

# The Internet Communication and the Moral Degradation of the Nigerian Youth

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**Abstract— The power, speed and sophistication of the internet as a communication medium in an information age cannot be overemphasized. Its popularity has also attracted criticism and worries over the effect of such medium on the youths. With the beam lights on youths in high schools and employing the electronic colonialism theory, this study sought to ascertain what the internet especially social media has done to and for Nigerian youths. From analysis of 200 copies of questionnaire, the findings revealed that the internet have negatively affected education, morality and culture of Nigerian youths amongst others.**

## I. INTRODUCTION

From time immemorial, man has always found a way to communicate with one another. Owing to its role as one of the most fundamental aspect of human existence, communication has evolved from what it was during the pre- historic times to what it is today. Communication by way of definition is “an interaction process through which person or groups relate to each other and share information, experiences and culture” (Jayaweera 1991 in Okunna & Omenugha (2012: 5). It is through such interactions that bridges and gulfs are bridged. It is also through such interactions that the world could become a global village.

The prediction of McLuhan of a global village has indeed come true in that the world has become a global village or a miniaturized village in that everyone in that setting is interconnected in some way. One who is in Nigeria can be abreast with the most recent happening in the United Kingdom. How is that possible? It is through globalization which was aided by communication and the internet. One can be in South Africa and order for goods from America with just a card and a click. The Internet has been the uniting link among nations, countries, continents and even worlds. It has so changed the world that new changes and trends have submerged the traditional and conventional ways of doing things. This submerge has both positive and negative effects on the people as a whole. Many people cannot even begin to imagine the world without electrical gadgets and internet to be specific. This

can account for the reason why some people in Nigeria can climb ‘mountains’ to get reception when they travel to remote areas all in a bid to stay connected.

In fact, a success factor for the globalization can be traced to the internet. With over “500 million facebook users, over 50 million tweets, over 450 million mobile internet users, and about 68 million bloggers, society has changed and there is a paradigm shift in the way things are done worldwide”. (kabani 2010 in Adeyeye et al (2013). Research has also revealed that Nigeria is the highest internet market in Africa. In that case, one may not be presumptuous to conclude that the internet has indeed become our life.

Coming to moral degradation, what is morality and how is it measured? Morality is a concept that defies a universally accepted definition because what is considered morally right may be the opposite within another cultural setting. By degradation, I mean that morals have been overrated, it is now seen as archaic, worthless, valueless, a cliché and as old school. Morality is now seen as a characteristic of the old world because in the new world, anything goes. There was a world that frowned at immorality but the present world has canonized immorality under the guise of civilization.

In every society, there are groups namely: the minors, youth, adults and the Aged. Of all the groups, the most vulnerable are the minors and the youths because of their inquisitive minds, impressionable age and adventurous spirits. In Nigeria, there was a time when morality was the order of the day, indiscipline and corrupt practices was frowned by all and sundry. That was prior to the phenomenon of the jet age. Nowadays with the recent happenings, one may ask what the internet has done to the conscience, rationality and morals of the Nigerian youth in particular and Nigerians as a whole.

Using the electronic colonialism theory as an anchor, this paper seeks to review related research papers with a view to identifying and exploring the ways that the internet in general and the social media in particular that was meant to be a blessing and to aid development has been stereotyped to be the leading cause of moral decadence in

the country with special emphasis on the youths. Also, this paper seeks to quiz Nigerian youths on how they perceive the advantages and disadvantages of the internet specifically as it relates to them.

## II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Modernization and globalization owing to technological advancements have been significantly successful in shrinking the world into a global village as predicted by McLuhan. One of such advancement is quite evident in the internet and its popularity and efficiency in uniting the world as one (in theory). In Nigeria, in its bid to be globalization compliant has popularized the internet involvement into almost every home. Be that as it may, there has been a sharp decline in the moral values of Nigeria as a developing nation and there is a stereotype that the internet has the bulk of the blame for such derailment. The survival and progress of a country to a reasonable extent depends on the youths and their ability to steer the ship. With the supposed rate of addiction to the net and its attendant effects, what bunch of youths will the country produce and bring to the globalization table?

Against this backdrop, one wonders how and to what extent the internet contributed to the derailment and degradation of the rectitude of morality in Nigeria especially among the younger generation. Basically, there is need to identify what internet has done **to** and **for** the Nigerian youth.

## III. INTERNET

*Throughout history, human beings have sought ways to improve their ability to receive, and assimilate information about their surroundings and at the same time to increase the speed, clarity and variety of their methods for transmission of information*". MacBride et al 1981 in Okunna & Omenugha (2012:1).

I want to state that from the above explanation by MacBride of what communication involves, I can confidently say that man has found that medium that combines speed, clarity and variety of methods and that is the internet. Originally, the channels of mass communication were basically print and electronic but recently, it added internet which has become the most popular, most efficient and the most important. It has rolled the previous media into one in that one can read newspapers online and most if not all TV networks all have websites for online users. Owing to its availability, importance, power and efficiency as a channel of communication, there is therefore the need to be wary of its effects. What then is the internet by way of definition?

The internet is an umbrella name for a fusion of networks. According to Okunna & Omenugha (2013), the internet is a combination of thousands of computer networks sending and receiving data from all over the world. In the same vein, Bell in Okunna & Omenugha (2012:138) saw

internet "As a collection of computer networks that connects millions of computers around the world"....it is a vast source of information that is constantly changing and expanding. Since its inception in the 1960s, it has grown immensely and is now used by over 400 million people all over the world, from those in commercial and educational institutions to individual consumers". Bell was right about the ever changing nature of the internet and the computer. A decade ago saw desktops but nowadays, the desktops have evolved into laptops, palm tops, Ipads and Ipods. Internet connection which was exclusively for the rich has been subsidized by the communication networks so much so that most handsets have internet connection. What has internet done for the users?

In answer to the question above, it is the position of this paper that the internet has a double edge sword characteristic in that it can be used for both good and bad. For one and on the good side, it has made education very easy and more accessible. One can be in his/her house and get a degree. From Wikipedia, "Educational material at all levels from pre-school to post-doctoral is available from websites. Examples range from CBeebies, through school and high-school revision guides and virtual universities, to access to top-end scholarly literature through the likes of Google Scholar. For distance education, help with homework and other assignments, self-guided learning, whiling away spare time, or just looking up more detail on an interesting fact, it has never been easier for people to access educational information at any level from anywhere. The Internet in general and the World Wide Web in particular are important enablers of both formal and informal education. It is that same internet that has increased the quality of education that has caused in decline in the quality of education. How can one reconcile the two? By spending more time on the socialization networks instead of academic sites, the time meant for studying have been directed towards socializing and it negatively affects education. However, if the same time is spent surfing educating sites, it will increase academic performance.

