The Imperceptibility in Social Technology: When Education Trails to Leverage Global Trends in African Countries South of the Sahara

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Abstract: *How objective and purposeful are our educational concepts in relation to global settings, and what constitutes the normative definition of cultural change if such understandings are not aligned within global frames? When recent works on socio-technological undertones consider in particular, local forces and circumstances that shape such mappings in countries south of the Sahara. Then, there is reason to analyze the pertinence of the knowledge scheme that shapes our mental construct; hence our social perceptions within the global scene of social technology. This relates to our technological cultures as identified in our thoughts and attitudes. This study argues that, successful development depends on the balance between thought and attitude. As such, particular attention is paid to issues related to concept-culture development and the role it can play in the social industrialization processes. Options for social technologically-induced cultural changes are discussed and the possibility to integrate appropriate technologies in Central African Regional schools' education systems is highlighted. The paper equally notes that, within the present educational dispensation, these efforts need educational reforms and actions that impede laissez faire prescriptions unlikely to achieve set goals. A minimum of mental shift and a gender sensitive reinforced educational system are also likely to trigger information flows that induce social change.*

Keywords: *Knowledge, social perception, culture, educational system, mental construct*

1. INTRODUCTION

Prevailing conceptions of technological development are, to a greater extent simplified abstractions, derived from interpretations of industrial development in Europe. However, recent historical research has revealed that European industrialization was a good deal more complex than was previously assumed. The emerging picture is one of the false starts, conflicts, a variety of possible development paths, multiple centers of invention and diffusion of technologies and of contradictory political intervention. Indeed, it looks very much like current industrialization efforts in the global South.

Simultaneously, the assumptions which were obvious to development theorists a quarter-century ago and the conceptual frameworks founded on them have increasingly been criticized for their inadequate consideration of the role of indigenous social forces in the developing world as [1] remarked. Concurrently, interest in development paths which are alternative or complementary to those promoted by abstract theorists is growing within the development research community. In Western science, reconstructions of and comparisons with other societies have often served the purpose of highlighting essential aspects of contemporary Western societies. Sub-Saharan African countries have accordingly been characterized by the absence or *lack* of this or that *modern* property [2]. The transition from pre-industrial to industrial society, and its roots in pre-industrial societies themselves has, by comparison, received little systematic attention, particularly the internal but transcendent technological dynamics of non-industrial social formations, and the elements of continuity that influence the development of social constellations. However, it is not enough to narrate illuminating parallels between European, American and other industrialization experiences in an anecdotal manner. Indeed, such parallels may turn out to be directly misleading, if used for prescriptive purposes. On the other hand, abstract theorizing is only helpful to the extent that it can be related to actual realities and used in empirical studies.

If one were to count the number of times in a day that s/he looks at a text, checks an email, scroll through Facebook or just set to reflect on how digital technology affects his life and interactions with the universe, it would be a whole lot. If we transpose this individual impact on the African society, we can then start imagining the impact of the digital age on communities and cultures at large?

The relationship between technology and society is an important focus in development studies and a determinant in psycholinguistics as to who is developed or not. But with the exponential advancement of modern digital technologies, one observes an orcharding of rapid and turbulent social changes, entirely reshaping local, national and global social structures in thought and expression; while the notion of development is shifting paradigms in perception and concept with embedded sociological underpinnings.

2. CONNECTING TECHNOLOGY WITH SOCIAL CHANGE

The effect of technology on society is not a new or even relatively recent phenomenon. The meaning of technology as perceived today, is generally linked to the application of science or knowledge, specifically, the creation of a tool, and use of the tool to solve a problem as [2] emphasizes that *societies have always been dependent on need-based technology, from time immemorial.* As each new technology becomes the norm and people grow *to* rely on it to the point that society would not function in the same way without it. Today, technological development is so interconnected with social change that what many consider as development is actually expressed through the social revolutions incapsulated in technological advancements. It may be a bitter pile for most African countries south of the Sahara to swallow when we look at development from the present information and digitization perspective. In concept, most sociologists would describe the present era of globalization as the age of information. Information has become an essential commodity, valued highly just like any other commodity, whether agricultural or industrial. It would not be farfetched to think that the digitization of information and communication has led to the exponential globalization of economy and society, significantly impacting cultures world-wide.

