

Mastering Digital Dilemma and Bold Strategies for Muslim Youth in Nigeria: The Role of Faith and Social Media in Kano State

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Abstract

Social media significantly influences the moral values and behaviors of Muslim youth in Kano State, Nigeria, offering benefits such as educational resources, networking opportunities, and community building, while simultaneously exposing them to inappropriate content, cyberbullying, and trends that may conflict with Islamic values. Hence, the rapid spread of digital technology creates both possibilities and disadvantages for Muslim youth in Nigeria, especially in Kano State, where religion and cultural beliefs have a considerable impact on social standards. This duality creates dilemmas for young people as they navigate the digital landscape, striving to balance social connectivity with their moral and religious principles. This research investigates the "digital dilemma" confronting young Muslims, examining how social media effects their religious identity, ethical ideals, and socio-political activity. The study looks at both the good and bad effects of digital platforms, emphasising issues including exposure to hazardous information, cyber dangers, and the loss of traditional values. At the same time, it investigates how faith-based digital literacy and smart social media activity might help Muslim adolescents manage these problems while upholding Islamic ideals. Using qualitative and quantitative methods, this research evaluates the role of religious academics, community leaders, and digital influencers in encouraging teenagers towards responsible and productive social media usage. The findings imply that combining faith-based concepts with digital literacy initiatives may assist Muslim adolescents in reaping the advantages of social media while minimising its hazards. The study finishes with bold recommendations for promoting a balanced and purposeful online presence, such as ethical digital participation, legislative advocacy, and community-driven projects.

Keywords: Digital dilemma, Muslim youth, faith, social media, Kano State.

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid expansion of social media has fundamentally transformed the ways in which people communicate, share information, and build communities. With millions of users around the globe, social media platforms have become embedded in daily life, influencing thoughts, behaviors, and social interactions. Muslims, like people of other faiths, utilize social media to connect with others, disseminate information, and seek knowledge. However, the widespread use of social media has also sparked concerns about its potential effects on morality, especially among Muslim youth. Islamic teachings underscore the importance of ethical conduct, justice,

compassion, and integrity in every facet of life. The Quran and Hadith provide comprehensive guidance on moral behavior, emphasizing values such as honesty, respect, and kindness.

Kano State in Nigeria, with its robust Islamic identity and predominantly Muslim population, presents a distinctive setting to examine the influence of social media on the moral values of Muslim youth. Ethical principles held by the people of Kano State are central to their way of life, with mutual respect as a foundational value (Adamu, 2019). In this context, adherence to cultural norms is considered moral behavior, while deviations are seen as immoral (Adamu, 2019). From

childhood, the practice of "tarbiyyantarwa" emphasizes the importance of early education in cultural values to foster responsible adulthood (Yahaya, 2014).

In today's digital age, social media has become an integral part of daily life worldwide, providing new avenues for communication, learning, and community engagement. However, these platforms also challenge traditional moral values, particularly for young Muslims in Kano State, Nigeria, where Islam is deeply embedded in the social fabric. There is growing concern about the impact of social media on the moral behavior of young Muslims, who are increasingly exposed to content that may conflict with Islamic principles of decency, modesty, and appropriate interpersonal conduct (Yahaya, 2014).

Recent controversies underscore these concerns. For instance, Murja Kunya, a popular TikTok personality, gained notoriety for her explicit remarks and provocative behavior, challenging societal norms in northern Nigeria [¹]. Similarly, Ramlat Princess openly declared her lesbian identity in a video, leading to her arrest for sharing explicit material and inciting public outrage [²]. Despite these efforts, the issue persists, highlighting a significant gap in research. This research seeks to address a significant knowledge gap by examining the influence of social media on the moral values of Muslim youth in Kano State, Nigeria. Additionally, it aims to develop practical strategies to encourage responsible social media usage among young people in Kano State, promoting a healthier online environment that aligns with Islamic values and promotes positive moral development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Media and Morality

Social networking sites enable rapid dissemination of messages, creating opportunities for widespread connections. Consequently, these platforms are filled with moral content, exposing users to diverse beliefs and behaviors. As online networks grow, people tend to simplify their moral judgments, viewing others as either good or evil rather than nuanced individuals.

