SCIENCE AS A PANACEA FOR SOCIAL VICES IN NIGERIA

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Abstract
Science is both a body of knowledge and a process. In school, science may sometimes seem like a collection of isolated and static facts listed in a textbook, but that's only a small part of the story. Just as importantly, science is also a process of discovery that allows the linking of isolated facts into coherent and comprehensive understanding of the natural world. Social vices are continually an issue of concern in which hinders the development and growth of a Nation. The progress of a nation is dependent on the resourcefulness and creativity of its people. This paper discussed the concept of science, social vices, types of social vices, causes of social vices, and control of social vices. It further discussed vices for curbing social vices. This paper concluded that social vices which could have been curbed, go completely undetected due to lack of efficient surveillance and tracking tools. Criminal cases like robbery and murder have remained unresolved because there are no reliable database, surveillance, and tracking and forensic tools that could aid in the investigations. The paper recommended that close monitoring and time should be given to children by parents and that government should organize forums that will enlighten the students on the dangers associated with social vices.
Keywords: Panacea, Science, Social vices

Introduction
The word "science" probably brings to mind many different pictures: a fat textbook, white lab coats and microscopes, an astronomer peering through a telescope, a naturalist in the rainforest, Einstein's equations scribbled on a chalkboard, the launch of the space shuttle, bubbling beakers. All of those images reflect some aspect of science, but none of them provides a full picture because science has so many facets: Science is exciting. Science is a way of discovering what's in the universe and how those things work today, how they worked in the past, and how they are likely to work in the future. Scientists are motivated by the thrill of seeing or figuring out something that no one has before. Science is useful. The knowledge generated by science is powerful and reliable. It can be used to develop new technologies, treat diseases, and deal with many other sorts of problems. Science is ongoing. Science is continually refining and expanding people's knowledge of the universe, and as it does, it leads to new questions for future investigation. Science will never be "finished." Science is a global human endeavour. People all over the world participate in the process of science (Adegoke, 2015).

Social vices include any immoral activities which are likely to become involved in any profitable venture or activity, like prostitution, gambling, pornography, Drugs etc. It is rare to find a society void of social vices. This depicts that they are present in all centers of our society be it home, schools (Primary, Secondary & Tertiary). Vice is from a Latin word 'vitium' meaning defect or failing. It is a bad habit or immoral activities. Vices are common among young males and females, examples include prostitution, indecent dressing, robbery, cultism, pocket picking, drug addiction, examination malpractice, hooliganism, thuggery, gambling, smoking, pre-marital sexual activities and rape. Social vices are bad traits, unhealthy and negative behaviours that are against the morality of a society and frowned at by members of the society (Adeyemo, 2009).

Peer pressure is the major cause of youth involvement in social vices. Students especially spend more time with their friends in school or at home. Due to their weak nature and tender age, they can easily be influenced. The proverb that says "show me your friend, and I will tell you who you are" shows the significance of friends and how they influence lives. A child tends to behave like his or her friends so as not to be labeled as cowards, JJCs, uncivilized or crude. A child who moves with children with poor

academic performance can be like them in no time and will be lured to the short - cuts to success such as examination malpractice. Likewise, a child who moves with other children with the habit of stealing is bound to be like them. Being a virgin, which was once a thing of pride has now turned to object of ridicule among friends and students. An innocent girl will want to experiment what her friends do discuss and may be pushed into sexual activities in tender age (Adeyemo, 2009).

Another factor is negligence by the parents or a broken home. Most children that engage themselves in vices are from broken homes. Lack of parental care, supervision and attention can make a child engage in social vices. Children from the permissive and uninvolved parenting styles fall mostly into these traps. They move with wrong people, their movements are not queried; their academic progress is not being followed up. Freedom to do anything without been probe affect children negatively. Negligence of parents can make the wards turn to their friends for love, emotions, care, advice who can lure them into deadly acts. An abandoned girl can look up to an opposite sex for love and affection. Some maids, house helps, family members who are always around children in the absent of parents can introduce these vices to them. Some may even violate the children sexually, warn and threatened them not to tell anyone. Even if the bold ones are determined to confide in their parents, they may be too busy or occupied to listen and see through things. Many parents have spoilt the lives of their children without them knowing (Agena, 2012).

