

Social Media Warfare: The Construction of Cancel Culture among Youths in Lagos State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study investigated the perception of cancel culture among youths in Lagos State, Nigeria. It explores how the online world affects the offline world. Symbolic Learning theory provided the framework while a mixed study approach guided the study. Alimosho Local Government area being the largest LGA in Lagos State was selected. Four hundred and thirty-two (432) questionnaires were randomly administered among youths who are social media users, and 5 in-depth interviews were conducted for social media users, influencers, community leaders, media personnel and religious leader for the qualitative phase. The study found that the concept of cancel culture has created amongst the youths, extreme movements of denunciations which have created a questionable expression of controversy and aroused resentment against individuals or groups of people. The study also discovered that, due to the strong reactionary beliefs connected with cancel culture, the phenomenon of cancel culture is undermining traditional cultural norms and calling into question societal social systems. The study concludes that holding people accountable for their actions and comments is desirable but allowing people to hear different opinions will promote a more receptive environment online. It is also important to note that while cancel culture has the potential to hold individuals accountable for their actions, it can also be misused as a tool for harassment, reputation stifling of free speech. Striking a balance between accountability and forgiveness, fostering constructive dialogue, and promoting empathy are crucial aspects in addressing the negative aspects associated with cancel culture.

Keywords

Cancel culture, denunciation, social media, youths

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Introduction

Cancel culture is a phenomenon that emerged in the early 2010s. It refers to a form of online activism or social media-driven accountability platform that seeks to hold individuals or public figures accountable for their perceived problematic actions or statements by "calling them out" (Brown & Abidin, 2020). Globally, the act of "canceling" usually involves boycotting, withdrawing support, or publicly criticizing the individual or group of people in question (Nakamura, 2018). The primary reason behind the culture of canceling vary widely, but it often happens when an individual or a group of persons are accused of engaging in behaviour perceived to be insensitive, or harmful, such as making racist, sexist, or otherwise discriminatory remarks, getting involved in a scandal, or having past controversial actions (Rogers, 2020). The goal of the cancel culture is to have social consequences for the person involved, impacting their reputation, career, or standing in the community. While some people view cancel culture as a way to address issues of social justice and hold powerful individuals accountable, others criticize it as a form of online mob mentality that can lead to unfair consequences, lack of due process, and the stifling of free speech (Collins and Tobin, 2021).

The tremendous growth of the social media has changed the mode of interaction and networking across the globe in all facet of life, political institutions which involve politicians, political parties, and political think tanks are all using the social media platforms especially Facebook and Twitter to communicate with and engage their voters. Citizens and leaders of thought have also availed the platforms to voice their opinions, engaging in wide network of communications and connecting with like minds. The platform as also been used for Crowd funding for victims, fund movements and finance elections. The Internet has offered a sure possibility towards the fulfillment of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): and advancing all human rights, freedom of expression and privacy. The social media is regarded as a social interaction and digitally mediated technology that facilitate the creation, sharing, exchange of information, ideas, career interest and other forms of expression through virtual communities and networks (Kietzmann *et al.*, 2011). Some of the most popular social media websites, with over 150 million registered users globally, includes the following Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, You Tube, LinkedIn, TikTok, Instagram, QZone, Weibo, WeChat, Tumbir, Baidu Tieba, Snapchat, Telegram, Discord, Pintrest, Microsoft Teams, Wikis and more are few examples of virtual communities' collaborative content creation, mass mobilization of people and ideas. The Social media web internet based applications are different from the highly regulated traditional print and televised media, for examples magazines, newspapers, TV and radio

stations operations in many ways, such as quality, reach, frequency, usability, immediacy and permanence (Wei Huang *et al.*, 2016).

Merriam-Webster (2019) defined the social media as a form of electronic communication such as websites for social networking and micro blogging, through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages and other contents which includes videos. Since the emergence and expansion of the Information Society, the internet and digital media can be used to classify, identify and represent a culture also known as the Digital Rhetoric: this implies a way of information, persuasion, and inciting inspirational action in an audience through the digital media that is composed and distributed on multimedia platforms. Due to the continuous transformation necessitated by information capitalism (Castells, 1996; 2007), the boundaries between digital and non-digital environments are collapsing and as further led to the expansion of the scope of digital rhetoric and there arises a continuous need to account for the increasing fluidity with which humans interact with technology (Boyle *et al.*, 2018). The trend of calling someone out on social media platforms laid the foundation for cancellations.

