




The 'anti-sociality' of social media as portrayed in selected Zimdancehall songs



Authors:

Raphael Nhongo¹ 
 Baba P. Tshotsho¹ 
 Tendai F. Muringa¹ 

Affiliations:

¹Department of English and Comparative Literature, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Fort Hare, East London, South Africa

Corresponding author:

Raphael Nhongo,
 rnhongo@ufh.ac.za

Dates:

Received: 15 Feb. 2020
 Accepted: 04 Sept. 2020
 Published: 19 Mar. 2021

How to cite this article:

Nhongo R, Tshotsho BP, Muringa TF. The 'anti-sociality' of social media as portrayed in selected Zimdancehall songs. J Transdiscipl Res S Afr. 2021;17(1), a839. <https://doi.org/10.4102/td.v17i1.839>

Copyright:

© 2021. The Authors.
 Licensee: AOSIS. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution License.

Background: Although social media was designed with the aim of bringing good, it has however taken negative trajectory in societies of the world which has resulted in unpleasant outcomes such as conflicts, lack of Ubuntu, family disintegration and even death of some people. All sectors of the society that include media, government departments, the law courts, the police, educational institutions, the home and arts industry have all pointed to the negatives of social media. Musicians as social commentators and members of the society sensitive to social issues have also observed and raised their concerns about the effects of social media through songs.

Aim: The article analyses the effect of negativity of social media on the lives of the people of Zimbabwe as revealed in selected songs.

Setting: Selected songs and most particularly Zimdancehall songs that are about the problems that are brought by social media in society will be analysed.

Methods: In the analysis, the article, therefore, adopts textual analysis as the method. WhatsApp is the major form of social media that will be focused on although others such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter would also form part of the discussion.

Results: Zimdancehall artists appear to have nothing to celebrate about social media as they are blame everything about it.

Conclusion: The article shall conclude that although social media was meant to bring people together, it has, however, set them apart and has created many problems in society and thereby becoming an antisocial platform.

Keywords: social media; Zimdancehall songs; WhatsApp; antisocial; Ubuntu.

Introduction and background

Social media allow people to get closer than ever before, regardless of wherever they are in the world and the distance that they are apart from one another. Social media although meant for communication and information sharing, it has proved to have adverse or undesirable effects ranging from immorality, lack of Ubuntu, divorce to murder. Despite the important role of sharing information fast and between many people at a given time, the use of social media has been extended to some roles that fall outside the ethical limits of society. Koc and Gulyagci¹ argue that it is unfortunate that despite the benefits that social media has provided, it is evident that more people, especially teenagers, are becoming addicted to using it. These adverse effects of social media have been witnessed in the public sphere, in the media and in some works of art. According to Sriwilai and Charoensukmongkol,² although social media has become a key integral part of people's life in the digital age, it is important to understand the negative impacts that it causes as well. The abuse of social-media platforms and the insensitivity of some social-media users have attracted the interest of many including musicians. These musicians have expressed their dissatisfaction with the conduct of some social-media users by composing songs and playing songs that reflect their dissatisfaction. It is for this reason that we have chosen to look at music, particularly Zimdancehall, to show how some musicians feel about the abuse and misuse of social-media platforms. Zimdancehall music has been chosen because it is the most popular music in Zimbabwe and is followed by many and treats current issues affecting the society. Music as a genre has also been chosen in this article because it is the easiest and fastest way of communicating an artist's feelings with the society. It reaches a large audience, both literate and illiterate, in a short span of time as entertainment whilst sending some messages. A work of art is a mirror of society which reflects what happens in society. It is noteworthy that music is part of popular culture and that musicians play the role of being social commentators. In the words of P'Bitek,³ artists are part of the 'most sensitive and

Read online:



Scan this QR code with your smart phone or mobile device to read online.

imaginative minds that society has produced ... They respond intuitively to what is happening, what has happened and what will happen'. According to Ngara,⁴ a work of art is like a sand grain which resembles the characteristics of a soil lump out of which it has been taken from. As this music is from Zimbabwe and about Zimbabwe, it reflects the treatment of social media and the feelings about such treatment of social media.

Social-media platforms include WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter amongst others. This article focuses more on WhatsApp, which is the most common form of social media platform, whose application is compatible with cellular phones and does not only require internet but can also use cellular-phone network. The social-media phenomenon has evolved over the past few years, and it has grown significantly, resulting in billions of subscribers.⁵ Although WhatsApp is a social-media platform, it has set people closer who are physically apart and those who are physically a distance apart have become socially closer. In public transport and even at home, people choose to communicate with those who are far away through their cellular phones on WhatsApp and ignore those who are closer to them physically. Such are the acts of immorality because it is a sign of being rude for one to be glued on his or her phone, ignoring those who are present and chatting with those who are far away. Even at work places, some people ignore those who will be coming to them to access some services because they will be communicating on WhatsApp. At home, some parents ignore their children whilst they are on social media. Children now lack proper socialisation because of social media in which their parents will be engrossed in instead of paying attention to them. Some couples end up quarrelling because the other spouse is busy on social media whilst ignoring the other. In cases where people are involved in an accident or where they need help, those who come across with such incidents choose to take photos and videos so that they can post on social media. Despite the fact that WhatsApp is a social-media platform, it has however become antisocial. WhatsApp has become so much problematic in society that even musicians have found it necessary to sing about this social media platform.

