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The Influence of Selected Social Media Platforms on the Moral Life of Youths in Anyigba Community

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Abstract

The widespread use of social media platforms among the youths has raised concerns regarding its impact on their moral life. Young people now spend a substantial amount of their daily activities, social contacts, and information consumption on social media platforms, which have grown in popularity and influence especially in recent time. The potential negative impact of social media on young people's moral beliefs and behaviors is one of the main focuses of this research. The variety of content available on social media platforms, such as user-generated posts, videos, photographs, and adverts, can have positive impact on youths; it can as well expose them to a range of moral dilemma. The aim of the research is to determine the impact of social media platforms on the moral values of the youth in Anyigba community. It uses sociological, evaluative and historical approaches, drawing data from books, journals, articles and interviews. This study indicates that social media usage among the youth in Anyigba community is pervasive, with a significant portion of their daily lives being spent on these platforms. It also reveals that social media has a mixed impact on the moral values and behaviors of the youth. While it provides opportunities for learning, social interaction, and self-expression, it also exposes them to various moral challenges, including cyber bullying, cybercrime, privacy invasion, sexual promiscuity, fake lifestyle and the propagation of harmful content. The study identifies a correlation between excessive social media use and a decline in offline moral behaviors among the youth. It concludes that social media has significant moral Impact on the youth of Anyigba community. The study recommends that parents, guardians, and educators should educate the youth on the responsible use of social media. Social media platforms should also take responsibility for regulating the content on their platforms to promote ethical values. The government should also enact policies that regulate the use of social media to protect the moral values of the youth.

Keywords

Social Media, Moral, Platforms, Youth, Anyigba, Community.

1. Introduction

The emergence of social media platforms has fundamentally altered how people interact, communicate, and exchange information. Social media has permeated millions of people's daily lives, especially the youth, thanks to the extensive usage of platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn, WhatsApp, and TikTok. However, concerns have been raised regarding these platforms' potential negative effects on young people's moral development and behaviours. Over the past ten years, social networking sites have become incredibly popular. A global exchange of ideas, opinions, and experiences is now possible because of the growth of these platforms, which have revolutionized how people connect and communicate. According to a report, there were approximately 4.66 billion social media users worldwide (Statista 1). One of the most involved and active demographics on social media sites are the young people. Social media's attraction stems from its capacity to foster a sense of community, self-expression, and connection with peers. A study conducted by Pew Research Center revealed that 88% of young adults aged 18 to 29 years use social media, with 78% using it on a daily basis (Smith and Anderson 5).

While social media offers numerous benefits, concerns have been raised about its potential negative impact on the moral development of young individuals. Critics argue that excessive use of social media can lead to a variety of issues; including cyberbullying, fake lifestyle, addictive behaviors, decreased self-esteem, and exposure to inappropriate content (Kuss and Griffiths 101; Primack et al. 221). Anyigba community like any other community in Nigeria is socially exposed to this, as a result of globalization and technological advancement. In support of this, Okpe opines that, society develops in response to the contact and interaction between human beings and their materials, social and intellectual environment (21). Technology has made it possible via the help of the internet for people to exchange information online without physical contact or proximity. Social Media platforms have been of great advantages to youths in the 21st century. On the other hand, it has also contributed to moral decadence among youths in Anyigba community and even globally. This paper describes selected social media platforms. It also evaluates the socioreligious life of Anyigba community. Furthermore, the paper seeks

to examine the positive and negative influences of selected social media platforms on the moral life of youths in the Anyigba community.

Concept of social media

Social media refers to online platforms and applications that allow users to create, share, and interact with content in virtual communities. These platforms typically enable users to connect with friends, family, and peers, and engage in various activities such as sharing photos, videos, thoughts, and opinions. Boyd and Ellison define social network sites as web-based services that allow individuals to create a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system (212). In the same vein, Power said Social media is a collection of websites and applications built on the idea of enhancing networking and sharing of information online (897). Over a period, social media have evolved as an interactive social platform for conversation and collaboration, as well as for sharing information and expertise (Singh et al. 1417). Poell and Borra examine social media platforms such as Twitter, YouTube, and Flickr as platforms for alternative journalism. They emphasize how these platforms enable citizens to document and share news events, challenging traditional media gatekeeping and providing alternative perspectives (697). Kaplan and Haenlein, "Social media is a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content (61).

