

PREDISPOSITION OF SOCIAL MEDIA TO CRIMINAL BEHAVIOURS: EFFECTS AND IMPLICATIONS TO FUTURE ASPIRATIONS OF NIGERIAN YOUTHS

**Ogbonna Nwota, CSP, PhD,
Special Protection Unit,
Force Headquarters, Abuja,
Nigerian Police**

Email: ogbonwota@yahoo.com ; Phone: +2348037905634

ABSTRACT: *Social media are coveted gift to humanity, but now an albatross on the constructive development of many Nigerian youths. The future of many Nigerian youths, who are most vulnerable to the phenomena of social media, is at stake. Forms of social media are Facebook, Yahoo Messenger, WhatsApp, Blackberry Messenger, Tweeter, Instagram, and Badoo. Adverse effects of social media in Nigeria are liberalization of sex, low education standard, increased same-sex relationships, religious fraud, scamming, identity theft, increased marital intolerance, bastardization of sexuality, flamboyant lifestyle, and drug use. The control of the abuse of social media by the Nigerian youths can be achieved through the family, school, religion, and security agencies. It is recommended for more disciplinary, moral reorientations, and robust behaviour modifications to be inculcated by the significant others in the Nigerian youths.*

KEYWORDS: Social Media, Criminal Behaviour, Future Aspirations, Nigerian Youths

INTRODUCTION

The interplay of science and technology in the 21st century has made a recurring decimal in both formal and informal discourses. Before delving into the subject matter, I must first of all, thank the Commissioner of Police, CP H. H. Karma, an exceptional and superlative Police Chief who considered me, worthy for this discourse. As a Police Officer, I simply employed a hybrid approach of juxtaposing Praxis with theories, drawing basically from the varied experiences of policing and law enforcement in Anambra State, Nigeria. This research work will meet intellectual curiosity and allow for the spectrum of opinions, reflections and commentaries for improved scholarship and community safety.

Crimes and criminal behaviours in the society are as old as human civilization. This is anchored on the fact that human beings are naturally inclined towards deviant behaviour and anti-social instincts. This theory was greatly advanced by Sigmund Freud, though critiqued by many scholars who argued that Freud had 'a pessimistic outlook on human nature', but experiential realities of policing tend to incline towards Freud's argument as the need for social ordering and harmonious human interactions in

the society has grown to become an imperative function of the state and recurring decimal in both formal and informal discourses (Newburn T, 2013). In view of the immemorial nature of criminal behaviours, policing as an act of social ordering has evolved over time from traditional styles where able-bodied youths were assembled and commissioned as vanguards of the society to the modern era, where the instrumentalities of social ordering, law and order in the society is in the hands of the state.

According to Blyden (1908), the tribes have laws regulating every function of human life and the laws are known to all members of the tribe, and justice administered by the tribal chiefs in the presence of the whole people in the village or town, where any violation of tribal law may have taken place. There are no Standing Armies. The whole people of the villages or towns are jointly and severally guidance and preservers of the peace. Crime control and policing 'as an indispensable aspect of humanity has kept evolving, changing with the changes times as societal evolution comes with its peculiar challenges to community safety, law and order in the society. It is, therefore, unavoidably critical that the society being policed and protected is continuously mirrored with the aim of identifying emergent criminal behaviours and streamlining

them into policing models and crime control mechanisms.

The 21st century could not be said to have birthed the information superhighway, but it certainly revolutionized, simplified and extended it with the reckless impudence to the reach of people who are neither technical nor schooled in the art and science of computers. This remains one of the talking points of the contemporary times as it has reduced the world to a global village, where territorial borders and geographical distance no longer pose any encumbrance and restriction to social interactions, economic and political relations in the international arena. The Nigerian community, mostly the novices in the world of computer technology, was still basking in the euphoria of the simplification of a hitherto know complex interactions of binary data encoding protocols of computers, by learning how to send emails and surfing the web, when social media was heralded.

