

**IMPACT OF CYBER FRAUD ON THE DIGNITY OF LABOUR IN CONTEMPORARY
NIGERIAN SOCIETY: A CASE STUDY OF OREDO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA,
EDO STATE**

ADINU FAVOUR OLUCHI

SSC2208831

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

BENIN CITY, NIGERIA

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**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND
ANTHROPOLOGY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE AWARD OF THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (B.SC.) HONOURS DEGREE IN
SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY.**

UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

BENIN CITY, NIGERIA

OCTOBER, 2025

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this project was carried out by ADINU FAVOUR OLUCHI of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Science Degree (B.SC.) in Sociology and Anthropology, University of Benin, Benin City.

MR. MONDAY ABIOLA
(Project Supervisor)

ASSOCIATE PROF. G. O IGBINOMWAHIA
(Head of Department)

Date _____

Date: _____

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God almighty the beginning and the End. The work is also dedicated to my wonderful parents Mr. and Mrs. Adinu.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I return all glory and honor to the Almighty God for His grace, wisdom, and strength that guided me throughout the course of this project. Without His divine help, this work would not have been possible.

I sincerely appreciate my supervisor, Mr. Monday Abiola, for his guidance, patience, and valuable contributions that greatly shaped this work. His support and encouragement have been a source of motivation to me.

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the impact of cyber fraud on the dignity of labour in contemporary Nigerian society: A case study of Oredo Local Government Area, Edo State. To achieve the purpose of the study, six (6) research questions were raised and answered. The sample size for this study consisted of one hundred (100) respondents. The data collected was analyzed using frequency count and simple percentage.

The study revealed that cyber fraud has a significantly negative influence on students' career ambitions, motivation for education, and adherence to professional ethics. It was concluded that participation in and admiration for cyber fraud significantly undermine the societal value and respect for honest labour among youths in Oredo Local Government Area.

The study recommended among others that law enforcement agencies should be adequately equipped and trained to detect, investigate, and prosecute cyber fraud cases swiftly and fairly, ensuring that the consequences of such crimes serve as a deterrent.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

In recent years, Nigeria has experienced a worrying surge in cyber-related crimes, popularly known as “Yahoo Yahoo.” This growing phenomenon has largely been driven by the participation of young people in internet scams such as phishing, online identity theft, and digital financial fraud. The quest for quick wealth, coupled with widespread unemployment and poverty, has made cybercrime appear as a viable alternative to legitimate work. What was once celebrated as a revolutionary technological advancement—the internet—has now become a double-edged tool that, while enabling education and innovation, is also exploited for criminal purposes. The alarming aspect of cyber fraud lies in its deep infiltration into different levels of society, making it increasingly difficult to distinguish between genuine success and illicit wealth. As this unethical behaviour continues to gain social acceptance, it poses a serious threat to Nigeria’s moral fabric, eroding long-held values of honesty, diligence, and integrity that once defined the dignity of labour. This situation raises major concerns about the nation’s cultural, ethical, and economic future.

In the past, the principle of dignity in labour held a revered position in Nigerian society. Families, religious institutions, and communities taught individuals to value every form of honest work—be it farming, teaching, craftsmanship, or trade. These teachings emphasized discipline, perseverance, and moral uprightness. However, in contemporary times, these ideals have rapidly declined. The glamorization of cybercrime in popular culture—through music, films, and social media—has shifted societal admiration from those who work hard to those who amass wealth through deceitful means. Young people, in particular, are increasingly drawn to the lifestyle of individuals involved in fraudulent activities, often

disregarding the unethical means by which such wealth is obtained. This transformation has created a moral crisis in which material acquisition is now equated with success, while integrity and hard work are undervalued.

The economic and international implications of cyber fraud are equally severe. The growing number of digital scams has damaged Nigeria's global reputation, leading to declining confidence among foreign investors and international business partners. As trust diminishes, genuine entrepreneurs and digital professionals suffer discrimination and suspicion, making it difficult for legitimate online businesses to thrive. This has stifled growth in the country's digital economy and creative industries. Additionally, many young people have abandoned education and vocational training, believing that honest effort is futile compared to the quick profits of cybercrime. Such attitudes discourage productivity and threaten the long-term development of a skilled and self-reliant workforce in Nigeria.

The psychological and moral consequences of this trend are equally troubling. The glorification of fraudsters in entertainment and social media promotes the false impression that crime is both acceptable and admirable. This misleading portrayal influences impressionable youths to believe that financial success can only be achieved through illegal means. Consequently, individuals who choose to live and work honestly are often mocked or regarded as unsuccessful, leading to frustration and social pressure that could drive them toward criminal behaviour. Over time, this erodes the nation's moral conscience and weakens collective faith in fairness, justice, and integrity. A society that no longer values honest work risks losing the foundation of accountability, discipline, and transparency needed for sustainable development.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In today's Nigeria, the increasing involvement of youths in cyber fraud has become a major social and moral concern. This criminal activity, which involves deceitful use of online platforms for personal gain, has not only tarnished the country's image internationally but also undermined fundamental moral values. With the spread of digital technology and easier access to the internet, cybercrime has become widespread, especially in urban areas where unemployment and economic hardship are most severe. The individuals who engage in these acts, popularly known as "Yahoo Boys," are often admired in certain social groups for their lavish lifestyles and extravagant possessions—symbols of success achieved through fraudulent means. Such admiration has weakened the value of honest work, making education, integrity, and hard labour appear less rewarding. Consequently, many youths now perceive cyber fraud as a faster and more appealing route to wealth and independence. The normalization of these behaviours raises serious questions about Nigeria's moral direction and the future of lawful work in the country.

A particularly disturbing outcome of this trend is the changing attitude toward work and productivity. Nigeria's once-strong culture of honesty, hard work, and perseverance is being overshadowed by the idolization of wealth gained through dishonest practices. Young people who engage in legitimate trades, teaching, or small-scale business are increasingly viewed as failures when compared to fraudsters who flaunt sudden riches. This has created a social perception that legal employment offers little reward. Furthermore, the inability of government institutions to provide adequate employment opportunities, combined with weak enforcement of cybercrime laws, has intensified the problem. Every year, thousands of graduates enter the labour market with little hope of finding jobs, leaving them vulnerable to the temptation of cyber fraud. The widespread influence of social media further amplifies this issue by promoting the extravagant lifestyles of cybercriminals, thereby shaping public

opinion in their favour. As this distorted value system spreads, the pride once associated with earning an honest living continues to diminish. Against this backdrop, this study seeks to examine the impact of cyber fraud on the dignity of labour in modern Nigerian society, with specific focus on youths in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

1.3 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following questions:

1. To what extent do young people in Oredo Local Government Area view cyber fraud as an alternative to legitimate employment?
2. How does engagement in cyber fraud influence individuals' perception of honest labour?
3. In what ways does cyber fraud affect the career aspirations and professional ethics of students in Oredo Local Government Area?
4. How does the prevalence of cyber fraud influence community respect for traditional occupations and hardworking individuals?
5. What challenges are faced by individuals who uphold the dignity of labour by choosing lawful work instead of cyber fraud?
6. What roles do community leaders and traditional institutions play in promoting the dignity of labour amid rising cases of cyber fraud?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this research is to examine the impact of cyber fraud on the dignity of labour in modern Nigerian society, using Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State as a case study. The specific objectives are to:

1. Determine how cyber fraud is perceived as an alternative to legitimate work among youths in Oredo Local Government Area.
2. Assess how participation in cyber fraud affects individuals' perception of honest labour.
3. Investigate the influence of cyber fraud on the career ambitions and professional conduct of students in Oredo Local Government Area.
4. Examine how the spread of cyber fraud affects community respect for lawful professions and hardworking individuals.
5. Identify the challenges encountered by individuals who uphold the dignity of labour through honest means of livelihood.
6. Explore the contributions of community leaders and traditional authorities in promoting respect for the dignity of labour despite the challenges of cyber fraud.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study holds great value for Nigerian youths, especially those facing unemployment and economic hardship. By exploring how cyber fraud erodes respect for honest labour, the research will raise awareness about the dangers of fraudulent activities and emphasize the satisfaction and long-term benefits of earning a living through legitimate means. It is expected to encourage young people to pursue meaningful careers, acquire useful skills, and engage in entrepreneurship as sustainable alternatives to crime.

The findings will also be beneficial to government authorities, as they will provide insight into how cybercrime damages national values and public attitudes toward hard work. The study will offer practical recommendations that can guide policies aimed at reducing youth

unemployment and strengthening ethical behaviour within society. It will also stress the need for increased investment in job creation, information technology education, and moral reorientation programs to curb the spread of cyber fraud.

Policymakers will find this research useful in designing strategies that address both the moral and economic aspects of cybercrime. The study will provide data that can inform labour market reforms, ethical education initiatives, and the enforcement of cyber laws. These insights will be valuable in developing social interventions that promote integrity and discourage the glorification of wealth acquired through criminal means.