Economic/Commerce wise, one can be at a place and buy goods from any part of the world. That is the power of internet. Online shopping has boomed both for major retail outlets and small artisans and traders. By its availability, it has also increased the value of the choices available to consumer. This also increased competition which translates into quality goods and services so as to be a strong competitor in the global market.

Furthermore, it has financially empowered few users who understood the mechanics of the internet. It did that through internet businesses, web site creation and management, and even foreign exchange trading. It has opened a new online market where a calculated move translates into money for the user.

From the above, it can be deduced that originally, it should be a blessing but several applications within the net

have been a contributing factor for the internet to be identified with social vices. Such applications include the social network sites, chat rooms, Skype, and the online gaming or gambling as the case may be.

This paper is concerned with the internet viz-a-viz the social sites. For McQuail (2010), *social media sites often known as just 'social media' comprise a number of internet websites that have been set up to enable and encourage users to create networks of acquaintances and also to share messages and audio visual materials, often available to wider public*". This sharing could allow users to either influence or be influenced by the contents that zap through and fro on the information super highway. A similar definition by Dedane 2009 in Ufuophu-Biri (2013) sees the social media as "tools used for information dissemination, especially among friends and colleagues who are not media practitioners but are connected through the internet".

While I agree on the information sharing part, I am however wary of such effects on the users especially as it relates to the value of morality on the important users. In communication, it is not enough to send a message to a receiver because the feedback in terms of reactions to the effects of the message always completes the communication process. What is the feedback of the users to the messages that abound on the internet?

#### IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

Several researchers, namely Chien Chou, Linda Condron, and John C. Belland (2005), Ufuophu (2013), Shu-Sha Angie Guan and Kaveri Subrahmanyam (2009) and a host of others have examined the effects of internet usage. The review is done under the following headings: under the following headings: **Awareness and Perception, Internet usage and resultant effects, addiction as an effect, technology and change, colonialism as an effect and social media and Nigerian youths.**

#### V. AWARENESS AND PERCEPTION

Are the students who are mostly youths aware of the internet applications such as social media and how is it perceived? Ufuophu (2013) studied the perception and usage pattern of social media by students of higher institution of learning in Delta State of Nigeria. Using a total of 600 questionnaires, he sought to determine the relationship between the students' perceptions and their use of social media amongst other objectives.

He found out that students in Delta State are adequately exposed to the social media and use them frequently and also concluded that they use it more for social relationships. A finding which is similar to other researches like Mesch (2009) etc.

However, the author expressed fear that despite the wide acceptance of the social media, the social media may breed or encourage certain deviance and outright evil in the society.

One would expect the author to at least to an extent, explore or give instances of the areas where the social media may breed evil so as to ascertain if the fear he observed was justified or not. It is not enough to say that something is tasty for there is the need to specify what it tastes like. Obviously, there exists a gap in that research which the present study intends to fill by ascertain if and how the internet encourages certain social deviances in the society.

#### VI. INTERNET USAGE AND RESULTANT EFFECTS

From research (Ufuophu 2013, Mesch 2009), it appears that youths are aware and actively use the internet but with what effect? This study by Shu-Sha, Angie Guan and Kaveri Subrahmanyam (2009) on Youth Internet use: risks and opportunities, analyzed 75 research different reports on internet use among the youth in a bid to determine a trend. They were able to thematize the effects of the internet into positive and negative. From their finding, they recorded that the negative effects has to do with addiction, exposure to inappropriate materials, online risks and cyber crimes and bullying. Providing a vehicle to promote cognitive, social, and physical development is generally seen as the positive effect. Specifically, they identified improvement in education scores, accessibility of the disabled especially the deaf to communicate effectively with the heavily visual medium of the Internet. In addition, owing to its private and anonymous nature of the user, users are able to express their health concerns freely without the fear of embarrassment. From their report, "The Internet's growing popularity as a health resource for youth makes it an appealing vehicle for delivering interventions, and it may be an economical and effective means for health promotion and prevention, Ybarra et al (2008 in Shu-Sha et al (2009). In other words, the internet may be the best medium to use in a health intervention that has to do with youths.

Be that as it may, there was no mention if any research was on Africa which means that the internet may not have the same effect as it did in the case of Shu-Sha et al (2009). The difference might be attributed to differences in cultural, social, religious beliefs and even development levels. This angle may have prompted this present research to determine if there is a similarity in the effects.

#### *Addiction as an effect*

The research by Chien Chou, Linda Condron, and John C. Belland (2005) reviews the research on the social effects of Internet addiction. It was observed that students have become obsessed with the internet besides using it for academic purposes. In view of these observations, the researchers examined why the Internet hooks students so tenaciously, leads them to new behavioral patterns, and even results in Internet addiction. Specifically, the purpose of this article is to review the up-to-date academic investigations on Internet addiction.

Before I delve further, what really makes the **internet addictive**? *“With its convenient communication options and the World Wide Web, the Internet provides remote access to other people and abundant information in all areas of interest. It is an environment that could be abused by virtually anyone, regardless of their interest in technology and science* (Griffiths, 1998 in Chien et al (2005:364)

Also in Chou’s study (2001: 377), 83 heavy Internet users were interviewed and reported that the Internet features they most appreciated included interactivity, ease of use, availability, and breadth of information accessed online. Indeed, the popularity of the Internet is increasing. In addition to ease of access and low cost, the Internet’s continuously expanding bandwidth continues to deliver multimedia resources in greater amounts and higher quality. The development of friendlier interfaces allows even those with low network literacy to use the Internet more easily and comfortably. This can explain why addiction seems to be a dominant theme in almost all the reviewed literature.

## VII. TECHNOLOGY AND CHANGE

Is there any relationship that exists between advancements in technology and social change which may either be negative or positive?

Mesch (2009) in trying to answer that question employed the technological determinism theory and is of the conclusion that technological advancement like the internet is an innovative force that has profound influence on children and youth; technology generates new patterns of expression, communication, and motivation.

For him, “Much of what happens in electronic space is deeply inflected by the offline culture—the material practices and imaginaries that take place outside the electronic space. Digital spaces are not exclusive conditions that stand outside the non digital. Digital space is embedded in the larger societal, cultural, subjective, economic, and imaginary constructions of lived experience and the systems within which we exist and operate”. (Mesch 2009:55)

On the whole, he attributed the power of change to the internet because through its constant presence and use, it has affected the culture in ways that are radically different from those of the previous generation.

From his explanation of the internet as either culture or as a cultural artifact, this paper wishes to see internet as a cultural artifact because it has become a part of life of the average Nigerian youth.

