IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA GAGGING IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES: LESSONS FROM THE TWITTER EXPERIENCE

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ABSTRACT
Social media reaches a vast number of people, so it is a mass media tool, which can be used to perpetuate good or evil. Is the state to have reins over what shows up on social media or what does not. To gag is to stop up the mouth of (a person) by putting something in it, thus preventing speech, shouts, etc. to restrain by force or authority from freedom of speech. On June 5, 2021, the social media platform, "twitter" was banned restricting its full operation in the country. The major objective of this paper is to dissect the impact of gagging twitter on our daily lives. This paper is a qualitative study and study participants were sampled through snowballing; method of analysis was through content analysis. Social media has most importantly allowed us to engage with first-hand accounts of those undergoing human rights crises. Social media has been the crux of increased activism, giving depth and humanity to previous impersonal news of human rights violations. It was discovered that societies with an appreciable level of freedom of the internet (there is no such society with totally free internet space); tend to record steadier economic growth, as 3 days after the ban, it was reported that the ban has cost the country over 6 billion Naira and it also contributes to the worsening unemployment in the country. It is recommended that social media can be put to good work, it is a peace agent and can bring people together but can also be a dividing tool, so there should be legal contractual coverage, agreement, restriction and guidance of the use of social media.

Keywords: freedom of speech, social media gagging, twitter.

Introduction

Twitter is a social media platform. Social media is a network which facilitates communication that is the exchange of information between two or more people in the digital realm. Social media as platforms where users may build a site with personal information to communicate with friends both literally and online, allowing them to find individuals with similar interests (Kuss & Griffiths, 2011). Social media is associated with the digital age. But what does this connote? IGI Global (2018), describes the digital age as the time frame in history that the use of digital technology became prevalent and of common use throughout the world. Social media and digital age are frequently paired, as indicated by news story captions such as, How Social Media helps Digital Age (Raut, 2018) and journal article titles like, Leading in the Digital Age: A Study of How Social Media Are Transforming the Work of Communication Professionals (Jiang, Luo, and Kulemeka, 2016).

For some, the absence of social media seems unthinkable, even frightening, 73 percent of Americans cannot imagine life without the Internet (McCarthy, 2017) and teenagers are framed as unable to "imagine a world without social media" (Devon, 2015). Social Networking is how you utilise social media, with social media comes, social networking which is the exchange of information or services among individuals, groups, or institutions; specifically: the cultivation of productive relationships for employment or business.

The extreme use of coercive power of the state against internet freedom has typically been seen as internet gagging (Adegoke, 2018). The Internet revolution has brought remarkable increase in the number of people making a living off the Internet, specifically on social media. From being social media managers to content creators to product photographers to video directing etc, (Kajanova, H., Sedlacek, M., Soosova, V., 2017), thousands of Nigerians have created work, jobs and careers off these social media platforms. Since the advent of Twitter, the influencing market space has grown that anyone with many followers who are dedicated could snag a deal with organisations looking to expand their reach.

Nigerians are now using Twitter to get jobs, information, investors, fill vacancies; a Twitter ban hindered these various economic activities (Nwolu, Nnabuife & Nnabuife, 2021). Online Social Networking (OSN) websites are popular and have become a part of our lives. These sites have made a significant impact on an individual's life. Social networks allow users to communicate, share knowledge about similar interests, discuss favorite topics, review and rate products/services. Online Social Media (OSM) websites have attracted millions of users by enabling them to interact in ways that were not possible before. OSN sites are the most popular sites on the internet. Social media are mostly used by students to communicate and exchange ideas with lecturers specifically in western societies (Sudha and Kavitha, 2016). OSN evolved into a global mainstream medium that generated increasing educational, social and economic impact. Social media is the medium to socialize. In reality, Social media and traditional mainstream media both complement each other. As individual public members now are optimistic about having substantial interactions with organizations, especially by using digital media, communication professionals have been looking for ways to enhance these interactions (Onwuka, 2013; Okpara, 2014).