The research will also be of significance to educational institutions and stakeholders in the education sector. The findings can contribute to curriculum improvements that integrate cyber ethics, entrepreneurship, and value-based education. Schools and universities can use the insights to create guidance programs that promote moral discipline and discourage fraudulent behaviour among students. Teachers, counselors, and administrators can employ the findings to encourage students to build their futures on integrity and diligence.

Finally, the study will be beneficial to the general public and civil society organizations. It will raise awareness about the socio-economic and moral dangers of cyber fraud and the importance of preserving the dignity of labour in Nigerian communities. The results can guide advocacy campaigns by parents, religious leaders, NGOs, and community groups to promote ethical living, support unemployed youths, and restore societal respect for honest work and perseverance.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study focuses on the impact of cyber fraud on the dignity of labour in modern Nigerian society, specifically within Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. The research targets

youths residing in this area, examining how their involvement or perception of cybercrime influences their attitudes toward honest work and lawful employment.

1.7 Definition of Terms

Cyber Fraud: This refers to criminal activities carried out through the internet, including phishing, identity theft, and online scams, where individuals unlawfully obtain financial or personal information for self-enrichment.

Dignity of Labour: This represents the respect and moral value attributed to all forms of honest work, emphasizing that every legitimate occupation contributes meaningfully to both personal and societal progress.

Youth Unemployment: This describes a condition in which young individuals, typically between the ages of 15 and 35, are actively seeking work but are unable to secure employment.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter examines how cyber fraud has affected the dignity of labour in today's Nigerian society. It begins by discussing the concept of cyber fraud and how it has evolved with technological advancement. The chapter also explores how many young people perceive cybercrime as an alternative to legitimate employment. It further assesses how involvement in fraudulent online practices reshapes individuals' views about the importance and value of honest work. Attention is also given to how cyber fraud influences students' professional ambitions and ethical standards. Additionally, the chapter considers how the growing prevalence of cybercrime affects the public's perception of traditional professions and the value of hard work. Finally, it highlights the challenges faced by individuals who continue to uphold the dignity of labour in an era where illicit wealth appears more celebrated, and concludes by discussing the roles of community and traditional leaders in restoring respect for honest work amidst the spread of cyber fraud.

2.1 Concept of Cyber Fraud

Cyber fraud refers to the unlawful manipulation of digital platforms to deceive others for personal or financial gain. It includes various online deceptive practices such as impersonation, phishing, false investments, and identity theft. This form of crime is mostly carried out through emails, social media, and fake websites that exploit people's trust or lack of digital awareness. In Nigeria, the growing rate of cyber fraud has been linked to widespread economic hardship, unemployment, and poor digital literacy. Many perpetrators disguise themselves as genuine institutions or individuals to obtain confidential details from unsuspecting victims.

Young people often become involved either as victims or offenders due to peer influence, the desire for wealth, and societal pressure. The inefficiency of law enforcement and outdated cybercrime regulations also make it easier for fraudsters to operate freely. To address this issue, there is a need for continuous education on digital safety, improved cybersecurity training, and the introduction of updated laws to match evolving cyber threats.

Beyond theft, cyber fraud encompasses manipulative techniques aimed at deceiving people through digital means. It often includes activities such as ransomware attacks, online impersonation, and emotional manipulation. In Nigeria, the term “*Yahoo Yahoo*” has become a popular expression for this phenomenon and reflects a broader social problem where online fraud is wrongly regarded as a clever or entrepreneurial act. This misconception has contributed to moral decline, particularly among the youth who see cybercriminals as role models. As online transactions increase, exposure to these threats also grows, reinforcing the need for digital ethics education and moral reorientation led by families, schools, and religious institutions.

Cyber fraud thrives because of weak security systems, inadequate regulations, and limited awareness of digital risks. The anonymity provided by the internet makes it easier for fraudsters to operate without detection. Common tools include spyware, fake websites, and cloned social media accounts. Many Nigerians fall victim because they fail to verify links or online sources before sharing personal information. Furthermore, poor cybersecurity infrastructure in both public and private institutions leaves sensitive data vulnerable to attack. Since many cases are not reported due to shame or fear, accurate data on cybercrime remains scarce. Preventing cyber fraud therefore requires robust cybersecurity measures, increased awareness, and investment in modern technological systems.

The motivation behind cyber fraud is largely rooted in economic and social challenges. Poverty, joblessness, and the pursuit of quick wealth drive many young people into internet fraud. Some see it as a way to escape hardship or to gain respect in a materialistic society that celebrates sudden wealth. This unhealthy trend undermines integrity and distorts moral values. Victims of cyber fraud often suffer both financially and emotionally, while the nation's image is tarnished globally. The rise in fraudulent activities has affected trust in Nigerian professionals and hindered international opportunities. Reducing cyber fraud will require government efforts to empower the youth, create employment opportunities, and promote ethical conduct through education and media campaigns.

Cybercrime does not only harm individuals but also poses a serious threat to national stability and economic progress. Frequent online attacks on banks and other financial institutions reduce public confidence and discourage foreign investment. Fraudulent transactions, data breaches, and identity theft disrupt economic growth and delay Nigeria's transition into a digital economy. In severe cases, cyber fraud is linked with organised crime, money laundering, and terrorism financing, making it a serious national concern. While Nigeria has introduced legal measures to combat cybercrime, enforcement remains weak due to insufficient funding, lack of training, and poor inter-agency collaboration. Effective solutions must therefore include policy reform, capacity building, public awareness, and international cooperation.

2.2 Impact of Participation in Cyber Fraud on Individuals' Perceptions of the Worth of Honest Labour

Engaging in cyber fraud significantly reshapes how individuals view the importance of honest labour. The rapid and often extravagant wealth associated with cybercrime creates the illusion that success is measured solely by financial gain rather than hard work or integrity.

Traditional employment, once seen as a source of dignity and self-respect, is increasingly perceived as slow, unrewarding, and outdated. The glamorisation of sudden wealth through social media further distorts societal values, diminishing admiration for patience, commitment, and legitimate enterprise. As a result, many young people begin to reject legal employment opportunities, believing that intelligence and creativity should be channelled toward activities that yield quick profits, regardless of legality.

Among young adults, cyber fraud has fuelled growing disregard for legitimate occupations. Those engaged in online scams often develop contempt for people who earn their living through conventional jobs. The excitement and instant gratification derived from illegal earnings breed frustration toward professions that demand perseverance and delayed rewards. This shift makes roles such as teaching, farming, or craftsmanship appear unattractive to ambitious youths. Consequently, the values of discipline, resilience, and ethical success are being eroded, giving rise to a culture that glorifies easy money over integrity.

Furthermore, the experience of quick financial success through cybercrime fosters impatience and discourages long-term career building. Once individuals become accustomed to rapid wealth, they begin to see hard work as unnecessary suffering. This attitude weakens industries that rely on dedicated professionals, such as education, medicine, and engineering, as fewer people are willing to commit to the time and effort required to excel in these fields. The resulting talent shortage negatively affects national productivity and weakens the country's professional base.

Psychologically, participation in cyber fraud alters moral judgment and encourages self-justification. Many perpetrators convince themselves that honest labour is only for those who lack intelligence or ambition, while fraud is seen as a display of wit and boldness. This distorted reasoning erodes their moral values and reduces respect for hardworking

professionals. In addition, the glorification of cybercrime in popular culture through music and film reinforces these beliefs, making it more difficult for individuals to appreciate the nobility of lawful work.

Peer influence also plays a major role in shaping attitudes toward honest labour. Within networks of cybercriminals, success is measured by wealth, luxury, and material display, not by integrity or effort. This collective mentality encourages conformity and pressures young people to abandon traditional aspirations. As the contrast between the lavish lifestyles of fraudsters and the modest living of honest workers grows, admiration for diligence fades. Communities begin to redefine success based on material possessions rather than moral values, leading to a cultural shift that undermines the dignity of labour.

2.3 Impact of Cyber Fraud on the Career Ambitions and Professional Ethics of Students

The growing involvement of students in cyber fraud has drastically influenced their career goals and ethical standards. Many students now view internet fraud as a faster and more appealing path to success than formal education or professional training. This perception has led to declining interest in conventional careers such as law, medicine, and engineering, which are now seen as time-consuming and less rewarding. As a result, students are increasingly abandoning their legitimate ambitions in pursuit of quick financial gain, eroding the work ethic and discipline that education is meant to instil.

The normalisation of cyber fraud among students has also weakened their moral integrity. Many justify their actions with excuses such as economic hardship or social inequality, blurring their sense of right and wrong. Over time, this mindset produces future professionals who may lack honesty and accountability. A student who engages in cyber fraud today may carry these unethical tendencies into future professional roles, undermining the credibility of

the workforce. This early exposure to dishonest behaviour shapes their moral foundation and threatens the ethical standards of various professions.

Involvement in cyber fraud also disrupts students' academic focus. Many who engage in fraudulent activities spend less time studying and often perform poorly in school. This diversion of attention leads to declining grades, poor qualifications, or even school dropout. As academic commitment weakens, the ability to build stable and rewarding careers also diminishes. Students who prioritise illegal activities over learning eventually struggle to secure decent employment and may become trapped in a cycle of crime and dependency.