Moreover, online content that incorporates moral rhetoric tends to garner more shares, heightening its influence on users' beliefs and actions (Brady *et al.*, 2017; Brady & Van Bavel, 2021).

The concept of "freedom of speech and expression," regardless of its consequences, has led to negative behaviors among users, particularly among

Muslim youths. These behaviors include engaging in inappropriate discussions, publicly insulting individuals, and sharing inappropriate images, all justified under the guise of freedom of expression (Folami, 2020).

The increasing popularity of social media among the Muslim community has prompted some scholars to anticipate its growing impact on religious practices. It is commonly argued that social media possesses the capacity to shape individuals' religious dedication and actions.

This impact is believed to be particularly significant in conservative and traditional environments compared to more liberal settings. Despite this, social media has undeniably benefited Muslim youths in Nigeria, who have used various platforms to promote Islam, combat extremism, and raise awareness about proper Islamic teachings. Through initiatives on platforms like Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, and Instagram, they have not only enhanced their religious understanding but also influenced their moral values (Oloyede, 2022).

The Quran stresses the significance of honesty and truthfulness, advising those using social media to uphold the accuracy and integrity of the information they disseminate. "O believers, be conscious of Allah and speak words of fairness" (33:70). Islam emphasizes the importance of modesty and respecting privacy, discouraging the sharing of personal information or images that compromise one's modesty or the modesty of others. Islam also teaches respect for all people, regardless of their beliefs or backgrounds. Social media interactions should be characterized by kindness, respect, and avoiding harm to others: "Believers, avoid mocking others or belittling women, as they may be better than you. Refrain from insulting each other or using offensive names. It's a disgrace to continue wrongdoing after embracing faith. Those who don't repent are indeed in the wrong" (49:11).

Believers are reminded not to mock others, as they may possess qualities or virtues that surpass their own. This applies to both men and women. Furthermore, they are advised against insulting one another or using derogatory nicknames. Such behavior is deemed inappropriate and contrary to the principles of faith.

Believers are also encouraged to collaborate in acts of righteousness and piety while refraining from participating in sin and aggression. This is a reminder to prioritize beneficial knowledge and avoid content that

¹Aminu Daurawa, Murja Kunya and the defeat of Hisbah in Kano. From <https://dailyrealityng.com/2024/02/27/aminu-daurawa-murja-kunya-and-the-defeat-of-hisbah-in-kano/> (accessed on 18.3.2024).

²TikToker remanded by Kano Sharia court for alleged lesbian claims. From <https://dailyrealityng.com/2024/02/17/tiktoker-remanded-by-kano-sharia-court-for-alleged-lesbian-claims/TikToker> (accessed on 2.4.2024).

promotes harmful or sinful behavior: “Work together in goodness and righteousness, but do not collaborate in wrongdoing and aggression. Fear Allah, for He is stern in punishment” (Q5:2).

Islam teaches the importance of managing one's time effectively and not wasting it on activities that do not bring about personal growth or benefit to others: “By the passage of time, humanity is indeed at a loss, except for those who have faith, do good deeds, and encourage one another to truth and perseverance” (Q103:1-3).

In summary, social media serves as a potent tool for good when wielded responsibly in accordance with Islamic principles. It facilitates avenues for acquiring knowledge, disseminating beneficial information, and fostering constructive connections with others. However, adherents of Islam are counseled to exercise vigilance in their online interactions, ensuring that the content they engage with and share reflects Islamic values and contributes positively to personal growth and societal well-being.

