

AN ISLAMIC OVERVIEW OF THE ROLE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING ON YOUTH TOWARDS NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF FACULTY OF HUMANITIES NORTHWEST UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The invention of social networking comes along with great advantages and has helped in turning the world into a global village. However, bringing the whole world together into communication has brought different civilizations, different ideologies, different upbringing, and different moral values into unison. This entanglement has its pros and cons. The youth, who have a great role in national building, have been affected as well and this is a threat to national development. Islam on the other hand has made newly invented things permissible apart from those prohibited for us. However, there are certain guidelines we must follow. This paper finds out the role played by Social Networking on youth which will eventually affect national development whether positively or otherwise as the youths are the building blocks of every society. The paper then attempts an Islamic evaluation of the findings looking at the Islamic standpoint on the issues raised. Questionnaires method of research was used to find out how the youth especially of the Faculty of Humanities, Northwest University Kano were affected by social networking especially regarding their use of time and productivity. The research finds out the advantages and disadvantages of social networking to the youth as well as the degree of the effects of social networking most especially with regard to the use of time and productivity of the youth of Faculty of Humanities, Northwest University Kano. Finally, recommendations are proffered on how to harmonize social networking with Islamic teachings.

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KEYWORDS: Social Networking, Youth, National Development, Social Networking Sites, Nation Building

INTRODUCTION

The 21st century has seen the web evolved from a limited network used to share bits of information to a global phenomenon offering more information resources and social connections than ever before in history. Since their inception, Social Networking Sites (SNS) have attracted millions of users worldwide, many of whom have integrated these sites into their daily activities as these sites offer services that allow one to connect with other people of similar interests or backgrounds. The world has now become a global village such that information is now easily shared regardless of location distance. This paper attempts discussing what social networking is, social networking sites, as well as who are the youth, what their role is in nation building, and the pros and cons of social networking on the youth. The paper also tries Islamically assessing the roles of social networking on the youth who are the bedrock of every society and once they are not productive, the society is doomed. Conclusively, recommendations were made to make social networking in compatibility with Islamic teachings.

This research is designed to discuss the impact of social networking on the students of Faculty of Humanities, Northwest University Kano ranging in age from 15 to 35 who are the youth based on the

African charter definition. The research has also restricted itself to three social networking sites viz: Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, therefore, other SNS are not to be discussed.

Significance of the Study

This work is significant in the sense that it helps in finding out the impact of social networking on youth which is very important in terms of capacity building. As a part of national capacity building strategy, the research work suggested some recommendations which will make social networking conducive to Islamic atmosphere as well as boost the morale of the youth towards national development.

Social Network Vs Social Networking

Social network is defined by the Oxford dictionaries as 'A dedicated website or other application which enables users to communicate with each other by posting information, comments, messages, images etc.'(Oxford Dictionaries)

Social Networking Service, on the other hand is defined by Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia as "a platform to build social networks or social relations among people who share interests, activities, backgrounds or real life connections".(Wikipedia)

According to Danah and Nicole, the terms social network and social networking are used interchangeably to mean the same thing (Boyd, et al., ND).

Social Networking Sites

With the emergence of SixDegrees.com social networking site in 1997, more sites began to develop and today there are a lot of social networking websites (Wikipedia). However, I selected only three social networking sites to make reference to in this work. They are: Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. This is because as I have observed, these sites are more popular in Northern Nigeria where the research is being conducted.

Facebook

This is an online social networking service headquartered in Menlo Park, California. Its website was launched in February 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg with his roommates and Harvard University students. They initially named it 'thefacebook' and limited the website's membership to Harvard students only, later to colleges in the Boston area and gradually kept adding from students of other universities to high school students and currently to anyone who claims to be at least 13 years old. It now had over 1.3 billion active users as of June 2014 (Wikipedia). In 2014, it has been reported as the largest social network (www.statista.com).

Instagram

This is an online mobile photo-sharing, video sharing and social networking service that enables its users to take pictures and videos and share them on a variety of social networking platforms. It was created by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger and launched in 2010. The service rapidly gained popularity with over 100 million active users as of April 2012 and over 300 million as of December 2014. It is ranked as the 5th globally used social networking site. It has a distinctive feature which confines photos to a square shape, similar to Kodak instamatic and Polaroid images, in contrast to the 4:3 aspect ratio typically used by mobile device cameras. Users can also apply digital filters to their images. The maximum duration of Instagram videos is 15 seconds (Wikipedia).