Brief Description of Selected Social Media Platforms

Facebook: Founded by Mark Zuckerberg in 2004, Facebook initially started as a platform for college students to connect. It expanded rapidly and opened to the general public in 2006. Facebook has evolved into a global social networking platform for sharing updates, photos, and connecting with friends and family. It's also used for businesses to create pages, run ads, and engage with customers. In February 2004 Mr. Zuckerberg launched "The Facebook", as it was originally known; the name taken from the sheets of paper distributed to freshmen, profiling students and staff. Within 24 hours, 1,200 Harvard students had

signed up, and after one month, over half of the undergraduate population had a profile. The network was promptly extended to other Boston universities, the Ivy League and eventually all US universities. It became Facebook.com in August 2005 after the address was purchased for \$200,000. US high schools could sign up from September 2005, and then it began to spread worldwide, reaching UK universities the following month (<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2007/jul/25/media.newmedia>).

WhatsApp: WhatsApp was founded in February 2009 by Brian Acton and Jan Koum, former employees of Yahoo! In January 2009, after Koum purchased an iPhone, he and Acton decided to create an app for the App Store. The idea started off as an app that would display statuses in a phone's Contacts menu, showing if a person was at work or on a call. Koum named the app WhatsApp to sound like "what's up". WhatsApp introduced a user-friendly messaging service. It was acquired by Facebook in 2014. WhatsApp offers text, voice, and video messaging, as well as sharing media and documents. It's widely used for personal and business communication globally (<https://www.forbes.com/sites/parmyolson/2014/02/19/exclusive-inside-story-how-jan-koum-built-whatsapp-into-facebooks-new-19-billion-baby/?sh=4d8aff302fa1>).

Instagram: Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger launched Instagram in 2010 as a photo-sharing app for iOS devices. It was later acquired by Facebook in 2012. Instagram is primarily focused on visual content, allowing users to share photos and videos. It's popular for personal expression, lifestyle influencers, artists, and businesses to showcase products and services. By March 2012, the app's user base had grown to approximately 27 million users. In April 2012, Facebook (now Meta) made an offer to purchase Instagram for about \$1 billion in cash and stock; a key provision was that the company would remain independently managed. Shortly thereafter and just prior to its initial public offering (IPO), Facebook moved forward and acquired the company for \$1 billion in cash and stock (<https://www.investopedia.com/articles/investing/102615/story-instagram-rise-1photo0sharing-app.asp>)

TikTok: Developed by Chinese company Byte Dance, was launched internationally in 2016. It gained massive popularity for short-form video content. TikTok allows users to create and share short videos set to music,

with various effects. It's used for entertainment, creative expression, and viral challenges. Byte Dance, a China-based technology company develops TikTok, a video-based social media platform which is the first Chinese-made social media platform that reached global popularity, crossing 2 billion accumulated downloads in April 2020. The app started in China under the name Douyin, and was released as TikTok tailored for the international market (<https://citizenlab.ca/2021/03/tiktok-vs-douyin-security-privacy-analysis/>)

Twitter: Created by Jack Dorsey in July 2006, Twitter is a microblogging platform that limits posts to 280 characters. Twitter is used for real-time updates, news sharing, expressing opinions, and connecting with a wide audience through tweets and hashtag. On October 27, 2022, business magnate Elon Musk acquired Twitter for US\$44 billion, gaining control of the platform. Since the acquisition, the platform has been criticized for facilitating an increase in content containing hate speech. Linda Yaccarino succeeded Musk as CEO on June 5, 2023. In July 2023, Musk announced that Twitter would be rebranded to X and that the Twitter bird logo would be phased out (<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twitter>)

LinkedIn: Founded in 2002 by Reid Hoffman, LinkedIn is a professional networking platform aimed at connecting people in the business world. LinkedIn focuses on building professional connections, job searching, sharing industry insights, and business networking. LinkedIn is a business and employment-focused social media platform that works through websites and mobile apps. It was launched on May 5, 2003. It is now owned by Microsoft. (<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/LinkedIn>).