Positive Effects of Social Media

Social media, despite its historical setbacks to our moral fabric, also yields numerous benefits to society. It promotes a sense of belonging among Muslims by enabling easy and free interaction, facilitating the sharing of information, ideas, beliefs, and moral teachings, including those of Islam. Moreover, it plays a pivotal role in promoting social justice, as individuals can garner government attention online, prompting swift action—a phenomenon not prevalent before the advent of social media. Additionally, it cultivates a spirit of solidarity, with online platforms serving as avenues for charitable endeavors. Notably, initiatives like Fauziyya D. Sulaiman's online charitable work have gained recognition, leading to her appointment as a Special Advisor for the Needy and Vulnerable in Kano State, highlighting the transformative potential of social media in addressing societal needs.

Social media serves as a powerful platform for the swift and widespread sharing of information, encompassing various ideas, beliefs, and moral teachings, including those rooted in Islamic principles. Numerous scholars utilize social media to disseminate their lectures, Friday sermons, and lessons on their respective pages, thereby facilitating global access to online teachings, preaching, and sermons. This phenomenon fosters connectivity and enables individuals from diverse backgrounds to engage with and benefit from the wealth of knowledge available on these platforms.

Social media plays a pivotal role in advancing social justice by amplifying the voices of marginalized communities, enabling them to draw attention to systemic injustices and spur governmental action.

Today's youth harness the power of social media to advocate for their interests, and government officials increasingly recognize its importance as a platform for civic engagement. Unlike traditional avenues where petitioning officials for redress of grievances can be arduous, social media provides a more accessible channel, especially when issues affect entire communities. Notable examples abound, such as the recent confrontation between the Hisba Commander of Kano State and certain social media personalities who gained prominence through objectionable behavior. This incident led to their arrest and trial by an Islamic Sharia court, underscoring the impact of social media in holding individuals accountable for their actions.

Social media has revolutionized the landscape of education by democratizing access to a wealth of educational resources, online courses, and tutorials, thereby enhancing learning opportunities for people across various demographics. This undeniable benefit of online networking has led to the emergence of numerous social media platforms facilitating collective learning experiences, connecting individuals from diverse regions to participate in virtual classes and discussions. These platforms have proven instrumental in fostering significant behavioral changes in people's lives, empowering them to acquire new knowledge and skills regardless of geographical barriers. By leveraging the power of social media, education has become more inclusive, convenient, and transformative, enabling individuals to pursue lifelong learning journeys and contribute positively to society.

By acknowledging and harnessing these positive effects, we can maximize the benefits of social media while minimizing its negative impacts on morality.

Negative Effects of Social Media

The widespread integration of social media into our daily lives has introduced numerous challenges to the moral fabric of society, particularly among the younger generation. It has fundamentally altered their values, prioritizing the pursuit of popularity over ethical conduct. Instead of being accountable for their actions, many youths now engage in behaviors that contradict societal moral standards, often under the guise of exercising their right to freedom of speech. This can manifest in provocative, licentious, or abusive utterances, where individuals as young as 20 or 30 feel entitled to publicly denounce older figures, such as Muslim clerics, merely due to differences in opinion or political ideology.

Moreover, social media has eroded the sincerity of actions, as individuals, including learners and religious figures, seek validation and fame through superficial online displays. This phenomenon extends beyond the youth, as even aspiring scholars may prioritize online recognition over authentic learning and

discourse, leading to the commercialization of scholarship and the degradation of religious integrity.