Twitter

Described as 'the SMS of the Internet', this is an online social networking service that enables users to send and read short 140-character messages called 'tweets'. It was created and launched in July 2006 by Jack Dorsey, Evan Williams, Biz Stone and Noah Glass. It gained a rapid worldwide popularity with more than 100 million users who in 2012 posted 340 million tweets per day. Currently, it is ranked as the 6th most visited website and as of December 2014, Twitter has more than 500 million users, out of which more than 284 million are active users.

Users may subscribe to other users' tweets known as "following" and subscribers are known as "followers" or "tweeps". Tweets are publicly visible by default but senders can restrict message delivery to just their followers (Wikipedia).

Youth

The term 'youth' is defined as "a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence" (UNESCO). It has been difficult to specify exact age group for the youth as it varies from one society to another much especially in the case of underdeveloped and developing countries whereby unemployment and the cost of setting up an independent household puts many young people into a prolonged period of dependency. Therefore, different age groups for determining youth were set by different age organizations in different parts of the world. For example:

United Nations secretariat, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and International Labor Organization (ILO) specified the age of 15-24 as youth determining factor; UN Habitat (youth fund) specified the age group of 15-32 as a factor for determining youth; whereas African Youth Charter sees youth as a person between the age of 15 and 35 (UNDESA).

Islamically, youth are seen with much importance and are given due consideration. The youth age is the period in which the deeds of the humans are taken into record. As such it is a vital stage of human life and as one scholar puts it, "young people have the physical and mental abilities for being mindful of Allah in all aspects of life. As human beings get older, they start losing the enthusiasm and the power of their good old years" (General Authority of Islamic Affairs and Endowments, 2014).

Islam, therefore, urges the youth to make a good use of their period and this can be seen in several Prophetic traditions. For example, the Prophet (peace be upon him) was reported to have said "the son of Adam will not pass away from Allah until he is asked about five things: how he lived his life, how he utilized his youth, with what means did he earn his wealth, how did he spend his money and what did he do with his knowledge" (Tirmidhi 2417). In another hadith, the Prophet was reported to have said that seven kinds of people will be sheltered under the shade of Allah on the Day of Judgment; among them is a young man who passed his youth in the worship and service of Allah (Sahih Muslim 5/2248).

The Role of the Youth in Nation Building

Nation is defined by Carolyn Stephenson as a group or race of people who shared history, traditions and culture, sometimes religion and usually language.

Nation building on the other hand refers to the process of constructing or structuring a national identity using the power of the state. This process aims at the unification of the people within the state so that it remains politically stable and viable in the long run. It involves the use of propaganda or major infrastructure development to foster social harmony and economic growth (Wikipedia). According to Akintokumbo Adejumo,

Nation building and the associated developmental issues require men and women of deep vision, sincerity of purpose, selflessness, genuine love for their country and their people, hardworking, of conscience, integrity, credibility, trustworthiness, honesty, reliable and able, people who do not think that getting to position of authority is a do-or-die affair, people who understand the meaning of nation building, leadership, good governance, rule of law, political emancipation, equality, human and civic rights, civility, freedom of speech, diversity and religious tolerance, people who will shun and will not tolerate tribalism, corruption and nepotism. These are people who can build nations (Adejumo, 2010).

The role of youth in nation building occupies a central place. This is because the youth are not only the leaders of tomorrow but also the partners of today. For a country to be more developed, it has to utilize its youth in the right direction. And as Rizwan Anwar puts it

"Developed countries are totally aware of the worth of their youth. They consider their youth as an asset"

"The energy and brightness of the minds of the youth act as torch-bearer for a nation. On the contrary, the countries which fail to realize the importance of the youth lag behind in every department of life. Likewise, if the youth are morally degraded and unconcerned about the future of the nation, that nation is doomed and cannot play any productive role." (Anwar, 2014)

The youth have many roles to play in the development of their nation. This includes the necessity for them to get proper education and spread it to the masses so that they will be aware of their rights and responsibilities. It is the youth's role also to promote a fair worldview of the country's image by serving the country with their skills and talents and preventing the country from evils that can damage the reputation of the nation. It is also the role

of the youth to help the government in the implementation of policies. Moreover, young people are full of vibrant ideas and have energy to try out new things, if these factors are put into consideration, it will pave a way for the country's prosperity.