Socio-Religious Life of Anyigba Community

Anyigba's social life, like that of many Nigerian towns, revolves around close friendships, cultural practices, and communal gatherings. Anyigba's social system is deeply embedded in Igala culture, influencing many aspects of daily life. The Social life of Anyigba community is reflected in various activities, events, religious and socio-cultural gatherings like the Italo festival, Ocho Festival, Market activities etc. For example, market and commercial activities contribute to the social and economic life of the people. Those places serve as important meeting places for people to

exchange their products or goods. Marvelous disclose this in an interview:

"Businesses like eateries, restaurants, supermarket, churches and mosques also play a part in the social life of Anyigba community. Religious activities like prayers, mouloud, night vigils, crusade, seminars, bring people together which can help them interact and socialize. It also brings about peace in Anyigba community. the socialization in religious activities most times helps people to know the needs of each other and how to assist each other especially in times of needs" (Marvelous, oral interview).

It also enables people to meet, engage in social interaction and share ideas together. The markets in Anyigba do not only serve economic purpose but they also create an opportunity for people to connect and strengthen their social tie. Anyigba community encourage togetherness, communal living through social, religious and cultural festivals. "The Igala, like many other people in Africa and indeed all over the world, have very many religious and social festivals" (Etu 108). This is seen in the way her dwellers come together to celebrate cultural events like Italo, ogba and festivals like ibegwu. In this respect, Okpe stated that, "Occasions for celebration and festivity in Igala are diverse ranging from social to cultural events. In most cases, festivities are celebrated annually to mark a special event in the traditional life of the people; this may last for a day or more depending on the festival in question" (11-12).

These gatherings often promote unity and peaceful coexistence among Anyigba people. Similarly, Okpe said "it is a forum towards improving and maintaining the socio-cultural identity of Igala as a people through social and cultural animation" (164). Religious activities and institutions also constitute the social life of the people. Anyigba community is a town where different religions are practiced. African Traditional Religion, Islam and Christianity are the religions that are practiced in Anyigba. Christianity and Islam are the most practiced religions even though African tradition religion has its place. Places of worship such as mosques, churches and shrines are platforms for spiritual activities and a place where people get to meet each other for interaction within the community. When we talk of festival celebration, Anyigba community is not left out. They celebrate different kinds of religious festivals and cultural events such as

Italo, Ibegwu, Igala day etc. During these events, traditional music, dance, arts are displayed. Okwoli opines that, "annual festivals are days for singing and dancing. When people meet for this, they like to sing, clap hands and express their joy and thanksgiving to the spirit" (34). For example, the Italo festival is a socio-cultural festival that attracts thousands of people from within and outside the community. It brings people of different backgrounds together to celebrate their cultural heritage. It also serves as a place for social interaction and integration. Discussing this Okpe asserts that, "Italo is more of a festival of unity celebrated yearly at the most central town in Igalaland. Italo as a social and cultural festival has the potential of not only uniting the various classes of Igala people independent of educational ranks and qualifications but has the capacity of building bridges across religious inclinations and divides" (13).

Another major factor that contributes to the social life of Anyigba community is the presence of the institution, Prince Abubakar Audu University. This is located along Ankpa-Benue road. The students of the school engage in diverse forms of social activities like cultural day, Igala day, inikpi day, fresher's welcome party. All these social activities bring people together and create a forum for social discussion. In an interview with Musa Marvelous, she has this to say about the role of the institution in the social life of the people:

"The school and the students contribute largely to the social life of Anyigba community. The school is an institution that brings different individuals from different backgrounds, it brings them together regardless of their backgrounds, this can help the students to learn each other's culture which can bring about tolerance and acceptance between the students" (marvelous, oral interview).

Positive Influences of Social Media platforms on the moral life of youths in Anyigba Community

Social media has drawbacks; it has unquestionably benefited the young people in Anyigba community in a number of ways. It has provided a forum for communication and social connection, given them access to resources that improve their educational and personal lives, raised awareness and provided access to information, to name just a few of the many advantages it provides. The researcher will go over

some of the positive influence that these platforms have had on the lives of youth in Anyigba community in this section.