African Youths form a significant population of consumers of the social media especially Facebook, which is the most used social site and it as diffused into the continent's political milieu such as, Uganda, Rwanda, Ghana, Libya, Egypt, Nigeria, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Sudan, Algeria, Morocco etc. Based on the foregoing it can be said that cancel culture is a new form of cyber ostracism, which implies any acts or actions of ignoring and excluding an individual or group from networking and communication, this has been made easier by the internet. In email and other social media communication, it is relatively easier to for a person or organization to be ignored and excluded, through simply refusing to communicate.

However, the use of social media and their role in Cancel Culture is a major concern. Nigerians are now imbibing the cancel culture to call out organizations, government, religious leaders, rapist, lecturers and debtors, this trend is growing. While some call out are said to be true others are said to be false. This article is focusing specifically on the cancel culture used among youths in Nigeria. It explores how the online world affects the offline world. This research is saddled with the responsibility of illuminating the social construction of Cancel Culture and the use of social media platforms.

Cancel Culture: A Social Perspective

The term "callout culture" or "cancel culture" is a phenomenon of social media activism that has prompted many to promote the boycotting of different institutions, people, systems for misalignment with social values. Research has made it clear that certain characteristic of a tweet (such as message topic, username, user image, etc.) play a statistically significant role on the perceptions of tweets and author credibility (An *et al.*, 2013). The term emerged from discursive accountability practices, including reading, dragging,

boycotting, blacklisting, calling out, in and even canceling, are the creations of Black counter publics that were conspicuously absent from the American public imaginary. It can be said derived from the marginalized, the abused, the victimized, and the deprived. Cancel Culture also known as Call Out Culture, is a movement and a new variant of Social Media behaviour, a social phenomenon that has become so common, that the term was the 2019 word or phrase of the year in the Australian Dictionary, Macquarie.

As a result of the ongoing pandemic people have remained at home to avoid COVID-19 pandemic, therefore they spend more time online, using social media, which has resulted in many cancelations, within this period several content creators on YouTube and Tik Tok have been attacked and labeled for organizing or attending parties during the pandemic, on the Instagram platform, there are countless profiles reported and classified as “covidiot” (Covid idiots), people who break the quarantine protocol. The cancel culture has created Internet Censorship; it provokes fear of making a mistake on social media and being “canceled” for it. It generates a lack of interest in understanding other people’s opinions, demonstrating that only the masses’ view matters. If someone thinks differently or make a mistake, their reputation could be destroyed (Delgado, 2020). It’s a defining feature of our online conversations, a version of the Cancel Culture that has been functioning as a tool for the oppressed, marginalized and their allies to reveal injustice, identify the loopholes and call for reforms. The practice of directly addressing inequality underpins countless social justice movements, from the dominant narratives of civil rights to standing rock a tribal civil liberty union in the United States.

The contemporary idea behind the Cancel Culture, are the interpersonal confrontations occurring between individuals, organizations and institutions on social media, extremely divisive, polarizing for challenging the status quo, which often spark discomfort and offense. Recently, Meghan Markle the Duchess of Sussex and her husband Prince Harry Duke of Sussex, (although the couple have stepped aside from performing royal duties) in a tell-all interview (Oprah TV) with Oprah Winfrey on the 7th March, 2021 the couples called out the British Royal Palace and British tabloids for barrage of negative headlines, unfair criticism and racism. How Meghan almost committed suicide, developed unstable mental health, that their son wouldn’t be regarded as a Prince, how Prince Charles, Prince Harry’s father stopped picking his son’s call and how their family has been cut off financially by the rest of the royals. On social media, some denounced the couple’s infidelity to the family, breaking the British Royals culture of silence, using the American media, while others firmly defended them (Specia, 2021). Landers (2017) quoted White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer, that Trump’s tweets are considered

“official statements made by the President of the United States”. The idea of “cancel culture,” is a phenomena uniquely enabled by capitalism’s demands on the media production side, and on the audience side, by our connectivity to social media.