A number of Zimdancehall artists have sung songs about WhatsApp pointing to its negative effects in Zimbabwe and beyond. Musicians who include King Shady, Hwindi President, Stunner, Juntal and Nox sang about WhatsApp. The article analyses the negative effects of WhatsApp as reflected in Zimdancehall songs that include *PaWhatsApp* by King Shady, *Handikurowe* (I won't hit you) by Freeman, *Let you go* by Stunner and *Nox-WhatsApp* by Hwindi President, *WhatsApp* by Juntal and *WhatsApp* by Nox. These are the songs that are analysed and from there the arguments about how social media becomes antisocial are based. It is important to first delve on the understanding of social media, the society and how music as part of popular culture is important as a genre for social commentating.

Social media and music as popular culture

Social media is generally understood as 'social platforms where people share information, ideas and personal interests and this also includes online tools and websites'.⁶ Miller, Costa and Hayness⁷ refer to social media as a place within which people socialise implying that social media is more than just a means of communication. The sociality of social media has however been a point of concern. Herring⁸ notes that social media is useful in providing a sense of identity, sense of belonging, uniqueness and shared values within a group but each positive value can also be a negative reason to reconsider one's social-networking membership. Sandoval⁹ argues that by including the term social to online media, it implies that other forms of media, such as television and newspapers are unsocial, yet, this is not the case. The television, radio and newspapers are even more social than what is referred to as social media because they hardly harm people's lives as they transmit information that is authentic and verified. The sociality of social media can be further viewed to be problematic on the grounds that it creates an illusion of knowing what is transpiring in one's life by seeing posts and social-networking pages and reading comments on one's posts,¹⁰ yet some people may be leading a life that is contrary to their posts. Genuine sociality of social media can also be questioned as comments can be sent by both friends and foes. More so, given the unpleasant outcomes of using social media, such as cybercrimes, fraud, conflicts, family disintegration and even human loss, social networks are increasingly being labelled as antisocial platforms.¹¹ With the negatives of social media, blame can be assigned to an individual but sometimes the vehicle of blame-in this case the social networking sites-is all that can be identified.⁸

The way people associate with each other to form social relations and society is referred to as sociality.⁷ Social life requires associations between individuals which potentially lead to interactions.¹² All sociality involves some medium of communication. Social media has potential to create sociality in private and public spaces and amongst small and large groups of people.⁷ Sociality can involve face-to-face interaction with friends, family and peers whilst digitally-mediated sociality makes use of innovative technologies in enhancing communication and social relations.¹³ To be antisocial implies that one's behaviour deviates from the social norm such that one fails to hang out or interact with other people as expected or prescribed by society. Social media is labelled as an 'antisocial' tool when users fail to interact with people in their immediate environment whilst investing effort in chatting to 'known and unknown' friends elsewhere in the globe. The unsocial character of social media is also witnessed when users of social networking sites forget that they are posting information on a giant billboard in a heavily trafficked area. A few minutes after posting, their negative remarks

would have circulated around the world before they could even post a second thought.⁸ Media is like an ecosystem embedded with human relations and influencing human relations.¹⁴ On the one hand, social media is praised for enhancing text-based communication and creating business opportunities whilst on the other hand, it is blamed for destroying social relations that once existed in a traditional family unit and the wider society. When social media is seen to promote 'antisocial behaviour' and also used as a medium to destroy existing human relations, it is then labelled as an antisocial tool that dissolves social relations that it is supposed to cement. All behaviours should fall within the ethical limits of society and must be guided by culture.

Culture, according to P'Bitek,³ is a philosophy of life as lived and celebrated by members of a particular society. On the other hand, Rendell and Whitehead¹⁵ are of the view that: '... culture is information or behaviour-shared within a community-which is acquired from conspecifics through some form of social learning'. Culture is concerned with the worldview of a given society and is socially learnt. Cultures are never static and not homogenous across different societies. Social media brings people who share different cultures closer together resulting in culture bomb and culture shock. What is considered as ethical in one culture may be a culture bomb or a culture shock in another society. Social media knows no cultural boundaries, but those people who get connected by the social media remain culturally sensitive, either consciously or unconsciously. Musicians as artists are also sensitive about culture and the songs that they produce are conditioned by the culture of a society from which they come from.

Music is the most common and widely shared part of popular culture in a society. It plays an essential part in articulating societal issues and can be considered to be the voice of the voiceless.¹⁶ Zimdancehall stems from a combination of two words Zimbabwe and dancehall meaning that Zimdancehall is dancehall music that grew from Zimbabwe. The term 'dancehall' has grown to be associated with a digitally mastered music genre, termed 'ragga' or 'dub', which emerged in 1970s and 1980s in Jamaica.¹⁷ Dancehall is part of a continuum of Jamaican music that developed long time ago as a tool of resistance against slave oppressors, but it has grown over the years to occupy a critical space in definitions of Jamaican and black identity. Although related to the more laid back, often spiritual genre of reggae, dancehall music is more inclined towards partying and urban lifestyle.¹⁸ The name dancehall arose from the popular high-density venues associated with exhibitions of the genre.¹⁸ Dancehall is a venue or space where shows are held but it may also mean a place where those involved in dancehall culture go to dance and participate in events with performing disc jockeys and dancers.¹⁸ Zimdancehall music started in

backyard studios unlike the traditional forms of music that used established entities such as Gramma Records and Tape Promotions or Zimbabwe Music Corporation.¹⁹ This genre of music is known for its hard-hitting lyrics, which often encompass social commentary on issues like poverty, unemployment and drug abuse.²⁰ The visits of other Jamaican artists like UB 40 in 1984, Shaba Ranks in 1993, Sizzla Kalonji in 2010 and Capleton in 2010, amongst others, led to a large number of Zimbabweans to compose their own version of the dancehall type of reggae music in the 1990s, for instance, artists, like Potato, Major E and Booker T, gained popularity through their Jamaican style of music.¹⁸ Zimdancehall gained full recognition in 2013 when a show was organised with the title 'the battle for the King and Queen of Zimdancehall' and the guest speaker was the popular Jamaican musician Sheldon Campeble 'Tubulance'. The first Zimdancehall awards were held in early 2014 to honour artists, producers, promoters as well as entertainment journalists who supported the rise of the music genre.¹⁸ Zimdancehall musicians as social commentators have observed and raised their concerns about the unsocial effects of social media through songs. This article therefore analyses the antisocial nature of social media as revealed in selected Zimdancehall songs in Zimbabwe. This article therefore analyses the notion of 'anti-sociality' of the social-media platforms themselves and their users as depicted in selected songs by King Shady, Freeman, Nox, Juntal and Stunner.