Impacts of Social Networking on the Youth

Social Networking Services have both positive and negative impacts on the society most especially the youth. Here are some of the advantages and disadvantages of SNS to the youth and the Islamic stand on them.

ADVANTAGES

1. Worldwide connectivity: one of the most outstanding benefits of the social networking services is their ability to form a web of connections of peoples with common interest throughout the globe. Moreover, social networking connects old acquaintances which if not for the social network one may end up his life without meeting others. These connections give a lot of leverages once one uses it for good. Islamically, this is something permissible and encouraging as far as it is used in the right path. This is because Islam encourages interaction between one another. As Allah said in the Quran:

O mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another. (Hujuraat: 13)

Moreover, this trend presents a huge opportunity for Muslims to reach out to people who may not know about Islam or Muslims. According to Javeria Salman, "thousands of Americans have never met a Muslim but they have access to us through social media" (Salman, 2012).

2. Low cost and free advertisement: for both personal and business use, social networking tends to be very cheap and sometimes at no cost because most of it is usually free. One can advertise his product and reach it to unimaginable location from his phone or system. This is encouraging in Islam as far as it fulfills the conditions of Islam as Allah says in the Quran

"whereas Allah has permitted trading and forbidden Riba." (Baqarah: 275)

3. Increases learning opportunity: the worldwide connectivity social networking provides to the people also comes with other opportunities as well. This includes the increase in opportunities such as learning and business. You can find different groups of intellectuals which one can join and benefit there from. One can also friend, follow, or subscribe to a well known scholar from whom he can gain a lot. Islamically, seeking for knowledge is treated with much emphasis and seen as a must. As Allah said in the Quran

It is only those who have knowledge among His servants that fear Allah... (Faafir: 28)
...and say: "My Lord! Increase me in knowledge." (Taahaa: 114)
...and whom We had taught knowledge from Us. (Kahf: 65)

Additionally, the prophetic traditions also gave emphasis to seeking for knowledge. For example:

Seeking for knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim. (Albani, nd; 44/183)

For him who embarks on the path of seeking knowledge, Allah will ease for him the way to paradise (Ibn Hambal 8299).

4. Mobilizing opinion of people: social networking is a good center for mobilization of people's opinion. With just few clicks and keystrokes, ideas are aired to the world in a short time and also one can undo or falsify a lot of allegations done to damage the image of some things. Concerning this, Javeria Salman had this to say:

With SNS, we can change the perception of Islam from that of an Old-fashioned, authoritarian religion to one people can comprehend and relate to ... if we develop better reference points for others on Islam, the irrational claims and hateful rhetoric will be washed away to the empty corners of the internet. (Salman, 2012)

According to (Tim, et al. 2001), Social media which social networking is part of also acts as powerful agency capable of shaping and directing public and private understanding of the world and awareness of its social, economic, moral, cultural, technological and political affairs.

5. Immediacy: one of the advantages of social networking is its capability of virtually instantaneous responses. One can get a lot of response as soon as he makes a post contrary to other means of communication.

DISADVANTAGES

Social networking has also come along with great challenges and disadvantages which some see as far outweighing the advantages. According to Abubakr2009 "the beautiful attractions of the media have been rubbished and what we feel these days is the negative impact. Major illicit acts are promoted and encouraged, such as homosexuality, obscene movies, and music promoting indecency like

gambling, robbery and alcoholism among others" (Abubakr, 2009). Also according to Syahmi Fauzi "it is undeniably true that Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, and the like do in fact cause more harm than good" (Fauzi, 2012). Below are some of the disadvantages of social networking.