Social vices affect the society as a whole and the individual in particular. The mental, physical and moral aspects of an individual are negatively affected. Students and others divert their time to these vices instead of being serious with their academic works and other important work. There is wastage of time which leads to poor academic performance. Deadly diseases that can lead to the termination of lives and career can be contacted. A pregnant lady will face emotional, psychological trauma which will make her lose focus and attention on her studies. She might eventually stop schooling, get expelled or quit for some period of time. If she is lucky, she may return to school but her mates will be far ahead of her (Ategwu, 2013).

Dangerous acts like cultism is rampant in the society as well as in schools. A secret cult is an organisation of some people who engage in some activities that are secret. Some people or students are lured while some are forced to join a cult. It is found out that most members of these secret associations are from rich homes. Greater attention is given to the cult to the detriment of academics. Much demand is expected from members. The cult is their priority while any other things including their studies are secondary. They forget their primary assignment in school by focusing on meeting the needs of other members, fighting and initiation of innocent students. Being in a secret cult exposes a child to other forms of illegal acts such as smoking, alcoholism, rape, taking of illegal substances, hooliganism, thuggery and others. They may lose their lives in fights or when there is a clash with opposing cult(s) and some may be rusticated from schools. They might even progress to higher crimes such as highway and bank robbery (Henry, 2014).

High rate of social vices can tarnish the image of a family and a country. It can destabilize a home and rumple the peace of a household. Parents blame each other for their wayward child (ren) which could lead to separation, broken homes and divorce. The health of parents with wayward attitudes are threatened which can further lead to anxiety, depression, high blood pressure, stroke and death. The absence of a parent or both parents will further implicate matters and will not help in the rehabilitation of the children. The image of a country is reduced by the high number of vices. Other countries look down on such country as being weak, corrupt and deadly. They sometimes disallow migration to their countries and even if they allow, strict screening exercises are put in place. Investors, both foreigners and citizens, will be scared to invest in a corrupt country. This will lead to fewer industries and companies that should have provided employment to the citizens, thus leading to high unemployment rate and inhibition of national growth and development (Olanibi, 2012).

Illicit drugs, smoking, alcoholism deteriorate the health of the users. They can also lead to the boldness of going for higher crimes. Many lives are lost to cancer and mental disorder. Many of the students, especially the addicted ones squander their pocket money on drugs and result to theft when they are broke. Rapists and their victims are exposed to sexual diseases like AIDS and other related STDS. Female students might stop education due to early pregnancy. High numbers of student who engage in evil acts in a school reduce the morality and standard of the school. Parents tend to withdraw their wards from such schools and the change of institution might have negative effects on students (Robert, 2011).

Methods of Curbing Social Vices

Social vices which could have been curbed, go completely undetected due to lack of efficient surveillance and tracking tools. Criminal cases like robbery and murder have remained unresolved because there are no reliable database, surveillance, tracking and forensic tools that could aid in the investigations. The overbearing effect of this is that the society remained unsecured and development is hindered. It has not only affected the country but globally as foreign investors are also conscious of the state of security. Science and technology has helped discourage social vices by letting them know there is no escape. With the advent of surveillance cameras, detection systems, GPS trackers amongst others, security systems can be robust and tight.

Deployment of GPS Trackers: The Global Positioning System (GPS) is a satellite based navigation system that consists of control, monitor stations and receivers that translate received information from the satellites and uses triangulation to calculate the exact location of any position or object on the earth's surface. This can be used by a radio helicopter pilot to determine the coordinates of the position/location of a person, in emergency, anywhere on the earth. The GPS tracker can be installed with individuals (hand worn), buildings, mobile systems, pathways and in camera for easy identification of a location during emergency, anywhere on the earth surface, by the relevant agencies such as fire fighters, police and military. Though the GPS is meant to determine; position locations, create digitized maps, to be used to plot the fire perimeter and hot spots for an area and determine how far an object is from another location, as accurately as possible. This technology has proven to be very efficient in reducing crime rate in other parts of the world. For instance, Western Australia Police have used predictive analytics and GPS maps to determine crime hotspots and deploy their personnel to provide surveillance (Henry, 2014). This has subsequently resulted into a reduced crime rate. Boko Haram insurgent group had claimed to be occupying Sambisa forest in Borno State, from where they carry out their attacks. With the use of GPS trackers, exact location of this insurgent group could be determined which will aid successful military operation (Hassan, 2013).