Methodological path and theoretical framework

The article adopts a qualitative approach as music that addresses the adverse effects of social media, particularly WhatsApp, which is being analysed. Zimdancehall music that touches on the negative of social media was analysed. The songs were purposefully selected through a thorough search of Zimdancehall songs that were produced between 2014 and 2016 that addresses the adverse effects of social media. Zimdancehall songs were chosen because this kind of music is the most popular local music in Zimbabwe and is mostly followed by the youth who are the most active users of social media. The singers were not having any priority in selecting the songs but it was the subject matter of social media and the genre of the music which is Zimdancehall was a priority in the selection. A total of six songs that include *PaWhatsApp* (On WhatsApp) by King Shady, *Handikurowe* (I won't hit you) by Freeman, *Let you go* by Stunner and *Nox-WhatsApp* by Hwindi President, *WhatsApp* by Juntal and *WhatsApp* by Nox were analysed. These songs were analysed with the aim of picking out the artists' views about the negativity of social media in the Zimbabwean society. The aim was to locate how some members have gone against the philosophy of Ubuntu as a result of social media and the analysis of these songs was done through the lenses of Ubuntu as a philosophy.

The arguments raised in this article are informed by the philosophy of Ubuntu which is part of Afrocentricity. Ubuntu is a word from Nguni languages and refers to correct behaviour, but correct in the sense defined by a person's relation and interaction with other people. Mawere and Mubaya²¹ note that Ubuntu inspires, permeates and radiates high mental and moral attributes such that it promotes brotherliness, togetherness, sharing, caring for one another, kindness, courtesy and good relations. They further note that 'Ubuntu is a philosophy of humanness that emphasises love, camaraderie and hospitality'.^{21 (p.79)} It refers to behaving well towards others and carrying out daily relations with others by maintaining the morality that is expected by the society. A person who behaves in the ways that are socially acceptable is considered to have Ubuntu.²² To Mawere and Mubaya²¹:

[T]he philosophy of Ubuntu stresses the values of respect, collectivism, social cohesion, consideration for others and the respect for life and nature: it is a collectivistic approach to life as opposed to Euro-centric approaches that are largely individualistic. (p. 79)

The central point of human communications in all cultures is found in African philosophy called Ubuntu. Bell²³ says that the concept of Ubuntu is tied to identity and is intrinsic to this 'community-oriented' outlook. All cultures possess a form of Ubuntu that crafts laws, beliefs and values amongst its people to maintain good human treatment. The key concept of Ubuntu is good behaviour and interaction in the context of different social roles and responsibilities.²⁴ However, Ubuntu is not mechanical, automatic and inevitable.²³ This entails that Ubuntu is not automatically observed by certain individuals and certain societies as they chose to willfully ignore Ubuntu. This makes it important to use the philosophy of Ubuntu as some people either choose to abide by Ubuntu or choose not to do so. As the philosophy of Ubuntu is grounded in the African culture and celebrates African values, morals and norms, it fits well in analysing the anti-sociality of social media as reflected in selected Zimdancehall songs.

The problematics of social media in society as reflected in Zimdancehall music

Social media has played many positive roles in easing communication and also bringing together people who have lost contact of each other. However, despite the good role that it plays, social media also brings many other problems in society and the negative side of social networks is made more conspicuous. In selected songs by King Shady, Freeman, Nox, Juntal and Stunner, social media is blamed for promoting antisocial behaviour amongst users of social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and WhatsApp. The artists emphasise on WhatsApp as the most common form of social media in Zimbabwe. The general views of artists are that social networks which were developed to maintain social connections at individual and group level are resulting in adultery, lack of respect and responsibility, jealousy, carelessness and obsessive behaviour. Zimdancehall artists have been sensitive about these problems that are

brought by social media. These artists address issues that mainly touch on lack of Ubuntu by these social-media users. Social media has also become a risky platform where secrets and pornographic material can be publicised to spite an individual after divorce or separation implying that in some cases it is an antisocial platform. Amongst the negative effects of social media, these Zimdancehall artists address issues of insensitivity and lack of conscience where social-media users want to capture sensitive encounters that they come across with so that they can post on social media. The other major issue that is addressed by these Zimdancehall artists revolve around how social media negatively affects the marriage institution in a number of ways.

Insensitivity and inhumane behaviour amongst social-media users

One of the major concerns that have been raised about social-media users is that of being insensitive and lacking conscience. Addiction to social media has led to obsession with it. Sriwilai and Charoensukmongkol^{2 (p.427)} note that 'addiction to social media has now become a problem that societies are concerned with'. People have been so obsessed with sharing of graphic material that includes photos and videos of other people who may have encountered problems to the extent that they find capturing the videos and photos more important than helping those that they find in trouble. When an accident occurs, when people are quarrelling or when someone is in trouble, people choose to take videos and photos instead of rendering help which is a sign of lack of humanness, a concept that is emphasised by Ubuntu philosophy. In noticing that such kind of behaviour resembles lack of Ubuntu, Zimdancehall artists got interested in the issue and sang about it.