Platform for Communication and Social Connection: Social media platforms help youths in Anyigba community to communicate with friends and family regardless of location. Contrary to earlier times, when communication was not as people perceive it today, it makes communication simple and efficient. Since most young people in Anyigba community use social media, it is simple to communicate ideas and opinions with others around the world. Transportation is now expensive because of hike in fuel price; social media can help to end the challenge with physical connection and communication. Social media also enables youths in Anyigba Community to connect with friends, relatives, and others in their age group. These relationships can deepen linkages between people, cultivate a feeling of community, and encourage morally upright actions like extending assistance to those in need and empathetic behavior toward others. For example, they are users of social media that have gotten help through giveaway from friends on platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, especially when physical connections fail.

Access to Personal Development and Educational Resources: Youths in Anyigba can have access to resources on social media platforms that can advance their academic and personal development. They can find a variety of resources on websites like YouTube, Facebook, and LinkedIn that can help them in both their personal and professional lives. Additionally, there are certain social media influencers who aim to educate people on a variety of life topics. Youths have access to training, tutorials, and educational videos that can help them increase their knowledge and abilities. Distance learning is possible via the aid of social media especially during COVID-19 pandemic. Students in some institutions use social media for lectures, presentation and even examination. This can help to reduce cost implications on the side of the students. On social media platforms, for instance, young people can learn about money, relationships, digital marketing, and other topics. These can assist Anyigba youths in developing the skills necessary to become dependable and financially savvy. They are youths within Anyigba community that have increased their cooking skill by simply watching tutorials on social media platforms.

Create Awareness and Access to Information: It is crucial to be aware of what is going on in one's immediate surroundings. Social media platforms serve as avenues for the dissemination of information. Anyigba community's youths get reliable information on global events, which can raise their knowledge of other people's cultures and ways of life. According to research, youths primarily obtain their news through social media sites like Facebook and Twitter. On social media, news quickly spread like wildfire from almost anywhere in the world. This can occasionally be overpowering, but it can also keep us informed of crucial occurrences. This might be a tremendous advantage if you need to spread the word about something quickly. For instance, if someone passes away in the nearby town like Egume, the news will immediately be on social media platforms especially Facebook. This keeps the youths of Anyigba community informed and aware of the happenings within Anyigba community and the entire world.

Impact on Business and Organizations: in anyigaba community, there exists several business which are majority of these businesses are owned by the young individuals. Social media has been of help to businesses and organizations in Anyigba because we are in the information age. Everything, including business, is moving toward digitalization. One cannot understate the importance of social media platforms in modern business. Now that social media platforms have so many benefits for the business sector, businesses and companies understand the necessity of being on these platforms. Through social media marketing, Companies within Anyigba community utilize social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and LinkedIn to market their products, offer their services, and find new employees. Most businesses use LinkedIn for employee recruitment, but it also helps them get users to their social media pages, which can increase sales. Findings show most companies use people's information on social media platforms to employ them into their organization.

[Effects of Social Media Platform on the Moral life of Youths in Anyigba](#)

The youths in Anyigba community increasingly rely heavily on social media either for networking, building relationships, Sharing contents and other purposes. This has a negative impact on all facets of their lives, particularly their morality. For instance, through influencers culture majority of youths in anyigba

community have been led astray. This is because they tend to follow the lifestyle of those influencers that they follow on social media. According to Emmuella Onogu:

“There are different types of influencer on social media. A youth will tend to go with the choices he/ she wants to make. A youth will want to get into the latest trend of his or her own influencer. For example, Bobrisky is an influencer that come out on social media platforms and tell people the way they should live their lives, how they should dress, the way they should follow her because she's a transgender, and one that believes that homosexuality is not really a bad thing will be looking up to Bobrisky as a mentor or someone that can make him/her open to the public (Onogu Emmanuella, Oral interview).

The society should all be grateful for the opportunities and advantages that social media presents, but research has proven that these platforms do not come without consequences for society. Most of the young individuals in Anyigba community use social media especially, Facebook, WhatsApp, TikTok, and Instagram. As a result of excessive use of these platforms and exposure to contents that has a detrimental effect on their morals, the society today, and Anyigba youths in particular, are engaging in immoral behavior. Simeon Ilemona states:

“The advent of social media has created a society where people no longer socialize as it used to be. Everybody are just touching their phones, one of the effect is that it makes youths lazy. Instead of going about to carry out their daily activities, they prefer to just stay and chat on social media. It also exposes youths to some information that ordinarily they wouldn't have access to. it exposes them to pornographic videos and sensitive sexual materials online, which they won't get ordinarily. Social media creates a kind of spatio-temporality, to break that barrier, it now exposes even the youths to western world. postmodernist ideologies are been brought into as a result of social media, where people are talking about Same-sex marriage, cloning, invitro fertilization etc which are not even part of our own culture.