According to NetBlocks, a watchdog organisation that monitors cyber-security and governance of the Internet, each hour of the social media gagging costs Nigeria about $250,000 every hour, resulting in "financial losses of up to $250,000 (N90.7million) per hour for the country and has put many jobs at risk since the ban came into (Oluwole, 2021). The Twitter ban has not done any body any good, as individuals use VPN (Virtual Private Network) to access Twitter (Li, 2021), the ban has caused the economy of the country to further depreciate, it means the economy would have lost approximately 7.5 billion in the past three days since the day of the ban (Nairametrics, 2021), it has also brought unemployment to the individuals in the society. The objective of this research paper is to explain the impact of social media gagging on daily lives, centering on twitter as the social media platform.

Literature and Theoretical Review
In the early 21st century, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube were everywhere, and their user base grows each year. In 2012, Facebook had over one billion monthly active users, and by 2018, it had 2.25 billion (Statista, 2018a). In 2012, Twitter had just over 150 million monthly active users, the number of unique visitors to a site for a 30-day period, by 2018 it had ballooned to 326 million (Statista, 2018b). In 2012, YouTube had 800 million monthly active users; by 2018, it had 1.8 billion (Gilbert, 2018). It has spun itself in communities to the point that it appears that removing it will impede the flow or exchanges of communication.

The rise of social media constitutes a paradigm shift for marketing. For example, more than 2 billion Facebook members actively use this social media platform monthly, spending more time there than on any other Internet application (Facebook, 2020; Kemp, 2016). In response, companies actively seek to leverage the opportunities associated with including social media in their marketing mix. In a survey of more than 5,000 marketers, 90% cited social media marketing as important (Stelzner, 2016), and market trends show strong growth in social media advertising spending (eMarketer, 2019). Scholarly research also provides evidence of the economic potential of investments in social media marketing (Kumar, Bezawada, Rishika, Janakiraman, & Kannan, 2016; Ma, Sun, & Kekre, 2015; Saboo, Kumar, & Ramani, 2016; Srinivasan, Rutz, & Pauwels, 2016) and the impact of specific social media marketing actions on consumers (Ashley & Tuten, 2015; De Vries, Gensler, & Leeflang, 2012, 2017). Business organizations are using social networks to achieve branding goals. One specific way to do this is to create brand fan pages on social networking site as social media marketing messages increase online shoppers' hedonic values.

Most Information and Communication Technologies professionals described government ban on Twitter as a decision made without knowledge of technology's dynamism. They argue that the decision could undermine the economic boost technology gives the country by way of consistently strengthening the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Osuagwu, Ndujihe, Njoku, Elebeke, Duru, and Yakubu, (2021). In a report to Al Jazeera, Gbenga Sesan, executive director of the Paradigm Initiative, a pan-African social enterprise working on digital inclusion and rights, opines that this ban will force investors out of Nigeria and also that global tech companies that want to investment in Africa are likely to consider a place like

Ghana rather than Nigeria (Iyorah, 2021). He also added that the suspension of Twitter sends the wrong signal to foreign investors; meanwhile, small businesses using Twitter as a source of livelihood in Nigeria will be affected due to the fact that businesses in Nigeria use digital media to reach customers, expose their brands and communicate with various stakeholders. That will definitely be affected by this erratic decision. Besides the financial loss, Bala Zaka, an investment expert, said the signal ban of Twitter has sent to international investment should be more worrisome to the government, who he said should have engaged Twitter diplomatically (Iyatse and Adepetun, 2021). With increased internet connectivity occurring across the world, individuals now have access to a suite of social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat) which provide news, information, entertainment, an opportunity to post photos, express opinion, seek companionship, and maintain networks of friends and family (Ryan, Chester, Reece, & Xenos, 2014). While engagement with social media can enhance feelings of social connectedness and wellbeing (Allen, Ryan, Gray, McInerney, & Waters, 2014). Heffner (2016) alleged that the use of social media can be a good outlet to deal with academic frustrations, especially if the students are in contact with other students that are having the same problem. Social media lets students to get connected with other students, which can be very useful because it will allow them to discuss class matters via social media.