Specificities of Social Media in Cancel Culture

Twitter’s Cancel Culture

Twitter is a very confrontational, rude and techno-elite social media platform. The use of broadcast-style social media platforms, such as Twitter allowed marginalized and deprived groups to engage in social network framing, a process by which collective experiences of an offending party’s (or their proxy’s) unjust behavior is discussed, morally evaluated, and prescribing punishment, such as being fired or clamour for resignation, through the collective reasoning of culturally aligned online mobs, social media crowds and leaderless organization (Meraz & Papacharissi, 2013). “Originally a practice of Black women ‘signifying,’ (the callout) has occasionally been mistaken for Twitter’s ‘mob mentality,’ but it is qualitatively different: it is often a critique of the social system inequality rather than an attack against specific, individualistic transgressions” (Brock, 2020). Twitter has become a powerful court of public opinion and "cancel culture" plays a central role. The phenomenon occurs when people get upset about something that a company or institution or person has done or something they have said. It also can be divisive with the opposing group saying threats of cancellation stifles free speech. It's hard to deny that cancel culture has sparked important conversations, social transformation and social change, such as when the Ogoni People’s Movement led by late Ken Saro-Wiwa trended for the first time. Since then, the Military Government and successive Civilian administration has made efforts to divide its ranks, this was during the era of less internet penetration.

Twitter also helped elevate the complaints and charges of sexual assault, sexism and unfair treatment of women during the #MeToo movement. But the strength of cancel culture can also ravage careers and lives and there are cases where the people on Twitter don't have all the facts and perhaps took on the role of judge and jury without having an accurate picture of the story behind their ire. Micro-blogging sites like Twitter increases the communication potential for users and presents more advantages for Cancel Culture movement because tracing of the identity and the source of the tweets are hard to achieve (Crettiez, 2011; Quilliam, 2014; Menkhaus, 2014). Mr. Donald Trump joined Twitter in 2009, having over 88.9 million followers and has attracted attention worldwide since he joined the Twitter Community; he frequently tweeted during the 2016 electioneering period and as President of the United States, over twelve years from the creation of his Twitter account till when he was permanently banned in 8th January, 2021 after the violent attack on the US

Capitol by Trump's supporters. Trump's supporters gave a quick and furious reaction by deactivating their twitter accounts and some were banned by Twitter for twitting pro-trump messages, however, Trump's adviser Jason miller said the big tech social media company like Twitter was attempting to cancel the 74 million Americans who voted for Trump in 2020. That if the President of the United States can be cancelled, his support group are of the opinion that, both explicitly and implicitly, what chance do they have of navigating the treacherous waters of the modern information society? Facebook and Instagram also banned and blocked him from all their platforms due to allegations of election-related misinformation, incitation of violence and misinformation about the global COVID-19 pandemic. Sociology is the study of social change, social exchange and social interactions, on the 20th of November, 2022 the British Broadcasting Commission announced the reinstatement of Donald Trump' twitter account by the owner of Twitter Mr. Elon Musk, the decision was reached after running a poll in which about 51.8% of twitter users voted that Mr. Trump's ban from the social media platform be lifted. The voter represents more than 15 million Twitter users: "the people have spoken," Musk was reported to have tweeted.

Twitter on the 4th of June, 2021 also suspended President Muhammadu Buhari's account after deleting his tweet been classified as violating twitter rules, which was tagged genocidal, threat and marginalization of the South Eastern people of Nigeria, an Igbo dominated ethnic extraction that has been combative and agitating for secession from the Nigeria State, the Federal Government in retaliation also indefinitely suspended twitter site operations in Nigeria, it directed the National Communications Commission (NCC) to instruct all telecommunication companies to withdraw network facilitation to Twitter for what the government termed interference, consistent use of the platform for activities that are capable of undermining Nigeria's corporate existence, funding of ENDSARS protest in October, 2020 and why Twitter has never deleted the tweets of the leader of the proscribed group- Indigenous People of Biafra led by Mazi Nnamdi Kanu (Lai, 2021). Ironically, the indefinite suspension of Twitter operation in Nigeria was published on Twitter via Nigeria's Ministry of Information and Culture's handle. The cancellation of Twitter by the Federal Government of Nigeria has generated reactions by international envoys, civil societies and opposition political parties in Nigeria. There has been global accusation of foreign manipulation, insecurity and subtle control against western countries using micro blogging and video technology, for example, India banned TikTok and Snapchat for being inimical to the security of India, while China, Uganda and Egypt don't have Twitter. The Russian Government is now deploying ransomware against US companies. These developments have created a two side for global information capitalism,

while some countries are able to develop and localize social media platforms such as Weibo of China, Twitter of US, and others are in a state of helplessness and by-passed by global dictates of information society.

