

USING TECHNOLOGY TO BUILD RESILIENCE IN NIGERIAN CHILDREN:  
PATHWAY FROM VIOLENCE TIME

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### Abstract

*This paper focus on the use of technology to build resilience in Nigerian children, the study delves into this seemingly neglected area so as to bring up healthy individual whose intellectual wherewithal could help surmount violence and make them be useful to themselves and their environment. In contemporary Nigeria, violence has taken over the better way of solving and resolving issues but the use of some technological advance programmes could help as a way in which school children and internally displaced children can imbibe good habits rather than involving in juvenile delinquencies that can destroy their future. In the field of Science and technology, resilience can be used as path through which already internalized antisocial behavior could be addressed in children by the introduction of videos and/or games. It is discovered in the course of this study that with children in internally displaced camps (i.e. ID camps) Nigeria would be in serious anarchy if children in the camps who have lost the sense of etiquette are reintegrated into the macro-society without psychic rehabilitation. This can be done through video programmes that inculcate peaceful coexistence as against violence. This study recommends that rather than feeding children alone in ID camps, they should be urgently rehabilitated through technological programmes that extol virtues and conviviality over violence.*

**Keywords:** Technology, Nigerian children, violence, resilience, video, game

## Introduction

Technology has done a lot in the pursuit of knowledge by human towards his life Endeavour; it is evident that modern technology plays vital role on human development. The rate at which Nigerian children and young people use internet and social media has increased over the past decade significantly, the use of computer system also helped in the areas of the invention of computer games which could be seen as inconsequential, trivial and can as well help to educate and inform Nigerian children (pupils).

## Objective

The main objective of this paper is to acquaint people with how technology development can be used to inculcate in to the children meaningful ways to steer through life challenges. Resilience is the ability to steer through serious life challenges and find ways to bounce back and to thrive. An interactive concept that is concerned with the combination of serious risk experiences and a relative positive psychological outcome despite those experiences (Rutter 2006). According to Masten (2002), resilience is the ability to attain positive development, emotional and psychological outcomes despite a number of risk factors surrounding an individual. It is a capacity all young people have for healthy development and successful learning, the capacity to cope, learn and thrive in the face of change, challenge or adversity. And the ability to bounce back, recover or rebound from adversity, or as the ongoing and dynamic process of coping (Benard 1996; Burns 1996; Fuller 1998; Luthar 2000, Johnson 2008).

## How to promote resilience

Most children and young people spend a large amount of time in a setting called schools which are positioned distinctly to foster development positively. Work in the area of resilience has been instrumental in shifting from deficit-based approaches (a focus on repairing problem behaviours) to strengths-based approaches that aim to take advantage of existing strengths, positive qualities and the intentional promotion of wellbeing and resilience (Clonan et al., 2004; Noble & McGrath, 2008). Indeed, it is recognized increasingly as well as teaching academic skills, promoting school children wellbeing and resilience is part of the core business of schools, it is important for schools to build positive and protective environments that promote wellbeing and resilience for all students.

There are risks and protective factors that surround the wellbeing and resilience of school children at every setting, some of these settings are as follows:

- Individual factor
- Family factor
- School factor
- Community factor

Each of these settings has its risk and protective factors;

### **INDIVIDUAL**

#### **Risk factors**

Prenatal brain damage  
Low intelligence  
Alienation

#### **Protective factors**

Adequate nutrition  
Problem solving skills  
Good coping style

## FAMILY

### Risk factors

Poverty/economic insecurity

Violence in the home

Parental unemployment

### Protective factors

Secure and stable family

Family harmony

Responsibility within family

## SCHOOL

### Risk factors

Peer rejection

Racism

Truancy/dropout

### Protective factors

Sense of belonging/connectedness

School norms against violence

Engagement in learning

## COMMUNITY

### Risk factors

Isolation

Lack of support services

Population density

### Protective factors

Sense of connectedness

Access to support service

Cultural norms against violence

## VIOLENCE

Nigeria has been witnessing different forms of ethnic, religious and communal violence. At various occasions, the Nigerian state had demonstrated some level of efficiency in the control and management of these security challenges.