In 2017 published report, Voice of America (VOA) observes that in Uganda, the website Yogera, or 'speak out', offers a platform for citizens to scrutinize government, complain about poor service or blow the whistle on corruption; Kenya's Mzalendo website styles itself as the 'Eye on the Kenyan Parliament', profiling politicians, scrutinizing expenses and highlighting citizens' rights; People's Assembly and its sister site PMG in South Africa and Parliament Watch in Uganda.

A study conducted at University of Nigeria, Nsukka explores the relationship between social media usage and academic performance among sociology and anthropology students, the study involved questionnaires distributed to 120 respondents, results revealed that the amount of time spent on social media did not impact academic performance, so academic performance is independent of social media usage, the study recommends that universities educate students on how to use social media to enhance their academic performance (Nwosu, Ajibo, Igwe, Odii, Ndubuisi, Nnadi and Igwe, 2019).

Uses and gratification theory
The Uses and gratification theory was coined in the 1940s by Katz and Blumler (1974), the primary objective of the theory is to clarify the causes why people choose a specific type of medium with a view to improving the understanding of social and individual gratifications and also to explain users' motives when interacting with a media. The theory refers to the study of the gratifications or benefits that attract and hold users to different media and various contents that fulfill the user's psychological and social needs (Dunne, Lawlor and Rowley, 2010).

People use specific media as an alternative communication medium and discover the usefulness which serves needs that motivate the user to use a particular medium, as users are very much aware of their needs and their behavior is goal-directed. The basic premise of uses and gratifications theory is that individuals will seek out media among competitors that fulfills their needs and leads to ultimate gratifications (Lariscy, Tinkham and Sweetser, 2011). Social media is used for the following reasons to interact socially, seek for information and self-educate, pass time, for entertainment and enjoyment, to communicate, to relax and for convenience and usefulness.

Social Media technologies have profoundly touched humanity. There are many ways the social media technologies are adding value to the human society; this included co-creating products, demand forecasting, distributing business processes, conducting market research, marketing communications, lead generation, social commerce, customer care, collaboration, and matching talents to roles. **Dumbrell & Steele (2013)** stated, "These social technologies have several characteristics that may suit information access and informal knowledge management by older adults, and there is a rapid uptake of these technologies by this demographic." Social media technologies have been seen to contain a plethora of information, covering many topic areas. Previously it has been identified that there is a large volume of quality health information on these platforms and an extensive range of condition-

specific categories that this information falls under **(Dumbrell & Steele, 2013)**. Social media has four major potential strengths: collaboration, participation, empowerment, and time. In terms of time, social media technologies allow users to immediately publish information in near-real-time (**Bertot**, Jaeger, & Grimes, **2010; Magro, 2012).**

Ulrich Beck's Risk Society
Ulrich Beck, in his book, 'Risk society: Towards a new modernity' in 1992 explained that the western modern world is now faced with fast food, global warming and several other risks, including the degradation of environment. The transition from traditional forms of media to a scheme of horizontal communication networks structured around the Internet and wireless communication has initiated a multitude of communication patterns at the root of a foundational cultural change, as virtuality becomes an important principle of our reality (Castells, 2010). Ulrich Beck argued a second modernity has emerged, which refers to the fact that modern institutions are becoming global, while everyday life is breaking free from the hold of tradition and customs as the old industrial society is disappearing and is being replaced by a 'risk society'. The earlier modernity largely consisted of industrialization. It was good for the society and advantageous for the people but the modernity has created risks, which we have to live with and find solutions for.

Aligning this theory to this research work, according to this theory, there is no 'road map' to the dangers of the reality. Because there are no definitive answers about the causes and outcomes of such risks, the people are obliged to face these and suffer the consequences. Social media, the internet network that connects individuals all over the world, is a blessing for the modern world, and it has now become an unavoidable aspect of society (Aishwarya & Vinod, 2017).