The desire for social recognition further intensifies the problem. On many campuses, cybercriminals are celebrated for their wealth and influence, while hardworking students are mocked or ignored. This misplaced admiration shifts ambition away from personal development and toward materialism. As a result, values such as honesty, perseverance, and discipline are replaced with greed and impatience. The culture of glorifying cybercrime spreads quickly among peers, making it difficult for integrity-driven students to maintain focus on legitimate aspirations.

Ultimately, the effects of cyber fraud among students extend far beyond academic life. When young people embrace fraudulent behaviour, they carry those attitudes into adulthood and future leadership roles. This endangers national progress, as such individuals are likely to perpetuate corruption and misuse of power when they occupy positions of responsibility. The consequence is a decline in public trust, weakened institutions, and compromised professional standards. If this trend continues unchecked, Nigeria risks producing a generation of leaders who value personal enrichment over ethical service, thereby undermining both national development and the dignity of labour.

2.4 Impact of Cyber Fraud Prevalence on Community's Esteem for Traditional Professions and Industrious Persons

The rising wave of cyber fraud in Nigeria has severely weakened the respect and recognition once given to traditional occupations such as teaching, agriculture, and skilled trades. Individuals involved in internet fraud, often seen as affluent and influential, have gradually become role models to many young people, overshadowing the virtues of hard work, integrity, and perseverance. Wealth acquired through deceitful means is now celebrated, resulting in a moral shift that diminishes admiration for diligence and lawful earnings. Consequently, those who choose honest professions are frequently regarded as unambitious or outdated. This decline in appreciation for legitimate labour discourages many from pursuing essential careers that sustain community development. Across various communities, teachers, artisans, and farmers now struggle not only with low earnings but also with diminishing public esteem, making it increasingly difficult to motivate future generations toward these occupations. The result is a growing moral and social divide where material success is prized above integrity, creating a society that values wealth more than ethical contribution.

The effects of cybercrime stretch beyond economic and legal implications, touching the very core of community morality and ethics. In numerous Nigerian towns and cities, individuals who accumulate wealth through transparent and legal efforts are frequently compared unfavourably with those who engage in cyber fraud. Such comparisons breed suspicion and erode collective respect for professions that provide stable but modest financial rewards. As a result, hardworking individuals often go unappreciated, leaving them frustrated and demoralised. With traditional figures of inspiration gradually losing visibility, young people no longer aspire to become dedicated doctors, teachers, or engineers. Instead, the temptation of quick financial gratification overshadows values like patience, honesty, and endurance.

This cultural distortion encourages the mindset that success justifies any means of achieving it, regardless of legality or morality.

In regions where cybercrime has become deeply entrenched, the prestige once attached to professional fields requiring extensive education and discipline is steadily declining. Careers such as law, medicine, and engineering have suffered a reputational setback, as the visible rewards of these occupations seem insignificant when compared to the ostentatious lifestyles of cybercriminals. This contrast devalues the sacrifices made by legitimate workers and breeds resentment among those striving to improve society through ethical labour. Consequently, many families and communities have stopped encouraging young people to enter demanding professions, believing the financial outcomes are inadequate. Over time, this mindset erodes professional standards, weakens merit-based recognition, and contributes to moral and institutional decay. The community's perception of success has shifted toward an admiration of quick riches rather than sincere contribution, undermining the foundational principles of discipline and perseverance.

The glorification of cyber fraud has also generated a culture of mockery directed at those who live modestly despite their education or career achievements. In certain areas, young professionals who drive simple cars or rent modest apartments are ridiculed or urged to “find faster ways” to improve their financial standing—often implying unlawful alternatives. Such social pressures degrade the dignity of labour, compelling some individuals to abandon legitimate employment in pursuit of easier, fraudulent options. The celebration of material wealth above moral standing alienates those who choose ethical paths, creating emotional distress and confusion among young people who struggle to reconcile their values with society's expectations. Ultimately, this moral misalignment fosters frustration, weakens social cohesion, and breeds cynicism toward the ideals of education, perseverance, and lawful enterprise.

The ripple effects of cyber fraud are also reflected in parental attitudes and family guidance. In some households, particularly in communities heavily affected by online crime, parents express regret over investing in formal education, lamenting that it fails to bring rapid wealth. Such sentiments degrade the value of education and discredit years of honest labour. Over time, this fuels a cultural crisis in which traditional careers are seen as obsolete or unproductive. Communities begin to elevate cybercriminals as the new elite, while hardworking individuals are dismissed as naïve or unlucky. As these distorted success stories become normalised, collective efforts to promote integrity and accountability weaken. The result is the gradual breakdown of moral and cultural structures that once sustained respect for honest work.

2.5 Obstacles Encountered by Those Who Maintain the Dignity of Labour by Opting for Lawful Employment Instead of Cyber Fraud

Nigerians who remain committed to earning a living through honest work face significant financial and social difficulties. One major challenge is the low level of income associated with most legal jobs, especially within the public sector. Rising living costs, inflation, and stagnant wages make it nearly impossible for many workers to meet basic needs, while others around them acquire wealth through fraudulent means. This disparity has created a sense of neglect and discouragement among law-abiding citizens who feel unrewarded despite their hard work. The lack of adequate compensation for legitimate labour makes honest employment appear less attractive, leading to frustration, moral conflict, and growing disillusionment among the youth.

Another major obstacle is the shortage of decent job opportunities for those determined to work lawfully. Unemployment and underemployment remain widespread, especially among university graduates, forcing many into unstable, short-term, or poorly paid jobs that offer no

security or growth prospects. Meanwhile, cyber fraud promises instant income with little effort, drawing more young people into illegal activities. Those who resist the temptation to engage in online scams are often ridiculed or dismissed as foolish for refusing to “make easy money.” The system’s failure to create sustainable livelihoods leaves these individuals feeling trapped in hardship and despair, despite their determination to uphold moral standards.

Societal perceptions of wealth and success also present a major challenge for individuals who pursue legitimate work. In contemporary Nigeria, success is often judged by visible affluence rather than by the honesty of one’s earnings. People involved in cyber fraud are often admired for their luxury lifestyles, while those who earn modestly are pitied or ridiculed. This distorted value system discourages persistence and integrity, particularly among young people who grow up equating worth with wealth. The popular culture of quick money—reinforced by media, entertainment, and sometimes religious circles—further glorifies fraudulent success, making it emotionally difficult for honest workers to remain motivated. In such an environment, the moral value of labour becomes undervalued and underappreciated.

Those committed to lawful employment also face systemic challenges arising from poor governance and institutional inefficiency. Many Nigerian organisations fail to uphold fair labour practices, such as prompt salary payments, worker welfare, and adequate benefits. Employees often work under poor conditions, with minimal job satisfaction or protection against exploitation. The lack of strong labour unions or effective legal frameworks makes it hard for workers to seek justice or better terms. This neglect creates widespread frustration, particularly when compared with the apparent prosperity of cybercriminals who enjoy their illicit earnings without consequences. Such an imbalance sends a discouraging message that honesty yields suffering, while deceit offers comfort, thereby weakening collective faith in hard work.

Maintaining the dignity of labour also brings emotional and psychological burdens. Individuals who remain committed to integrity often battle feelings of inadequacy when comparing themselves to peers involved in fraudulent ventures. Being labelled as “unsuccessful” or “behind” can lead to social alienation, low self-esteem, and depression. Family members or friends sometimes pressure them to abandon honest means and pursue quicker, unethical paths to wealth. The strain of holding onto one’s principles in a morally corrupt environment can be mentally exhausting. Without social and emotional support systems, many may eventually lose faith in lawful work, further diminishing the nation’s moral fabric.

2.6 Functions of Community Leaders and Traditional Institutions in Advancing the Dignity of Labour in the Face of Cyber Fraud Challenges

Community leaders and traditional institutions play vital roles in preserving moral integrity and promoting respect for labour in the face of rising cyber fraud. As custodians of culture, they serve as moral guides who shape communal attitudes toward honesty and hard work. Many use their authority to discourage fraudulent wealth and promote ethical living through public speeches, town meetings, and cultural events. In some communities, titles, awards, or honours are reserved only for individuals known for their uprightness and industriousness, thereby reinforcing the social value of honest achievement. These cultural reinforcements help redirect admiration away from deceitful wealth toward legitimate accomplishments, gradually restoring the dignity of labour.

Traditional institutions also contribute through education and rehabilitation. Many local councils now collaborate with government agencies and non-governmental organisations to conduct training programmes in trades, technology, and entrepreneurship. These initiatives provide young people with practical alternatives to cyber fraud and instil pride in manual or

intellectual work. Elders and community leaders often act as mediators, helping families reintegrate youths who have engaged in fraudulent activities by guiding them back into productive community life. Such interventions highlight that true success stems from persistence and lawful effort, not exploitation or deceit. By serving as visible examples of integrity, these leaders motivate others to follow ethical paths.