King Shaddy in his song WhatsApp ridicules those people who have lost the sense of Ubuntu because of WhatsApp. King Shaddy in the song is singing about obsession with WhatsApp where even when seeing an accident, one who is so attached to WhatsApp takes photos instead of helping the person so that he or she can share those photos on WhatsApp. In the song he says:

Ringava bhazi raita accident panekuti abatsire ocapture video.

[If the bus that has been involved in an accident, instead of helping you capture a video]

The concern by the singer is not new as we, on our day-to-day lives, always witness incidents of accidents on WhatsApp. One then wonders where the person who will be shooting such photos and videos will be. It also boggles one's mind of how the people who will be taking such videos at accident scenes will be feeling about those who will be involved in the accident. Instead of helping the accident victims, those social-media users who lack Ubuntu will get there and start capturing photos and videos. At times, some victims might be having a chance to survive but end up passing away because those who arrive there first do not help them but just get interested in capturing the

incident so that they can share on WhatsApp. What makes the matter worse is that sometimes, the relatives and friends of those who get involved in accidents and die get to learn about the fate through social media which could harm them emotionally than when they are told by someone who is trained to relay such frightening messages. A living case is that of a Zimbabwean and a South African security guards who were shot by armed robbers in their service car where the relatives of the Zimbabwean security guard got to know about his death through seeing the video on social media. Some dangerous situations that those who get into can be avoided but end up being fatal because those who will be close do not render any help but simply record the incident on their phones. All of us at one time in our lives must have witnessed a person being attacked by a dangerous animal, drowning, falling from a tall object or being attacked by fire amongst other heinous experiences. Whilst such incidents are still being captured on camera, we see no one rendering any help and then at the end we wonder if the person who was capturing that incident could not help the person in trouble. Such people who capture such incidents instead of helping the victim are undoubtedly lacking Ubuntu. A South African photojournalist, Kevin Carter, died by committing suicide after capturing a photo of a Sudanese young girl in 1993 (who later in 2011 the father of the child revealed was actually a boy), who was crawling to a feeding centre after she had fallen down because of hunger. The photo came out in the New York Time on March 26 and thereafter, in 1994, Kevin Carter won the Pulitzer Prize for Feature Photography because of the photo of the vulture and the little girl. The reaction by the readers of New York Times pointed that Carter was inhumane. They wanted to know what happened to the girl after the shooting of the photograph and one of the readers' comments was saying that there were two vultures, one behind the girl, the real one, and another carrying a camera. This reaction led Kevin Carter to commit suicide on the 27th July 1994 by putting a hose into his car's exhaust pipe and the other end of the hose into the car and running the engine until he died of carbon monoxide.^{25,26} Although Kevin Carter took his life because he felt that he had acted inhumane by posting a photograph of a child who was about to be devoured by a vulture, he again went against the philosophy of Ubuntu because Ubuntu does not condone suicide but one should apologise as a way of regaining human dignity.

As mentioned above that some social-media users lack Ubuntu by shooting photos in situations where another human being is in trouble instead of rendering help, King Shaddy bemoans such people again in his song WhatsApp. He says:

Bonzo achinyura mumvura umwe akamira ocapture video

[Bonzo drowning in water and someone is staring capturing a video]

King Shaddy is castigating the way some social-media users have become so obsessed with it so much that even when someone is drowning in water they do not even find it

important to save a life but what is more important to them is to shoot a video so that they can become social-media heroes by sharing such material. One wonders whether when one is sharing material on social media of someone being in trouble is considering it as entertainment or is sympathising or is trying to prove that he or she has made history by capturing a reality movie or drama. People have lost Ubuntu by capturing sad and painful experiences of other people as if they are recording some rarely ever witnessed traits about wild animals for national-geographic screening on television.

Obsession with social media has led to loss of Ubuntu. People who are obsessed with social media have proved to be insensitive from the way they would conduct themselves whilst carrying out some duties, relating with others or even doing any other things because they always remain glued to their gadgets. King Shaddy's sensitivity about the loss of Ubuntu as a result of social media is reflected through lyrics in his song *WhatsApp* as follows:

Ndobasa avo and havambomboneta

Kana mumigwagwa vatyairi votohuta

Vamwe varikurara nefoni mumagumbeze hanzi pandinomukira vanondiona Mabusiness makuhwa kana

varikutsvaga varume kana varikutsvaga mabhebhi Apinda muchimbuzi akabata matissue asi ari imomo

Kunyangwe vachinamata muchurch ziso rakavhara rimwe rakavhura

Unenge uchatsva musoro mudryer akarivara

Mazvake mazvake mubhazi musoro ndaona vese vakatsikitsira pasi

Mungava mumunda varikuviga vanhu kumarinda

Kunyangwe pastor achipreacher vamwe mai vozvitora picture

Kunyangwe teacher achiticha anotorwa picture.

[That's their work and they will never tire

On the roads drivers are ever hooting

Some get into their blankets with their phones saying I want to disturb others at night

Businesses, gossiping and some are searching for dating partners using cell phones

They get into the toilet holding a tissue on one hand and the phone on the other

Even when praying in church one eye is closed whilst the other is opened

Will be burnt on the scalp by the drier in a saloon because is relaxed on the phone

In the bus each man by himself everyone is looking down on the phone

In the fields and even when burying someone at the cemetery

Even when the pastor is preaching one woman is shooting a selfie

Even when the teacher is teaching a photo of him is shot.]