### ***Colonialism as an effect***

Communication experts have proven that the internet belongs to what is called the new media and therefore a mass communication medium in all ramifications. If the youths in a developing country are addicted to media materials in the internet, what could that mean? In 2011, Abida Eijaz & Rana Eijaz looked at Electronic Colonialism: Outsourcing as Discontent of Media Globalization. Their

objective was to identify and highlight the role and implications of global information sources, Ideologies, policies and politics of developed countries and how they unseeingly affect developing countries due to their increased dependence for information. Analysis of the coverage of conflicts by Pakistani dailies is approached through quantitative analysis, in-depth interviews and focus groups of the related journalists and sub-editors to highlight the outsourcing process. The findings suggest that the main sources of strategic and political news were outside Afghanistan, Iraq or Pakistan. However, humanitarian news was covered by Pakistani journalists and Pakistani news sources were facilitating the agenda set by the news agencies of developed countries. This tilt is evident in Pakistan’s foreign policy as well.

The reason for such preference and dependence on global news sources were that of perception of more credibility and reliability than local news sources in less developed countries, and for the journalists, it is its convenience and accessibility that stands global sources out.

Among other findings, it was gathered that Western countries are rich in technological hardware and software and they use media as a tool to promote their ideology and they recommended that Developing countries should seriously take measures to establish their own strong networks of information. They also found out that journalism was not a matter of freedom of press but a matter of political economy. US-Afghan conflict and Iraq war was covered on the same lines of political economy whereby you say what the advanced countries want you to say.

## VIII. SOCIAL MEDIA AND NIGERIAN YOUTHS

With the beam light on Nigeria, this research stumbled upon a study available at [www.slideshare.net](http://www.slideshare.net) on the use of social media among Nigerian youths. Amongst other findings, he found out that most internet users 81 in number disagreed that the internet had any negative effect on them while 19 agreed that it had a negative effect which is mostly loss of time and increased dependence on electronic media. The research was also able to conclude that most users on the net are for socialization purpose as 59 respondents have not visited or used any academic social media site. In other words, very few are aware of the usefulness of the use of social media for educational purposes. This finding was corroborated by the findings of Lenhart (2007) in Mesch (2009) that “The most frequent youth use of the internet remains for social purposes, as 93 percent send and receive emails, 68 percent send and receive instant messages, and 55 percent have a profile in a social networking site. Only 28 percent create or work in an online journal (blog), and 18 percent visit chat rooms”.

## IX. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This paper was anchored on the Electronic Colonialism Theory (ECT) which posits that foreign produced communication negatively influence local values and indigenous media. What is the overall content on the internet if not foreign related? At this point, I am tempted to bring up Technological determinism which Mesch (2009) sees as the power of technology as an independent force that drives social change. Technology itself exercises causal influence on social practices, and technological change induces changes in social organization and culture regardless of the social desirability of the change.

Electronic colonialism theory according to Roberts, (2010) was “formed to protect cultural diversity and traditional cultures of a culture”. Umeogu & Ojiakor (2012) asserts that it was more like a reaction to the belief that first world nations were on the verge of cultural invasion of the developing and under-developed countries with the sole intention of conquering and changing their local culture to synchronize with theirs. On the moral scale, Nigerians have been rated high but that is now a thing of the past because morality has been sacrificed on the altar of modernization and globalization where immorality now means being complaint with the present age.

Prior to the advent of the internet, the concern was on the effect of mostly television programming on developing nations. However, that concern has been escalated by the speed and success of the internet into becoming a part of people’s daily life. In fact, Internet and the World Wide Web have added a new twist to past debates on e-colonialism.

With the onslaught of the information revolution, the influence of the Internet has grown far beyond the expectations of its originators (Rosenberg 1997). Writing on e-colonialism as a challenge to developing nations, Namibiar & Venkatesan (2003) asserts thus: “*From its humble beginnings as a research oriented computer network, the Internet has become a worldwide phenomenon. The rapid growth of the Internet has brought with it a growing disparity between the technology haves and the technology have nots, and this forms the basic tenet of the concept of e-colonialism*”.

For them, such disparity has always existed but now, more than ever before; unequal adoption of technology excludes many from experiencing the benefits of the information revolution.

For this paper, ECT basically tries to analyze what the internet does to the mind of the audience. Its power is largely derived from repeated exposure to media contents. ECT “explains how mass media are leading to a new concept of empire. It will not be based on military power or land acquisition but one based on controlling the mind. It is a psychological or mental empire”. ([www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)). This is a new form of colonialism and more fatal because

mind management and manipulation is the modern form of enslavement. One can now understand the saying that ‘a controlled mind makes a willing slave’.

The relevance of this theory to this work is vividly captured in the words of Rauschenberger (2003:2) that: “*the spread of American consumer culture goes beyond popular consumption, raising questions and concerns of US dominance in the cultural sphere, what effects such cultural commodities are having on the values of societies and in turn, on the realm of politics*”.

Thus, although the Internet offers a wide range of options for communication and exchange of information, there may be a need to consider the impact of these technological developments on society (Salpini 1998 in Namibiar & Venkatesan (2003).

Also, the theory is significant and relevant for people to understand that most developing countries may become ‘electronic colonies’ that are force-fed information generated by the developed world.

## X. METHODOLOGY

This study was designed as a survey. A survey is a type of quantitative approach in research where participants are asked to answer certain questions with the aim of generating numerical data which are analyzed in order to arrive at a conclusion. Bearing in mind the title and nature of the study, it is believed that a survey will help elicit the appropriate data needed.

The administration of survey for this study was through pre-coded questionnaire. Questionnaires generally need a form of statistic for its analysis and this study chose to use statistical package for social science 2.

To get the sample for this study, purposive sampling was used to tailor it down to schools within Omagba community and the particular schools to sample, quota sampling was used to divide the respondents into 60:40 which means that 120 questionnaires went to learning field school while 80 was for holy spirit. Quota sampling is a non probability sampling techniques where the researcher allocates proportionate representation of subjects depending on which traits is considered the basis for the quota. The basis for the quota in this case was population as learning field seen as a prestigious school attracts more students. The questionnaires were distributed to the students and the flaw of the distribution is that students at the back seat were marginalized.

Coming to sample size, it was put at 200 respondents following the Rule of 200. For Guilford (1954, p. 533) suggested that *N* (which is number of cases) should be at least 200 cases. The periods of data collection was from Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2013 to Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2013. Two days was used for each school while a day each was given to arts and science classes.