Another crucial function of these leaders is to ensure moral accountability through public recognition and storytelling. During festivals and cultural gatherings, community elders often share proverbs, folktales, and moral lessons that emphasise the consequences of dishonesty and the rewards of hard work. These oral traditions carry deep significance, as they resonate with community values and reinforce moral standards. Leaders may also use social shame and public disapproval as corrective tools, encouraging parents to guide their children away from fraudulent behaviour. Through these cultural mechanisms, the community is reminded that honour comes from integrity and hard work, not from ill-gotten gains.

Furthermore, traditional rulers frequently collaborate with religious leaders to strengthen anti-fraud campaigns and advocate for moral renewal. By uniting their spiritual and cultural influence, they deliver powerful messages condemning deceitful wealth and celebrating ethical labour. Public awareness programmes, sermons, and community projects jointly organised by these institutions serve as platforms to promote honesty, responsibility, and lawful enterprise. Some communities now hold events to celebrate artisans, farmers, and traders, showing that dignity lies in the process of earning, not in the amount earned. This collective reinforcement helps shift social admiration from material success to ethical living.

Traditional authorities also act as advocates for youth empowerment policies that encourage self-reliance and skill development. Many have appealed to local governments and private organisations to invest in job creation and vocational centres. By supporting such initiatives,

community leaders help reduce the allure of cyber fraud while elevating the social image of manual and technical labour. They also identify vulnerable youths and connect them with productive opportunities, ensuring they contribute positively to community development. Through continuous advocacy, moral guidance, and collaboration, these traditional and community leaders help re-establish a culture that values integrity, perseverance, and the true dignity of labour.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in the **Strain Theory**, developed by Robert Merton in 1938. The theory explains how social pressure and inequality can lead individuals to engage in deviant behaviour when they are unable to achieve accepted goals through legitimate means. In societies where success is measured by material wealth and status, people who face obstacles such as unemployment or poverty may experience frustration and turn to alternative, often unlawful, routes to achieve these goals. Within the Nigerian context, where opportunities for advancement are limited and economic hardship is widespread, cyber fraud becomes an appealing outlet for those seeking rapid success. Merton's concept of strain thus provides a useful lens for understanding how the inability to achieve financial stability through honest work drives some individuals toward online crime.

The theory highlights five possible reactions to societal pressure: conformity, innovation, ritualism, retreatism, and rebellion. Cyber fraud can be classified as an **innovative response**, where individuals pursue socially approved goals—such as wealth and recognition—through illegitimate means. This adaptation reflects the tension between ambition and accessibility. As people grow frustrated by barriers like unemployment, corruption, or systemic inequality, they may innovate by turning to cyber fraud as a faster route to success. This behaviour

ultimately undermines the social value of hard work and distorts moral priorities, as individuals begin to justify unethical actions as necessary survival strategies.

The modern digital economy further intensifies this strain by amplifying the temptation to exploit technology for unlawful gain. With widespread internet access and growing dependence on digital transactions, opportunities for cybercrime have expanded. The appeal of quick money through technology contrasts sharply with the slow, often unrewarding process of legitimate labour. This dynamic reinforces the idea that effort is unnecessary when shortcuts appear more profitable, deepening moral decay and weakening traditional work ethics.

The widespread acceptance of cyber fraud undermines society's respect for labour by redefining success through the lens of instant gratification. As fraudulent activities yield rapid wealth and social prestige, honest work becomes devalued and unappealing. The public perception of legitimate labour shifts from one of pride to one of pity or insignificance, creating a moral imbalance where unethical behaviour is normalised. Over time, this erodes the moral foundations of the workforce, replacing discipline and perseverance with greed and opportunism.

The relevance of Strain Theory to this study lies in its ability to explain the psychological and societal factors that motivate individuals to choose cyber fraud over honest work. It provides insight into how structural inequalities, economic frustration, and cultural pressures can distort values and encourage deviant innovation. As more people embrace illegal means to attain wealth, the collective respect for lawful work diminishes, thereby eroding the dignity of labour. The theory helps illustrate that the glorification of cyber fraud is not merely a moral issue but also a social and economic consequence of systemic strain within the Nigerian society.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the procedures and techniques adopted for conducting the study. It explains the research design, population, sampling methods, sample size, and data collection and analysis techniques used in achieving the objectives of the research. It also describes the validity process that ensured the instrument accurately measured the intended variables. The methodology further details the approaches used in gathering data and the analytical tools applied to interpret the results, including both statistical and descriptive methods.

3.1 Research Design

The study employed a descriptive survey design. This design was selected because it allows for the systematic collection of data that reflect the characteristics and opinions of a particular group or population. It typically involves using questionnaires, surveys, or interviews to obtain information from a representative sample. The approach provides an accurate picture of trends, patterns, and relationships without manipulating the study environment. It is widely used in the social and educational sciences to explore attitudes, opinions, and behaviours. For this research, the design made it possible to examine how cyber fraud affects the dignity of labour in modern Nigerian society, using Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State as the focal point.

3.2 Population of the Study

The population for this research comprised residents of four selected communities within Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. These communities included Urubi, Ikpema,

Ibiwe, and Uzebu. According to available demographic data, Oredo Local Government has an estimated population of 404,218 inhabitants.

3.3 Sample Size

A total of one hundred (100) respondents formed the sample size for this study. These participants were drawn from the four selected communities—Urubi, Ikpema, Ibiwe, and Uzebu—with twenty-five (25) individuals chosen from each community. The sample size was determined using Taro Yamane’s formula for sample estimation:

$$\text{Sample size} = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where:

N = Population size

1 = Constant

e = margin of error (usually 0.1 for a 90% confidence level)

Thus;

$$= \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

$$= \frac{404,218}{1+404,218(0.1)^2}$$

$$N = \frac{404,218}{1+404,218(0.01)}$$

$$N = \frac{404,218}{1+4,042.18}$$

$$N = \frac{404,218}{4,043.18}$$

$$N=100$$

Thus, the calculated sample size is 100 respondents.

3.4 Sampling Technique

The simple random sampling technique was utilized in selecting participants for the study.

This method ensured that every individual in the population had an equal opportunity to be

chosen, thereby reducing bias. Using this technique, twenty-five respondents were randomly selected from each of the four identified communities, giving a total of one hundred (100) participants.

3.5 Research Instrument

The primary tool used for data collection was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered to the respondents confidentially and designed to obtain detailed and relevant information for the study. It consisted of six sections labeled A to F.

- **Section A:** Focused on the extent to which youths perceive cyber fraud as a viable alternative to lawful employment.
- **Section B:** Examined how involvement in cyber fraud influences individuals' views on the value of honest labour.
- **Section C:** Investigated the effect of cyber fraud on students' professional ethics and career aspirations.
- **Section D:** Assessed how the prevalence of cyber fraud affects community respect for traditional professions and hard work.
- **Section E:** Highlighted the difficulties faced by individuals who choose legitimate work over fraudulent practices.
- **Section F:** Explored the contributions of community leaders and traditional institutions in promoting the dignity of labour amidst rising cyber fraud activities.

3.6 Validity of the Instrument

The research instrument underwent face validation to ensure its appropriateness and clarity. The questionnaire was reviewed by the project supervisor, who assessed its content and

structure to confirm that it adequately addressed the research objectives. Necessary adjustments and corrections were made before it was finalized for administration.

3.7 Method for Data Collection

The questionnaire served as the primary data collection method. Copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the selected respondents across the four communities. The instrument was designed by the researcher to obtain information relevant to the influence of cyber fraud on the dignity of labour within the Nigerian context.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts and percentages were applied to summarize the data, while the chi-square test was employed to test the hypotheses. The chi-square technique helped to determine whether significant relationships existed between categorical variables, such as demographic attributes and respondents' opinions. It compared the observed and expected frequencies to identify statistically meaningful differences. This analytical method was suitable for descriptive studies and aided in presenting the results in tables and charts, thereby simplifying interpretation. The findings were subsequently discussed in relation to the study's objectives to draw valid and logical conclusions.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Analysis of Respondents Demographic Data

This section opens with the demographic information of the respondents, covering their gender, age, marital status, religious affiliation, and occupation. These details are intended to give an understanding of the impact of cyber fraud on the dignity of labour in contemporary Nigerian society, with specific reference to Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

Table 4.1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	31	31%
Female	69	69%
Total	100	100%

Source: Field Work, 2025

Table 4.1 showed the gender distribution of respondents, with 31% being male and 69% being female. This indicated that the majority of the study population consisted of female respondents, while males represented a smaller proportion.

Table 4.2: Distribution of Respondents by Age

Age Range	Respondents	Percentages
18-25	62	62%
26-35	22	22%
36-45	11	11%
46 years and above	5	5%
Total	100	100%

Source: Field Work, 2025

Table 4.2 showed that respondents within the age range of 18–25 years formed the largest group, with 62 respondents, representing 62% of the total. This was followed by those aged 26–35 years, who made up 22 respondents or 22%. Next were respondents aged 36–45 years,

accounting for 11% of the respondents. The smallest group comprised those aged 46 years and above, with 5 respondents, representing 5%. This indicated that the majority of respondents fell within the 18–25 age range.