The world is fast changing and we are now living in a world, which is beyond the modern. With the advances in science and technology, new risk situations are created that are different from those of previous ages. Science and technology obviously provide many benefits for us, benefits flow from the use of social media for risk, high concern, and crisis communication: speed, access to information, reach, amplification, transparency, understanding, changes in behaviours, relationship building, timeliness, hyperlocal specificity, and listening and feedback. Yet, these benefits also have risks that are hard to measure. For instance, a generation ago, in the developed societies, marriage was a fairly straightforward process of life transition - one moved from being unmarried to the status of marriage, and this was assumed to be a fairly permanent situation. Today, many people are co-habiting and divorce rates are high. Eke, Omekwu and Odoh (2014) described some dangers associated with social networking sites such as E-crime, Internet addiction, laziness, standard crimes like, fraud, murder, kidnapping; immoral actsS like, pornography, prostitution, cyber-bullying were identified.

The contemporary world is not riskier than that of earlier ages. The risks, which we encounter today, derive less from mutual dangers or hazards than from uncertainties created by our own social development and by the development of science and technology. The central issue before was wealth and how it could be distributed more evenly. In advanced modernity which is what is being experienced presently, the central issue is risk and how it can be prevented, minimised, or channeled. The ideal in the society before was equality, while in advanced modernity it is safety. Then people achieved solidarity in the research for the positive goal of equality, but in advanced modernity the attempt to achieve that solidarity is found in the search for the largely negative and defensive goal of being spared from dangers, a valid explanation of the risks can be sought in the sub-politics of the state, as the sub-politics consist of large companies, scientific laboratories, and the like. Take the case of India. The Supreme Court ordered the closure of hundreds of factories in and around New Delhi because of the environmental hazards created by them for the community. This is the apt example of the role of sub-politics.

Beck asserts that humans do not yet live in a risk society but are rather moving toward it. While society grapples with current threats and hazards, risk consciousness is inherently forward-thinking and hypothetical (Beck, Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity, 1992). We are currently experiencing a new paradigm, our decisions as a civilization entail new global problems and dangers resulting from

the unintended consequences of modernity and radically contradicting the institutional language of control and the promise to manage disasters (Cortiñas-Rovira, Pont-Sorribes, & Alonso-Marcos, 2015), this comes as a result of our use of twitter which is a social media tool.

Methodology
Qualitative method of data collection was adopted for this study. Primary and secondary sources of data were used, the former was collected through key-informant interviews (KIIs) conducted with ten key informants; comprising of six males and four females. Also, three focus group discussions (FGDs) were also conducted, which consisted of five study participants each, one group was made up of males, the second group had females study participants and the third group had three female study participants and two male study participants, so the sample size of the study consisted of twenty-five (25) study participants. All study participants were selected through snowballing, using information gotten from a student, and so all were students of a selected university in the south-east (Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka), who were social media influencers or content creators, and these participants were sampled premised on the fact that these are key informants and are also youths. Secondary data was taken from the internet, newspapers and journal articles. Data collected was subjected to content analysis, the data was analysed thematically. Significant statements were quoted verbatim to substantiate important findings.

Results and Discussion
Usefulness of Social media
A study participant in one of the FGDs conducted, in describing social media had this to say:

> Social media is the medium to socialise, it supports personalised people-to-people and many-to-many communication, like chatting with a friend who lives many miles away on whatsapp); lurking, that is, watching or monitoring what an instagram user is writing and posting, but without them ever knowing); taking action in relation to existing content by tweeting, retweeting or commenting on a TV news story on Twitter; creating and circulating original content in sharing what's on your mind with the world, via Facebook). *(FGD, 22 years old, female, 300 Level, Department of Business Administration).*

Much fanfare surrounds the idea that billions of social media users, not just a handful of big media conglomerates, are creating and sharing their own content with audiences, small and large. Social media is the new communication method (digital marketing), in which the entire message can be managed through online blogging. Twitter is one of the well-known social media sites. Several companies prefer to carry out their business online. The best application of social media is the marketing and branding of a company's products, besides consumer networking and transparency of consumer feedback. Twitter as one of social networking sites has made a significant impact on an individual's life (Adegoke, 2018). Social networks allow users to communicate, share knowledge about similar interests, discuss favorite topics, review and rate products/services, this is also seen in a statement by a study participant in a FGD:

> When I wake up in the morning, in fact the first I do is to check my twitter, instagram and facebook accounts and respond to any comment that concerns me and the brand I cover *(FGD, Male, 25 years, 300 Level, Department of Mass Communication)*