The advent of social media as a byproduct of the information superhighway was received with ineffable enthusiasm and wide acceptance cutting across all classes of people and virtually every age of comprehension. Adaja and Ayodele (2013:65) believed that 'one of the breakthroughs in information and communication technology in the 21st century was the discovery and emergence of the new media which have facilitated the creation of the different platforms for social interaction'. The advantages of social media to humanity are quite myriad as accessibility to each other are made simpler, while communication, exchange of information and data, and indeed most forms of human interactions are seamlessly conducted without the usual hassles of technical sophistication in the application and complex computer language of programming and software.

Social media could be aptly described as a complex process of social interaction in terms of task and accuracy performance, yet very simple that the barely literate, the young as well the old could effortlessly deploy without technical knowhow and formal trainings. There is no doubt that human interactions have been made easier with the invention of social media, but it must be emphatically stated that the high points of social media remain the greatest undoing of

our generation. Evidential indices so far on the use and effects of social media to the Nigeria community could be aptly captured as a wonderful 'gift of fire' to humanity.

As applicable with other human inventions, social media have been negatively exploited by a greater percentage of our youths who on daily basis predispose themselves to vices and crimes, that were hitherto difficult and complex to commit and execute, but were made simpler and less Herculean with the simplification of the information superhighway and easy usability of the social media. There is no doubt, therefore, that the social media have in no measure predisposed and exposed our youths to criminal behaviours and anti-social instincts, which are negatively affecting the foundations of our society and the future of our younger generation. This paper, therefore, considered the phenomenon and the psychology of, while also juxtaposing the effects and implications of its predisposition to criminal behaviours when viewed against the future aspirations of the Nigerian youths.

FORMS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The social media is an omnibus nomenclature for different information superhighway generated and based social interaction and communication platforms that have evolved in different forms with varying peculiarities and compositions. According to Wikipedia, instant messaging as a key aspect of social media became globally evident in 1996 when an Israeli company, Mirabilis, launched ICQ, a text-based and online messenger. ICQ allowed for multi-user chats, file transfers, a searchable user directory. AOL later acquired Mirabilis and ICQ in 1998, later sold it to Digital Sky Technologies in 2010. The latest version of ICQ includes Facebook integration and mobile synchronization.

The turning point, however, occurred in 1997, when AOL launched AIM, attracting a new generation of tech-savvy internet users, allowing users to send messages to each other, which included user profiles and icons. By 2005, AIM dominated the instant messaging market with millions of users before the invention of other social media networks that liberalized the market

and made it available and accessible to a greater percentage of the world's populace. As of today, it is difficult to pin down accurately the exact number of social media platforms currently in use in Nigeria, but the most popular ones with perhaps large patronage are:

Yahoo! Messenger: Yahoo messenger is an aspect of Yahoo mail launched in 1998. Yahoo messenger was originally under the name Yahoo Pager. One must possess a user's Yahoo ID, to be able to chat with Yahoo Messenger, or gain access into Yahoo chat room service. It is to be noted, that the advent of Yahoo mail and Messenger, remains critically infamous to the proliferation of internet-based crimes in Nigeria. Yahoo Messenger, however, could be said to have grown obsolete in our present Nigeria as other emergent social media platforms are found to be more efficient and effective in modern day communications and social interactions.

Facebook: Mark Zuckerberg, a student of Harvard University with four of his roommates launched Facebook in 2008 from their dormitory rooms, which allowed users to engage in instant messaging of a friend or multiple people while logged into the social network (Wikipedia). Over time, Facebook has grown, becoming one of the most popular, most accessed and used social media networks in the world.