Table 4.3: Distribution of Respondents by Religious Affiliation

Religion	Respondents	Percentages
Christian	76	76%
Muslim	18	18%
African Traditional Religion	6	6%
Total	100	100%

Source: Field Work, 2025

Table 4.3 showed the religious affiliation of respondents, with 76% (76 respondents) identifying as Christians, 18% (18 respondents) as Muslims, and 6% (6 respondents) practicing African Traditional Religion. This indicated that Christianity was the predominant religion among the respondents, followed by Islam and African Traditional Religion.

Table 4.4: Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status

Marital Status	Respondents	Percentages
Single	73	73%
Married	24	24%
Divorce	3	3%
Total	100	100%

Source: Field Work, 2025

Table 4.4 showed the marital status of respondents, with 73% being single, 24% married, and 3% divorced. This indicated that the majority of respondents were single, while a smaller proportion were married or divorced.

Table 4.5: Distribution of Respondents by Occupation

Occupation	Respondents	Percentages
Farmer	21	21%
Civil servant	34	34%
Trader	41	41%
Others	4	4%
Total	100	100%

Source: Field Work, 2025

Table 4.5 revealed that 21% of the sampled respondents were farmers, 34% were civil servants, 41% were traders, while 4% belonged to other occupations not specified. This indicated that the majority of the respondents were engaged in trading.

4.2 Presentation and Analysis of the Items in the Research Questions

Research Question 1: To what extent is cyber fraud regarded as a feasible substitute for lawful work among the youths in Oredo Local Government Area?

Table 4.6: Distribution of Responses on Extent Cyber Fraud is Regarded as a Feasible Substitute for Lawful Work Among the Youths

S/N	Items	Total No of respondents	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	Many youths in the community see cyber fraud as an easier alternative to legal jobs	100	63 (63%)	31 (31%)	4 (4%)	2 (2%)
2.	Cyber fraud is perceived by some youths as a faster way to gain wealth than lawful employment	100	59 (59%)	34 (34%)	4 (4%)	3 (3%)
3.	The popularity of cyber fraud has reduced interest in acquiring professional skills	100	61 (61%)	33 (33%)	4 (4%)	2 (2%)
4.	Youths are more likely to engage in cyber fraud when faced with unemployment	100	57 (57%)	38 (38%)	3 (3%)	2 (2%)
5.	Legal work is often viewed as less rewarding compared to cyber fraud among youths	100	64 (64%)	28 (28%)	5 (5%)	3 (3%)

Researcher's Field Work, 2025

Table 4.6 presented the distribution of responses on the extent to which cyber fraud was regarded as a feasible substitute for lawful work among youths in Oredo Local Government Area. Regarding item 1, the view that many youths saw cyber fraud as an easier alternative to legal jobs was widely supported, with 63% of respondents strongly agreeing and 31%

agreeing, while only 4% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed, indicating that 94% of respondents shared this perception. In item 2, the belief that cyber fraud was perceived as a faster way to gain wealth than lawful employment was also strongly affirmed, as 59% strongly agreed and 34% agreed, while only 4% disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed, showing that 93% of respondents upheld this view. Similarly, item 3, which highlighted the reduction in interest in acquiring professional skills due to the popularity of cyber fraud, had 61% strongly agreeing and 33% agreeing, with only 4% disagreeing and 2% strongly disagreeing, indicating that 94% of respondents supported this assertion. In item 4, the likelihood of youths engaging in cyber fraud when faced with unemployment was recognised by 57% strongly agreeing and 38% agreeing, while just 3% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed, showing that 95% of respondents believed unemployment increased cyber fraud participation. Lastly, item 5, which stated that legal work was often viewed as less rewarding compared to cyber fraud, received the highest strong agreement (64%) and an additional 28% agreement, while only 5% disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed, revealing that 92% of respondents shared this opinion. Overall, the findings indicated that there was a high extent to which cyber fraud was regarded as a feasible substitute for lawful work among the youths in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

Results of Research Question 2

Research Question 2: What is the impact of participation in cyber fraud on individuals' perceptions of the worth of honest labour?

Table 4.7: Distribution of Responses on Impact of Participation in Cyber Fraud on Individuals' Perceptions of the Worth of Honest Labour

S/N	Items	Total No of respondents	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	Participation in cyber fraud lowers respect for people engaged in honest labour	100	67 (67%)	26 (26%)	4 (4%)	3 (3%)
2.	Those involved in cyber fraud see lawful workers as naive or less smart	100	62 (62%)	34 (34%)	2 (2%)	2 (2%)
3.	The success of cyber fraudsters has made honest labour seem outdated	100	53 (53%)	39 (39%)	5 (5%)	3 (3%)
4.	Youths who admire cybercriminals tend to look down on hardworking professionals	100	66 (66%)	29 (29%)	3 (3%)	2 (2%)
5.	Honest labour is no longer celebrated in society due to the influence of cybercrime	100	63 (63%)	32 (32%)	2 (2%)	3 (3%)

Researcher's Field Work, 2025

Table 4.7 presented the distribution of responses on the impact of participation in cyber fraud on individuals' perceptions of the worth of honest labour. Regarding item 1, the belief that participation in cyber fraud lowered respect for people engaged in honest labour was strongly supported, with 67% of respondents strongly agreeing and 26% agreeing, while only 4% disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed, indicating that 93% of respondents held this view. In item 2, the perception that those involved in cyber fraud saw lawful workers as naive or less smart was affirmed by 62% strongly agreeing and 34% agreeing, with only 2% disagreeing and 2% strongly disagreeing, showing that 96% of respondents shared this opinion. Similarly,

item 3, which asserted that the success of cyber fraudsters had made honest labour seem outdated, had 53% strongly agreeing and 39% agreeing, while 5% disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed, revealing that 92% of respondents supported this statement. In item 4, the view that youths who admired cybercriminals tended to look down on hardworking professionals was recognised by 66% strongly agreeing and 29% agreeing, while just 3% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed, indicating that 95% of respondents upheld this belief. Lastly, item 5, which stated that honest labour was no longer celebrated in society due to the influence of cybercrime, received 63% strong agreement and 32% agreement, with only 2% disagreeing and 3% strongly disagreeing, showing that 95% of respondents shared this perspective. Overall, the responses indicated that participation in and admiration for cyber fraud significantly undermined the societal value and respect for honest labour among youths in Oredo Local Government Area.

Results of Research Question 3

Research Question 3: What is the impact of cyber fraud on the career ambitions and professional ethics of students in Oredo Local Government Area?

Table 4.8: Distribution of Responses on Impact of Cyber Fraud on the Career Ambitions and Professional Ethics of Students

S/N	Items	Total No of respondents	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	Exposure to cyber fraud reduces students' motivation to pursue professional careers	100	52 (52%)	41 (41%)	5 (5%)	2 (2%)
2.	Some students abandon their education to pursue cyber fraud as a career path	100	69 (69%)	22 (22%)	3 (3%)	6 (6%)
3.	Cyber fraud erodes students' sense of discipline and professional ethics	100	49 (49%)	42 (42%)	5 (5%)	4 (4%)
4.	Students influenced by cyber fraud are less likely to uphold values of hard work and integrity	100	71 (71%)	21 (21%)	5 (5%)	3 (3%)
5.	The desire for quick money through cyber fraud affects students' long-term career goals	100	55 (55%)	39 (39%)	4 (4%)	2 (2%)

Researcher's Field Work, 2025

Table 4.8 presented the distribution of responses on the impact of cyber fraud on the career ambitions and professional ethics of students in Oredo Local Government Area. Regarding item 1, the belief that exposure to cyber fraud reduced students' motivation to pursue professional careers was supported by 52% of respondents strongly agreeing and 41% agreeing, while only 5% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed, indicating that 93% shared this view. In item 2, the assertion that some students abandoned their education to pursue

cyber fraud as a career path received the highest strong agreement (69%) and an additional 22% agreement, with only 3% disagreeing and 6% strongly disagreeing, showing that 91% of respondents affirmed this statement. Similarly, item 3, which stated that cyber fraud eroded students' sense of discipline and professional ethics, had 49% strongly agreeing and 42% agreeing, while 5% disagreed and 4% strongly disagreed, indicating that 91% of respondents supported this view. In item 4, the perception that students influenced by cyber fraud were less likely to uphold values of hard work and integrity was affirmed by 71% strongly agreeing and 21% agreeing, with just 5% disagreeing and 3% strongly disagreeing, showing that 92% of respondents held this opinion. Lastly, item 5, which highlighted that the desire for quick money through cyber fraud affected students' long-term career goals, received 55% strong agreement and 39% agreement, while only 4% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed, indicating that 94% of respondents agreed with this claim. Overall, the findings revealed that cyber fraud had a significantly negative influence on students' career ambitions, motivation for education, and adherence to professional ethics in Oredo Local Government Area.

Results of Research Question 4

Research Question 4: What is the impact of cyber fraud prevalence on the community's esteem for traditional professions and industrious persons?