Data collected is in line with **Tripathi & Verma, 2018,** today, one's daily routine is incomplete without a minimal visit to social media websites. Thus, Blogs, YouTube, Myspace, Facebook, Snapchat, and Pinterest are all covered within the social media definition (Loanas & Stoica, 2014). They help us to communicate using different sorts of messaging of videos, audio, pictures, and text. These sites can carry structured, unstructured, and semi-structured data with robust analytical tools. Communication can be of any type, relating to transportation, security, governance, election, entertainment, movies, games, tourism, shopping, plantation, education, healthcare, pharmaceutical, manufacturing, products, and their feedbacks and much more news. For personal or professional or entertainment purposes, one/two/ more of the most globally known social media is used, which includes, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram, and others. Social Media are networking websites that aim at

encouraging and strengthening the relationship among individuals, groups, and companies. The President, Association of Advertising Agencies of Nigeria (AAAN), Steve Babaeko, observed that significant population of Nigerian youth earn their livelihood through Twitter, "some simply by being attack dogs or mouthpiece for politicians and the government" which by implication, income for those youths will be lost to the ban. On the other hand, unemployment among the youth segment currently stands at about 35%, depending on which state of the Federation one is looking at; with Twitter ban, the unemployment rate will worsen (Babaeko, 2021).

Ban on Twitter, the impact on job creation, employment and work
Nigeria's decision to suspend Twitter, at first indefinitely and later temporarily, could backfire for the government and cost the country economically in terms of new investment into its technology sector. The ban may threaten Nigeria's status as one of the best-performing African countries in attracting investment for technology start-up businesses (Iyatse and Adepetun, 2021).

Twitter is a service that individuals and businesses in many industries embrace, with the growth of social networking sites and its ability to deliver real-time information to thousands of people instantly. Twitter social media is a microblogging platform developed in 2006. Twitter activities and sales performances of five companies from the Fortune 500 companies and its competitors were analysed. Chadwick Martin Bailey and iModerate Research Technologies found that consumers are 67% more likely to buy from the brands they follow on Twitter and 51% more likely to buy from a brand they follow on Facebook. Social media phenomena highly influence the audience.

Social media is a preferred mode of communication for building the relationship between marketers and consumers. Thus, social media platforms are nurturing relationships with customers. This particular assertion from a social media addict throws more light on the social media influencer world:

> Being digital is the way to go, while all individuals are social beings that interact with and live amongst larger groupings of other individuals, in the digital age individuals are interacting more and more via social media *(KII, 27 years old, Female, 400 Level, Department of Crop Science)*

This finding correlates with the work of Smith and Anderson in 2018, as they report it is imperative to use social media, as its use grows ever more widespread and intense, mass use of social media seems less like a free choice and more of a prerequisite or compulsion for living in the modern world. Unfortunately, failure to heed social media's customary and normative prescriptions can result in stigmatization (being disapproved of or condemned by the group) and exclusion (being kept out or marginalized from group activities).

Digital media like Twitter are essential for information exchange, marketing customer services and remote work, especially during public health and safety emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic. The suspension can slow commerce, cut productivity and ultimately cost jobs (Iyatse and Adepetun, 2021). It has been stressed that banning Twitter in Nigeria was an act of insensitivity considering the fact many Nigerians make a living through the site, as social media like Twitter have been proven to lift people, especially the youth, out of poverty through the acquisition and exchange of value adding ideas, the Internet revolution has had a profound impact on the way people in Nigeria earn a living, thousands of Nigerians have found new and exciting ways to create work, jobs, and careers online. From social media managers to content creators to product photographers to video directors, the opportunities for earning a living on the Internet are vast and varied. To this effect, the Nigerian government should reconsider the ban on Twitter without further delay (Paulinus and Obi, 2021) as the suspension created a market access gap for millions of small business and medium scale enterprises that use the platform to reach their customers. This could complicate the challenges COVID-19 and other structural defects has imposed on businesses. Also affected is the e-commerce market in the country, estimated at $12 billion (Iyatse and Adepetun, 2021), as Nigerians are increasingly active on social media platforms, individuals with a large following of dedicated followers have the potential to snag lucrative deals with organizations looking to expand their reach. Influencers, as they are commonly known, have become a vital part of the marketing strategies of many brands, offering a unique and personalized way to connect with customers and drive sales.