Blackberry Messenger: This is also known as BBM, developed by Blackberry Limited launched in August 2005. According to Wikipedia, BBM is a proprietary internet-based messenger and video-telephony application included on Black Berry devices that allows instant messaging and voice calls between BlackBerry users as well as exchange of voice notes, pictures and wide selection of emoticons. Communication was only possible between BlackBerry devices until late 2013 when BBM was released on iOS and Android systems. It must be emphasized that the quest for blackberry phones among our youths as at the time in question was insatiable and greatly predisposed many of youths to all kinds of vices and unprintable escapades just to own a blackberry phone.

WhatsApp: WhatsApp is an American proprietary instant messaging platform for smart phones launched in January, 2010 that is internet-based for sending text messages, documents, images, video, user location and audio media messages to other users using the same platform (Wikipedia). The arrival of WhatsApp on social media platform attracted large patronage from mostly the youths as the network could be accessed with any internet-based phone irrespective of the phone's make.

Twitter: According to Wikipedia, Twitter is an online social networking service launched in July 2006. It enables users to send and read short 140-character messages called 'tweets'. Registered users can read and post tweets, but those who are unregistered can only read them and unable to comment. Users access Twitter through the website interface, SMS or mobile device application.

Instagram: This is an online photo-sharing, video-sharing and social networking service that enable its users to take pictures and videos, and share them either publicly or privately on the platform, as well as through a variety of other social networking platforms. This service was, however, acquired by Facebook in April 2012 (Wikipedia).

Badoo: Badoo is a social networking service and dating platform founded in 2006 by a Russian entrepreneur, Andrey Andreev. To gain extra features, a user can pay a fee or allow Badoo to email all his/her friends (Wikipedia). Unfortunately, Badoo is surreptitiously used in Nigeria as social media network platform for eliciting and soliciting illicit sex activities. It is undoubtedly one of the social media networks in Nigeria, where decency has been thrown into the dustbin as vulgar language and pornography remain a major descriptive feature of the platform.

EFFECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND PREDISPOSITION TO CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR

Social media as a modern way of life have in no small measure predisposed the youths to criminal behaviour and exacerbated their level of vulnerability and culpability to deviant behaviour

and anti-social instincts. This has been made possible through the following ways:

Liberalization of Sex: Time was when sex was a hush-hush thing in the Nigerian society and rarely deployed outside relationship and affinity of two persons, that time of course, is history. The arrival of social media on the Nigerian hemisphere has redefined our perspective and orientation towards sex, liberalizing it as a non-issue that could be deployed for fun, money, and as a bargaining tool. Nche (2012) believed that the phenomenon of social media has ruefully exacerbated the matter of sex as one can easily reach out-to friends of the opposite sex, make new ones and even invite them over through these social sites.

The truth is that most of the vices in our society have been euphemized by social media, given superficial and baptismal names, to dilute the gravity and intensity of offences lend credence to them as social norms in our society. The truth is that sex has become so common in our society that the private parts of many ladies in our present society have more human traffic than some streets. The implications of liberalized sexual activities in our society are the rapid inclination towards prostitution, unwanted pregnancies and abortion.

Dwindling Standard of Education: The education sector is one of the greatest victims of social media and has contributed immensely to the sorry-state of our educational standard in Nigeria. Abbreviation of words as a form of communication through mobile phone messaging was borne out of the need to minimize cost and ensure that text messages were not unnecessarily lengthy, but this gradually crept into the psyche and psychology of our youths as a modern style of communication. Today, social media have taken the shine off mobile phone messaging, as words are now embarrassingly and senselessly abbreviated to the extent that misspelling and bad sentences are paraded by our students with impunity and with a sense of immunity inferred from the social media platforms.

This unwholesome situation has degenerated to the extent that most Nigerian graduates cannot spell their names in a hurry. A lady once came to my office to lodge a complaint, a graduate of one the universities. Having made

her complaints, she was requested to write her statement. This lady struggled for over thirty minutes on how to spell her name correctly. She is Daberechi, but in the spirit of social media, adopted the name 'Dabbie'. It was as embarrassing as scornful. Obviously, the likes of 'Dabbie' abound in our society today as 'illiterate graduates'. Beyond this, it has remained a distracting impetus to the greater number of students who spend most of their days in school, even while in lecture halls on social media sites.