Facebook's Cancel Culture

Robertson (2021) Facebook enjoys a global monopoly on the social media space with over 2.6 billion Facebook accounts and worth hovers around \$750 Billion. Facebook has moved from being an interesting gimmick, a form of social messaging to being an essential service for many groups. Here in Nigeria as in other countries, government agencies, charities and news organizations depend on Facebook for some of their work. In February, 2021 Facebook cancelled its service to Australia in protest to Australian Government introduction of a media code, in order to stop other countries from following the Australian policy, Facebook simply unfriended the whole of Australia, the health care providers, churches, government, school, businesses and several other groups. The Australian government treasurer, Josh Frydenberg, stated: "Facebook responded to a code designed to curb its market power with an abuse of its market power." Cancel culture is real and it is particularly dangerous when we rely on monopolies for our news and views – monopolies who determine that we are not mature or intelligent enough to think for ourselves. Bromwich (2018) a style writer for the New York Times described the digital phenomenon of being canceled as "total disinvestment in something (anything)". Facebook has also contributed to Cancel Culture in Nigeria during the #BringBackOurGirls, etc.

YouTube

YouTube has remained a video-sharing platform of choice despite the increased competition from other social platforms, for example, Daily motion, Vimeo, and the likes. It has the advantages of being difficult to trace the identity of people posting content, while offering the possibility for users to generate comments and share contents (Quilliam, 2014). Most of the videos, graphic transmission and content have been identified by researchers as promoting radicalization, thereby creating an online and off line world.

Cancel Culture among Nigerian Youths

Nigerians have participated in online campaigns and signature collection aimed at canceling a person, organization and systems. Significantly, it should be kept in mind very clearly that for digital natives, the Internet is a "natural" extension of the off-line society as it is known by other generations. The position of Postmes & Brunsting (2002) carried clearly empirical evidence of the way that online activity is regularly viewed as an identical option to disconnected activity (by activists and non-activists alike), and they

additionally contended that the web can promote identity formation and help build communities. Create engaging, appealing, intelligent and easy to use stages within the platforms to draw in more youthful crowds (Weimann, 2015); Offer spaces where gatherings can keep up with secret yet exceptionally equitable correspondence modes with the understanding that everybody can partake (Weimann, 2010); Identify likely members and give them data about 'the reason' and the gatherings associated with defending it (Busher, 2015).

Theoretical Framework

This article made use of Symbolic Learning Theory. The theory was developed by Canadian-American Psychologist Albert Bandura in 1971, it is a model that talks about 'reciprocal determinism', meaning the world and people's behaviour affect each other, central to it is the identification of 'talent developers' and also incorporating 'culture and environment' into our roles. Symbolic Learning Theory an off shoot of Social Learning Theory holds that learning is formed through imagery, from age 7 years imagery helps to develop a mental blueprint. The Social Media space is dominated by visual and digital imagery such as, video calling, chartroom, and several technology transmission graphics that aids live streaming. This involves series of social elements and people can learn new information and behaviours by watching other people. Social Learning Theory rests on a tripod stand of Personal factors (cognitive, affective and biological events), Behaviour and Environmental factors. The focus of Social Learning Theory is on how people develop cognitive function and learning through the environment. Social Learning theory emphasizes on the importance of observing and modeling the behaviours, attitudes, and emotional reactions of others, also on learning that occurs in social context, noting the negative/positive consequences of their actions, stresses observational learning, imitation and modeling (Fryling *et al.*, 2011; Overskeid, 2018; Hammer, 2011). Human communities are established by symbolic interactions which are outcomes of social learning, Cancel Culture (social movements) are also rooted in symbols, signs, language, music and paintings.