Violence simply means hostilities leading to the use of physical force or power by group or community that either results to injury, death or psychological harm (Abdullahi, 2016).

Violence often arises from mistrust, polarization of relations among groups and hostility, at times in a competitive setting. Abdullahi, M. (2016) in Elaigwu (2004), is of the view that violence is created according to the reports of some analyst that, insurgents, violence conflicts and other criminal elements would continue to terrorize the country as long as the insurgents have easy access to arms and ammunitions. The arms in the hands of criminals appear to be more than the one's in the hands of security agents. It is said that an idle hand is a devil's workshop, the rate at which students after leaving school roam about streets aimlessly contribute to more easy access to them and ask to perpetrate evil acts all in the name of making ends meet. These can be curbed if more attention is put on wellbeing of Nigerian children and youth in order to put a lasting solution to the problems which could bring about violence and conflicts within the society.

### **The use of technology as resilience**

Technological based computer games can provide us with exciting teaching and learning opportunities. Technology has contributed immensely to the development of mankind globally; educational sector is not left out in the areas of skill acquisition development. It is necessary to extend this to the aspect of child rebuilding in solving some of the problems that might arise as a result of violence, insurgency and terrorism.

According to Karen Anderson (2012), some of the opportunities provided by the use of technological based computer games that can help children are as follows: It provides platform for both talented ones, the weaker and the ones with special needs in bringing them together and sees them as one. It can also draw in pupils who lack confidence or be disinterested in learning backs to normal thinking. Among these opportunities is also skills development in terms of literacy, numeracy, logic, coordination, communication, teamwork and many others without the pupils knowing/aware that they are engaging in skill building.

The technological based computer games can be used as powerful tools that can instantly attract children attention thereby focusing on some positive/useful aspect of it to work with in life.

The invention of social media contributed to the lives of Nigerian children both in positive and negative way, what many Nigerian children perform all in the name of using social media nowadays is nothing to write home about, rather than using the platform for thing that will benefit their lives, most of them are busy using it to destroy their future. The use of the like of Facebook, twitter, Instagram by young people as a platform for dating , contacting unknown or total stranger and some ended up being sexually harassed, kidnapped, raped or even killed. But these platforms can be used for things that can better their lives, for example, creating a chatting platform which can be used to discuss issues that concerns their wellbeing, progress in education, learning of some creative skills that could be of useful benefits to their future. Digital connectivity can lead to an additional risk of experiencing social, physical, psychological or emotional harm, although these challenges are not always recognized or notice by young people themselves. Online games and messaging breaks down geographical barriers between peers, but it also removes the layers of protection afforded by more traditional format. Using smart phones makes managing your social networks and accessing online content much easier, but they are also instrumental in the distribution of pornography and the increase in cyber-bullying.

Similarly, when children face a challenging life experiences, traumatic event or an episode of poor mental health, they frequently turn to social media platforms to share their experiences, look for information or way, and make sense of what is happening to them. Some children/young people turn to their online friends and communities when they are in distress because online peer groups who have had similar experiences can help answer

questions they might have about managing their condition, which in turn builds a wider network of support and individual resilience that can shape how they respond to and navigate events in the future, Livingstone, et. al. (2012).

## Conclusion

In the era of digital world, technology can serve as resilience to Nigerian children towards exposing them to ways through which their lives could be better, rather than making use of the technology based platform or device negatively which would have negative effects on them. Awareness on how and what to use social media for needs to be created among school children and the risk involved when correct procedures are not followed.

## Recommendations

This study recommends as follows:

1. Embedding the promotion and acquisition of digital technology resilience in school curricular, and shaping it so that it is appropriate for the age and learning style of the children
2. Laws enacted to control the use of social media to forestall the dangers involved when used by school children should be implemented accordingly.
3. Positive teacher-students relationships should be encouraged which are associated with increased behavioural, cognitive and emotional engagement of students towards learning when provided.
4. Government should provide an enabling environment that will take of the wellbeing of every Nigerian child irrespective of ethnic and cultural beliefs.
5. Children that have experienced the trauma through violence should be rehabilitated before being reintegrated into the macro society.

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