**Discussion of result: demographics**

The title of this study is the internet, moral degradation of the Nigerian youth. For starters, when one hears the word 'youth', what comes to mind is the undergraduates often excluding the adolescents. However, this neglected group is at an impressionable age that they are prone to youthful exuberances because they are still experiencing life and living out their fantasy. An undergraduate in the university may not use his mobile to view pornographic materials because he/she has the opportunity to live out their fantasy. That happens not to be the case with an adolescent still tied to the aprons of his/her guardian or parents. For this group, an escape route will be the internet and in line with the above justification was the rationale to use senior secondary students in their final years.

From the data, the number of female respondents (58%) was higher than their male counterparts (40.5%). This may be an indication that females are more serious with their education as against the stereotype that there are more males in schools than female. The nominal role for the schools sampled also revealed the same trend of more females. As regards to their ages, more of the respondents were between the ages of 14-16 with a percentage of 56% followed loosely by those within 17 -19 years with 39%. This is a valid result considering that SS3 students fall within the range of 16-17. The decision to include 14 years was as a result of the culture within Omagba community where 2 years old are enrolled into kindergarten schools so that by the age of 13, they are already in the senior secondary schools. Also, by the time of the research, the current SS2 students will be formally in SS3 upon resumption of schools by September which means that by September or the end of the year, most of the respondents may have migrated from 14-16 to 17-19.

Furthermore, it is not enough to assume that in this age of information revolution that everyone uses the internet. To measure the validity of the respondents there was need to measure their internet usage and also the registration with social media as it is the operational definition of internet for this study. It was found out that two third of the respondents (85%) use the internet while 13. 3% do not use the internet. From the difference in figures, their responses will be considered valid as the number of users far outweighs the number of non users. Coming to the issue of social media membership which is analyzed in table 4, here again more than two thirds of the populations are registered with asocial media. However, 25% are not registered. What could that mean? Majority of the students not only use the internet but are also registered with the social media. This could also mean that their definition of internet usage is for social purposes. Another reason for the 25% that are not registered in this internet age may be as a result of their background. One of the respondents declined to fill the questionnaire on the ground that he doesn't use the internet. On further probe, the researcher found out that it was not a personal decision but his parents' who decided that he can only use phone after his WAEC examinations. That was

quite impressive because I want to believe that most of the parents are unaware of their children's exploits on the net. It shows that the student in question had a sound moral upbringing so much so that he was not swayed to follow the paths of his colleagues who bring phones to schools. From the result of a casual observation with the students, most of them joined social media with their friends phone while in school while others agreed that they only chat while in school but switches off while at home. This also supports the above assumption that most parents especially within the Omagba community are unaware of what their children do. This is also heightened by the fact that the schools in question officially end the day's activities by 4pm while the exam classes end by 6pm. By the time the students are in contact with their parents, they have exhausted their online goals for the day. With the limited time frame for the parents, there is little or no room for mentoring and parenting as the day will almost be over.

**Question 1:** there appears to be a surge of research on internet effects, what seems to be the point of attraction? From the findings of the literature review that addiction and the anonymity provided by the internet contributes to its negative effect. The first question in section B (please refer to the questionnaire on the appendix section) was aimed to pinpoint the aspect of the internet that the youths think have attracted negativity. From their responses which was as follows: anonymity was fingered or pinpointed by 17.5% of the total respondents; 14.5% went with absence of censorship; flexibility 11.5% and addiction was credited with a whopping 48.5%.

By anonymity is meant impersonation or a situation where users use fake names or cybernoms. From literature review, it was gathered that this feature of the internet allows the users to acts out their fantasy without fear of being judged by the society and their peers. Interestingly while a mere 17. 5 % fingered anonymity as the negative factor; from my data, 53.5% did not register with their real names. From this finding, one would have expected anonymity to win the negativity race but the findings revealed that addiction was the reason. This finding was in consonance with the findings of the research by Chien Chou, Linda Condron, and John C. Belland (2005) where addiction is seen in terms of the user's preoccupation with the Internet, amount of time spent on the Internet, and effects of the Internet in the user's life. According to Shu-Sha et al (2009), "*internet addiction is the use of the Internet to escape from negative feelings, continued use of the Internet despite the desire to stop, experience of unpleasant emotions when Internet use is impossible, thinking about the Internet constantly, and the experience of any other conflicts or self-conflicts due to Internet use*".

It is addiction that can cause students to chat while classes are ongoing and even in the church. It is addiction that will cause users to give up sleep all in the name of chatting at the expense of their programmes lined up for the

next day. It is addiction that is the mother of other effects. At a point, the researcher thought the respondents were wrong but looking closely at addiction and what it has done to the youths, one couldn't agree less. There are cases of people who pass their bus stops because they were fiddling with their phone. In Onitsha where the researcher resides, there abound cases of youngsters that were involved in accidents all in the name of pinging. While most of the users chat online, it prompted the decision to ascertain the dominant theme of their chats.

Looking at the negativity factors again, it can be concluded that all other factors contributed to addiction. Absence of censorship, anonymity and flexibility contributes to the internet's ability to hoodwink users. By flexibility is meant that it can be carried around unlike what was obtained during the era of television, one cannot carry their TV sets around but with mobile phones, it can become the shadows of users. Flexibility also means that one can upload, recall and edit a post. With censored materials, it will be virtually impossible to recall a decent publication and edit into being a vulgar post. Flexibility also means the ability of internet to be flexible to fit the peculiarity of the users' schedule. This addiction is worsened by satellite providers who have provision for mobile phone subscription so that in addition to being a mobile phone, it also serves as a mobile television. The result of the combination of a mobile phone and mobile TV is addiction. The researcher is aware of youngsters and even adults whose lives were on hold during the 90 days of big brother Africa; who had to carry around DSTV walka all in the name of not missing any moment of the housemates' activities. If DSTV had not come up with the idea of a walka, such people may at some point be pried away from the program but the flexibility and portability of the device encouraged addiction.

Coming to absence of censorship, who cares? Who checks? No one does and that is why so many kinds of information abound on the net. Within the comfort of one's home, materials will be uploaded unlike what will be the case if there is some form of gate keeping, checkmating or censoring materials before uploading. A friend once told me that the more vulgar one is, the more followers one will have and since the objective is to attract followership, there is need to throw caution and censorship to the winds. And that brings me back to my question, who really cares?