The ENDSARS protest of October, 2022 that spread across several cities in Nigeria, solidarity protest by Nigerians in diaspora and mass mobilization by global sympathizers started on Twitter in 2017 with #EndSARS as a decentralized social movement before moving to the streets, demanding the disbandment of SARS a Special Anti-Robbery Squad within the Nigerian Police Force, it generated millions of tweet, exposing and sharing documentary of several police civil rights abuse, violations, killings, injustice and brutality. The social media presented a symbolic learning platform globally on the need

to raise a voice against SARS. These explain several mass participations in challenges and comments on some trending issues on social media especially on Cancel Culture. One major strength of Social Learning Theory is speed, the rate of assimilation, ease of acceptance and modification of behavior is very high. Understanding and integrating social and cognitive skills through observation and practice as proven to be easy. The theory focuses on group behaviour and group interpretations of situations, while deemphasizing individual interpretation and gives less explanation as to why the social behavior is occurring. Social learning theory also looks at individual problem as a result of behavior being influenced by positive or negative reinforcement (LeCroy & Ashford, 2013)

Methodology

This study was conducted in Lagos State which is located in the South West of Nigeria. Lagos State is Nigeria's largest city, 7th fastest growing city in the world, an industrial megacity and comprises of Lagos Island, Lagos Mainland, Badagry, Ikorodu and Epe division respectively; all belonging to the Yoruba-speaking area of Nigeria. Ikeja, the capital city of Lagos state, with an estimated population of about 18.4 million inhabitants is reputed among Nigerian states (LBS, 2020). The Alimosho Local Government, the largest in terms of population and land mass with a multi-lingual population was established in 1945 and it was under the former western region administration. Alimosho's population is predominantly Egbados. The study employed a mixed study approach of an exploratory and cross-sectional survey and it also made use of primary and secondary data collection. Secondary data was gathered through reliable internet sites, journals and newspapers. Primary data was collected with qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. These approaches were proper on the grounds that the study was conducted at a single period to comprehend the social construction of cancel culture among youths in Lagos state and how it is aided by social media. For the qualitative, 5 in-depth interviews were conducted for social media users. Four Hundred and Thirty-two (432) copies of questionnaires were distributed and administered to respondents out of whom the actual participants of the study. In all a total of 106 participants meets the inclusion criteria and were interviewed for the study. This sample size was determined using Cochran unknown size population formula. This is because the populations of social media users are not known. This formula is

$$n = \frac{z^2 pq}{e^2}$$

Where ME = the desired margin of error (0.05)

$$q = 1 - p$$

$z = Z$ statistics for level of confidence at two-sided test is 1.96;

$p =$ assumed proportion of the cancel culture population (0.5)

$n =$ sample required

non-response rate is 5%

$$n = \frac{\{0.5(1-0.5)(1.96)^2\}}{0.05^2} = 384$$

Total sample size = 384 respondents.

A well-structured questionnaire was distributed to the respondents via online. Since the major means of the questionnaires distribution was via mail and social media platforms, 106 questionnaires were retrieved, and the questionnaires were properly filled. The questionnaires were analyzed using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 21 and also descriptive and inferential (Chi-square) statistics at $p < 0.05$ while the qualitative data was analyzed with ALAS TI 8. Ethical consideration of non-maleficence, respect for individual, equity and beneficence was strictly adhered to.

Findings and Discussion

Table 1 below presents the socio-demographic factors of the respondents which entail age, sex, religion, marital status, ethnic group, educational attainment and occupational engagement. Respondents' mean age was 34 years, while 19.8% were between 15-24 years old, 34.9% were between 25-34 years old, 38.7% were between 35-44 years and 6.6% were between 45-60 years. This shows that larger parts of the respondents are between 25-44 years of age. Almost Two-Third of the respondents (61.3%) were male, while 38.7% were female. The investigation revealed that 50.9% of the respondents were married, while 48.1 were single and 0.9% were divorced. Yoruba respondents were 88.7%, while 6.6% were Igbo respondents and 4.7% were Hausas respectively since the study was conducted in Lagos state where the dominant language is Yoruba. Majority of the respondents were (76.4%) were Christians while 23.6% were Moslem.