Furthermore, social media brings forth detrimental effects on the modesty of both genders, with girls, in particular, feeling emboldened to engage in immodest behavior and disregard traditional standards of decency. Previously shy and reserved, many young women now unabashedly showcase themselves online, exploiting their bodies and engaging in licentious behavior to attract attention from equally irresponsible youths. As stated by Chima and Onyema (2019), "Today, the prevalence of pornography on social media poses a significant concern for the security and well-being of teenagers. Easy access to explicit content via smartphones leads to moral degradation, as youths become increasingly immersed in it, forsaking real-life interactions. This obsession often translates into a desire to replicate what they see, fostering a negative attitude towards relationships. In educational settings, the dissemination of pornographic material among peers spreads rapidly, fueling immorality among the youth. Todd (2009) asserts that social media platforms, particularly targeting adolescents, render them susceptible to sexual misconduct." Philista and Arne (2015) argue that the widespread availability of sexual imagery online has contributed to a culture of intolerant sexual behavior, particularly among young people. They suggest that easy access to pornographic materials in unregulated cyber cafes has fueled this trend, leading to a rise in sexual promiscuity and exploitation. Overall, these authors suggest that social media has contributed to a culture of sexual promiscuity and immorality among young people in Nigeria.

In essence, the pervasive influence of social media has not only blurred the lines between right and wrong but has also exacerbated societal problems such as the erosion of moral values, the commodification of knowledge and religious authority, and the decline of modesty and decency, particularly among the younger generation.

Consequently, digital dilemma requires a very strong transformative social policy that denotes initiatives designed to effectuate substantial good alterations in society by tackling concerns associated with social media security, protection, and public services. Likewise, it is a proactive strategy for confronting social inequities via intervention mechanisms that acknowledge both good transformations and injustices via policy initiatives aimed at restructuring existing frameworks and processes. This should transcend beyond conventional welfare initiatives by striving to establish enduring transformations that empower people and communities through good uses of social media. Transformative social media policy should extend beyond traditional welfare initiatives, advocating for measures that not only provide safety nets but also encourage economic advancement,

social cohesion, media security and equity. Bolatito (2024) asserts that transformative social media policy will significantly shaped our comprehension of transformative social policies through engaging social media usage. He contends that these policies are crucial for promoting social integration and attaining a more equal allocation of resources. emotional security encompasses a broad array of policies and programs aimed at providing financial and emotional support to individuals and families during times of adversity. It includes several provisions, such as unemployment benefits, disability allowances, and retirement pensions. The concept of transformative social media policy has significantly impacted the understanding and implementation of social security.

Theoretical Implications

This study's findings, interpreted through the framework of Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 2002), reveal profound insights into the influence of social media on moral values and behaviors. Social media acts as a platform where individuals can observe and imitate behaviors, leading to the adoption of new behaviors and ideas. Exposure to explicit content on social media can lead to the normalization and internalization of such behaviors, potentially reshaping moral boundaries (Boyd, 2014). Repeated exposure to explicit content, even though advertisements, can cause behavioral changes and the adoption of harmful behaviors (Livingstone & Smith, 2014).

Additionally, social media can distract from productive activities, reducing engagement in meaningful tasks (Carr, 2010). The platform's potential for misuse by youth, perpetuating trivial activities, can detract from more beneficial engagements (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007).

The pursuit of online fame can lead to an obsession with social media, compromising moral values (Senft, 2008). The public nature of social media can promote immoral acts, eroding moral boundaries and societal norms (Turkle, 2011).

In conclusion, Social Learning Theory provides a framework for understanding the influence of social media on moral values and behaviors. Interventions aimed at promoting responsible social media usage should consider the powerful role of social models in shaping behavior. Strategies such as promoting positive role models, increasing awareness of the impact of observed behaviors, and providing educational resources can help mitigate the negative influences of social media.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative explanatory design to explore the relationship between social media engagement and moral development among Muslim youth in Kano State, Nigeria. It aims to devise effective strategies for encouraging responsible social media use

among these youths. The primary data collection method involves focus group discussions, chosen for their ability to elicit nuanced experiences and insights from both Muslim scholars and youth. Purposive sampling is employed to ensure a representative sample that includes individuals with diverse backgrounds, varying levels of social media engagement, and different degrees of religious adherence.