Furthermore, since it appears that what the youths do online is chatting or pinging, the researcher deemed it necessary to ascertain the dominant theme of their chats. From the data, the following was gathered: inspirational 34%; love/romance 29.5%; neutral 15%; spiritual 8.5%; political 8%. From the findings, the dominant among the themes was inspirational which could only mean that their chat contents will have no negative effect on their morality. However, a further probe to determine if their partners are allowed access to their chat contents revealed an interesting fact. If the dominant theme is inspirational as deduced from

the table, one will expect that anyone could access the respondents' messages but that appears not to be the case. From table 8, it is explicit that 40% (which is a majority) will not allow their partners access to their online activities while 26% are undecided about whether to or not to. Another 31.5% agrees to allow access. At this point, if the theme of the messages is inspirational, political, spiritual or even neutral, why would one not allow one's partner to access them? This could only mean that the respondents were not truthful about the theme of their messages. You can only hide what may threaten your relationship and in this case it is online flirting and relationship with the opposite sex which may jeopardize the trust issue with the offline partner. This leaves one with the conclusion that contrary to the responses, the dominant theme is romance or love since the users are reluctant or out-rightly deny access to their partners. That would explain the reluctance or the barrier to accessibility.

**QUESTION 2:** The questions under section C of the questionnaire were aimed to determine the extent of the role of the internet as regards education and morality. This is in cognizance of the fact that education equips the youths today to make efficient and transformational leaders tomorrow. If the educational level of the youths is compromised, what bunch of leaders does the country hope to churn out tomorrow?

Extent here means to what degree since it is a known fact that the educational and morality level have been compromised. In response to the extent that social media caused a decline in education in Nigeria, it was gathered that 76% representing 152 respondents agreed that it was to a great extent while 17.5 representing 35 respondents said that extent is minimal while an insignificant 4% debunked the assumption. An addition of the respondents that agreed that the internet does have a negative effect on education can now be put at 96%.

The reason for this decline in education can be attributed to chatting while lectures are ongoing which happens to be the aftermath of addiction to the internet. Analysis revealed that more than half of the respondents or specifically 56% concurred that students chat in the classroom while 33.5% agreed that students chat but disagreed on the extent followed by 9% who out rightly denied that students do chat in class. From the table on the extent of internet and the extent of chatting in class, a trend will be picked which is that chatting affects education which in turn affects morality and the society bears the brunt of such immorality.

In the present world, there are so many eBooks, internet materials and easier access to journals that our predecessors could only dream about. There was a time it was a huge task to access foreign reports and studies but that distance and accessibility barrier have been broken down by the internet. Education has been made easier by the internet and has also been sub-standardized by the same internet. That may sound

like a contradictory statement but when one looks at the positive and negative effect on education, he /she will agree with me on this. As can be deduced so far, the internet is like a double edged sword that can be used for either good or bad purposes. For the good side of contributing to the growth of academics is Njoku in Uche (2013) who proposes that

*Social media can enhance academics, provided that the academic contents that are infused into the social media are positively constructed. The contents that the students have access to are very important. They have to be positive, and if we can achieve that, then it is good. Social media can be used in schools for academics, if the contents are monitored and consist of subjects required by the student's syllabus.*

Here, he is concerned about monitoring the contents but with the increasing pressure of staying connected with both offline and online friends, how many of these students accesses academic sites. The only time students remember Google is when they have an assignment and what they do at the end of the day is to copy and paste materials. In that case, the internet which had made research easier and more accessible has contributed to the collapse of education especially in a developing nation like Nigeria. Originality has depreciated while the mechanization of the human brain has appreciated. What do we use the human brain for? Nothing except to go online and copy what others had done. Is that growth? How does that help the education sector? How does it help the users? Which way Nigeria?

Backing this observation is Shu-Sha et al (2009), for them, "there is evidence that Internet addiction has a negative effect on academics (a drop in grades)." Also in the same vein, Olajide in Uche (2013) identified the internet or social media as "one of the factors contributing to poor academic performance among the youths over the past few years. Since young people spend huge amount of time interacting with electronic media, it's only natural to see a short-fall in their academic performances over time."

Decline in education is evident in both reading and writing culture. Nowadays, there is what we call chat language or Sms language where tense and spelling is not considered so long as it makes sense. Such languages include the following;

- I want to see you----- I wt 2 c u
- Thank you.....tnk u
- Good.....gd or gud
- Night-----9t
- The-----d
- Because -----cos/cuz
- That -----dt
- Can-----cn
- Come-----cm
- Road-----rd

Lots of love -----lol

And the list goes on. If the above become the conventional way of writing, what will be the writing culture in the nearest future when the youths will be in the helms of affairs? What will they transfer to the younger generation? Where is education heading to? What about the reading culture? Philosophy tells us that all our knowledge accrues out of experience but may not necessarily be from personal experience. If that is the case, I want to use my sister as an example. Whenever she wants to read online, be sure that she will also be on facebook at the same time so that she can read and chat at the same time. Even when she knows that what she was doing was academically wrong, she appears reluctant to close the facebook application. The only ground to close facebook is if she was working on a deadline. It is only the fear of being penalized that will keep her in check. Any reading done under that kind of condition is hardly internalized and if that becomes the norm, what breed of educators will eventually swarm this country.

If morality is the goodness or rightness of an action when judged by the standards of the society, to what extent does the internet influence the youth when it comes to relationship and exposure to pornographic materials. Tables 10 and 11 were quite insightful into answering the question. From table 10, 81% share the same view with the researcher that exposure to pornographic materials affect the respondents standard of what is morally right as regards sexual exploitation. What could be the big deal about sex when sexual escapades abound on the internet? There are certain types of phones that have such applications. Does it not contradict what the youths are taught about the sanctity of their bodies? How can the society not practice what it teaches? It is this same factor that has led to sexual promiscuity and has also contributed to the break or destabilization of relationship as was attested to by table 11. On the extent of the internet on relationships, 44.5% went with great extent followed closely by 41.5% that agreed that internet does affect relationships but on a mild extent. The commonality of both responses is that there is a link between internet usage and the establishment and continuation of offline relationships.

The internet media is filled with explicit materials that have increased the number of sexual perverts and the degree of sexual immorality and promiscuity in Nigeria. Acts considered an abomination have become an accepted part of the people's culture. There was time lesbianism and homosexuals were a taboo but nowadays, there are gay clubs and groups and the members like the vampires, no longer hide in the dark. With modernization has come the sudden realization of sexuality right so much so that heterosexual have migrated into either of the alien camp (gay and lesbianism).

How do they meet? Basically, using facebook and 2go as an example, while signing up, one is usually requested to indicate the gender one is interested in. This indication

becomes public knowledge and anyone who keys into such group can locate you. If one can use the social media to trace old school mates, then one can trace and join such immoral groups. Someone may call me out dated for seeing these groups as immoral. Does the fact that the society is too distracted to be bothered by the legality and acceptance of such sensuality bestow legitimacy on them? My answer is no. While the society is being swayed down the path of immorality, there are people who are immune to pop culture and will always intercede on behalf of others. Writing on sex and the internet is Shu-Sha et al (2009) who asserts that “*Exposure to sexually explicit Internet material is an important concern as there is evidence that such exposure is related to greater sexual uncertainty and more positive attitudes towards uncommitted sexual exploration among youth*”. Indeed, the sexual exploration has risen to its peak as a result of the pornographic pictures being downloaded from the net. Some persons go as far as using nude images as screensaver on their mobile phones. The sexual temptation have been transferred from online to offline that there are so many cases of sexual abuse that its origin can be traced from the social media. It has even created an avenue for psychopaths to choose and carry out their fantasies.