The negative effects of social media usage are numerous and continue to affect the youths in anyigba community. Ilemona further stated that:

As a result of social media, it now bridges the bridge of communication, given the youths of Anyigba access to communicate on global scale which now exposes them to Western Culture. These are the challenges that emerge with the introduction of social media. More so, youths today are advocating for gender equality, feminist ideology, these are problems that are gotten from social media. Most of these ideas are western ideas that are gotten from social media platforms and they want to practice it without considering the fact that the socio-cultural life of a traditional African man differs to a large extent from that of the westerners, this can bring confusion in the society which is against cultural norms and values (Oral interview).

The researcher will discuss the various ways that social media platforms negatively influence Anyigba youths moral life.

It affects Physical Relationship: Excessive use of social media can cut down on face-to-face social interactions, which are essential for the growth of social abilities like empathy and moral reasoning. Most youths in Anyigba today own personal cell phones which give them the opportunity to access social media and building online relationships. Sani Lois supports this, in her opinion:

“The use of mobile phone has negative implications. It can be so addictive even among the older generation if not properly managed. They have access to vast and uncensored information on internet and the extent to which they gain information is not even regulated here in Nigeria. As a result many of them get carried away by what they see or consume online" (Oral interview).

As it is called global village today, any person anywhere can be reached and form relationship. You see Majority of youths in Anyigba are carried away especially with their phones without being aware of what is happening around them. The youths in Anyigba community no longer invest in their physical relationship; all they focus on is online relationship which cannot be compared to physical relationship. This is moving the community from African communalism to western

individualism because, this create a Mentality of "me and myself" alone. This loss in interpersonal relationships could impede the development of the youth's moral ideals in relation to collaboration, respect, and effective communication. Unlike before when people cherish relationships and cared for people around them, all that has been altered since the introduction of social media. Online relationship is growing while physical relationships are now depleting. This is a serious side effect of social media.

Poor Academic performances among Youths in Anyigba: social media is negatively affecting the academic performance of youths in Anyigba community, as students spend excessive time on various platforms like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, WhatsApp. Time that should have been invested in growing academically and learning new things through research is now spent aimlessly on these platforms. For example, some young students of Prince Abubakar Audu University Anyigba, fail their continuous assessment and some fail examination because they prioritize being online over studying and preparing for their studies. One of the respondents, a postgraduate student said:

"Excessive usage of social media affects the students in several ways. Firstly, it makes the students reluctant to study because, they just stay all day watching movies on social media. The time they are supposed to use in studying their books is used in watching videos which affect their academic performance and sometimes they can even be in long conversation with their fellow course mates no remembering the task before them, this can discourage seriously to their studies" (Simeon Ileomna, oral interview).

Majority if not all the youths have access to mobile phone which give them opportunity to access social media platform. A typical mobile phone user in our period finds it difficult to compose a letter since they are used to texting, which has bankrupted them in the area of letter writing. This is supported by the fact that most pupils fail the English language in this era. Anyigba youths who are students have less time for their studies as a result of their addiction to social media and mobile phones, this leads to examination malpractice. Exam misconduct is on the rise in schools, particularly tertiary institutions, as students use mobile phones and mobile internet to cheat during exams. In

tandem with what Simeon Ileomna said, Hannah Joseph, an undergraduate student of Prince Abubakar Audu University Anyigba, said:

"I think social media addiction affect students academic performance, if that student becomes a social media addicts, the times that should have been spent on reading, you use it for chatting, listening to music, downloading things that don't help academically. If it were that you had use your time or part of your time to go online download things that helps you academically is better but, if you go online solely for the purpose of downloading music, Tiktoking, WhatsApp and Instagram and other social media platforms, you wouldn't have time because some people can spend hours from morning till night being online and they don't get tired, same thing the next day, when they wake up, they go to class and sometimes they can even skip class, because while using their phone, time might just be going and they often say things like in the next 30 minutes I will stand, in the next 10 minutes I will stand up and such person can end up skipping the class due to the time wasted online" (Interview).

