

## **Moral Excogitation On The Use Of Computer And The Nigerian Youths.**

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**ABSTRACT:-**The advent of computer and by extension internet, has indeed added meaning to life. It has made work easy, and greater feats achieved. There is hardly a field of operation that computer with its attendant devices have not ease work and increase productivity. Great distances are covered with a twinkle of an eye, information is disseminated with ease and in seconds. Businesses are transacted without necessarily having to move from one place to another. But sad to observe that computer has over exposed African children to moral bankruptcy through constant exposure to pornographic pictures, violent movies and many more debased programmes through the internet, which made them see African values system and cultural heritage as antithetical, and over bearing. Also, cell phones and calculators have adverse effect on African child who instead of using his natural intelligence, resorts to over dependent on calculator to do simple mathematical calculations. Letter writing has become a thing of the past. Computer has eventually become a ‘child’ of mixed blessing. If nothing is done and on time to redress the ugly trend, then, we are sure to have our unique heritage and values that made us humane elude us swiftly as most of our young ones especially females are ready found almost in their nudes on the street and campuses of our higher institutions

**Keywords:-***Moral Excogitation, Computer, And Nigerian Youths.*

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Morality very importantly is the concern of ethics and ethicists. Morality is a system of social direction and control. It comes prominent in the context of social relations. This suggests that moral life may not exist outside human society. Morality comes from the latin word, *moralis* which translates into the conduct, custom or way of life. Put differently, it is the system of rules that ideally should direct or control human behavior or actions with respect to right and wrong, good or bad. On the other hands, ethics has to do with principles, rules, norms etc intended to help regulate man towards leading a good life, or in the choice of right course of action. Ethics and morality are found within the ambit of philosophy whose seeming acceptable definition from *philos* and *Sophia* means love of wisdom which can be analysed as the capacity for profound knowledge, experience, providence and good judgment. From the foregone, it is incredible that man would allow his action unchecked unregulated in any field of study or adventure to include even the use of computer and its related devices to such an arbitrary level that he should be affected negatively by his creation-computer.

### **II. MEANING OF TERMS ETHICS**

Derives its meaning from the Greek word, *ethos* which implies customs, norms, habits or accepted ways of behavior for individual or community. Ethics and morality have been used interchangeably. This may explain why most philosophers refer to ethics as a moral philosophy. Norman Shields have it defined as a conscious and purposeful behavior that is concerned with the obligations and rules that relates to it. That is, ethics aims at discovering

those factors that make actions good or bad, right or wrong for the individual, or social groups (9). To Ozumba, ethics defines as philosophical thinking about morality (4). It has also been defined as a systematic investigation into the norms of human behavior. Ethics according to William Lillie is the normative science of the conduct of human beings living in societies. That is, a science which judges this conduct to be right or wrong, good or bad or in some similar ways (1-2)MORALITY: This term derived from the Latin word ‘moralis’ meaning the conduct or custom or way of life, it can also be seen as the system of rules that should govern the behavior or action of people with respect to right and wrong, good and bad within a giving society (Elijah,20).

Man’s action should be applauded as praiseworthy and not blame worthy. Ethics and morality can be used interchangeably to refer to the control of human act or conduct so as to eschew dishonesty, adultery, murder, incest, abortion, corruption, nudity and the likes.

### **III. COMPUTER AND RELATED DEVICES**

Computer is a general purpose device that can be programmed to carry out a set of arithmetic or logical operations. It can also be defined as a programmed machine that can respond to any specific sets of instructions in a well-defined way, and can as well execute a prerecorded list of instructions. In another sense, Willie sees computer as a device that works under control of stored programmes automatically accepting, storing, processing data to produce information that is the result of that processing. Computer is a highly sensitive device that can manifest in different other forms to include GSM or cell phones, internet through interconnectivity and by this the world has been reduced into a small village; distances, secrets reduced if not eroded. Infact, the much talked about science and technology is said to have yielded its most potent and rewarding fruits with the invention or advent of computer based devices which in turn eases man’s lifestyle and interaction(Rosenberg, 80). The benefit of these wonder- packed devices permeates all fields of human endeavor to include: Banking, health, security, academic, industries, personnel management, communication and many more resulting in less labour, while increase in production and distribution of goods and services are now done in matters of minutes. The computer age is indeed a digital age (Russell, 208). However, it could be noted that the advent of computer with apparent benefits have also brought to us many undesirable, unpleasant dispositions and consequences, antithetical to African cultural values and heritage that made us uniquely Africans and ethical. Especially our youths.

### **IV. THE MORAL CHALLENGE OF COMPUTER (INTERNET)**

Deterioration of Natural Intelligence.