3. HAS DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY AFFECTED SUB–SAHARAN AFRICA IN POSITIVE WAYS?

It is a truism that digital technology is certainly at the root of many advancements in complex sciences, healthcare, communications, industry, information sharing and other such areas. And there is consensus as to the magnitude of the impact of this digital technology. But opinions may sometimes vary greatly on which effects are negative and which are positive

Most noticeable, social change as indicated by [3] is a neutral concept that can be seen as positive or negative depending on the lens with which we choose to view it. From the sociological perspective, any change that improves human social welfare could be seen as positive. But that is an oversimplification, as something that improves someone's lot in life may have the opposite effect on another person or society. Many of modern technology's effects on people and societies fall into this nuanced area of subjective experience. For example, advancements in computers, instant communication, information transfer and transportation have led to large corporations from wealthy, industrialized societies outsourcing labor functions like manufacturing and telecommunications to Sub-Saharan African countries where labor is much cheaper. This is a positive effect for the corporation because its profit margin increases. But it has a negative effect on workers who lose their jobs to outsourcing, thus increasing the already dreaded rate of poverty in these countries especially those of the central African sub region

These technological advancements have also helped online some world businesses like Amazon and eBay to flourish. These businesses effectively outsource the majority of their labor and retail space to the internet and automated mechanization systems. While the companies benefit from low overhead and high profits, consumers benefit from low prices. Low scale retailers lose business or go completely out of business, and their employees lose their jobs. Of course, the inter- and intra-personal effects of the digital age are perhaps the most fascinating and that is why many people in modern societies now engage with each other primarily through electronic communication and, specifically, social media. Many people also use social media as their primary source of news, regardless of the reputability of sources.

Information has become democratized. At the same time, it has become self-selected. The concept of *facts* has become devalued while the same concept on social platforms has allowed for the democratization of art, music, ideas and social movements. While we acknowledge the fact that the world is being revolutionized through the success of modern digital media, we equally recognized that this is just one of the many, complex effects of modern technology on society.

4. WHEN EDUCATION TRAILS MODERN TECHNOLOGY

Unequal access to modern technology causes a new digital divide of global social stratification. While in developed countries, technology provides the opportunity to reconnect with the global world with school children at all levels, in particular collaborating directly in real time with children in different geographical locations, scientists being able to conduct complexed experiments that impact from across the globe, education in impoverished African states is a sorry narrative of events in total incapacity to create innovate or change.

The educational systems in most of these countries is a cliché of some old scrab of syllabus drowned by some "di-constructivists" of the colonial era that provided subservient education with the ultimate gold of denaturing the thinking processes in the African mind that "di-enslaves" him to become an independent human being. The whole concept of African educational system, especially in countries of the central African region, has since they gained independence, evolved in an educational system with an undercurrent of dismembering the thinking linkages that provide for self-realization and self-actualization. This explains why the educational system in most countries south of the Sahara is dependable, unproductive and realistically barren.

Training received from these institutions replicates concepts and theories of the early nineteenth century geared at preparing people for some kind of industrial or factory occupations [4]. This could be justified in that; African states need industries to develop their economies. Whereas, times have evolved, world economies have moved from industrialization to technological revolution then to globalization and now digitalization, with Central African countries invisible on the scene. Yet, an educational system that undermines such evolutions and which some educational theoreticians and political watchdogs will not hesitate to convoke facts and figures to establish some sought of leveraging that purports some development of its kind; in a general context of pain and misery simply because they exist some kind of internet and some sought of social media interconnectedness. Technology's effect on society is complicated, nuanced, and the concept of development variegated. But with a good educational system that integrates our indigenous knowledge, cultural values with context governed principles and values, the directionality of social technology can be aligned to a well fashioned and modern educational system that respects African cultural specificities