Unhealthy Comparison and Fear of Missing out (FOMO): Among youths in Anyigba community, social media lead to constant social comparison and a fear of missing out (FOMO). Inadequacy, envy, and a concentration on materialistic ideals can all result from this comparison. The frequent use of social media by youths in Anyigba community exposes them to influencer culture and other types of content that are detrimental to their psychological wellbeing. For instance, the majority of influencers flaunt their expensive homes, vehicles, clothes, and way of life. Between them and their followers, this could lead to unhealthy comparisons. One of the issues facing the youth in Anyigba community is that as long as social media influencers display their material possessions, homes, and wealth, it would be easy for their followers to develop a materialistic mindset. Nowadays, the majority of young people in Anyigba community are motivated by material possessions; some even make unnecessary purchases in an effort to mimic the lifestyles that social media has made possible for them. This goes against conventional qualities that were once valued, such as contentment. More to it, the researcher expressed concern that a person's use of social media platforms to check their friends' updates could have a

negative impact on their psychological health and wellbeing by increasing feelings of depression, moodiness, and unhappiness. This is entirely attributable to the comparisons people make between themselves and their friends in their minds. When they realize that their lives do not meet up to the standards they observe on social media, some people could feel as though they are missing out. To mimic what they see on social media, some people may even turn to immoral actions like stealing, prostitution, and rituals. Such negative feelings could harm their moral growth by encouraging a competitive and shallow worldview.

Cyberbullying: this is another serious side effect of using social media among the youths in Anyigba community. Cyberbullying according to Merriam Webster dictionary, is the electronic posting of mean-spirited messages about a person (such as a student) often done anonymously. Social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram can develop into havens for cyberbullying and online abuse, which can have detrimental effects on Anyigba youths moral development. Online aggressiveness and exposure to negative material can reduce empathy, encourage abusive behavior, and result in deterioration in their moral values. It also affects their self-confidence and results to low self-esteem. For instance, the researcher has seen this repulsive behavior by some young individuals in Anyigba community especially students, where people on their numerous social media accounts post offensive things about someone else, especially when relationships have ended. Both of them involved will post disparaging comments about the person they just broke up with.

Laziness and Time Wastage: Social media usage is a time waster especially when one becomes addicted to it. From the researcher's experience it not a false assumption that constantly engaging in social media can take your precious time. Youths may get entangled on social media platforms with interesting contents and conversation for hours without knowing that time is actually going. Some youths in Anyigba community stay on social media from 7pm till 2am the following day; these people may not be doing anything serious other than engage in less important activities on these platforms especially on Facebook. Social media can also lead to laziness among Anyigba youths when not properly used. Most youths in Anyigba community are always checking for new messages on their social media platforms, this keep them glued to their phones. It becomes difficult for them to go about their daily

activities since they want to always be in touch with their cell phones. This has resulted to many youths being lazy and many are unproductive in Anyigba community.

Poses Risk for Cybercrime: most youths in Anyigba community are fraudsters (yahoo) and others are victims of internet fraud. In recent years, social media has dramatically increased the rate of cybercrime in Anyigba community. Cybercrime simply means online stealing. Cybercrime is the term used to describe any theft or fraud committed via phone, computer, or social media. This is typical of young people in Anyigba and throughout Nigeria. Youths are now stealing people's money on social media platforms, mainly Facebook and WhatsApp, due to their desire for materialism and quick money. One of the negative effects of social media on youth in Anyigba communality as discovered by the researcher is the prevalence of fraudsters' actions online. The majority of young in Anyigba people are victims of this immoral behaviour. Nowadays, youths break into people's bank accounts and personal information to steal all of the victim's money. Most of them see this immoral act as a normal thing meanwhile; this menace is against traditional African values.