In this song King Shaddy, with the real name Shadreck Kwarire is reflecting to his audience that this obsession with WhatsApp has dehumanised the people to the extent that their behaviour has become strange as a result of the loss of Ubuntu. Nox in the song 'WhatsApp' equally expresses

concern on how obsession with WhatsApp is affecting individuals in society singing:

Kana kugeza haageze angoripo PaWhatsApp

Anorara nayo tsvina angoripo PaWhatsApp

Haachina mafingerprints nekuchata PaWhatsApp.

[Is always on WhatsApp and no longer bathing

Sleeps with a dirty body but always on WhatsApp

No longer have papillary ridges on fingers because of all the typing on WhatsApp.]

These Zimdancehall artists have observed that this obsession with WhatsApp has become toxic in the people's minds making them behave in an unusual and undesirable manner. Ubuntu has disappeared because of WhatsApp. People now fail even to engage in a conversation beyond greetings because they will be concentrating on WhatsApp. Nox is making it even more comic by mocking those who are obsessed with WhatsApp by saying that some have even lost their finger prints because their fingers never rest typing on their cellular phones. He says some have even stopped performing or have become inefficient in performing their duties because of WhatsApp. We have witnessed several times in the media when some people are reprimanded at their work places for concentrating on WhatsApp and neglecting their duties. Some employers have gone to the extent of banning their employees for using their phones at work because some workers become inefficient as they will be concentrating on their cellular phones. Some of these behaviours that result from over concentration on social media are detrimental to the rendering of crucial services such as in the home affairs, health and other departments. Sriwilai and Charoensukmongkol² note that:

Because of the negative impacts that social media addiction might cause the well-being and job outcomes of employers, it is important for companies to consider policies to help prevent and overcome this problem in the workplace. (p. 433)

Some of the people who are employed to offer these important services but are obsessed with social media ignore the clients whilst concentrating on their gadgets and such is a sign of lack of Ubuntu.

At times social-media users post some graphic material without considering how the recipients of such material would react. Those who post sensitive graphic material are in most cases not even aware that they must first put a warning that they are about to post sensitive material. On television when sensitive graphic material is about to be screened, the viewers are warned that 'those of nervous dispossession' should not watch but those who post on social media do not put such warning thereby harming the emotions of other social-media users. Some people post images and videos of people who are dead, who are murdered, who are burnt excessively or those who are injured amongst other sensitive graphic images, before they

put a warning for other users and such acts demonstrate lack of sensitivity and being inhuman. These social-media users at times do not consider that such images and videos may be those of relatives or close friends of those who are being posted.

The problems of social media in the family as an institution

The family is the social institute that has been heavily affected by social media negatively, particularly the marriage institution. Marriages have broken down, there have been quarrels between spouses and cases of infidelity have been witnessed, some resulting in violence and some resulting in divorce because of social media. The singers whose songs are being analysed here have all sung about the issue of problems in marriages that are as a result of social media which explains that the marriage institution is the one that is most negatively affected by social media. On the problems of social media on marriage and family cohesion, King Shaddy sang the song *WhatsApp*, Juntal also sang the song entitled *Muroyi WhatsApp* (WhatsApp the Witch), whilst Freeman sang the song *Handikurove* (I will not beat you), Hwindi President sang *Pa WhatsApp* (On WhatsApp) and Nox sang the song with the title *WhatsApp*.

WhatsApp has brought problems of infidelity, lack of trust and jealousy in marriage unions. It has set couples and other members of a family unit who stay under the same roof apart instead of bringing them closer together. This is revealed by Freeman in the song *Handikurove* where WhatsApp is depicted as the medium used to communicate in extra-marital affairs leading to marriage dissolution. He sings:

Pangamunaye muritwo mangamuchiiteyi?

Ndaigara ndichingozvibounza inyaya dzeyi dzinokugarisa pawhatsapp everyday ...

[When you were the two of you what were you doing?

I used to ask myself what exactly is keeping you busy on WhatsApp everyday]

In the song *Handikurove* the central concern is suspicion of infidelity by the husband on his wife as a result of the consistent and prolonged chatting on WhatsApp. WhatsApp is blamed as a negative implement which has perpetrated divorce to the extent that the artist says, '*Rudo rwasvika pakupera, dai ndisina kukuroora*' (Our love has come to an end and I regret why I married you). The song confirms that some marriages have broken down because of WhatsApp where the other spouse will be always chatting on the phone raising suspicion and jealousy on the other. Tokunaga²⁷ argues that overusing social media can jeopardise the quality of interpersonal communication that people develop with others. WhatsApp is also seen as an enemy in the family that sets people apart.

The parasitic nature of WhatsApp in the family devours the emotional attachment that exists in the family union and creates an emotion of hate that sets people apart. WhatsApp is also perceived as a witch that comes into the family spreading a bad spell that results in a repulsive relationship between family members. Juntal in his song *Muroyi WhatsApp* (WhatsApp the Witch) says:

Mumba hamuchina rudo rwekutamba chikudo rwuya rwataita kare
WhatsApp ndiwe muroyi ndiwe wapunza musha wangu iwe WhatsApp
Maive nerudo mumba manga tichidya pamwe chete semhuri ine rudo zvachinja
Mhamha tichadya time time mira tiri online
Saka ndichakuponda ponda ndichikubuditsa mumba mangu iwe WhatsApp
Mukadzi wangu akutambidza chikafu akafuraira ari paWhatsApp
Vana vangu havachanditariri kana mumba havachateereri vana WhatsApp
Ini vacho hazvichambondifadza ndoita kunga ndisina mhuri ndina WhatsApp.
 [There is no longer any love in the family that we used to enjoy
 WhatsApp you are the witch you have destroyed my family
 They used to be love in the family we would eat together but now it has changed
 Mother we will eat later we are online
 I will deal with you WhatsApp and throw you out of my house
 My wife is handing a plate of food to me looking aside whilst on WhatsApp
 My children no longer listen to me because of you WhatsApp
 It is am no longer having a family but WhatsApp]