The obvious implication of this academic irresponsibility is the consequent lack of concentration and comprehension in classes, resulting to graduation of 'half-baked' or 'not-baked' graduates who are turned into the society as unemployed youths that obviously see the society as unfair and wicked when they cannot get a job. Though unemployment in the society could not be said to be solely responsible for criminal behaviour among our youths, but it obviously remains a critical factor that predisposes our youths to criminality.

Exponential Growth in Homosexuality: Homosexuality was abominable in the past in the Nigerian society. It was seen as evil, and even the few that indulge in such act, conduct their affairs with utmost secrecy and risk of being ostracized if caught. The story is different today as social media has provided an avenue for regrouping of this type of people, sensitization of their cause and recruitment of others into illicit sexual activities. One may not be far from the truth to state that the acts of homosexuality have led to the rapid increase in alien sexual orientation and practices in Nigeria, where a group of men and women in their numbers, indulge in gang sex with each other, nicknamed, 'threesome', 'foursome' not minding the health implications and social hazards of such acts. These sexual fantasies are gradually becoming a way of life of many youths in our society, who now hide under the philosophy of human rights to bastardize our societal values and ethics of our uniqueness as a nation.

Religious Fraudulent Activities: Religion is unarguably a central phenomenon to the affairs of humanity and has contributed meaningfully to peaceful coexistence in the society as well as a

source of conflict. The social media in contemporary times have helped in fueling religious promiscuity and fraudulent activities of self-acclaimed men and women of God in our society, whose activities have greatly impugned on the character and phenomenon of Christianity as a spiritual way of life. This is carried out through the circulation of uncensored adverts of well-orchestrated video recordings of 'miracles' of these so-called men of God on social media platforms. Most of the youths easily fall prey to these manipulations as advertised on social media, and are made to part with their money and other valuables in the 'name of God'.

This lucrative nature of religious activities in Nigeria has led to the tremendous increase in the number of self-acclaimed men of God, who have turned themselves into 'God's of men'. There is no doubt that social media have been at the centre of these fraudulent religious activities, and has been employed negatively to the vulnerability of many youths who deploy it as a platform of deceit, lies, pretentiousness and fraudulent activities of our youths. The worst impact of social media on the religious infrastructure in Nigeria is the growing hibernation of our youths in religious philosophies to ventilate their crankiness as against hard work, and whoever that tries to raise an incisive and objective advice or question is perpetually viewed with contempt and labelled, blasphemous.

Scamming Vulnerabilities and Identity Theft:

The rate of internet scam and identity theft in our country is becoming alarming and worrisome when viewed against the background that these criminal acts are mostly perpetrated by our youths, who are supposedly the leaders of tomorrow. These activities have escalated due to the opportunities provided by social media platforms, where pictures of prominent persons in the society could be easily cropped from the internet and used in defrauding unsuspecting members of the public. It is to be noted that the term 'yahoo-yahoo', crept into the social lexicon of Nigeria with the advent of social media as exemplified in yahoo mail and yahoo messenger and the subsequent deployment of the platform for fraudulent and criminal activities. Social

media have cheapened the belief in hard work among our youths, as the ones who perpetually live on social media sites live more luxuriously than the ones that work hard to legitimately earn their living.

Increase in Divorce and Marital Infidelity:

Cases of divorce and marital infidelity in contemporary society astronomically increased due to the conducive platform provided by social media. The unfettered freedom of speech and expression on have raised self-styled authorities and social pundits in all aspects of human endeavours, who regularly wear the toga of perfection and absolutism, and thereby dish pieces of advice with reckless impunity and a sense of social-epistemic immunity, often swaying the beliefs of netizens of social media in most of our valued institutions. The marriage institution has remained the greatest victim of these marauders who mendaciously and hypocritically pollute the minds of young ones, on the ethics; ethos and etiquette of marriage. Their advice on marriages are, 'walk away', 'can't take that rubbish from any man', 'why should man be interested in my whereabouts and movements?', 'my husband can't dictate who is to be my friend', 'I wear what I like and he can't stop it' and many more.