Impact on human rights

Social media platform like Twitter is one of the best technological innovations that have made information sharing, marketing information and collaboration easier. It was acknowledged that Millions of people across Nigeria, especially the youth, rely on social media to engage in discourse and to share and access information (Anyim, 2020). As a matter of fact, Nigeria's constitution and international human rights law, as set out in the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa, protect the right to free expression and access to information and provide that any restriction to this right must be justifiable in a democratic society (Ewang, 2021). The ban prevents the freedom of expression. Nigeria is a party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which in Article 19 obligates States to guarantee the right to freedom of expression, encompassing the right to hold opinions without interference, and the freedom to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas of all kinds through any medium regardless of frontiers (ACNL, 2021). About the ban on twitter influence on rights of the populace, a study participant had this to say:

> Article 19 of the United Nations Universal Declaration on Human Rights reads: Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers *(KII, 24 years old, Female, 300 Level, Department of Criminal Law)*

Another also said:

> The African Commission Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa Principle 38 (1) & Principle 37 (1), prohibits States from interfering with the right of individuals to seek, receive and impart information through any means of communication and digital technologies, through measures such as the removal, blocking or filtering of content, unless such interference is justifiable and compatible with international human rights law and standards. Social media made me more knowledgeable about human rights *(KII, 24 years old, Male, 300 Level, Department of Human Rights Law)*

Should other social media platforms also be banned?

The 2020 virtual protest in Zambia to *#ZimbabweanLivesMatter,* exposed the potential of social media to empower dissenting voices. The impact of Twitter, WhatsApp and Facebook in Gambia's elections has indicated that even in rural areas with limited connectivity, social media content contributes to offline political mobilization, as reported by Democracy in Africa in 2020. In Nigeria's situation, social media, particularly Twitter, has provided veritable platforms for constructive dialogues among citizens on critical developmental issues and democratic governance.

While every well-meaning African would not conceal the fact that published fake stories or threats of various forms via social media platforms has played into widely held fears, prejudices and assumptions and can exacerbate distrust and encourage a cycle of violence, the significance of content regulation and moderation, no matter the user's political status or socio-economic background, by handles providers like Facebook, Twitters cannot be underestimated.

A study participant in one of the KIIs had this to say:

> Banning Twitter was worrisome and surprising, despite significant governance issues awaiting attention like insecurity, poverty, poor healthcare system, youth unemployment, that affect the society's progress. The ban also came about to suppress and intimidate Nigerians from demanding transparency and accountability in governance *(26 years old, 400 Level, Female, Department of Sociology)*

It is also seen in a response by a study participant that Twitter ban is also not constructive for the government, there is need to know what citizens think of the policies and plans being brought forth:

> Citizens' participation can help governments to be more accountable and responsive, improve the people's perception of governmental performance and democratic dividends received from government *(KII, 26 years old, 400 Level, Male, Department of Political Science)*

Li and Ranieri in 2010 said that, banning social media does not increase success of students. However, well-designed instructional materials for developing digital competence is urgently needed to engage students and increase educational success in the online environment; and success do not depend on the education media, so banning twitter is not the answer to society's ills but there is need to instruct the populace on how to use it.

In a study by Scholtz B.,Calitz, A.P. and Tlebere, T. (2017), evaluating students' social media use for extra-curricular education, it was found out that social media campaigns are conducted to increase awareness, was conducted to improve environmental awareness, this is in line with a quote by a social media fiend:

> I volunteer with an environmental NGO, I got in touch through Twitter, and at present I manage the organisation's social media pages and twitter has greatly helped me in my education, concerning my academic performance (*FGD, 25 years, Male, 300 Level, Department of Microbiology and Applied Brewing)*

Social media platforms, particularly Twitter is an outlet that bring about increase in knowledge about situations, happenings and events. There will be economic melt-down in Nigeria, she will lose $30million (N10.885 billion) per day if Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube are all shut down. *(The methodology estimates total cost in local currency is NGN 48,596,413,850 Nigerian Naira (NGN) using exchange rate as of November 2019, (Oluwole, 2021).* The implication of the ban would result in the reputation and goodwill of the country taking a hit with both advertisers and investors.