The concern by Juntal in his song is that there is no longer any love in the family because of WhatsApp which has bewitched the family. The wife no longer cares about the husband and the children no longer notice the presence of their father because they are now always engrossed on WhatsApp. The father now feels neglected by both his children and wife because they no longer have time for him as they are now always occupied by WhatsApp. Wang and Wellman²⁸ argue that these relationships that are created online through social media now compete with offline relationships where family members of the same household will be together physically but relating more with those who are geographically far away from them. Social media-enabled-online relationships can displace and damage offline interaction and relationships.²⁹ In a normal family and under normal circumstances, family members who live in the same household are expected to engage in a conversation and share experiences of their lives but WhatsApp makes them engage in conversation with those who are elsewhere and forget about those who are closer to them. This kind of behaviour is a creation of a new family order in the 21st century where members of the same family unit living under the same roof find comfort in interacting with their gadgets than other human beings present.

King Shaddy in the song *WhatsApp* puts it in the following words:

Vamwe vatukana varambana mudzimba umo hapana zvamaona
WhatsApp yatora mari panezvoinhu zvese yavekumberi
Kunyangwe mwana achichem mai varikuignowa varipiko
Baba vapira gotsi mugumbezi mai vakanda ziso kunodongorera baba
Isu tanzwa nekutenga nyama itsva zvichinzi Mhofu guru ramatenga ratsva
 [Some are fighting, they have divorced in the houses there you are yet to see
 WhatsApp is now the highest consumer of money
 Even when the baby is crying the mother is ignoring
 The husband has covered his head with a blanket in bed and the wife is peeping
 We are tired of buying meat that gets burnt during the cooking]

WhatsApp is making relations sour in marriages because most of the wrong doings that happen in these unions are as a result of WhatsApp. King Shaddy is saying that some go to the extent of divorcing because of WhatsApp. He is concerned about the expenditure that takes place because of WhatsApp where money is used to buy data and some other losses like food getting burnt. He is also worried about the neglect that young children suffer from as they are no longer getting the attention of their mothers because of this social-media platform. Children need to be socialised by their parents and taken care of but they are no longer getting enough attention because their parents will be busy concentrating on social media. In that way, the parents will be demonstrating antisocial behaviours to their children so much that they will be moulding them to become members of the society who would lack Ubuntu because they would not have had enough of coaching or nurturing from their parents.

Nox, on the other hand, in his song *WhatsApp* reveals how social media fuels jealousy in a marriage and expresses it as follows:

Foni yako yarira ndinoda kuziva ini akufonerandiyaniko?
Akusera message ndiyaniko aita unyemwerere?
Maawa four shuwa here uchichata PaWhatsApp nepaFacebook
Hanzi babe chimbomira ndipindure chat, kusvika usiku ndakangomirira.
 [Your phone rang I want to know who is calling you
 Who sent you a message that has made you to smile?
 You have spent four hours chatting on WhatsApp and Facebook
 Whilst you ask me to wait until you reply chats until its evening whilst I am waiting]

WhatsApp is depicted as causing social problems such as jealousy that leads to suspicion that a spouse is involved in an extra-marital affair. The husband is questioning why the wife is spending many hours on WhatsApp and Facebook and why she is smiling when she is receiving a message on her cellular phone. This implies that when digitally mediated sociality takes precedence over face-to-face interaction, it

becomes problematic in a marriage union. Billedo, Kerkhof and Finkenauer,³⁰ and Johnson, Bostwick and Bassick³¹ observe that those who are in long-distance romantic relationships become jealous when they connect through social media. This then entails that those who have extra-marital affairs will always be on social media because they are jealous and those that they are involved with are also jealous. The relationship becomes complicated because the spouse who is close at home under the same roof will also become jealous because the spouse is always concentrating on social media and in that scenario, life becomes complicated for the three and even the children if they are there because all of them need one another's attention. A spouse who waits for his or her other half to attend to him when he or she is busy on social media gets annoyed by the behaviour of the other. Social media, particularly WhatsApp which is easily accessible, has become an agent for lack of Ubuntu in marriages and this has led to lack of trust, jealousy, quarrels and at worst divorces. Butler and Matook²⁹ observe that the individuals in households are present physically but ignoring one another because they are focused on their mobile devices. Neglect of a spouse because of concentration on the cellular phone shows that social media can destroy social relations in a home when users of this platform display antisocial behaviour to their loved ones. In marriages, it is not only women who annoy their spouses by being always on WhatsApp but also men do the same as reflected by Hwindi President in the song *Pa WhatsApp* (On WhatsApp):

Vatete murume wangu haaboe paApp

Dai ari makwikwi aitotora cup

Akada anotokupindura rough

Haatirimuke kunyangwe kumupa chikafu

Ukuda kumubvunza baby unotaura nani mhinduro yake iwe ndiwe ani

Kukumbira vamwe rudo sendisipo

Ndikada kumubvunza ndodhakwa nemakopo

Kungodai chete hanzi ita zvaunoda

[Aunt my husband is always on WhatsApp

If it was a competition he would win the cup

Sometimes he replies me negatively

Even if I serve him food he ignores me

When you ask him whom he is chatting with he asks me who I am

He is asking for love from other people as if I am not there in his life

If I ask him he assaults me

When I ask him he tells me to do what I want]