Sexual Promiscuity: social media platforms create opportunities for young individuals in Anyigba to meet, socialize, and share contents. However, this opportunity has been abused in most cases. Through social media, youths have access to pornographic images and videos which is harmful to their moral development. Social media give opportunity for Anyigba youths to connect with both male and female gender; this has made it easy for them to indulge in sex chat which can lead them to fornication. Some youths in Anyigba have made sexual immorality a hobby. Some connect with friends of the opposite sex on social media just to engage in sexual activities. Before social media, people used to refer to persons who engage in sexual immorality, especially those who stand by the side of the road, as prostitutes. But the situation today is different. "Hookup" is the term used to describe prostitution today. In order for potential customers to invite them over for immoral behavior, several female youths in Anyigba, for instance, left their contact information and photos in hotels. Since many were being used by yahoo guys for rituals, several youths in Anyigba community have died in this act.

Lack of Privacy: most youths in Anyigba community lacks privacy as a result of being careless with their personal information on social media platforms. Social media sites frequently gather and distribute personal data, posing issues with privacy and security. The hazards of identity theft, cyberstalking, and internet scams may be unintentionally taken on by young people. This possible weakness may have an impact on their moral principles of caution, faith, and appropriate online behavior. Youths revealing every detail of their lives on social media are another aspect of Privacy that the researcher noticed among youths in Anyigba community. People used to keep secrets before social media was invented. As a norm, there are certain facts about a person that should be kept secret, but today everyone wants to demonstrate that they are not lazy. In the past, there were some things about people you would not know until it was revealed to you. Some young people in Anyigba today lack discretion and privacy; instead, they choose to post details of all their movements and activities on social networking sites like Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram. Some people could engage in it to receive likes and approval from friends online without realizing the negative effects. For instance, when a young person buys anything or even travels to a new place, the first thing they do is post about it on social media. This can leave them open to many risks.

It encourages Fake Lifestyle: Fake life is one of the adverse effects of social media on the moral life of youths. Fake life is living a life that is not true or genuine. It also means portraying the false image of you. Youths in Anyigba community and society as a whole have suffered as a result of how a polished lifestyle is portrayed on social media. When one is continuously exposed to pictures of people who appear to be having perfect lives, it is simple to compare oneself to them and feel inadequate. Speaking about the negative lifestyles of youths in Anyigba community, Honorable Stephanie opines that:

"Most influencers influence youth negatively. They display a lifestyle that is not real with their audience making some youths feel they are not doing enough or living the best life for their age. Some are not sincere enough to make people see the reality; they are concerned about living a life to bring audience thereby making youths believe that you don't need hard work to get the life you want. They make success seem easy to youths with the different

lifestyle they display. The need to be perfect and look perfect for the public has led a lot of youths to all sorts of crime. Most of them want to be like those they see on the internet without questioning their source of income" (Oral interview).

Anxiety, despair, and feelings of insecurity may emerge from this. A sensation of detachment may result from the disconnection between actual life and the carefully cultivated online identity. The pursuit of a false lifestyle can result in debt and unhealthy routines. To keep up the illusion of a glamorous life, many people feel pressured to spend money on pricey vacations, chic clothing, and opulent experiences. This constant pressure to satisfy others' expectations and follow fashion trends frequently results in reckless expenditure and debt. People may put worldly goods ahead of long-term financial stability out of a desire to be liked and followed, which can make them feel validated.

Impact on Youth's Financial Life: Social networking sites can have a negative impact on young people's financial lives if they are used excessively. In Anyigba community, the majority of young people use at least one social media site. To be visible on social media, data is needed, and users of social media pay money to purchase this data. TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube are just a few of the social media sites that use a lot of data. Any user using these sites, notably TikTok, has to have enough data to do so efficiently. Amazingly, some young people in Anyigba pay huge amount of money on monthly subscriptions. One of the youths said, he does not really take note of his spending on subscription but he is sure he does not spend anything less than 5000 on subscription in a month (oral interview, Onoja Matthew). Another youths said that he spend up to 10,000 naira on monthly subscription. In order to know why he spends so much, the researcher asked the respondent, this was his response, "I am a sociable person, I'm virtually on almost all the social media platforms, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp amongst others, I also indulge in research online, so I consume more of data, Also as a graduate without an employment you know we will be more involved in social media activities to keep us busy" (Adejoh Stephen, oral interview). Some of the youths hardly feed properly but the addiction that comes with using social media platforms won't allow them to stay offline. They go about begging people on social media for money and most cases subscription. The majority of