Christian marriages are built on a Christian foundation and principles, it is 'for better, for worse', and till death do us part'. That is the Command to all Christian marriages. No man, however, is allowed to take advantage of this proviso, to beat and/or maltreat his wife. Any man that does that is a beast and needs his head re-examined. It is criminal to do so and I do not ascribe to beating or brutalization as a way of instituting discipline in marriages. But we should not rule out misunderstandings in marriages, it must come and it must happen. We are humans and we must make mistakes. Being advised to walk out of marriages, exhibiting unnecessary subversion, overt radicalism and categorical inclination and insistence on human rights in all matters in marriages will only denigrate, desecrate and destroy the institution of marriage.

Those young women, who have taken social media as a second home, reeling off all kinds of stories on marriages, whether real or

imagined, and offering unsolicited pieces of advice are still living with their husbands, their marriages are not broken even their husbands are not perfect. They have not walked away and shall not walk away. In the privacy of their homes, they stomach the imperfections of their husbands and their marriages are thriving.

Bastardization of Beauty Pageant and Promotion of Trivial Lifestyles: Beauty pageantry in no distant past was quite adorable, classic and exquisite as it provided opportunities for ladies with a powerful mix of beauty, brains, candour and character to be meritoriously selected as beauty queens. They were ladies of panache, imbued with native intelligence and a combination of nature and nurtured unflawed physique and unflappable personality. Unfortunately, the contemporary beauty pageant is a contrast of the old order as social media platforms have been deployed for the balkanization of once respected vocation and promotion of trivial lifestyles in the name of beauty pageant.

The fragmentation and balkanization of Beauty Pageantry as currently peddled and advertised on numerous social media platforms is tsunamic to the societal orientation of hard work and spirit of contentment among our youths. Different business-minded people in conjunction with some beautiful ladies simply evolve a contest with a name hitherto unknown to the industry's lexicon. Prices are ascribed to these girls depending on their levels of 'compliance and offertory'. This in their analysis to these young susceptible minds automatically imbues 'queenship' in them and consequently legitimizes them on a daily basis to wear the insignias of a crown and aimless perambulate from one 'big' office to another in the name of seeking for sponsorship for their pet projects and courtesy visits, and exposing self to moral dangers.

The truth is that most of these modern queens of the 'fragmented order' are usually exposed to amoral crucibles in the name of 'camping and audition' where they willfully predispose themselves to all forms of concupiscent lobbying to outwit, outmaneuver and outshine each other. Inasmuch as there are still elements of decorum in the conduct of a few

of the beauty pageants of today, but they abound, many indecorous, indecent, and pedophilic issues and sexual exploitation inherent in the processes and proceedings of a modern beauty pageantry if closely scrutinized.

Some of these young girls involved in Beauty Pageants are mostly innocent, undefiled as at the time of their recruitment, but cunningly procured by a business syndicate, who capitalize on their naivete and dangle many fantasies as their would-be prizes, whereas they are actually defiled, sexually radicalized and exploited, and consequently exposed to the 'corporate begging' with a predisposed mind set of deploying beauty, body and buttocks as bargaining standpoints of strength and tools for negotiations. This excess dosage of moral dangers being injected into the minds of the youths in the society by social media platforms has toxic effects and negative implications for younger generations.