How can you explain a scenario where girls have thrown decency to the birds so much so that people masturbate online using Skype? I wonder if the word ‘virginity’ still means anything to our youths when children as young as 11 years have become sexually active. I conclude that with the internet as evidence of civilization comes sexual revolution and morality entrapment.

This trait is not limited to the youths as it has crept into marital homes. Marriage is a bond not meant to be broken. It is therefore disheartening that internet has succeeded in breaking the bonds of many marriages. Husbands and wives have divorced over what started as online friendship. Emotion is like a river, once it starts flowing forward, it is hard to change its course backwards. Many females who are not opportune to be in social gatherings have found succor in the internet and owing to their vulnerability, easily fall prey to online romance which most often than not, culminates in offline romance as well.

It does not affect only marriage because other matured relationship have been threatened and destabilized by the internet. There are users who are so shameless that what they have on their profile is their indecent pictures. A friend once told me that if you act or talk decent in twitter, you will have no followers but once you are perceived as being vulgar, your wall or tweets will attract followership. When has vulgarism translated into sociability?

Chieu et al (2005) also identified the internet as one of the causes of disrupted marriages. With the increasing rate of divorce and its effects on the offspring’s, what will be the emotional and psychological state of the so called future leaders? What values are they going to teach their own?

**Question 3:** How does internet usage affect Nigerians culture?

This question was concerned with the effect of consumption of foreign materials on Nigerian culture. Foreign culture abound everywhere ranging from the television and now to the internet. Foreign materials have so flooded the country that people have become confused about their identity. Suffice it to say that the internet has led to loss of cultural identity especially among our youths who are now seen as cultural bats. Cultural bats in the sense that they are from Africa but operates with the borrowed culture from the west that one is confused as to whether to call them African or westerners or even American-wanna-be. It has also crept into language identity especially among the eastern part of Nigeria where children become aliens among their people because they don’t understand their indigenous language unless the communication is in English language.

Coming back to the research, by culture for this study is meant the general way of life or what makes us Nigerians in the first place. A follow up question of how foreign materials affect dressing and lifestyles was specifically meant to gauge the understanding of cultural erosion. There appears to be uniformity in the answers as 66.5 % agreed that consumption of foreign materials has contributed to cultural erosion in Nigeria. For lifestyles and dressings, we have another 86% and 85% in consonance.

Writing on **Cultural erosion and alienation** may sound extreme but that is exactly what is happening. If what was abhorred is now accepted as a way of life, then people have become alienated from their culture and the previous culture is being eroded. According to Umeogu & Ojiakor (2012), *Culture is the customs, beliefs, art, music, and all other products of human thought made by a particular group of people at a particular time. This culture is what distinguishes one culture from another, or a kind of identification which when exhibited reveals or gives inkling to where you came from. A mode of dressing often leads to such comments like “you dress like an American; or you look like one who is coming from the airport”*.

A convergence of definitions summarizes *culture as the totality of the way of life of a people*. In other words it is the existence and metaphysics of their being. It has to do with dressing, eating, acting, talking and even thinking. If that is the case, how could people easily let go of their culture under any guise? The answer lies in the electronic colonialism theory.

By repeated consumption of foreign originated materials, we have come to believe that what we have is inferior and needs to be usurped by the western values. In Nigeria, greeting of elders is as natural as breathing but nowadays, even greeting has been westernized from good morning ma or sir to Hi Dad or Hi mum.

What about dressing? Let us look at the case of the African reality show “big brother Africa 2013 as a case in

point. The show is meant to showcase the different cultures in Africa whereby contestants from all over Africa stay together for 91 days. In this year's season (2013) was a Malawian named Natasha who was an embodiment of a real African woman. It was disheartening to read and hear comments by fellow housemates and Africans that she dresses like a bush woman because she was proud to wear her African apparel. Her fellow housemates sidelined her from conversations and socialization because they didn't want to be associated with her and the result was that she was always up for eviction till she was eventually evicted. The favorite was a lady called Pokello from Zimbabwe who was named the queen of swag because of her skimpy and half clad dressing. What does that tell you? It means that our dressing for the youths should be synchronized to that of America for instance. Even during the administration of the questionnaire, the researcher first thought she was in the wrong place as a result of the dressing of these adolescents. They dressed as if they were going for a fashion show. Who will blame them when the nation has been turned into a fashion craze nation? A fleeting glance in our tertiary institutions will also reveal the same trend where traditional dressing has been bastardized in the name of pingging. By bastardization I mean that even if they want to use a traditional material for their clothes, it will be the design of the West and will be so customized that you will hardly recognize the material. It has even spread to the mothers who are in a competition to out dress and out swag one another.

As regards nutrition, it has been replaced by pasta and yummy dishes that cause more harm than good to the body. The scenario is also worsened by the fact that our climate and body chemistry is radically different from those of the westerners. Our highly native and nutritious recipes have been benched by fast food and junk and with it came the white man disease. Illnesses that were unheard of like child diabetes and child obesity and even heart problems have become rampant.

Realizing that we are at the verge of unconsciously eliminating our culture, scholars and writers are bothered. Ansah 1989 in Okunna (1999: 143) writes that "...the fear is prevalent that through the use of modern technology and mass communication, some cultures risk losing their identity and become submerged by the cultures belonging to those who control modern technology and communication software.

In the same vein, Okunna (1999:143) observed that: "...in virtually every third world country, mass media audiences consume large quantities of foreign media culture. It is feared that this massive exposure to foreign culture could distort and displace native cultures in developing countries. And she accuses the media by documenting that "...because mass communication is such a powerful vehicle for the dissemination of culture, there has always been fears that massive flow of foreign mass media

*contents into societies other than those in which such contents are produced, will negatively influence local culture (Okunna 1999:142).*

However, I want to state that the media in this case is no longer the print and electronic media but the internet which has intruded into the everyday lives of the average global citizen and has prompted the enlightened ones to accuse the world powers of electronic colonialism. With the beam light still on colonialism, there are four types of independence namely: political independence, psychological independence, spiritual independence and economic independence. Of the four, Nigeria was granted political independence and yet every year, we celebrate Independence Day when we are still slaves. What an irony! The fact that Nigeria is not economically, spiritually and psychologically independent means that Nigeria was, is, and will still be tied to their aprons till Nigerians cut that cord.