The investigation revealed that the respondents were highly educated, 57.5% were HND/Degree holders, 30.2% were Masters/PhD holders, 5.7% were NCE/OND holders and 6.6% were O'level holders, these shows that 93.4% had higher education qualification and that the respondents are literates. In the area of occupational engagement 72.6% of the respondents were employed in various economic activities, while 27.4% of the respondents were students.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Socio-demographic Characteristics

Demographic Characteristics	Frequency (n= 106)	Percentage
Age (Mean age= 37)		
15-24 years	21	19.8
25-34 years	37	34.9
35-44 years	41	38.7
45-60 years	7	6.6
Sex		
Male	65	61.3
Female	41	38.7
Marital Status		
Married	54	50.1
Single	51	48.9
Divorced	1	0.9
Ethnic Group		
Yoruba	94	88.7
Igbo	7	6.6
Hausa	5	4.7
Religion		
Christianity	81	76.4
Muslim	25	23.6
Educational Level		
HND/Degree	61	57.5
Masters/PhD	32	30.2
NCE/OND	6	5.7
Secondary	7	6.6
Occupational Engagements		
Employed	77	72.6
Students/Unemployed	29	27.4

Source: Fieldwork, 2021

The general consciousness of cancel culture on social media among youths among the respondents is presented in Table 2. Based on research outcomes 100% of the respondents have Social Media accounts. This shows that the phenomenon called social media is popular. Majority of the respondents uses more than one social media platforms, because 63.2% of the respondents use multiple platforms e.g. 2go, Tiktok, Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp, Instagram, Snap chat, YouTube, Zoom etc. On the area of level of relevance and awareness of the respondents to the kinds of deviant behaviours the social media promotes. It shows that 45.3% of the respondents believe that the social media promotes Moral Decadence (Nudity, Porn sites, Immoralities, etc), while 26.4% states that the social media promotes Fraudulent activities, 24.5% says it promotes Cyber bullying and 3.8% gave no response. On the level of awareness about the concept of Cancel Culture or Call Out Culture, 58.5% of

the respondents do not know about Cancel Culture, 41.5% are aware of the concept of Cancel Culture. Research findings shows further what Cancel Culture means to the respondents. 29.2% considers it an act of Whistle Blowing, 25.5% considers it has an Abnormal Behaviour, while 45.3% maintain that they have No Idea of the concept of Cancel Culture.

Table 2: Perception of Cancel Culture on Social Media among Youths

Variables	Frequency (N=106)	Percentage (100%)
Deviant Behaviours		
Moral Decadence	48	45.3
Fraud	28	26.4
Cyber-bullying	26	24.5
No Response	4	3.8
Awareness of Cancel Culture		
Not aware	62	58.5
Aware	44	41.5
Cancel Culture		
Whistle Blowing	31	29.2
Abnormal Behaviour	27	25.5
No Idea	48	45.3
Social Media Platform		
Facebook	15	14.2
Multiple Platforms	67	63.2
Twitter	4	3.8
Whatsapp	20	18.9

Source: Fieldwork, 2021

In another response gathered through the research instrument, the respondents were asked for what reason did they participate in any cancel culture. The outcome is presented in Table 4.4. According to Table 4.4: 13 (12.3%) of the respondents participate in a form of cancel culture or call out on issues related to Bad behaviours, 9 (8.5%) of the respondents participate in a form of cancel culture or call out on issues related to Fake News/Hate Speech, 4 (3.8%) of the respondents participate in a form of cancel culture or call out on issues related to Indebtedness/Fraud, 12 (11.3%) of the respondents participate in a form of cancel culture or call out on issues related to Politics/National Issues, 3 (2.6%) of the respondents participate in a form of cancel culture or call out on issues related to Religious Issues, 1 (0.9%) of the respondents participate in a form of

cancel culture or call out on issues related to Sports and 64 (60.4%) of the respondents did not participate in any form of cancel culture or call out culture. This implies that most of the respondents actually use social media for leisure, educational and entertainment purpose but did not participate in the phenomenon of cancel culture.