SOCIAL MEDIA-PREDISPOSED CRIMES AND IMPLICATIONS ON FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

The effects of social media on our lives are rife, and portend dangerous implications to the aspirations of the youths in our society. As young men and women in schools and other vocations, we grow up with dreams; dreams of being professionals, dreams of becoming men and women of affluence and influence in certain facets of life, but the extent of the realities and achievability of these dreams is consequent on what we make out of our today. Though most of the implications of these unwholesome impacts of social media on the youths are moralistic in nature, but the experience of policing has shown that most of these moral negativities always aggregate at a certain point in life into frustration and aggression against the society and consequent inclination and involvement in crimes. Accordingly, social media can predispose our youths to crimes through the following ways:

Liberalized sex: Liberalized sex in our contemporary society as a resultant effect of social media has exposed our youths to active and reckless sexual lifestyles and consequent spread of infectious and deadly diseases in the society. These diseases have resulted in the untimely death of most of our promising youth and as well

truncated the aspirations of many due to ill-health. A lady once confessed that it is the society that gave her HIV and she must not die alone, but must definitely infect as many as she can before her death. Also, many of our young promising girls have found prostitution to be more gainful and lucrative than seeking for another job vocation. This ephemeral approach to life has greatly truncated the dreams of many of the youths.

Low education quality and youths' unemployability: The prevalent occupation of the minds and psychology of the youths with social media activities has contributed greatly to the dwindling standard of education and consequent explosion in the rate of unemployment in the society. A thorough examination of these unemployed youths shall certainly reveal that a greater percentage of them have made themselves 'unemployable' as they cannot pass the simple employment aptitude tests, answer current affairs questions or boldly write and express themselves in correct English language.

Escalation of incidences of divorce: Marital infidelity in our society as reinforced by social media is alarming, when viewed against the number of social deviants in the society. Experiential analysis of crime trends among the youths indicates that most of the youths that indulge in crimes are either children of divorced marriages or children without proper parentage.

Drug use: Increased exposure of hard drugs by our youths remains another dangerous aspect of social media with obvious implications for the future of our youths. This has resulted in numerous cases of mental disorder and persons of unsound mind among our youths. It is no longer hidden that drugs like Codeine, and Tramadol and other pain-relieving drug substances are regularly advertised on social media platforms as the best, shortest and cheapest way of getting 'high and excited'. This is drug abuse and it portends a bleak future for the youths.

Flamboyancy: Elevation of flamboyant lifestyle and ostentatious display of wealth and affluence have become an indispensable feature of most social media platforms. This has invariably

created a sense of greed and lust for affluence among youths, who now see such displays as a way of life and measurement of life's progress. There is no doubt that these displays have spurred many youths of our time to crimes, with the intention to meet up with mates that litter the social media stories of their successes, whether real or imagined.

INSTITUTIONAL ROLES TOWARDS SOCIAL MEDIA CONTROL IN NIGERIA

The Family: The family as the primary and first institution of socialization and mentoring has indispensable roles to play in the lives of their children towards internalization of social norms and values, and keeping away from vices and anti-social instincts. It is no hidden truth that modern families have failed in this obligation as they knowingly, but gradually predispose their children to acts that could lead into criminal behaviour. It is imperative at this time of our lives that the family units have to reinvent the glorious era, where discipline and godliness were the focal trainings and anchor of socialization for the children. This will greatly assist in keeping the children within the bounds of good conducts and godliness, irrespective peer group pressure and escalating trend of social vices.

The School: The school is another institution that remains critical in a child's development, socialization and mentoring. Unfortunately, most contemporary schools have shown lackadaisical attitude towards the social well-being and character of the students. Many have argued that the schools should not be blamed as most parents have formed the habit of harassing the school management for daring to discipline their children, this is indeed unfortunate, but does not in any way exculpate school from abdicating its responsibility to the society. In the university, certificates are awarded in CHARACTER and LEARNING, which entails that you must not only be educationally sound but must also, be morally upright. To what extent do these certificates reflect on the lives of our modern graduates?