Table 4.9: Distribution of Responses on Impact of Cyber Fraud Prevalence on the Community's Esteem for Traditional Professions and Industrious Persons

S/N	Items	Total No of respondents	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	Professionals such as teachers and civil servants receive less respect due to cyber fraud's influence	100	72 (72%)	23 (23%)	2 (2%)	3 (3%)
2.	Community members tend to admire individuals with flashy wealth regardless of its source	100	63 (63%)	29 (29%)	6 (6%)	2 (2%)
3.	Traditional professions are undervalued because they don't offer quick financial rewards	100	71 (71%)	22 (22%)	4 (4%)	3 (3%)
4.	The success of cybercriminals overshadows the contributions of lawful workers	100	59 (59%)	36 (36%)	3 (3%)	2 (2%)
5.	Honest and industrious people are now seen as less successful in the community	100	64 (64%)	27 (27%)	4 (4%)	5 (5%)

Researcher's Field Work, 2025

Table 4.9 presented the distribution of responses on the impact of cyber fraud prevalence on the community's esteem for traditional professions and industrious persons. Regarding item 1, the view that professionals such as teachers and civil servants receive less respect due to

cyber fraud's influence was strongly supported, with 72% of respondents strongly agreeing and 23% agreeing, while only 2% disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed, indicating that 95% share this opinion. In item 2, the perception that community members tend to admire individuals with flashy wealth regardless of its source was affirmed by 63% strongly agreeing and 29% agreeing, while 6% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed, showing that 92% of respondents hold this view. Similarly, item 3, which asserts that traditional professions are undervalued because they do not offer quick financial rewards, received 71% strong agreement and 22% agreement, with only 4% disagreeing and 3% strongly disagreeing, revealing that 93% of respondents support this statement. In item 4, the belief that the success of cybercriminals overshadows the contributions of lawful workers was supported by 59% strongly agreeing and 36% agreeing, while 3% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed, showing that 95% of respondents share this perspective. Lastly, item 5, which states that honest and industrious people are now seen as less successful in the community, received 64% strong agreement and 27% agreement, while 4% disagreed and 5% strongly disagreed, indicating that 91% of respondents uphold this view. Overall, the findings suggest that the prevalence of cyber fraud significantly diminishes the community's respect for traditional professions and hardworking individuals, replacing esteem for diligence with admiration for quick, often illicit, financial gains.

Results of Research Question 5

Research Question 5: What are some of the obstacles encountered by those who maintain the dignity of labour by opting for lawful employment instead of cyber fraud?

Table 4.10: Distribution of Responses on Obstacles Encountered by those Who Maintain the Dignity of Labour by Opting for Lawful Employment Instead of Cyber Fraud

S/N	Items	Total No of respondents	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	People who choose lawful jobs face social pressure to pursue quick wealth	100	52 (52%)	33 (33%)	9 (9%)	6 (6%)
2.	Lawful workers struggle financially compared to those involved in cyber fraud	100	47 (47%)	38 (38%)	11 (11%)	4 (4%)
3.	The community does not adequately recognize the efforts of honest workers	100	27 (27%)	59 (59%)	6 (6%)	8 (8%)
4.	Lack of employment opportunities drives people away from lawful work	100	61 (61%)	28 (28%)	6 (6%)	5 (5%)
5.	Upholding dignity of labour is difficult in an environment that glorifies fraud	100	44 (44%)	31 (31%)	11 (11%)	14 (14%)

Source: Field Work, 2025

Table 4.10 presented the distribution of responses on the obstacles encountered by those who maintain the dignity of labour by opting for lawful employment instead of cyber fraud. Regarding item 1, the belief that people who choose lawful jobs face social pressure to pursue quick wealth was supported by 52% of respondents strongly agreeing and 33% agreeing,

while 9% disagreed and 6% strongly disagreed, indicating that 85% share this view. In item 2, the assertion that lawful workers struggle financially compared to those involved in cyber fraud was affirmed by 47% strongly agreeing and 38% agreeing, with 11% disagreeing and 4% strongly disagreeing, showing that 85% of respondents uphold this opinion. Similarly, item 3, which states that the community does not adequately recognise the efforts of honest workers, had 27% strongly agreeing and 59% agreeing, while 6% disagreed and 8% strongly disagreed, revealing that 86% of respondents support this perspective. In item 4, the view that lack of employment opportunities drives people away from lawful work was recognised by 61% strongly agreeing and 28% agreeing, with only 6% disagreeing and 5% strongly disagreeing, indicating that 89% share this belief. Lastly, item 5, which states that upholding the dignity of labour is difficult in an environment that glorifies fraud, received 44% strong agreement and 31% agreement, while 11% disagreed and 14% strongly disagreed, showing that 75% of respondents agree with this claim. Overall, the findings reveal that individuals who choose lawful employment in Oredo Local Government Area face significant challenges, including social pressure, financial struggles, lack of recognition, limited job opportunities, and a societal climate that glamorises fraudulent success over honest work.

Results of Research Question 6

Research Question 6: What are the functions of community leaders and traditional institutions in advancing the dignity of labour in the face of cyber fraud challenges?

Table 4.11: Distribution of Responses on Functions of Community Leaders and Traditional Institutions in Advancing the Dignity of Labour

S/N	Items	Total No of respondents	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	Community leaders should consistently promote the value of honest work in their public addresses	100	73 (73%)	22 (22%)	3 (3%)	2 (2%)
2.	Traditional rulers should establish community norms that discourage cyber fraud and reward hard work	100	66 (66%)	24 (24%)	6 (6%)	4 (4%)
3.	Religious and community leaders should organize regular campaigns to educate youths on the dangers of cyber fraud	100	71 (71%)	22 (22%)	4 (4%)	3 (3%)
4.	Community leaders should collaborate with schools to instill the principles of dignity of labour in students	100	54 (54%)	36 (36%)	4 (4%)	6 (6%)
5.	Traditional institutions should lead by example by honoring individuals who have excelled through lawful and honest means	100	78 (78%)	16 (16%)	4 (4%)	2 (2%)

Source: Field Work, 2025

Table 4.11 presented the distribution of responses on the functions of community leaders and traditional institutions in advancing the dignity of labour in the face of cyber fraud challenges. Regarding item 1, the view that community leaders should consistently promote the value of honest work in their public addresses was strongly supported, with 73% of respondents strongly agreeing and 22% agreeing, while only 3% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed,

indicating that 95% share this opinion. In item 2, the assertion that traditional rulers should establish community norms that discourage cyber fraud and reward hard work was affirmed by 66% strongly agreeing and 24% agreeing, while 6% disagreed and 4% strongly disagreed, showing that 90% of respondents support this approach. Similarly, item 3, which states that religious and community leaders should organise regular campaigns to educate youths on the dangers of cyber fraud, received 71% strong agreement and 22% agreement, with 4% disagreeing and 3% strongly disagreeing, revealing that 93% of respondents uphold this view. In item 4, the suggestion that community leaders should collaborate with schools to instil the principles of dignity of labour in students was backed by 54% strongly agreeing and 36% agreeing, while 4% disagreed and 6% strongly disagreed, indicating that 90% share this belief. Lastly, item 5, which states that traditional institutions should lead by example by honouring individuals who have excelled through lawful and honest means, recorded the highest strong agreement (78%) and an additional 16% agreement, while only 4% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed, showing that 94% of respondents support this measure. Overall, the findings highlight a strong consensus that community leaders, traditional rulers, and religious figures have vital roles in promoting and safeguarding the dignity of labour by setting positive examples, creating supportive norms, and actively discouraging the appeal of cyber fraud.

4.3 TEST OF HYPOTHESES

Test of Hypothesis One

Hypothesis 1: Cyber fraud is not regarded as a feasible substitute for lawful work among the youth in Oredo Local Government Area.