Table 3: Reasons for Cancel Culture

Reason for Cancel Culture	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Bad Behaviours	13	12.3
Fake News Hate Speech	9	8.5
Indebtedness/Fraud	4	3.8
Politics/National Issues	12	11.3
Religious Issues	3	2.6
Sports	1	0.9
Not Disclosed	64	60.4
Total	106	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2021

In another response gathered through the research instrument and presented in table 4.6. Majority of the respondents stated that they use WhatsApp most frequently 72 (67.9%), 15 (14.2%) uses Facebook, 6 (5.7%) uses Twitter, other respondents use all the platforms which also constitute 10.3%. Based on the above findings WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter are mediums of exposure to radicalization, indoctrination methods and sources of information dissemination in the social construction of cancel culture in Nigeria. Based on findings from the research instrument Twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp are frequently used by the respondents; these social media applications have trans-border technology backed up services, which enables video recording, video transfers, voice calls, voice recording and storage. Specifically, these channels provide networks of recruiters, working horizontally, in all the countries they target due to the trans-border nature of the Internet.

Table 4: Presentation of Frequently Used Social Media Platform

Medium	Frequency	Percentage (%)
All Platforms	11	10.3
Facebook	15	14.2
Instagram	2	1.9
Twitter	6	5.7
WhatsApp	72	67.9
Total	106	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2021

The following extract captured the view of one of the IDIs who uses the social media for business and trending news.

Based on my experience, exposure to social media and with online presence of 70% daily, I use the social media for my business and source of trending news to keep me updated and informed about happenings around me. Cancel Culture against most public figures has larger audience on Facebook and WhatsApp. The rate of shares and video download on these two platforms is very high. This has been made possible by the joint ownerships of the two social media application by Mark Elliot Zuckerberg an American media magnate, internet entrepreneur, and philanthropist with about 2 Billion WhatsApp Users and 2.85 Billion Facebook Users. (IDI/Female/35 years/Christian/Alimosho LGA)

Table 5.1: Calling People Out on Social Media does it Achieve its Aim

Table 5 below revealed that calling People Out on social media or engaging in Cancel Movement achieves its aims and purposes. In another extract capturing the view of one of the IDIs who uses the social media for research, social interaction and trending news.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
No	46	43.4
Yes	60	57..6
Total	106	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2021

Cancel Culture is an empowerment for the present generation aided by technology, the older adults are playing sitting on the fence role and this generation like its counterparts in South Africa, North Africa were Arab Spring brought about sweeping changes in the political culture, Nigerian Youths are not left behind. I have observed that Cancel Culture circulates a lot of fake news, wrong information and videos from other countries in achieving its objectives. (IDI/Female/28 years/Christian/ Alimosho LGA)

Table 5: Practicing what is learnt online from Social Media and Age Group

Social Media Practice	Age group				Total
	Youth	Adult	Middle Age	Elderly	
No	2	7	10	0	19
	9.5%	18.9%	24.4%	0.0%	17.9%
Yes	19	30	31	7	87
	90.5%	81.1%	75.6%	100.0%	82.1%
Total	21	37	41	7	106
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-square χ^2 (df = 3, N = 106) = 3.726, p = .293

Source: Fieldwork, 2021

The researcher in a quest to investigate how the online world affect the offline world did a cross tabulation of the age group of the respondents with the respondents view on whether they practice what they learn online or not. It was found that 2 (9.5%) of the youth do not practice what they learn online while 19 (90.5%) of the youth admit that they practice whatever they learn via the internet and social media. Out of 37 Adult who participated in the survey it was found that 7 (18.9%) of the adults claim that they do not practice whatever they learn online while 30 (81.1%) of the adults affirm that they put into practice the things they learn online.

In addition, out of 41 middle-aged persons who participated in the survey it found that 10 (24.4%) of the middle-aged persons claim that they do not practice whatever they learn online while 31(75.6%) of the middle-aged affirm that they put into practice the things they learn online. Furthermore, all (100%) of the elder/senior persons who took part in the survey affirms that they practice whatever they learnt online.