1. Identity theft and invasion of privacy: social networking sites facilitate identity theft especially via information disclosure and privacy setting. In November, 2011, a woman was charged at a New Jersey court with identity theft of her ex-boyfriend via Facebook. Dana Thornton set up a fake Facebook profile for her ex and made personal statements saying he was high all the time, had herpes and liked prostitutes (Social networking law blog). "The more information you have on your profile the easier it is for identity thieves to verify themselves as being you" (Fauzi, 2012). The way the privacy setting is set also enables unreliable ones to steal one's identity. Even though there are features that allow users to change their privacy settings and not allow other users to view ones personal details, the settings are never default and as such one is unaware of how much information he is sharing not only with friends, but with the rest of the world.

Islam is no way in support of one using others' property except with their will and consent and identity theft is not different from material theft because both of them are properties of others taken without their consent. Allah also said in the Quran: O you who believe! Enter not houses other than your own, until you have asked permission and greeted those in them; that is better for you, in order that you may remember. And if you find no one therein, still enter not until permission has been given. And if you are asked to go back, go back, for it is purer for you. And Allah is All-Knower of what you do. (Nur: 27)

2. Cyber bullying: cyber bullying refers to "bullying through information and communication technologies" (Fauzi, 2012). Social networking sites have increase the ease and prominence of cyber bullying and other cyber crimes against children. This is because bullies often feel more confident online and they can contact their victims anytime, anywhere, day or night, not just in the school yard. Even though cyber bullying is not physical, its emotional and psychological effects are devastating for the victim and can often lead to suicide and depression (Fauzi, 2012). Megan Maier was one of the victims of cyber bullying. 16-year-old Josh sent a friend request to her on a social networking site and she accepted. Thinking that she had finally get someone who thinks she was pretty after a lifelong

struggle with weight and self-esteem, Megan started regularly communicating online with him although they had never met in person or spoke on the phone. Later on, Josh began saying he did not want to be friends anymore and other cruel messages. Finally, he wrote to her that she was a bad person and everyone hates her and that the world would have been a better place without her. She replied him saying that he was a kind of boy a girl would kill herself over and 20 minutes later, Maier was found in her bedroom closet already hanged herself with a belt. Despite efforts made for her to recover, her death was announced on October 17, 2006. (Wikipedia)

Islam is against any kind of ill treatment to any individual man or woman, young or old and regardless of the way that ill treatment is done. Allah said in the Quran

...but transgress not the limits. Truly, Allah likes not the transgressors (Baqarah: 190)

And in a hadith, the prophet (peace be upon him) was reported by Abdullah bn Umar to have said

"A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim, so he should not oppress him, nor should he hand him over to an oppressor. . ." (Bukhari, bk 43; 622)

(Yusha'u, 2004) stated that: "whatever leads to the welfare of the individual is morally good in Islam and whatever is injurious is morally bad"

3. Time wasting: Time is a precious factor and its wastage is considered more dangerous than squandering property as time cannot be compensated. However, people tend to spend so much time on social networking without due consideration. This goes to the extent that it tends to affect ones productivity. According to Donna Cosmato

"A Nielsen report explains that social networking can be a big waste of time that sucks 17 percent of our Internet time down the non-productivity drain" (Cosmato, nd)

It is also reported that Facebook users spend about six hours each month on the site, while social networkers spend three times as much time on those communities as they do on other online activities like email. (Cosmato, nd)

For the youth to be more beneficial and contribute to nation building, they must be aware of the worth of their time and use it wisely. Islam values time and abhors its wastage. The prophet (peace be upon him) was reported to have said "There are two blessings which many people lose, (they are) health and free time for doing good" (Bukhari, 8/421).

4. Weakening strong ties and isolation: whilst social networking strengthens weak ties with acquaintances

and people not seen often, it also weakens strong ties and also brings about physical social isolation. "Nowadays, the urge to contact each other over the phone or even face to face is not as important because we feel like we are still connected via social network" said Syahmi Fauzi (Fauzi, 2012). The rise of social networking has increased social and emotional isolation and diluted the strength of our human relationships. And he, Syahmi Fauzi added that the "idea of being constantly connected is awful in the way that personal interactions between friends are more superficial than they were before Facebook and other social networking sites" (Fauzi, 2012). On the contrary, nation building requires united citizens who have love for themselves and their nations and those who know the value of togetherness.