youths in Anyigba use TikTok, giving them access to the platform's information. "TikTok is known for its viral trends, which can lead to overconsumption, especially when it comes to purchasing items that are not necessary. Creators often promote products, fashion items and gadgets, which can create a sense of urgency to buy. Additionally, the app's algorithm shows users more of what they engage with, creating a cycle of consumption. Youths in Anyigba are trapped in overspending and impulse spending which negatively affects their financial life. They spend Money they don't have, buy things they don't need, to show people who don't even like them. Also, alot of youths in Anyigba precisely have fallen victims of scammers who promised them fast ways to make money on social media platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp respectively, this had resulted to massive financial loses and financial bankruptcy on the side of the youths.

To prevent it from negatively affecting their financial well-being, it is essential for young people to be careful of their social media use and form healthy habits. Also, it is crucial to set screen time restrictions, evaluate marketing critically, and foster financial literacy.

Conclusion

The research on “an assessment of the impact of selected social media platforms on the moral life of youths in Anyigba community” reveals both positive and negative consequences. On the positive side, social media platforms have provided opportunities for communication, networking, and access to information. They have also offered platforms for personal and business growth, educational support and raising awareness on various social issues. However, there are significant concerns about the negative impacts of social media platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, TikTok, YouTube and Instagram on the moral life of youths. Excessive use of social media can lead to addiction, cyber bullying, privacy invasion, and unhealthy comparison, sexual promiscuity, and time wastage. It can also contribute to decreased in-person interactions, increase fake lifestyle, financial bankruptcy, and erosion of traditional moral values. More so, it also discusses other factors like family factor, insatiable taste for Materialism, bad leadership, westernization and negligence of religious activities, all these were discussed as other causes of moral decline among youths. Therefore, it is crucial for parents, educators, community leaders, and policymakers to

guide and educate youths on responsible and ethical social media use, ensuring that the negative effects are minimized while the positive aspects are harnessed for personal and community development. By striking a balance and judiciously utilizing social media platforms, youths in Anyigba community can navigate the digital landscape while upholding their moral integrity and well-being.

Recommendations

Since social media has form a basis of youth's life in the 21st century, it becomes expedient to ensure a responsible use of social media platforms among youths in Anyigba community, therefore, researcher recommends the following:

- Government should implement programs or workshops that aim to enhance the digital and information literacy skills of youths. This will enable them to critically evaluate and navigate social media platforms, understand the consequences of their online actions, and make informed decisions about the content they engage with.
- Encourage parents and guardians to actively participate in their children's digital lives by fostering open communication, setting boundaries, and monitoring their online activities. This involvement can help guide and regulate the youths' social media usage and promote responsible behaviour online.
- To avoid the negative of social media on youth's mental health, it is recommended that the youths in Anyigba community should learn to properly use social media and also reduce the amount of time spent on these platforms; because excessive use of these platforms can negatively affect their mental well-being which can indirectly lead to other moral concerns.
- Encourage youths to participate in peer support groups where they can openly discuss their social media experiences and worries and receive guidance from their peers.
- Promote awareness and encourage youths to adopt ethical behavior while using social media platforms. This can include being mindful of the content they share, avoiding cyber bullying or harassment, respecting others' privacy, and promoting positive digital citizenship.

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Oral Interviews

S/N	Name	Age	Address	Occupation	Date
1	Onogu Emmanuella	24	PAAU Staff Quarters,	Nurse	27/07/2023
2	Hannah Joseph	22	Behind High Court	Student	29/07/2023
3	Simeon Ileomna	26	Iji, phase 1.	Student	3/08/2023

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4	Sani Lois	30	Stadium Road	Lecturer	4/08/2023
5	Ameh Stephanie Ojone	32	Ajetachi	SM Influencer	6/08/2023
6	Ilemona Hnery	26	Beside UBA Bank	Student	5/08/2023
7	Onoja Matthew	28	Behind Ify' Kitchen	Graphic Designer	9/08/2023
8	Adejoh Stephen	27	Agala-Ate Road	Student	9/08/2023
9	Musa Marvelous	27	Behind Solag Filling Station	Receptionist	20/07/2023