Nigeria is an independent country but still in chains. We are still in mind or mental slavery. For (Namibiar & Venkatesan (2003), *"The impact of e-colonialism can potentially be just as devastating as that of mercantile colonialism in the nineteenth century....While the Internet facilitates the sharing of information globally, it also threatens cultural diversity, the loss of local culture and the manipulation of the less developed"*.

The concern for mind management or colonialism was further explained by Namibiar & Venkatesan (2003). For them,

*Many third-world countries do not have the resources or the expertise to provide access to the Internet for their citizens, let alone relay information by way of the Internet. Therefore, information that is published on the Internet about most developing countries is likely to be generated by third party groups purporting to be the authority on that country. This may result in such groups dominating the information about a country's cultural, economic and political status and placing an interpretation on the information that suits their own needs.*

Professor Ndolo saw international communication as the transfer of information, opinions, entertainment, culture, advertisements, ideas, feelings, socio-cultural, socio-political and socio-economic ideologies, policies, whims and caprices from one nation to another or across nations through channels of communications designed for such. Such channels include radio, television, internet, satellite, new and social media. In order to engage in international communication, there must be a cultural identity. As it stands and as can be deduced from what the ongoing, Nigeria and her youths lack cultural identity, dressing identity and even language identity. In that case, what is there to communicate? Image-wise, what identity do we communicate with since Nigeria is synonymous to fraud? Here we call it yahoo or 419 but it's generally known as advance fee fraud. In whatever form it takes be it hacking or over riding, it would have been an impossible feat

without the aid of internet. One can now understand why the respondents in table 16 agreed that impersonation and anonymity have contributed to increase in cybercrimes. Most often than not, hackers need their prey to be online before they could hack into their system.

Once upon a time, we (because we are Nigerians) believed that a good name is better than riches. Now, we believe that when money talks, bullshit happens. Can you see the difference in both beliefs? In order to meet up with the new trend, now, it is either one gets rich or dies trying. This could explain why people especially the youths have resorted to the fast line and one of the fastest ways is through the internet advance fee fraud. It is also the urge to get rich quick that have turned the rationality of men into greedy people that despite the increase in fraud, more people still fall prey. Why? It is because of the need to get rich the easy and fast way. The country has become like a big jungle where one has to survive by nook or crook. Since survival by decent employment is now the lot of people connected directly or indirectly to the corridors of powers, other have to survive somehow and since the 'somehow' is no longer questioned, anything goes. That is, the end justifies the means.

**Question 4:** What is/are the negative and positive effects of internet on the youths? Just like civilization that has done things **to** and **for** Nigeria as a developing country, so it is that internet has its advantages and disadvantages. A claim which was supported by tables 18 which looked at the perceived effects of the internet. From the table, half of the population at 58.5% consented that internet has both negative and positive effects. While 15% are with negative effects only, 19.5% went with the positive. The fact still remains that there are two sides to every story and same applies to the internet. The position of this study lies with the majority that internet possess double edged sword characteristics. On the positive angle was easier access to educational material, socialization, information, entertainment and all of the above. Worthy of note is that all of the above was nominated by majority of the respondents. For easier access to education, I will borrow a quote from Wikipedia which I have earlier used on this work:

*“Educational material at all levels from pre-school to post-doctoral is available from websites. Examples range from CBeebies, through school and high-school revision guides and virtual universities, to access to top-end scholarly literature through the likes of Google Scholar. For distance education, help with homework and other assignments, self-guided learning, whiling away spare time, or just looking up more detail on an interesting fact, it has never been easier for people to access educational information at any level from anywhere. The Internet in general and the World Wide Web in particular are important enablers of both formal and informal education.*

The entertainment function got the least vote with 9% and that was a shock to the researcher who thought that

entertainment was the reason for social media membership. Entertainment will be in the form of funny updates and pictures of friends. There are people whose theme is comedy and for such people, social media should be entertaining and relaxing and when one reads their posts, a smile is bound to cross the readers face. It also happened that most of the respondents besides identifying all the above as their response, ticked socialization. Do social media make one friendlier or more sociable? During the pretest of this study, the respondents claimed that it does not make them friendlier. If that is the case, what is the meaning of socialization as experienced by the youths?

For the youths, socialization begins and ends with interaction. It lies in the number of friends one has and one's ability to chat with many people as one can without giving them the impression that one is also chatting with others simultaneously. Socialization then becomes a mastery of fanning of friends' ego. This could also be the reason why loss of time is seen as a negative effect because in the process of fanning ten friends' ego, constructive time is lost.

On the negative aspect from is loss of time 25%; emotional disturbance 19.5%; loss of privacy 6.5%; less emotional bonding with relations 10%; all of the above 34.5%. It can be seen that all the factors are what contributes to the negativity surrounding internet usage. If addiction as was deduced from table 5 is a problem, then it is because of the amount of time spent in the name of catching up. In a previous research, the researcher asked the respondents what they would have been doing if they were not on the net and a whopping 85 % ticked that they would have been studying or doing more constructive work. What is constructive about using the internet?

What I mean by non constructiveness is that most people or youth can no longer contribute constructively to any work or event because of the over dependence on the internet. This has led to the popularity of plagiarism where people use materials as if it was their brain child. By the way, it is not seen as an ethical issue online but a way of life; the way it is simply done. I want to say that most of the materials on the internet are recycled in that a student for instance, can edit a work and repost it as his/her thoughts. It is that bad! Such trend was observed by Okunna & Omenugha (2013) who affirmed that *“many do not care for the intellectual rights of others as they take materials from the internet and pass them off as theirs”*.

Non constructiveness will eventually lead to diminishing returns since there are no new thoughts and ideas to keep it going. Why is that so? I want to put myself in the shoes of the guilty party so as to understand their logic. When can I engage in constructive intellectual activity when I have undivided attention for my online friends and actions? How many people will I leave unattended to all in the name of reading and writing? Bottom line is that the reason all boils down to laziness and

addiction. When people are unconsciously hooked to the net, how can they do anything else? I guess that is a food for thought. This all becomes like some kind of chain reaction that one leads to another. With the bunch of youths and their new standard of morality, what will the future look like? What will they bring to the table of international communication?

On a conclusive note, I want to state that another effect of internet is the use of internet Users as research objects. There exists no innocent site as the programmers of the software use the site visits to conduct research for companies. According to Mesch (2009) *Digital spaces such as social networking sites, weblogs (blogs), and clip and photo sharing are owned by commercial companies that target youth and try to shape their consumption patterns*”.

Internet search providers often attempt to get into the brain of users to establish a trend and to tailor more services to address the claims so as to ensure continual use and even addiction to their products and services so as to influence the users directly or indirectly. In some other cases, the data is sold to online advertisers so as to help in formulating relevant and appealing messages.