The data will be analyzed using thematic analysis to identify patterns and themes, providing a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. This qualitative approach seeks to deliver a detailed examination of how social media influences moral development among Muslim youth. Additionally, it aims to generate actionable strategies for fostering responsible social media practices. Ultimately, the study contributes to the broader conversation on social media and morality within the framework of Islamic teachings.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Influence of Social Media on Moral Values of Muslim Youth in Kano State: Focus Group Discussion Insights

In a focus group discussion involving Muslim youth from Kano State, participants examined the profound impact of social media on their moral values and behaviors. The discussion revealed a complex interplay between the positive and negative influences of social media, highlighting concerns about exposure to explicit content, behavioral changes, and the pursuit of online fame.

Isma'il Sani Habib, a 34-year-old graduate in Islamic Studies from the College of Qur'an and Islamic Studies in Ghana, articulated significant concerns about the influence of social media on moral behavior. He noted, "Social media has a profound influence on moral behaviors, particularly by exposing users to explicit content, which has become a significant concern." Isma'il observed that before social media, exposure to explicit content was minimal, but now, it is widespread and accessible, leading to potential shifts in moral values. Boyd (2014) supports this concern, emphasizing that "the broad reach of social media exposes users to content that can challenge their moral boundaries, especially among impressionable youth" (p. 35). Isma'il also highlighted how global connectivity via social media introduces foreign immoral behaviors, which affluent youth might emulate, impacting less privileged youth.

Abubakar Nazifi Abubakar, a mid-30s graduate from Khartoum University, Sudan, shared his experience of how constant exposure to explicit content through online advertisements affects his behavior. He stated, "The unavoidable exposure to explicit images and videos through online advertisements has a profound impact on my behavior," suggesting that repeated exposure to such content can normalize it and influence one's attitudes towards morality. This perspective aligns with

Livingstone and Smith (2014), who found that "online advertisements, particularly those with explicit content, can significantly influence the behavior and attitudes of young users" (p. 65). Abubakar also noted an increase in disrespectful behavior among youth, including a decline in respect for religious norms, reflecting Turkle's (2011) observation that online platforms can alter self-perception and behavior, fostering traits like arrogance and pride (p. 76).

Muhammad Sani Shuaib, in his late 30s and a graduate in Shari'a from King Faisal University in Chad, noted that social media can be a significant distraction from productive activities. He said, "Social media can be a significant distraction, consuming valuable time that could be spent on more productive activities." This observation is supported by Carr (2010), who argued that "the distraction caused by social media can lead to a decline in engagement with more substantive pursuits" (p. 121). Muhammad acknowledged the positive impact of religious content but emphasized that the negative influences, such as exposure to drug abuse and fornication, often outweigh the benefits. Boyd (2014) reflects this duality, stating that "social media platforms are double-edged swords, offering both beneficial and harmful content" (p. 37).

Inuwa Muhammad Adam, an unmarried mid-30s graduate in Arabic language from Islamic University of Niger, expressed concerns about the misuse of social media by youth. He observed that "while some elderly individuals utilize social media to share valuable insights, the majority of users are young people who often get sidetracked by trivial matters." This aligns with Ellison *et al.* (2007), who found that "young users predominantly engage with social media for entertainment and social interactions, often at the expense of more beneficial activities" (p. 1146). Inuwa also pointed out that exposure to nudity and pressure to own expensive smartphones leads to immoral behaviors, such as fornication and theft.

Ukasha Haruna Muhammad, a newlywed in his late 20s and a graduate from Bayero University Kano, reflected on the negative influence of social media on youth. He stated, "Social media has led many young people down a dangerous path, pursuing fame at the expense of their morals." This view aligns with Senft (2008), who explored the detrimental effects of the quest for online fame, noting that "the quest for online fame can lead individuals to compromise their moral values, engaging in behaviors they might otherwise avoid" (p. 89). Ukasha emphasized that the obsession with social media can lead to extravagance and a prioritization of data purchases over essential needs.