Discussion of Findings

The main objective of this study was to examine the social construction of Cancel Culture with the aid of social media among youths in Lagos state, Nigeria and also to establish the relationship between the online and offline social world? The Social Media is a very popular Social Actor globally and it is the semi-autonomous cocoon that drives the Cancel Culture Movement. The findings from the field reveal that Cancel Culture is a popular social action in the country, but majority of the respondents do not know the literal meaning of the concept. However, as a result of its high prevalence everybody has individual perception which culminates into divergent social definitions of Cancel Culture. Most of the respondent also noted that they have not heard the term Cancel Culture.

The study also discovered that cancel culture has promoted fake news, nudity, religious issues and terrorism. With this most respondent noted that they do not participate in any form of cancel culture. In addition, most of the respondents agreed that Cancel Culture usually achieve its purpose, while others disagree. This is supported by Crettiez (2011), Quilliam (2014) and Menkhaus (2014), that micro-blogging sites like Twitter increases the communication potential for users and presents more advantages for Cancel Culture movement because tracing of the identity and the source of the tweets are hard to achieve. Based on findings the poor level of awareness on the fundamentals of Cancel Culture among the respondents and the general populace has made it impossible to harness its benefits in reporting atrocities, giving one's opinion and questioning our leaders and bringing them to accountability, also the absence of autonomy of governmental duties of legislation and judiciary in Nigeria, makes the outcome of Cancel Culture predictable in favour of the elites and ruling class. Relying on the strength of the research findings, most of the respondent do not know the functional meaning of Cancel Culture, while some perceived it has Whistle Blowing (a form of exposing wrong did) and others consider it an Abnormal Behaviour. The Social Media has greatly put the print media, traditional businesses, traditional schooling system on their toes has all of respondents are active on the Social Media while based on another finding most agree that Cancel Culture is popular.

The online social world and offline social world has proven to have significant association, most visuals and write-up online form part of the knowledge of the respondents and they demonstrate what they have learnt online in the real-world situation. Most videos online elicit cognitive and emotional reaction from the respondents, while some have learnt certain skills online from farming group, fashion, entertainment and celebrity group online and they practice the skills and talents learnt to demonstrate cognition. In view of this Government is not relenting in regulating the Social Media, pending when this will be achieved via legislation, Government agencies such National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) and National Communication Commission (NCC) have become Social Media watch dogs.

Conclusion and Recommendation

From the foregoing it has been discovered that Cancel Culture, Social Media, the Internet are a determinant of the system of Government and type of society. Basically, Democracy, Multi political party and its electoral system has greatly enabled Cancel Culture to flourish in advanced countries. The Governments of US, UK, France, Germany, Canada, and other European countries investigate

matters brought to the public through Cancel Culture Movement, it has assumed adjudicative dimension of its own in these countries. To the extent that it has a hybrid term called Cancel_Culture_Capitalism_it means cancel culture and partisan activists are coming for your business, they are coming for your game, or event in your hometown, and they are coming to cancel everything from sports to how you make a living. It is a political attitude of the Western elite to attack big corporations and business institutions of perceived political opponents, Republicans vs. Democrats, Conservatism vs. Rightist etc. The ownership and investment in media houses by Political actors, Party financiers and stakeholders has further aided Cancel Culture Capitalism. Countries that are Communist, Socialistic and Theologically driven have develop technological curtains that separates their social media content from that of the West, notably is India, China, Russia, Iran, The Taliban, etc. But in the last six years the Federal Government of Nigeria have made countless attempts at regulating the social media, because the fear of Cancel Culture is the new wisdom in the country's bureaucratic and administrative circle. To reduce the prevalence rate of Cancel Culture, Government agency such National Orientation Agency should evolve orientation through the mass media such as newspapers, television stations, radio stations, civic education and so on to sensitize the general public about cancel movement. Government should maximize financial resources at its disposal to engage in more social projects that will uplift citizen's lives and be more visible of social media to engage her youth population with facts and figures. These will make the general public to have channels of verifying news and information. The National Legislative and State Legislative Bodies should desist from partisanship and seek equity collaboration with civil societies so as to develop a holistic legislation devoid of class protection and personal interest to check mate fake news. The Cancel Movement should transform it Civil Societies and Task Team with clear stated objectives as distinctive positions to be achieved by the Cancel Movement now Civil Societies. Finally, there is a great need to regulate blogging activities on the social media space to guide against cyber bullying, character assassination, and other vices.

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