Bloggers and social media activists have had to contend with intrusive policies of governments, which are hidden under vague anti-terrorism laws; thereby equating opposition to government with terrorism. Websites are attacked by paid internet mercenaries; email accounts are hacked and police often wire-tap phone conversations or demand self-censorship of social media posts. Some of the countries in the region are signatories to several international conventions and laws, which guarantee freedom of expression but they have manipulated local laws to serve their ends. Ironically, they intensify these monitoring, intrusions and surveillance around periods of organised protests against injustice; for example, Ethiopia was alleged to have blocked social media sites during Oromo protests.12 In situations where government controls who gets connected and what sites get visited by the citizens, there is little to no democratic rights for the citizens because the aim of the so-called national security effectively comes across as regime preservation.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Social media has intertwined itself in the social context of the society. It has become institutionalized in the society, entered lives of most people, and changed human interactions and connections. Without a doubt, it has radically transformed the world. It offers several advantages; it aids people to communicate and to get updated. However, it also provides disadvantages such as distraction and addiction. Social media platform(s) has brought about a remarkable increase in the number of people making a living off the Internet in Nigeria. From influencers to social media managers to content creators to product photographers to video directors, the opportunities for earning a living online are diverse and ever-expanding as it helps in education too, it is recommended that, the university authority should integrate social media as part of its e-learning platform. The university authority should device efficacious strategies for optimal utilization of the platform for academic purpose after its integration into its e-earning system. This will be supplemented by well-articulated policies that will facilitate the proper and appropriate use of social media for academic purposes by students. It is believed that proper and pious utilization of the above recommendations will go a long way in enhancing the benefits of the use of social media by students. As more and more Nigerians embrace the digital economy and harness the power of social media, the future looks bright for those looking to build a successful and sustainable career online. Twitter is an alternative means to raise one's voice more effectively than lethal weapons, but it needs the partnership of conventional media which can use the information of social media as primary content.

Social media has significance in conflict zones but it is effective locally, until and unless it is integrated with conventional media as an indigenous content. The mode and method of the resistance can be

transformed accordingly in the era of globalization where borders cannot cease the flow of information. Social media proved to be more reliable in insecurity matters; one is able to get information of situations in other areas or locations. Shutting down internet in a globalised economy does not forebode well for developing countries, product photographers and video directors are also in high demand in Nigeria thanks to the rise of e-commerce and online marketing. With more and more businesses selling products online, the need for high-quality images and videos that showcase their products in the best possible light has never been greater. Product photographers and video directors play a crucial role in helping businesses attract customers, increase sales, and build their brand online, the ban on Twitter in Nigeria should be lifted. It is recommended that social media can be put to good work, bringing light to social issues in the society and it is a good space for the economy of individuals in the society, be it advertising, purchase.

Twitter is a peace agent that can make contributions in conflict situations, there remains a world of unexplored peace vis-à-vis the social media applicability in peace processes, students in educational institutions need to be instructed on how to use social media effectively and correctly, banning it will not solve the problem which the government thinks is a problem, as it will still persist. Allowing citizens to air their grievances freely can help government officials and policy makers to crowdsource solutions while also providing direct access to citizens' opinions, and can bring people together but can also be a dividing tool, so there should be legal contractual coverage, restriction and guidance of the use of social media.

The ban on Twitter should be removed, the owner of the social media or the operator and government should have a round-table discussion and talk of issues assailing the government as a result of Twitter. There should be agreement on the use of social media platforms between the government and the owner(s), the owner of the social media or the operator and government should have a round-table discussion and talk of issues assailing the government as a result of Twitter, so social media platforms should not be portrayed as an instrument of subversion, because they are tools which can be put to beneficent use. A typical example is the use of internet and twitter for crowd sourcing policies that will entrench democratic ideals. Opinions could be mined through twitter using existing methodologies to measure public reactions to government policies and to also help design pro-people initiatives, which can aid development. There should be rules and regulations regarding the use of social media platforms.

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