Falalu Yahuza Bagwai, a mid-30s graduate from Sudan University, expressed concerns about the public nature of social media. He noted, "While social media platforms like TikTok can offer valuable

educational content, I am concerned about the alarming trend of sharing and promoting immoral acts." This aligns with Turkle's (2011) observation that "the public sharing of private acts on social media can erode moral boundaries and societal norms" (p. 78). Falalu also cited specific cases where social media perpetuated criminal behavior, illustrating its potential to inspire harmful trends.

The focus group discussion highlighted a consensus among participants that social media significantly impacts the moral values and behaviors of Muslim youth in Kano State. While there are positive aspects, such as access to religious content, the dominant sentiment was that the negative effects—exposure to explicit content, distractions, and the promotion of immoral acts—are more pronounced. Participants called for increased awareness and measures to mitigate these negative influences, emphasizing the need for mindful engagement with social media to balance its benefits and drawbacks.

Effective Strategies for Promoting Responsible Social Media Usage in Kano State

In a recent focus group discussion, participants proposed several strategies to promote responsible social media use among youth in Kano State. These strategies are supported by insights from scholars and experts, emphasizing a multi-faceted approach that includes technological solutions, education, governmental oversight, parental guidance, and personal responsibility.

Technological Solutions

Muhammad Sani Shuaib, an educator in his late 30s, emphasized the role of technological solutions in managing social media use. He stated, "Technological controls are crucial for regulating social media access. I advocate for using tools that can restrict users access to some unwanted sites and allow parents to monitor their children's online activities. By employing these technologies, parents can ensure a safer online experience for their children." This view aligns with the perspective of Dr. Paul Levinson, a media scholar, who highlights that "technological tools, such as parental control software, can play a significant role in moderating online exposure and promoting safe social media practices" (Levinson, 2017, p. 203).

Education and Awareness

Khadija Habib Dan Kullu, a mother and graduate of Yusuf Maitama Sule University, Kano, supported the idea of educational initiatives to promote responsible social media usage. She noted, "Organizing seminars on online safety and digital etiquette is essential for shaping responsible digital behavior. Education equips individuals with the skills to navigate the online world safely and make informed decisions." This aligns with Dr. Douglas Rushkoff's assertion that "educating individuals about online safety, digital etiquette, and media literacy is crucial for fostering responsible digital citizenship" (Rushkoff, 2019, p. 78). Additionally,

Ukasha Haruna highlighted the importance of developing critical thinking skills through education, which enables youth to identify and counteract harmful online influences, a view supported by Valkenburg and Peter (2013) who emphasize that "critical thinking skills are essential for young people to navigate online content effectively" (p. 118).

Governmental Oversight

Abubakar Nazifi Abubakar, a proactive advocate, called for stronger governmental oversight. He argued, "Legislation and regulations are vital for shaping online conduct and protecting vulnerable groups. Specific legal frameworks are needed to ensure responsible social media use and promote social justice." Summayya Musa Magaji, another advocate, echoed this sentiment, emphasizing the need for clear laws to prevent online harm and promote social justice. This perspective is supported by Dr. Nancy Baym, who argues that "governmental regulations can provide a framework for ensuring responsible social media practices and protecting users from online harm" (Baym, 2018, p. 142).

Parental Guidance

Ukasha Haruna Muhammad, a parent, stressed the importance of parental involvement in regulating children's social media use. He stated, "It is crucial for parents to understand when their child is ready to handle social media responsibly and to set clear boundaries. Educating children about distinguishing right from wrong online is essential for their safe and responsible social media use." Valkenburg and Peter (2013) also highlight the role of families in cultivating responsible behavior, noting that "families play a key role in instilling moral values and guiding responsible online behavior" (p. 118).