5. WHY INCLUDE SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF TECHNOLOGY IN SCHOOL CURRICULUM

At the center of the social implications of technology are humans: - it is humans who make the technology and humans who benefit, or are harmed, by it. Social implications of technology constitute a cardinal point in social studies in that, researchers seek to understand how the way people think and act is meaningful to them, and it is the job of the researcher to provide the relevance of the research. «Sociology of Technology" could be seen as exploring the ways in which culture and social structures shape the design and use of technology, and how technology in turn influences cultural and social experience. Such studies are very instrumental in today's search to understand the functioning of communities especially within this context of global village propaganda. While technology stands out as the indisputable catalyzer of social change, the social ramifications of this same technology constitute the bed rock upon which concepts and action pivotal to any development process are interwoven. Yet, the very concept of development cannot be stripped off our educational systems. would not it be right to argue that; Central African countries' economic debacles stems from inadequate educational curriculums, poor tectological infrastructures and a fatidic digital gab that translates the absence in the world development forum Agenda? If social implications of technology could be highlighted in the African context of our educational system, would not there be a sought of awakening of the subconsciousness slumber that has keep most of the African states south of the Sahara at the lamplight of laughingstocks.

In getting to know the positive social implication of technology, young Africans will immediately understand the equal opportunities it offers within the universal value behind technology in bringing equality to products and services, and minimizing socioeconomic gaps among societies and people. In fact, social technology makes health and education available to more people, making it easier to learn and get care, no matter their background. Furthermore, in including the social impact of technology in school curriculum, the African youth will be exposed to the reality that individuals are being impacted by technology in many different ways, and that, many of these ways are negative. An early exposure to this knowledge will keep a lot of African youths away from social media criminality

6. LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY-INDUCED SOCIETAL ISSUES AND CULTURAL CHANGES

Technology has grown rapidly in the resent past decades and its use has also increased drastically Though the disparity can be observed in its use and application with regards to most African countries south of the Sahara, there is no doubt that it affects the life of people and changes their way of learning, thinking, and communicating. The major role it plays in the society cannot be overemphasized, and now it is even very tough to imagine life without technology. The simple truth is that, nowadays, both technology and society are co-related, co-dependent, and co-influence with each other. Technology lays an impact on society, including the potential for society to progress or decline, in both good and bad manner. At the center lays the kind of education being offered to the youths. So, while society is shaped by technology, which has both beneficial and harmful consequences, the younger generations in particular bear the burden of the inextricable link between human society and social technology in the use of technical systems like mobile phones, computers, television, etc. that reflect the very basis of a population's needs and lifestyle. Although technology improves the lifestyle of human being, it is also a major concern for the present and future generations. Nowadays, people are excessively using technology which reduces their physical activities that directly affect their health. Also, due to the excessive use of technology there is reduced attachment to the sentimentality that hitherto made human relationship more conventional, thus increase in many social crimes happening every day as machines, rather than the human society keep fleshing meaning in a society wherein, human being no longer accounts for the solidarity that gives behavior and attitude their sociocultural reality.

7. CONCLUSION

Our culture has been radically transformed and is still being transformed by technology. From our ideals to modes of communication, we have come a long way. Many people now find it difficult to conduct a face-to-face chat. More than ever before, people use their phones, tablets, or computers to spend time with their buddies. Also, individuals now evaluate others based on how technologically versed they are; whether or not they own the latest mobile phones or cars. Nowadays, listening to music on headphones is preferred over listening to another person.

Most individuals nowadays prefer the internet because that is all they have ever known. Cell phones with touch screens are all the rage these days. Technology just serves to separate people from actuality. People nowadays lack the ability to interact in real-life situations such as individual connections, problem-solving, and showing adult actions. All this is influencing our culture. The reality is that social technology influences culture every time we get anything from an internet seller rather than going to a local business set up. Every moment someone sits down to watch a program, s/he is shaping culture through technology. By not integrating meaningful reforms in educational systems, Central African states are yet to experience improved education and learning processes. Nowadays, people can easily enhance their knowledge using the internet since most of the data present on it is free of cost, and can be accessed at anytime and anywhere. Whatever our perception of social media technology in present era societies, its match towards an adulterated global society is not devoid of serious African cultural alienations coded in most advanced economic and educational systems of countries of the global North that African countries south of the Sahara are unable to measure up to.

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