The implication is that there becomes no escape route as they can determine a trend and capitalize on it so that users at all times are gratified and what does that translate into? The resultant effect is more dependence on foreign culture and more detachment from native culture and what happens next? An esteemed lecture of mine will always answer that what always happens is “one step forward, two steps backwards and three steps back into the bush”.

## XI. RECOMMENDATION

Firstly and most importantly, what a system like Nigerian system needs is fundamentally a character formation system that will repair and retune the character of its people. And it has to begin from the family. The problem of the world began from the family and its solution will also start from the family. Increasingly, children are no longer spending time with their parents. Instead of emulating from their parents, they tend to imbibe what they see on the TV and internet and internalize it as the accepted way of life. This can be done through Proper guidance. If parents could pry their children away from the TV, Ipad, IPods etc, then there will be room for a different character formation. Prying doesn't mean that they would no longer use them but set a limit by way of a time schedule so that most of their socialization time will not be spent on line. Allowing them unsupervised access to the net exposes them to form characters outside the parents' jurisdiction. More so, it excludes the family as one of the agents of socialization. How many families watch movies together with their kids and explain certain scenes to them? In other words, parents should totally embrace their responsibility and start acting like parents by checkmating their children /wards activities as it relates to the media. Besides, there are many free and

commercially available software programs, called content-control software, with which a user can choose to block offensive websites on individual computers or networks, in order to limit a child's access to pornographic materials or depiction of violence.

Furthermore, Africans especially Nigerians need to believe in themselves and that can start from mind liberation. A friend in the course of discussion told me point blank that the problem of Nigeria is not the internet but with Nigerians as a whole. When it comes to the internet contents, has anyone uploaded anything to the internet and it was rejected? How come we blame the West for everything when there is no conscious effort to change the status quo? One can now say that the problem is with African mentality. Africa needs is to shake loose of complex. There is urgent need to step up and out from where inferiority complex has left us. How can we shake off complex when we are being made to believe that Jesus is a white man while the devil is black; western culture is civilized while African culture is barbaric. I believe it is such stereotyped that pushed Michael Jackson with all his achievements to opt for surgery so as to be transformed into a white man. It is indeed a shame.

Also, I recommend Re-invention of culture. What is that which makes us unique in our own way? If Nigeria could package their culture and create myths around them, such information on the internet will attract people who may identify with such myths. How did the world began to celebrate Christmas on 25<sup>th</sup> December? There is a program on African magic called 'Goge Africa' which showcases the different cultures of African people. Such programs should be uploaded to YouTube so that everyone can access them and begin to appreciate our unique way of life. Such packaging can also be seen in the case of fashion where Nigerian designers have attracted the attention of world designers into trying designs with African prints. There is also the 'corn row' hairdo which is being worn by music artistes in their music video. This should boost the confidence of Africans in general that something good can come out from Africa if we put our mind to it.

In addition, there should be provision of Functional employment to fight unemployment and idleness. It has been said that an idle man is the devils workshop. In Nigeria, many people have turned to the internet out of frustration and to fight boredom. Cybercrimes have all been linked to unemployment and poverty so if there is functional employment for the youths it will give them a sense of fulfillment besides detaching them a bit from the apron of social media. This is where the government should step in and look for ways to provide employment. According to the governor of Imo State during the lifting of job embargo in the State, he pointed out that leaving the youths unemployed is a crime itself. Other governors should emulate his strides for a better and productive Nigeria. One may say that unemployment should not be an issue for secondary school students. While that might be true at the moment, they

notice the plight of their elders ones and mentors who are unemployed after graduation, where then lies the motivation for them to study harder when it has become obvious that education does not pay in Nigeria.

It is also wise to consider Insistence on value on original human thinking. In fact, there should be some kind of Award for morals and originality based on merit and not nepotism. This will challenge as well as motivate others into a healthy competition because man by nature always strives for recognition and attention. Why not tap into that desire for a good cause? That way, there would have been created room for social pressure and room for moral motivation and self-control to engage in appropriate and ethical behavior, even in situations where there is the freedom to do otherwise. Here, leading by exemplary comes into play because the parents in the family and leaders in the society cannot be morally bankrupt and expect moral soundness from the youths or others.

Finally, this paper recommends Education of the public on the implication of addiction and abuse of internet. I often wonder the functions of the national orientation agencies. At this point, there is serious need for re-orientation because some users are not even aware of what they do are doing to themselves and to the society in general. The right information in the hands of many is the essence of communication and power. It is left for the agency in partnership with schools and socialization agents to educate minds. Even those who are aware are oblivious of the implication to the country as it relates to international communication and subsequent development. If they understand that their actions perpetually tie them to the aprons of the West, there may be a conscious effort to be independent in all ramifications. On the part of the schools, there are normal moral education classes where people are told to be good students. Enlightened teachers will use the opportunity to educate the students on the dangers it poses to their future. But firstly, they have to be groomed before they can groom the students in turn since one cannot give what he/she does not have.

For the government, there should be some form of government censorship where there will be installed software to help checkmate the flow of some form of materials into the country. It might not be extreme like that of Chinese government where they have electronic firewall that prevents access to social media. Being extreme will result to an infringement of the right to information and our country will no longer be a free society. On a second, is there anything like absolute freedom???

## XII. CONCLUSIONS

The advent of the social media following the popularization of the internet has marked a watershed all over the world in virtually every sphere of life especially in the area of communication, socially, economically, emotionally and even development wise. One glaring fact is

there was already a shift in value system in the country before internet stepped in and catalyzed the whole process. People were in denial of what had been happening but internet just amplified it to becoming obvious to the blind so much so that the table had been turned around to blame it (internet) for moral decadence. Yea, we had already started dressing and eating like the westerners from what we consumed from the electronic media way especially the television before the internet personalized and increased the velocity of the process.

Considering the fact that social media has brought about a lot of positive changes in the lives of the users throughout the world in so many ways that has lead to improvement, progress and development, it was hard to have dwelt on the negative effects but yet it had to be done. With the breed of youths Nigeria has today, is the future guaranteed? Who am I? Who are we? This is the type of question that subsequent generations will ask if the rate of cultural dependency on foreign material is not checkmated. This situation will be an aftermath of the elimination of culture. The tricky part is that internet has come to stay unless by some miracle, all the servers will breakdown but that will not stop the west as they will come up with more sophisticated servers. As was stated in the recommendation, everyone has a share in the blame and therefore, all hands must be on deck ranging from the individual, the family, the leaders and the society at large. Each has a unique role to play so as to restore what is left of the dignity of the nation.

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