Table 4.12: Testing of Hypothesis 1

Response	Item 1	Item 2	Item 3	Item 4	Item 5	Total
Strongly Agree	63	59	61	57	64	304
Agree	31	34	33	38	28	164
Disagree	4	4	4	3	5	20
Strongly Disagree	2	3	2	2	3	12
Total	100	100	100	100	100	500

Researcher's Field Work, 2025

$$X^2 = (F^o - F^e) / F^e$$

To calculate for Expected Frequency (F^e);

$$F^e = \text{Row} \times \text{Colum} / \text{Grand Total}$$

1st Response;

$$F^e = \frac{304 \times 100}{500} = 60.8$$

2nd Response;

$$F^e = \frac{164 \times 100}{500} = 32.8$$

3rd Response;

$$F^e = \frac{20 \times 100}{500} = 4.0$$

4th Response;

$$F^e = \frac{12 \times 100}{500} = 2.4$$

Contingency Table;

Table 4.13; Contingency table on Hypothesis 1;

Fo	Fe	Fo - Fe	(Fo - Fe) ²	(Fo - Fe) ² / Fe
63	60.8	2.2	4.84	0.0796
31	32.8	-1.8	3.24	0.0988
4	4.0	0.0	0.00	0.0000
2	2.4	-0.4	0.16	0.0667
59	60.8	-1.8	3.24	0.0533
34	32.8	1.2	1.44	0.0439
4	4.0	0.0	0.00	0.0000
3	2.4	0.6	0.36	0.1500
61	60.8	0.2	0.04	0.0007
33	32.8	0.2	0.04	0.0012
4	4.0	0.0	0.00	0.0000
2	2.4	-0.4	0.16	0.0667
57	60.8	-3.8	14.44	0.2375
38	32.8	5.2	27.04	0.8244
3	4.0	-1.0	1.00	0.2500
2	2.4	-0.4	0.16	0.0667
64	60.8	3.2	10.24	0.1684
28	32.8	-4.8	23.04	0.7024
5	4.0	1.0	1.00	0.2500
3	2.4	0.6	0.36	0.1500

$$X^2 = 3.2504$$

$$\text{Degree of freedom [Df]} = (R - 1) (C - 1)$$

$$Df = (4-1) (5- 1) = 3 \times 4 = 12$$

$$Df = 12$$

DECISION: From the computation above, it can be observed that the table value of X^2 (3.2504) is greater than 0.05 significance level with 12 degrees of freedom. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis. Thus, we concluded that there is high extent to which cyber fraud is regarded as a feasible substitute for lawful work among the youths in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

Test of Hypothesis Two

Hypothesis 2: Participation in cyber fraud has no impact on individuals' perceptions of the worth of honest labour.

Table 4.14: Testing of Hypothesis 2

Response	Item 1	Item 2	Item 3	Item 4	Item 5	Total
Strongly Agree	67	62	53	66	63	311
Agree	26	34	39	29	32	160
Disagree	4	2	5	3	2	16
Strongly Disagree	3	2	3	2	3	13
Total	100	100	100	100	100	500

Researcher's Field Work, 2025

$$X^2 = (F^o - F^e) / F^e$$

To calculate for Expected Frequency (F^e);

$$F^e = \text{Row} \times \text{Colum} / \text{Grand Total}$$

1st Response;

$$F^e = \frac{311 \times 100}{500} = 62.2$$

2nd Response;

$$F^e = \frac{160 \times 100}{500} = 32.0$$

3rd Response;

$$F^e = \frac{16 \times 100}{500} = 3.2$$

4th Response;

$$F^e = \frac{13 \times 100}{500} = 2.6$$

Contingency Table;

Table 4.15; Contingency table on Hypothesis 2;

Fo	Fe	Fo - Fe	(Fo - Fe)²	(Fo - Fe)² / Fe
67	62.2	4.8	23.04	0.3704
26	32.0	-6.0	36.00	1.1250
4	3.2	0.8	0.64	0.2000
3	2.6	0.4	0.16	0.0615
62	62.2	-0.2	0.04	0.0006
34	32.0	2.0	4.00	0.1250
2	3.2	-1.2	1.44	0.4500
2	2.6	-0.6	0.36	0.1385
53	62.2	-9.2	84.64	1.3608
39	32.0	7.0	49.00	1.5313
5	3.2	1.8	3.24	1.0125
3	2.6	0.4	0.16	0.0615
66	62.2	3.8	14.44	0.2322
29	32.0	-3.0	9.00	0.2813
3	3.2	-0.2	0.04	0.0125
2	2.6	-0.6	0.36	0.1385
63	62.2	0.8	0.64	0.0103
32	32.0	0.0	0.00	0.0000
2	3.2	-1.2	1.44	0.4500
3	2.6	0.4	0.16	0.0615

$$X^2 = 7.5220$$

$$\text{Degree of freedom [Df]} = (R - 1) (C - 1)$$

$$Df = (4-1) (5- 1) = 3 \times 4 = 12$$

$$Df = 12$$

DECISION: From the computation above, it can be observed that the table value of X^2 (7.5220) is greater than 0.05 significance level with 12 degrees of freedom. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis. Thus, we concluded participation in and admiration for cyber fraud significantly undermine the societal value and respect for honest labour among youths in Oredo Local Government Area.

Test of Hypothesis Three

Hypothesis 3: Cyber fraud has no impact on the career ambitions and professional ethics of students in Oredo Local Government Area.

Table 4.16: Testing of Hypothesis 3

Response	Item 1	Item 2	Item 3	Item 4	Item 5	Total
Strongly Agree	52	69	49	71	55	296
Agree	41	22	42	21	39	165
Disagree	5	3	5	5	4	22
Strongly Disagree	2	6	4	3	2	17
Total	100	100	100	100	100	500

Researcher's Field Work, 2025

$$X^2 = (F^o - F^e) / F^e$$

To calculate for Expected Frequency (F^e);

$$F^e = \text{Row} \times \text{Colum} / \text{Grand Total}$$

1st Response;

$$F^e = \frac{296 \times 100}{500} = 59.2$$

2nd Response;

$$F^e = \frac{165 \times 100}{500} = 33.0$$

3rd Response;

$$F^e = \frac{22 \times 100}{500} = 4.4$$

4th Response;

$$F^e = \frac{17 \times 100}{500} = 3.4$$

Contingency Table;

Table 4.17; Contingency table on Hypothesis 3;

Fo	Fe	Fo - Fe	(Fo - Fe) ²	(Fo - Fe) ² / Fe
52	59.2	-7.2	51.84	0.876
41	33.0	8.0	64.00	1.939
5	4.4	0.6	0.36	0.082
2	3.4	-1.4	1.96	0.576
69	59.2	9.8	96.04	1.622
22	33.0	-11.0	121.00	3.667
3	4.4	-1.4	1.96	0.445
6	3.4	2.6	6.76	1.988
49	59.2	-10.2	104.04	1.757
42	33.0	9.0	81.00	2.455
5	4.4	0.6	0.36	0.082
4	3.4	0.6	0.36	0.106
71	59.2	11.8	139.24	2.352
21	33.0	-12.0	144.00	4.364
5	4.4	0.6	0.36	0.082
3	3.4	-0.4	0.16	0.047
55	59.2	-4.2	17.64	0.298
39	33.0	6.0	36.00	1.091
4	4.4	-0.4	0.16	0.036
2	3.4	-1.4	1.96	0.576

$$X^2 = 25.352$$

$$\text{Degree of freedom [Df]} = (R - 1) (C - 1)$$

$$Df = (4-1) (5- 1) = 3 \times 4 = 12$$

$$Df = 12$$

DECISION: From the computation above, it can be observed that the table value of X^2 (25.352) is greater than 0.05 significance level with 12 degrees of freedom. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis. Thus, we concluded that cyber fraud has a significantly negative influence on students' career ambitions, motivation for education, and adherence to professional ethics in Oredo Local Government Area.

Test of Hypothesis Four

Hypothesis 4: The prevalence of cyber fraud has no impact on the community's esteem for traditional professions and industrious persons.

Table 4.18: Testing of Hypothesis 4

Response	Item 1	Item 2	Item 3	Item 4	Item 5	Total
Strongly Agree	72	63	71	59	64	329
Agree	23	29	22	36	27	137
Disagree	2	6	4	3	4	19
Strongly Disagree	3	2	3	2	5	15
Total	100	100	100	100	100	500

Researcher's Field Work, 2025

$$X^2 = (F^o - F^e) / F^e$$

To calculate for Expected Frequency (F^e);

$$F^e = \text{Row} \times \text{Colum} / \text{Grand Total}$$

1st Response;

$$F^e = \frac{329 \times 100}{500} = 65.8$$

2nd Response;

$$F^e = \frac{137 \times 100}{500} = 27.4$$

3rd Response;

$$F^e = \frac{19 \times 100}{500} = 3.8$$

4th Response;

$$F^e = \frac{15 \times 100}{500} = 3.0$$

Contingency Table;

Table 4.19; Contingency table on Hypothesis 4;

Fo	Fe	Fo - Fe	(Fo - Fe) ²	(Fo - Fe) ² / Fe
72	65.8	6.2	38.44	0.584
23	27.4	-4.4	19.36	0.707
2	3.8	-1.8	3.24	0.853
3	3.0	0.0	0.00	0.000
63	65.8	-2.8	7.84	0.119
29	27.4	1.6	2.56	0.093
6	3.8	2.2	4.84	1.274
2	3.0	-1.0	1.00	0.333
71	65.8	5.2	27.04	0.411
22	27.4	-5.4	29.16	1.064
4	3.8	0.2	0.04	0.011
3	3.0	0.0	0.00	0.000
59	65.8	-6.8	46.24	0.703
36	27.4	8.6	73.96	2.699
3	3.8	-0.8	0.64	0.168
2	3.0	-1.0	1.00	0.333
64	65.8	-1.8	3.24	0.049
27	27.4	-0.4	0.16	0.006
4	3.8	0.2	0.04	0.011
5	3.0	2.0	4.00	1.333

$$X^2 = 11.761$$

$$\text{Degree of freedom [Df]} = (R - 1) (C - 1)$$

$$Df = (4-1) (5- 1) = 3 \times 4 = 12$$

$$Df = 12$$

DECISION: From the computation above, it can be observed that the table value of X^2 (11.761) is greater than 0.05 significance level with 12 degrees of freedom. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis. Thus, we concluded that the prevalence of cyber fraud significantly diminishes the community's respect for traditional professions and hardworking individuals, replacing esteem for diligence with admiration for quick, often illicit, financial gains.