5. Freedom of expression: social networking grants its users right to express themselves in the way they wanted, however, this opportunity is being misused and it becomes a center for castigating others, tarnishing images with false claims, gossiping, vain talking, raising baseless allegations in order to defame others or their religion... as Bashir Galadanci puts it "those who want to cast a negative light on Islam easily perpetuate stereotypes about Muslims through their posts, tweets and videos" (Galadanci; 2014; 5). However, even though Islam has given us freedom of expressing our views, there are some guidelines concerning that. Galadanci 2014 has this to say: "freedom of expression is an inalienable right in Islam, but it is not absolute and has limits and borders". And Allah said in the Glorious Quran

And follow not that of which you have no knowledge. Verily, the hearing, and the sight, and the heart of each of those ones will be questioned (by Allah). (Isra': 36)

Allah has in the Glorious Quran asked us to stay away from gossiping, mockery, and talking unnecessarily, this can be seen in the verse

"O you who believe! Let not a group scoff at another group; it may be that the latter are better than the former. Nor let (some) women scoff at other women, it may be that the latter are better than the former". (Hujuraat: 11)

"And spy not, neither backbite one another". (Hujuraat: 12)

And in a hadith, the prophet (peace be upon him) was reported to have said "and whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, should talk what is good or keep quiet" (Bukhari, book 73, no. 158)

According to Dr. Syed Muneeb gossiping and talking about unnecessary things is called *lagwu* in Arabic and Allah has asked us to stay away from it (Muneeb,

nd) in Surah al-Mu'minoon where Allah said when describing the real believers

And those who turn away from Al-Laghw. (Mu'minoon:3)

6.Absence of copyright: in social networking, author has no authority over his work, by the time one makes a post, it is likely that others copy it directly and paste it on their walls without identifying the owner, sometimes he may even claim the ownership of what he has not own. This is unacceptable Islamically and especially in intellectual properties, sheikh Muhammad Umar Baazmool said “no one may use his work except after obtaining his permission and they must then relay everything precisely and reference it to the owner” (Galadanci, 2004; 6)

7.Circulating false information: one of the disadvantages of social networking is how false information is circulated therein without verification of its authenticity. News disseminated in the social network is often unreliable. Islam has made stern warning against hiding the truth and spreading rumors and has ordered us to verify news before acting upon it. Allah said

O you who believe! If a wicked person comes to you with any news ascertain the truth (Hujuraat: 6)

Yusha'u2004 stated that: “verifying all and any news item before approving it for printing or broadcasting by other means is an obligation” (Yusha'u, 2004; 99).

8.Spreading immorality: it is one of the ill effects of social networking its ability to spread immorality especially among the youth. Social network has become a center for the intermingling of men and women and this gave way for exchange of pictures and videos which gave increase in phonography, homosexuality, lesbianism, adultery, fornication and the rest. Now there are groups for all those vices in social networking sites. Lesbians, adulterers and the rest are not ashamed of opening groups in the names of their evil acts and others follow as well. Users also update their profile pictures and this gave rise to a long look at the opposite sex. This is abhorred in Islam.

Tell the believing men to lower their gaze, and protect their private parts. That is purer for them. Verily, Allah is All-Aware of what they do. (Nur: 30)

Verily, those who like that Fahishah should be circulated among those who believe, they will have a painful torment in this world and in the Hereafter. And Allah knows and you know not. (Nur: 19)

9.Use of pictures and videos for defamation: the sharing of pictures has come along with its problem. This is how others take pictures of others Photoshop it and use it in objectionable places. Those whose pictures are used may not even know about it.

10.Another problem with social networking is that its users are unrestricted. They can do whatever they wanted without others knowledge, therefore, there is no limitation and as such the young ones can easily be misguided. Allah said in the Glorious Quran

O you who believe! When you hold secret counsel, do it not for sin and wrongdoing, and disobedience to the Messenger, but do it for Al-Birr and Taqwa; and have Taqwa of Allah unto Whom you shall be gathered. (Mujadalah: 9)

And indeed We have created man, and We know what his self whispers to him. And We are nearer to him than his jugular vein. (Remember) that the two receivers (recording angels) receive (each human being), one sitting on the right and one on the left. Not a word does he (or she) utter but there is a watcher by him ready (to record it) (Qaaf: 16-18)

METHODOLOGY

The study is an opinion survey designed to assess how social networking affects the lives of the youth especially regarding their use of time and productivity. Data was obtained through the use of simple random sampling questionnaire having both close and open ended questions. A sample size of hundred respondents was picked out from the students of Humanities, Northwest University Kano ranging from the age of fifteen to thirty five. The questionnaire elicited information on personal characteristics of the respondents as to their gender, age and favorite social networking site. Their response was then sought regarding how they conduct their social networking activities with reference to the time spent, maintenance and above all how it affects their lives. Data collected was then sorted and analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages.