A closer relationship and interaction with most of these graduates will reveal, that they neither qualified to be certified in character, nor learning, as their characters are simply a reservoir

of vices and crimes, while their grammatical representations (both spoken and written) and analytical dispositions do not indicate that they have been to the university. The time is now for the universities to rise up to the occasion by adhering strictly to lay down norms and rules guiding the university in terms of award of certificates. To curtail some of these excesses of the students, the university should come up with 'Certificates of Attendance'. This should be recommended for students whose performance all through the duration of academic calendar fall below the expected standard of a university certificate.

Religious Organizations: The proliferation of churches since the early 1980s in Nigeria is necessary for religious pluralism, and perhaps for the propagation of the gospel as obligated in the Bible. Unfortunately, this pluralism has given leeway for all manner of characters, creating leadership credibility gaps in the minds of worshippers. With constitutionally guaranteed freedom of association and worship, what can the state do when in the name of religion people choose to pontifically proclaim financial prosperity on gullible members without preaching the corresponding foundations thereto? To me, this is deceit. Fraud. Obtaining under false pretense.

This unwholesome development is not only the puzzle, but a stalemate. However, the state must be audacious enough to strike a balance between what is acceptable religious practice and what is criminal. In view of the above, how can the churches preach the truth when the target for large membership remains the motivating factor to the establishment of some churches? There is no doubt that the church is failing in its obligation to the society and should buckle up to the challenges of time of moral chastisement. Religion has the potential to create peace as well as conflict in the society. The churches are encouraged to use their platforms to preach moral rectitude for the benefit of humanity.

Security Agencies: The Police as the lead agency in the management of internal security should work assiduously in conjunction with other security agencies to ensure that crimes are nipped in the bud through sensitization/awareness

programmes on crimes and security. Investigations of different crimes committed by mostly the youths indicate that most of them are cunningly recruited to crimes without prior knowledge of what they were getting involved. The workshops and seminars will provide platforms for interaction with the youths, educating them on the implications of seeking criminal vocations and exposing them to the inexcusability of ignorance as grounds of direct and indirect involvement in crimes. This crime prevention mechanism, if regularly deployed by the Police shall assist greatly in discouraging our youths from criminal disposition and anti-social instincts, and creating a society where crime prevention works better and remains more productive, than crime fighting in the management of internal security.

CONCLUSION

The impact of social media on our lives is quite enormous, overwhelming and overarching. It has the good, the bad, the ugly and the unmentionables. Their effects on our lives depend on how best we deploy it. It is like a razor. When used carefully, the result will be a good shave, but if deployed with reckless impunity, you will surely get a deep cut. Social media is a coveted gift to humanity, but now an albatross around our neck. Things that were hitherto abhorred are now euphemized and imported as an acceptable way of life. The students no longer spell correctly instead. They indulge in senseless abbreviations in the guise of being classy and in tandem with modernity. Listening to news and reading newspapers are now things of the old and only the old should dwell in such superannuated habits. Ladies who give birth out of wedlock are now glorified in the inglorious act and nicknamed 'Baby Mamas', while their male counterparts arrogantly brag their promiscuous escapades. What a world. Too many things have gone awry, since the arrival of social media on human platform.

Recommendations

1. The future of the Nigerian youths, who are most vulnerable to the phenomenon of social media, is at stake. The youths must conduct self-examination and advise themselves accordingly.

2. Parents should be bold enough to take disciplinary measures at regulating the use of social media in their respective homes.
3. University system should become firmer and religiously adhere to their standards for the award of certificates.
4. The church should rise to the occasion and speak out with vehemence on the infectious vices of the modern society as currently propelled by social media.
5. The Police should be supported to effectively prosecute anyone arrested in connection with criminal activities. With everyone doing their bit, the future of our youths will be rescued and a better tomorrow will be assured. I will submit with the words of British statesman, Benjamin Disraeli (1804 - 1881), 'Youth is a blunder, manhood a struggle, old age a regret'.

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