Many concerned individuals of African extraction rightly observed and decry that breakthroughs in computer (GSM) seemed to have wipe (reduced) the mental capacities and reasoning faculties of people globally. In Africa this ugly trend is worst in having eaten deeper into the African child. The natural (God given intelligence which he \she has is now stifled and replaced with artificialities ( Cybernetics) such that even the simplest mathematical calculations can hardly be done without using calculators. Students spend more time on video machines, phones rather than on their books, letter writing a very interesting skills where students learn spellings and the use of correct tenses is now a thing of the past and has been replace with phones: Togo, WhatSAppetc, consequently, examinations malpractice becomes the order of the day. It is indeed a sad aberration ( Ikegbu and Nganya 429). Also,Onuoha in his work “Science and Man’s Existential Predicament” avers that man is gradually losing one of his most basic tools (reasoning faculty).

Average person now places high importance on computer: phones, internet at the expense of other aspects of human culture. We have over relied on electronic materials such

as computer, calculator, GSM etc. (508). Still on this, a New York Times published an article on the menace of computer or technology gadgets. It was revealed that average kids ages 8-18 spends over 7<sup>1/2</sup> hours a day using technology gadgets equaling 2<sup>1/2</sup> hours on music about 5 hours on Tv and movies, 3 hour on internet and video games, and just 38 minutes on old fashioned reading according to Kaiser Family Foundation which adds up to 75 hours a week!. These statistics are not just mere numbers, they are a reflection on the way our society is heading to (New York Times, March 2010). Accordingly, less than 40 minutes is devoted to study in a day and lamentably, several hours of our youths including university undergraduates are spent on social networks such as 2go, Twitter, Facebook, Whatsapp, Blackberry messenger, Yahoo instant chat and lots more, will spelt doom not only on their future but on our nation as well, as it will lead our nation into a beggarly nation that will experience retrogression in place of progress with the consequences of a ramshackled economy (Arbib, 28). If the positive side of computer that assist in researches through e-books is inclined to, it would have been worthwhile but we observe sadly that this technetronic age cybernetics and automation have revolutionalized the working habits of our youths and misdirected from engaging in active rewarding work and activities capable of assisting them to achieve means of livelihood, to a wasteful life of leisure and amusement (Aigbodioh, 171).

In a situation where man is willing to work and live up to his biblical and divine mandate to subdue, dominate and replenish the earth, computer and its associated devices have so much to offer to man in less or no stress in virtually all spheres of life: Health care, education, science and technology, economics, agriculture etc. but as Carson observes,- ... ninety-eight percent of babies are borne with creative ability, less than 5 percent of us remain creative at the age 18. Fifteen years after birth many of those same clever and creative infants now teenagers spend their time looking at television or videos. This life style should require them to use little imagination. Why should they? Everything is done for them, including telling them how to dress, think and behave. Consequently they do not get into the habit of thinking for themselves, all they have to do is follow. We fast seem to have gotten away from analyzing things for ourselves, from thinking ideas through; from creativity, using our minds and imagination. Ultimately, it is costing us (219). Gabriel Markel shares similar view with Carson when he avers that technology has reduced man to a technical man. He has been reduced to a mechanistic being, his creative ability as rational being, has been lowered and he is been restricted by the dictates of computer. He now lives less than human beings. What an aberration, man has been deprived of his most salient component (rationality) by computer and the likes. Rather than generate fresh ideas that will lead to growth of knowledge in many facets, our youths have entangled themselves with copycat mentality where internet does virtually everything for them (Mckeown, 22). As a result, their brains seem to have lost the creative capacity . Most disheartening in Nigeria today, immorality has almost become a virtue and morality a vice with unprecedented increase in abnormal behavior due to the rise of computer (internet) into prominence where people have easy and fast access to all kinds of information: pornographic films and pictures all over the net at no cost that corrupts the minds of our youths.

Who knows the origin of insurgency in Nigeria? When our children are daily glued to pornographic sites, violent films and many morally debased programmes which are antithetical to our values system and cultural heritages. Little wonder why our society has alarmingly deteriorated into chaotic and shameless one. It remains most disheartening to observe that our young women now embrace poor role models of going about almost nude, young men are not left out in this apparent insanity (Ogaretal, 3).

## V. CONCLUSION

Nudity on the streets is gradually gaining acceptance as the normal way of dressing courtesy of the internet, movies and media industry. Most products like toothpaste are now advertised using a nude woman. Music sells hot if it is characterized by nude dancers. Computer associated crimes such as hacking, internet fraud, banking fraud, false shares fake employment, fake admission etc. are rampant. So, if nothing is done shortly, then we may be running too fast to our extinction. Imagine in Nigeria today it is difficult to trace culprits because websites can easily be deleted even after having defamed any character falsely with widest spread. It therefore becomes imperative for us as Nigerians and indeed the world to return back to our drawing boards and reconsider our actions and attitude in line with our rational and moral dictates urgently and sincerely.

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