RESULT

Table 1: Personal Data/Information of the respondents

SN	CHARACTERISTICS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Gender		
	Male	50	50
	Female	50	50
2	Age		
	15-20	44	44
	21-25	30	30
	26-30	20	20
	31-35	06	06

Table 1 portrays the respondents’ genders and ages. The respondents are equally selected to be 50% males 50% females. Majority of the respondents are under the age of twenty (44%) followed by those ranging from 21-25 with 30%. 20% of the respondents age between twenty six and thirty while the remaining 6% are thirty one to thirty five years.

Table 2: Respondents personal outlook on social networking

SN	ITEMS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
3	What is your favorite social networking site?		
	Facebook	67	67
	Instagram	25	25
	Twitter	08	08
4	What is your main purpose for social networking?		
	News	29	29
	Chatting	59	59
	Exchanging pictures and videos	03	03
	Religious inspiration	09	09

Table 2 shows that the majority of the youth in Faculty of Humanities, Northwest University Kano prefer Facebook more than other social networking sites leading with 67% of the respondents. This is followed up by Instagram with 25% while the remaining 8% incline to twitter. The table also brings into light the main purpose of social networking for the majority of the youth of Faculty of Humanities, Northwest University Kano is to chat with family and friends as 59% answered so. 29% do it to get news, 09% for religious inspirations whereas only 03% use it mainly to exchange pictures and videos.

Table 3: Maintenance

SN	ITEMS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
5	How do you get the data for surfing the web?		
	I buy data bundle	81	81
	Someone buys it for me	11	11
	Free	07	07
	Borrow from friends	01	01
6	Are you able to cater your minor financial responsibilities independently?		
	Yes	49	49
	No	10	10
	Sometimes	41	41

The above table figures out how the social network affects the respondents in terms of maintenance. Question was asked on how they maintain social networking and 81% of them buy data bundle. 11% are being sponsored by others, 07% depend on the free data given by network service providers while

the remaining 01% borrows from friends. When asked whether they can handle their minor financial responsibilities independently, 49% answered in the affirmative, 41% responded that it is not all the time they are able to do so while 10% replied with ‘no’. However, out of the 81% of the respondents who buy data by themselves, the research shows that while 46% of them were able to cater for their minor financial needs, 42% of them are not always being able to do so whereas 12% of them are not capable at all.

Table 4: Time factor

SN	ITEM	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE%
7	How much time do you dedicate on the site daily?		
	Less than three hours	30	30
	Always online	16	16
	Not everyday	43	43
	6-12 hours daily	11	11
8	Do you consider reducing the time you spend online?		
	Yes	71	71
	Sometimes	15	15
	No	14	14

Table 4 above is trying to analyze the time spent by the respondents on social networking and their concern towards it. The result shows that the majority with 43% is not logging in everyday, 30% spend less than three hours daily, 16% are always online whereas the remaining 11% spend 6-12 hours online daily. Moreover, the table shows that 71% of them are thinking of reducing the time they spend online, while 15% sometimes think of that, 14% are not thinking of reducing the time being spent.

The table below is designed to investigate on how social networking affects some parts of the lives of the youth. A question was asked to see the impact of social networking on the studies of the youth. Majority of them consisting of 80% responded that they concentrate fully on their studies as they used to do before while 20% of them were not able to concentrate fully because of social networking. The second question was asked to see whether they sleep as early as they used to do before social networking. Here, 50% of them responded that they still sleep as early as they used to do before they start social networking whereas the remaining 50% maintained that their sleep was affected by social networking. The third question was whether they think they can contribute more to nation building if they are not social networking and majority of them 55% replied with yes, 31% answered with ‘may be’ whereas 14% replied with ‘no’. The last question asked whether

social networking hinder them from doing something they used to do before. 70% of them replied in the negative while 30% of them answered positively.