4.5 Discussion of Findings

The results of the study revealed that cyber fraud is widely perceived as a viable alternative to legitimate employment among young people in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. This tendency appears to stem from a blend of social, economic, and cultural influences. High unemployment rates, widespread poverty, and restricted access to decent job opportunities often push youths toward unconventional means of survival. The belief that cybercrime provides swift financial returns with minimal effort, coupled with weak law enforcement and the portrayal of fraudulent success as glamorous in the media, further sustains this perception. Additionally, the erosion of moral values and the absence of strong ethical reorientation have contributed to a reduced commitment to honest and lawful work.

The study further indicated that the participation in and admiration for cyber fraud have considerably weakened the social respect and value once accorded to honest labour among the youths in Oredo. This can be traced to the growing acceptance and celebration of fraudulent success. Individuals involved in cybercrime who display wealth and social prestige tend to become role models for impressionable young people, overshadowing those who work diligently and ethically. This warped value system diminishes the importance of hard work, discipline, and moral integrity. As time passes, the quest for quick illicit gains replaces the traditional respect for honest work and erodes collective moral standards within the society.

Another finding showed that cyber fraud exerts a profoundly negative impact on students' career aspirations, enthusiasm for education, and commitment to professional ethics in Oredo Local Government Area. The attraction of immediate financial rewards often outweighs the desire for long-term academic or professional success. Many students, influenced by the visible wealth of cybercriminals, begin to see education and legitimate careers as unnecessary or unrewarding. This mindset discourages academic dedication, lowers interest in skill

acquisition, and weakens ethical principles. As a result, attention shifts from building stable and respected careers to chasing short-term illicit wealth, thereby hindering both personal growth and community progress.

The findings also revealed that the widespread practice of cyber fraud has significantly reduced community respect for traditional professions and industrious individuals, replacing admiration for diligence with reverence for quick, illegal wealth. This transformation can be traced to a shift in cultural values brought about by the public success of cybercriminals. As fraudsters flaunt their material possessions and gain social recognition, admiration within the community often gravitates toward high-paying but unethical ventures rather than sustained, legitimate work. Over time, the prestige once associated with integrity and professional competence fades, and material success—regardless of its source—becomes the primary measure of achievement. This gradual change undermines the moral and cultural foundation of the society.

The study further disclosed that those who choose to earn a living through lawful means in Oredo Local Government Area face numerous challenges such as social pressure, economic hardship, limited job opportunities, and insufficient appreciation for hard work. The economic strain of surviving on low-paying jobs, combined with the social admiration for fraudulent wealth, places honest workers at a disadvantage. Many feel undervalued and demoralized as society increasingly celebrates materialism over integrity. This lack of recognition and encouragement makes it difficult for individuals in legitimate professions to remain motivated, reinforcing a culture that esteems financial gain above moral uprightness.

Finally, the research revealed that community leaders, traditional authorities, and religious figures play a crucial role in restoring respect for lawful work and discouraging the growing appeal of cyber fraud. Their influence as moral guides and custodians of cultural values

positions them to lead by example and promote ethical conduct. By modeling integrity, rewarding diligence, and publicly denouncing fraudulent behaviour, they can help reshape community attitudes. Through advocacy, mentorship, and awareness programs, these leaders can foster a culture that values honest labour, strengthens ethical behaviour, and promotes social stability.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

The research examined how cyber fraud affects the dignity of labour in today's Nigerian society, focusing on Oredo Local Government Area in Edo State. To achieve this aim, six research questions were formulated and addressed. The study population consisted of residents from four selected communities within Oredo Local Government Area—Urubi, Ikpema, Ibiwe, and Uzebu. According to available demographic data, Oredo Local Government Area has an estimated population of over 400,000 people. From this population, a total of 100 participants were selected as the sample size, with 25 respondents drawn from each of the four communities. The study adopted a descriptive survey design to guide the investigation. Data collected were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), while descriptive tools such as frequency counts and percentages were employed to summarize the findings. The study's hypotheses were tested using the chi-square statistical technique.

Findings revealed that many young people in Oredo Local Government Area perceive cyber fraud as an acceptable and attractive alternative to legitimate employment. This trend appears to be driven by various socio-economic and cultural factors. High unemployment levels, poverty, and limited access to genuine income-generating opportunities often push youths toward fraudulent activities. The belief that cyber fraud provides fast financial rewards with little physical effort, combined with weak law enforcement and the glorification of fraudsters by the media, has made the practice even more appealing. Additionally, the decline in moral values and lack of proper value reorientation have contributed to the erosion of respect for honest work.

The study further revealed that the involvement of youths in cyber fraud and their admiration for those who practice it has severely weakened societal respect for honest labour in the area. The normalization of fraudulent success has caused a moral shift, where individuals who display sudden wealth—regardless of its source—are admired more than hardworking professionals. Consequently, genuine hard work, skill development, and ethical behaviour are undervalued. Over time, this change in perception has diminished the importance of perseverance and integrity, undermining the community's moral fabric.

Another key finding indicated that cyber fraud negatively impacts students' motivation towards education and career development. Many students have become disinterested in academic pursuits, seeing them as unnecessary when compared to the quick financial rewards of fraudulent activities. The temptation of immediate wealth overshadows the long-term benefits of education and professional growth. This mindset has reduced enthusiasm for learning, weakened adherence to professional ethics, and diverted attention from legitimate career development to illegal income sources. As a result, the prospects for personal and societal advancement are significantly diminished.

The study also established that the growing rate of cyber fraud has lessened community respect for traditional professions and hard work. Instead, admiration is increasingly directed toward those who amass wealth quickly, even through dishonest means. The visible success and social recognition of cybercriminals have shifted the community's perception of success from integrity and diligence to material accumulation. Over time, professions built on skill and effort lose prestige, and the cultural focus turns toward wealth regardless of morality. This shift threatens the ethical foundation upon which community values were originally built.

It was equally observed that individuals who engage in legitimate work in Oredo Local Government Area encounter numerous challenges such as financial constraints, lack of

societal recognition, limited job opportunities, and pressure to conform to the fraudulent lifestyles celebrated by others. The difficult economic situation makes it hard for honest workers to meet their needs, while the glamorization of fraudsters discourages perseverance in lawful professions. Consequently, those who remain committed to ethical work often feel neglected and undervalued, leading to frustration and reduced motivation to continue in their professions.

The study also highlighted the crucial role of community leaders, traditional rulers, and religious figures in protecting and promoting the dignity of labour. As moral custodians, these leaders can influence positive behaviour by exemplifying integrity, promoting ethical values, and discouraging fraudulent activities. Their leadership can create social norms that reward hard work and honesty while condemning deceitful practices. Through consistent advocacy, mentorship, and community education, these figures can reshape public perception, restore respect for lawful work, and strengthen moral values within the community.

Conclusion

The study concluded that cyber fraud poses a serious threat to the dignity of labour in modern Nigerian society, particularly in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. The findings revealed that an increasing number of young people view cybercrime as a viable alternative to lawful employment, driven by financial aspirations, peer pressure, and the perceived success of fraudsters. This attitude has undermined the traditional respect for honest work and caused a decline in the value placed on professional integrity and diligence. Many young people, especially students, have been swayed by the allure of fast wealth, which has distorted their ambitions and weakened their dedication to education and legitimate career paths. Consequently, the rise of cyber fraud has generated a moral and social crisis where honest workers are often unappreciated and face limited opportunities.

Furthermore, the research emphasized the importance of leadership and community involvement in restoring the dignity of labour. Traditional and religious leaders, as well as community influencers, must champion honesty, perseverance, and integrity while actively discouraging fraudulent practices. Efforts should also be made to provide youths with meaningful employment opportunities, vocational training, and mentorship to redirect their energy towards legitimate means of livelihood. Reviving the dignity of labour will require a collective societal effort to rebuild moral standards, promote ethical conduct, and reward hard work. Without such measures, the erosion of societal values and economic integrity will persist.

Recommendations

1. Government bodies, non-governmental organizations, religious institutions, and community leaders should jointly organize continuous awareness campaigns emphasizing the importance of honest work, the dangers of cybercrime, and the need to preserve the dignity of labour.
2. Federal, state, and local governments should establish job creation initiatives, vocational skill programmes, and entrepreneurship support schemes to provide realistic alternatives for unemployed youths.
3. Schools and universities should integrate moral education and lessons on the dignity of labour into their curricula to reshape young minds toward integrity and discipline.
4. Law enforcement agencies should be properly trained and equipped to detect, investigate, and prosecute cybercrime cases promptly to serve as a deterrent to others.

5. Influential figures such as traditional rulers, community heads, entertainers, and public officials should lead by example through transparency, honesty, and consistent advocacy for ethical work to counter the glorification of fraudulent lifestyles.

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