WhatsApp results in marriage relationships reaching other levels that are unbelievable to be happening in normal society. In the song, the husband is no longer treating his wife in a societally expected manner and is no longer regarding her as a human being or someone with feelings who also deserves respect. The husband has become inhuman and even violent towards his wife because of the obsession with

WhatsApp. What boggles the mind is that this man could be chatting with someone else's wife who is also demonstrating the same behaviour towards her husband wherever she is. This is clear testimony that social media has created serious problems in society where people are now living in an idealised world of fantasy. Stafford³² and Johnson et al.³¹ are of the view that relationships that are maintained through social media are more idealised. WhatsApp has made people to see a rosy life outside their vicinity, yet on the other end they have the same belief that those that they are chatting with are living a better life because people only reveal the positive side of their lives on social media when they are chatting with those they admire. This has turned the people to become inhuman because of idealising life by believing what they see on social media which is not even close to reality. The idea of being human has been lost because people no longer realise what is realistic because of living a life of imagination that is portrayed on social media. Social media has resulted in an antisocial behaviour where people become closer to those who are geographically far away from them and emotionally further apart from those who are physically closer to them.

Social media is also antisocial in that sense when a vendetta arises between people and they use social media to tarnish one another's image. Stunner and Nox in the song *I'm letting you go* portray social media performing antisocial roles. Whilst on one hand, social media was and is still used to cement and publicise a loving relationship between couples, the same social media has however become a risky and antisocial platform. It becomes anti-social especially when the love between couples is facing collapse. On that note Stunner and Nox reveal that one may decide to publicise bad issues about the other on social media where they say:

I am letting you go asi dai wadeleter mamessage

Nemapic andaikusendera,

Netumwe tumasin twandaikutumira murudo ...

[I am letting you go but you should delete all the messages

And the pictures that I used to send you

And the other stuff that I used to send you whilst we were still in love]

When people are still together and are happy, they share a lot on social media even nude images of themselves. Sometimes, because of bitterness when the relationship ends, the other part may want to cause pain on the other by sending such nude images or sending pictures of the other and attaching negative messages on the image like saying one is a thief, a murderer and so on. Such acts are inhuman as they degrade the image and the social standing of the other. Culturally, one's nude image should not be displayed in public as Ubuntu values privacy of the human's genitals but those who get infuriated in relationships decide to publicise their ex-partner's disgusting images on social media. In the song, the artists further implore the ex-partner to remove all material on Facebook and not to upload any of their private material on YouTube by singing:

Handichadi kubatika ndichibuditswa paFacebook ...

Youtube ndogona kuita kana mamillon likes butcareer rinodonha kunge council yakanda maspikes

[I don't want to be accessible on Facebook ...

I might have a million likes on You tube but my career will be destroyed just like the council police

who would have thrown the spikes on a car]

The song, *I'm letting you go*, reveals the potential of social media to be used as a means to destroy and tarnish one's image through sending sensitive and private information to the public. The artists are wary of one's career which can be destroyed through social media where their lyrics say '*Wakuda kuforwader mapics angu ndiparare*' [You now want to forward my pictures so that you destroy me]. The sociality of social media is then questioned when it can be potentially used to mar the once publicised special memories and fame. On the contrary, the fame of 'a million likes' will be obtained for the wrong reasons proving that the sociality of social media is relative depending on whether publicity is negative or positive. Therefore, social media can be used as a means to divide people and set them apart in as much as it connects and bring them closer together.

Conclusion

Social media has been shown to be carrying a lot of antisocial realities as revealed through Zimdancehall songs by selected singers. The singers as artists are the sensitive eyes of the society who can detect what is happening around them and then publicise through music. Social media, although its intended use was to bring people closer together, it has proved that it also does the contrary which also turns to be accompanied by devastating effects like lack of sensitivity, lack of Ubuntu, divorce, jealousy, fighting, neglect of others, wastage of resources, tarnishing of one's image, rumour mongering, failure to perform as expected at work and at its waste even murder amongst many other problems. The initiative to have social media was a very good one that was meant to ease communication in bringing people closer together and easing ways of doing business but the initial intended purpose has been overtaken by the anti-sociality that it has brought. Social media, particularly WhatsApp, has dehumanised the people and the philosophy of Ubuntu has been lost through it. Those who are closer together physically are set further apart emotionally by social media and those who are further apart physically are emotionally brought closer together by social media. Social media also has a problem of making it easier for people to engage in antisocial behaviours that demonstrate lack of Ubuntu such as engaging in extra-marital affairs and making family members suffer from emotion by being neglected by those whom they want attention from. The anti-sociality of social media also manifests where people become so obsessed with social media that they value social media more than humanity and human life. This happens where some social-media users would want to shoot photos and videos in situations where they should be instead rendering help to those who

would be in trouble in situations like accidents, quarrels or when one is being attacked by a dangerous animal. Social media has resulted in moral decadence and lack of Ubuntu. Since social media is mostly blamed for promoting antisocial behaviour in the society and even online, artists now regard it as an 'antisocial tool' although there are other factors that can also contribute to destroying social relations in a society.

Acknowledgements

Competing interests

The authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

Authors' contributions

R.N., B.P.T. and T.F.M. contributed equally to this work.

Ethical considerations

This article followed all ethical standards for carrying out research.

Funding information

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors.

Data availability

The authors confirm that the data supporting the findings of this study are available within the article.

Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any affiliated agency of the authors.