If ‘Yes’ specify

Table 5: Effects

SN	ITEMS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
9	Do you fully concentrate on your studies as you used to do before engaging in social networking?		
	Yes	80	80
	No	20	20
10	Do you go to sleep as early as you used to do before social networking?		
	Yes	50	50
	No	50	50
11	Do you think you can contribute more to nation building in the absence of social networking?		
	Yes	55	55
	No	14	14
	May be	31	31
12	Did social networking hinder you from doing something you used to do before?		
	Yes	30	30
	No	70	70

The respondents who answered that social networking hinder them from doing something they used to do before were asked to specify and they made some responses which can be categorized into three viz. daily activities, studies, and sleep. 33% see that they are not doing their daily activities like house chores, sitting together with family members etc. as before. 44% are of the view that the level of attention they used to give to their studies has been reduced; whereas 22% said that social networking hinder them from sleeping as they used to do before.

REMARKS ON THE FINDINGS

The research conducted has come to the conclusion that social networking has a great impact on the youth as it affects both their social, intellectual and productive life. The result shows that social networking if not used carefully can lead to time wastage and can put the youth into a non-productivity drain as about 16% of the students of the Faculty of Humanities, Northwest University Kano are always online, 20%’s studies were affected by social networking, 50% were not sleeping as early as they used to and 55% are of the view that they can perform better in nation building in the absence of social networking. Another impact of social networking on the youth can be seen in the issue of maintenance as those who are unable to cater for their needs always or at all manage to buy data in order to

engage in social networking. These issues have to be addressed in order to have sustainability in national development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

When asked about the legality of social networking in Islam, Mufti Isma’il Menk responded that social networking is innocent like a knife, it is depending upon the kind of use one uses it. If one uses it for good then it is acceptable in Islam whereas if one abuses it then it is Islamically unacceptable (Menk, nd). Dr. Syed Muneeb on the other hand said “an innovation is innocent, it cannot be blamed, social networking is not *haraam* but there are a lot of *haraam* in social networking” (Muneeb, nd). Below are some recommendations that will guide the use of social networking so that it will be in conformity with Islamic teachings and similarly boost the capacity of the youth towards national development.

Lower your gaze: The users of social network should stop looking at whatever is prohibited as Allah said in the Quran: “Tell the believing men to lower their gaze, and protect their private parts. That is purer for them. Verily, Allah is All-Aware of what they do”. (Nur: 30)

Check source’s authenticity before acting upon it: Whenever one gets a message or news he should not forward it or spread it until he confirms its reliability.

Set a time plan: one should set for himself a time plan regarding when to be online and when to do other things and he should abide by it strictly.

Be Allah’s conscious: one should know that whatever he is doing even if nobody is seeing him Allah knows and angels are recording. As Allah says

And indeed We have created man, and We know what his self whispers to him. And We are nearer to him than his jugular vein. (Remember) that the two receivers (recording angels) receive (each human being), one sitting on the right and one on the left. Not a word does he (or she) utter but there is a watcher by him ready (to record it) (Qaaf: 16-18)

Always follow and subscribe to those beneficial to you and your religion. This is in accordance to the verse of the Quran which says: “Help one another in righteousness and piety, but help not one another in sin and rancor” (Ma’idah: 2)

Unsubscribe and unfollow bad friends: certain people need to be blocked and deleted from ones friend list. These are those who are unbeneficial and can help in the increase in one’s immorality. As Mufti Isma’il

Menk said “ if they are coming in between you and Allah, between you and your contentment or trying to achieve something wrong from you block them” (Menk, nd).

Set a trend of goodness: Initiate something good which will be beneficial to others.

CONCLUSION

This research paper has identified the impact of social networking to the youth. Some of these impacts are cyber bullying, weakening strong ties, identity theft, circulating false information, spreading immorality, reducing productivity, time wastage etc. As the study sought to find out the effects of social networking to the youth in the Faculty of Humanities, Northwest University Kano, the finding shows that social networking if not used wisely can become one of the obstacles that inhibit the youth in realizing their developmental goals. Recommendations were therefore suggested in order to make social networking to be in harmony with Islamic teachings as well as reverse its side effects so as to allow the youth achieve measurable and sustainable results in terms of national development.

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