Personal Responsibility

Inuwa Muhammad, a young Arabic poet, emphasized personal responsibility in managing online presence. He advised, "Be mindful of the accounts you follow and the content you engage with. Choosing to follow uplifting and beneficial content can help reduce exposure to harmful material. Regulatory bodies should enforce laws against immoral content, and users should actively seek positive content to create a safer online environment." This approach is supported by Dr. Joseph Turow, who highlights the impact of social media algorithms on content exposure, noting that "users should be conscious of the content they engage with, as algorithms tend to reinforce patterns of behavior by showing similar content" (Turow, 2020, p. 95).

In summary, the focus group discussion revealed a consensus on the importance of adopting a multi-faceted approach to promoting responsible social media use. Participants advocated for technological solutions, educational initiatives, governmental oversight, parental guidance, and personal responsibility

as key strategies. These approaches, supported by scholarly insights, provide a comprehensive framework for fostering responsible social media practices in Kano State.

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

The focus group discussion provided valuable insights into the multifaceted impact of social media on the moral values and behaviors of Muslim youth in Kano State. These findings highlight several key areas of concern and propose strategic measures to address these challenges effectively. This section discusses these findings in detail, situating them within the broader academic discourse, and offers practical recommendations for promoting responsible social media use. Participants were alarmed by the widespread exposure to explicit content, which they believed could lead to shifts in moral values (Boyd, 2014). This underscores the need for enhanced content regulation, user education, and robust parental controls (Livingstone & Smith, 2014).

Participants also noted behavioral changes resulting from prolonged social media exposure. They observed that constant exposure normalizes explicit content, leading to significant changes in behavior (Livingstone & Smith, 2014). This highlights the importance of media literacy programs to educate youth on critically evaluating online content.

Additionally, social media was identified as a significant distraction, detracting from productive activities (Carr, 2010). Addressing this issue requires a balanced approach that includes time management education and the promotion of digital well-being tools. Participants also emphasized the trivial use of social media by youth, stressing the need to guide them towards more purposeful engagement (Ellison *et al.*, 2007).

The pursuit of online fame was criticized as it can lead to extravagance and compromised moral values (Senft, 2008). Educational initiatives that emphasize personal integrity and ethical behavior are crucial. Finally, concerns were raised about the public nature of social media and its potential to promote immoral acts (Turkle, 2011). Enhanced digital etiquette education, privacy-prioritizing platforms, and stronger regulatory frameworks are necessary to address these concerns.

Effective Strategies for Promoting Responsible Social Media Usage

Participants in the focus group discussion suggested a comprehensive strategy to encourage responsible social media use among youth in Kano State, consistent with academic perspectives. They recommended technological solutions, such as parental control software, to oversee and manage children's online activities, reflecting Levinson's (2017) emphasis on the importance of technological controls for safe online practices. Additionally, they stressed the necessity

of education and awareness initiatives to empower youth to navigate online spaces safely and responsibly, a viewpoint supported by Rushkoff (2019) and Valkenburg and Peter (2013).

The participants also underscored the importance of governmental oversight, parental guidance, and personal responsibility. Abubakar Nazifi Abubakar's call for stronger governmental oversight aligns with Baym's (2018) argument for legislative frameworks to ensure responsible social media practices. Ukasha Haruna Muhammad emphasized the role of parental involvement in guiding children's social media use, consistent with Valkenburg and Peter's (2013) focus on the family's role in fostering responsible behavior. Finally, Inuwa Muhammad's emphasis on personal responsibility highlights the importance of mindful engagement with positive content, as discussed by Turow (2020). Collectively, these strategies promote a comprehensive approach to fostering responsible social media use among youth.

CONCLUSION

The findings from the focus group discussion underscore the significant influence of social media on the moral values and behaviors of Muslim youth in Kano State. While recognizing the positive aspects of social media, participants highlighted the more pronounced negative effects, such as exposure to explicit content, distractions, and the promotion of immoral acts. The proposed strategies, supported by scholarly insights, offer a comprehensive framework for promoting responsible social media practices. Implementing these strategies requires a collaborative effort involving technological solutions, educational initiatives, governmental oversight, parental guidance, and personal responsibility.

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