative effect on youth and peace building. From my findings youths are actively involved in social media and they are leading in the highest number of social media handlers in current times, which could be mostly playing negative role in their life and society if not correctly handled. The finding further reveals that in our modern society, social media could be accurately put in check by putting preventive measures in place, the reliability of the source of the messages provided by the social media. Social media ought to be an avenue for promoting peace building amongst the youth.

Recommendation

Consequent to the above research, the study recommends that in as much youths cannot do without social media or social networking, there should be measure to control the extreme use and also control the dependences to social networking sites. Here are few possible solutions:

- i. Parents/Guidance must try monitoring their children on what he or she is watching on the internet and try to discuss some limits and rules, monitoring their choices of what to watch does not mean banning them from watching media, it is just making them aware of the negative influences.
- ii. Cut down on the quality of period spent on these social media platforms by reducing the number of social media sites or platform we install on our devices. With just limited media platforms on these mobile devices, the rate at which people update their status, ping and also use these devices can be reduced to some extent.
- iii. It is important that youths schedule the way they use the social media, stop leaving these platforms open and running because that is a very easy way to get distracted with the continuous buzzing and notifications from these sites. Do ensure to keep track of time when using this media sites, probably set an alarm or timer on your phone.
- iv. Youths should try as much as possible to occupy themselves in other exercise and social activities. Try going out for sport activities like basketball, football etc. And also try engaging more often in face-to-face chats.
- v. Youths should be introduced to mobile applications that will give/ensure instant access between the youth enhancing success in economic endeavors in the community and peaceful coexistence.
- vi. It is very imperative, particularly when in a classroom or meeting places, these devices should be switched off totally or by simply turning off the notification alarms, light and buzzing, by doing so people tend to concentrate more and cannot be easily distracted.

Conclusion

The key objective of this research is to shade more light on the negative effect of social media on youths and peace building, how it affects in encouraging peace building amongst the youth and how efficiently the usage of social networking sites has affected the youth negatively. Through reference of the study, it is clearly figured out how the use of social media impact the youth negatively. As the technology is evolving, the web-based social networking has turned into routine for every last individual, groups; people are seen hooked on with this technology constantly. Youths are found in contact with these media on a daily basis. Youths have the capability to distribute, consume and produce a wide variety of multimedia resources such as for example blogs, films and photographs, amongst others.

Furthermore, parents, guardians and teachers should always learn how to monitor how their students or children make use of these social networking or social media. As per everything in life, moderation is very vital. When an individual learns how to control the way he or she uses social networking sites or social media, the person gains control of how he or she spends time on them and concentrate more on the rudiments that matters more in life, be it business, work, school and personal life as well. Therefore, it is very imperative than ever before to control, manage and identify the numerous ways in which social media and social networking can negatively affect an individual. A single negative effect can trigger another negative effect which can cause a chain of reaction leading to obliteration of Peace and relationships in a society.

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