Deployment of CCTV systems: A Close Circuit Television (CCTV) is a situational crime prevention system with some crime prevention capacity. When installed at some strategic places, it can trigger a perceptual mechanism in a potential offender that if he commits a crime, he will be caught. In other words, CCTV can be used to increase the perceived risk of capture. Although, CCTV system is not a physical barrier, but it can limit access to an area, make an object harder to steal or a person more difficult to assault and rob. Other nations all over the world have embraced the use of CCTV as a surveillance tool to monitor events, people and government installations. It was used in Kenya, France and USA to monitor attackers. It is the researcher's strong belief that if this technology is properly harnessed here in Nigeria, it will stem the rate of crime and aid the police in their investigation (with video footage of incidences).Proper implementation of this technology will however be a mirage, due to the epileptic nature of electricity generation in Nigeria. Presently, the country cannot guarantee steady supply of electricity. However, this challenge could be overcome through the use of dedicated solar panels to power these devices (Robert, 2011). Also, with DNA fingerprinting culprits of these vices are caught and brought to book and serve as warning to intending offenders. Even during riots and protests crude implements like batons and whips are no longer necessary as tweezers and gases which are less harmful are used. Science and its revolution have challenged and spurred the ability of man. It has created many avenues to engage the intellects and ability of man. Most of the social prevalent in the country are due to the rate of unemployment. With the advancement in science and technology one does

not necessarily need to walk around with CVs anymore. Businesses and job opportunities are just at the fingertips to engage the mind using social media and other applications. Science has also created a global platform for the public awareness of the danger and occurrences of these vices. This is to ensure proper investigations and safety of the general public (Ekomwenrenren, 2015).

Other devices to control social vices include:

(1) Metal Detectors: They are electronic instruments which detect the presence of the metal nearby. They are useful for funding metal inclusions hidden within objects or metal objects buried underground. They often consist of handheld unit with a sensor probe which can be swept over the ground or other objects or persons. If the sensor comes near a piece of metal, it is indicated by a changing to be in earphones. The closer the metal the higher the earphones. Another type is stationery walk through metal detectors used for security screening at access points in prisons, courthouses, and airports to detect concealed metal weapons on a person's body.

(2) **Tear Gas:** Tear gas, formally known as a lachrymatory agent or lachrymator (from the Latin lacrima, meaning "tear"), is a chemical weapon that causes severe eye, respiratory, and skin irritation, pain, vomiting, and even blindness. In the eye, it stimulates the nerves of the lacrimal gland to produce tears. Common lachrymators include pepper spray (OC gas), CS gas, CR gas, CN gas (phenacyl chloride), nonivamide, bromoacetone, xylyl bromide, syn-propanethial-S-oxide (from onions), and Mace (a branded mixture). Lachrymatory agents are commonly used for riot control. It is also called lacrimator. Any group of substance that irritates the mucus membrane of the eyes, causing a stinging sensation and tears. They may also irritate the upper respiratory tract resuming to coughing, chocking and general debility. It is used by law enforcement agencies as a means of dispersing mobs, disabling rioters and flushing out armed suspects without use of deadly force.

(3) **Tasers:** Also called Conducted Electrical Weapon (CEW). It is an electroshock weapon introduced as a non-lethal weapon to subdue fleeing, belligerent or potentially dangerous people. Someone struck by them experiences overstimulation of sensory nerves and motor nerves resulting in strong involuntary muscle contractions. The Taser fires two small dart-like electrodes, which stay connected to the main unit by conductive wire as they are propelled by small compressed nitrogen charges. Tasers also provide a safety benefit to police officers, as they have a greater deployment range than batons, pepper spray or empty hand techniques. This allows police to maintain a safe distance (Adegoke, 2015).

Conclusion

Although science has provided ways to curb social vices, making it a panacea of giving too much credit as it has also contributed to it. Social vices which could have been curbed go completely undetected due to lack of efficient surveillance and tracking tools. Criminal cases like robbery and murder have remained unresolved because there are no reliable database, surveillance, tracking and forensic tools that could aid in the investigation. Science has also created a global platform for the public awareness of the danger and occurrences of these vices. This is to ensure proper investigations and safety of the general public.

Recommendations

Based on the above, the following recommendations are given:

- Social vices need to be curbed. Youths that engage in these dangerous acts need help advice and rehabilitation for the addicted ones.
- Parents need to know their children's friends, status, and their academic performances. This is majorly the role of the mothers. Mothers should be close to their children. Close monitoring and time should be given to children by parents. Children should be taught the moral values and the word of God.
- Government should organize forums that will enlighten the students on the dangers associated with social vices.
- Police must be active and be at alert. Schools should have a high level of discipline.

- Any student seen as threat to others should be cautioned and rehabilitated. All hands must be on deck to combat the social menace common to students.

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