References

- Koc M, Gulyagci S. Facebook addiction among Turkish college students: The role of psychological health, demographic, and usage characteristics. *Cyberpsychol Behav Soc Netw*. 2013;16(4):279–284. <https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2012.0249>
- Sriwilai K, Charoensukmongkol P. Face it, don't Facebook it: Impacts of social media addiction on mindfulness, coping strategies and the consequence on emotional exhaustion. *Stress Health*. 2015;32(4):427–434. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smi.2637>
- P'Bitek O. *Artist the ruler: Essays on art, culture and values*. Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers Ltd; 1986.
- Ngara E. *Art and ideology in the African novel: A study of the influence of Marxism on African writing*. London: Heinemann Educational; 1989.
- Bouhnik D, Deshen M. WhatsApp goes to school: Mobile instant messaging between teachers and students. *J Inf Technol Educ*. 2014;13:217–231. <https://doi.org/10.28945/2051>
- Taşkiran NÖ, Yılmaz R. *Handbook of research on effective advertising strategies in the social media age*. Hershey, PA: Business Science Reference; 2015.
- Miller D, Costa E, Hayness N. *How the world changed social media*. London: UCL Press; 2016.
- Herring MY. *Social media and the good life: Do they connect?* Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Company; 2015.
- Sandoval M. *From corporate to social media – Critical perspectives on corporate social responsibility in media and communication industries*. Oxon: Routledge; 2014.
- Kent ML. Directions in social media for professionals and scholars. In: Heath RL, editor. *The Sage handbook of public relations*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage; 2010; p. 643–656.
- Athanasopoulos E, Makridakis A, Antonatos S, et al. Antisocial networks: Turning a social network into a botnet. In: Wu TC, Lei CL, Rijmen V, Lee DT, editors. *Information security: ISC 2008. Lecture notes in computer science*. Heidelberg: Springer; 2008; vol. 5222, p. 146–160.

12. Lee PC. Social structure and evolution. In: Slater PJB, Halliday TR, editors. *Behaviour and evolution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994; p. 266–303.
13. Frei BA. Sociality revisited – The use of the internet and mobile phones in Northern Cameroon. Bamenda: Langaa Research and Publishing CIG; 2013.
14. Vaidhyathan S. Antisocial media – How Facebook disconnects us and undermines democracy. New York, NY: Oxford University Press; 2018.
15. Rendell LE, Whitehead H. Culture in whales and dolphins. *Behav Brain Sci*. 2001;24(2):309–324. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0140525X0100396X>
16. Mano W. Popular music as journalism in Zimbabwe. *J Stud*. 2007;8(1):61–78. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616700601056858>
17. Stolzoff NC. *Wake the town and tell the people: Dancehall culture in Jamaica*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press; 2000.
18. Shoniwa K. The rise of Zim-Dancehall [homepage on the Internet]. 2015 [cited 2020 Jan 6]. Available from: <https://www.musicinafrica.net/magazine/rise-zim-dancehall>
19. Ureke O, Washaya Y. Social commentary, subaltern voices and the alternative medium of Zimdancehall music: Unpacking the music of Winky D and Sniper Storm. *Muziki: J Res Afr*. 2016;13(1):68–88. <https://doi.org/10.1080/18125980.2016.1182383>
20. Pindula. Zimdancehall [homepage on the Internet]. 2015 [cited 2020 Jan 6]. Available from: <https://www.pindula.co.zw/Zimdancehall>
21. Mawere M, Mubaya TR. African philosophy and thought systems: A search for a culture and philosophy of belonging. Bamenda: Langaa Research & Publishing Common Initiative Group; 2016.
22. Louw DJ. Ubuntu and the challenges of multiculturalism in post-apartheid South Africa. *Quest: Afr J Philos*. 2001;XV(1–2):15–36.
23. Bell RH. *Understanding African philosophy: A cross-cultural approach to classical and contemporary issues*. New York, NY: Routledge; 2002.
24. Samkange S, Samkange TM. *Hunhuism or ubuntuism: A Zimbabwe indigenous political philosophy*. Salisbury, MD: Graham Pub; 1980.
25. Macleod S. The life and death of Cavin Carter. *Time*, 24 June [serial online]. 2001 [cited 2020 Jan 7]. Available from: <http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,165071,00.html>
26. Neal LM. How photojournalism killed Kevin Carter [homepage on the Internet]. 2014 [cited 2020 Jan 7]. Available from: <https://allthatsinteresting.com/kevin-carter>
27. Tokunaga RS. Social networking site or social surveillance site? Understanding the use of interpersonal electronic surveillance in romantic relationships. *Comput Hum Behav*. 2011;27(2):705–713. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2010.08.014>
28. Wang H, Wellman B. Social connectivity in America: Changes in adult friendship network size from 2002 to 2007. *Am Behav Sci*. 2010;53(8):1148–1169. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764209356247>
29. Butler BS, Matook S. Social media relationships. In: Mansell R, Ang PH, editors. *The encyclopaedia of digital communication and society*. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2015; p. 1096–1107.
30. Billeto CJ, Kerkhof P, Finkenauer C. The use of social networking sites for relationship maintenance in long-distance and geographically close romantic relationships. *Cyberpsychol Behav Soc Netw*. 2015;18(3):152–157. <https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2014.0469>
31. Johnson AJ, Bostwick E, Bassick M. The effects of social media on the development and maintenance of these relationships. In: Punyanunt-Carter NM, Wrench JS, editors. *The impact of social media in modern romantic relationships*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2017; p. 113–130.
32. Stafford L. Long-distance relationships. In: Berger CR, Roloff ME, editors. *International encyclopaedia of interpersonal communication*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2016; p. 1–8.