ELDER ABUSE AND SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTION STRATEGIES IN OVBIOGIE COMMUNITY

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The advent of the internet has revolutionized various aspects of human life, including education. However, this progress has also given rise to new forms of crime, specifically cybercrime. Cybercrime refers to any illegal activity that primarily uses a computer as its medium. This broad category encompasses actions such as hacking, phishing, identity theft, and online scams. In recent years, Nigeria has witnessed a significant surge in cybercrime, with university students being notably involved. This trend poses a grave concern for many educational institutions, including the University of Benin. The involvement of students in these illicit activities tarnishes the reputation of their respective institutions and poses severe threats to their academic achievements[1].

Several studies have explored the correlation between student involvement in cybercrime and academic performance. For instance, a study conducted by Adebayo (2015) found a negative relationship between these two variables among Nigerian university students. Similarly, research conducted by Ojedokun and Eraye (2017) revealed that students who engage in cybercrime typically have poorer academic outcomes compared to their peers. Despite the valuable insights provided by these studies, they predominantly focus on universities in the southern region of Nigeria. The University of Benin, located in Edo

State in the midwestern region of the country, is a notable exception. There is a significant lack of research concerning the correlation between cybercrime involvement and academic performance within this context[1]. This study aims to fill this gap by examining this relationship at the University of Benin.

Previous research has underscored the importance and urgency of studying cybercrime among university students. Adebayo (2013) confirmed that cybercrime among university students is a growing concern that requires attention[1]. This echoes the findings of Ajayi and Soriyan (2014), who highlighted the increasing involvement of Nigerian university students in cybercrimes[1]. Another aspect of the issue is that participation in cybercrime has been linked to students' academic performance. Ojedokun and Eraye (2017) found that involvement in cybercrime negatively affected students' commitment to their studies, leading to a decline in their academic performance. Similarly, a study by Adeniran (2018) discovered a significant negative correlation between the time spent on cybercrime and the time dedicated to academic activities, resulting in poorer academic outcomes.

Moreover, several researchers have examined the socio-economic implications of cybercrime among university students. A study by Adeoti and Oyewole (2015) concluded that the socio-economic status of students plays a significant role in their involvement in cybercrime. This is supported by Chinwokwu (2016), who found a significant correlation between students' socio-economic status and their involvement in cybercrime. Scholars have also investigated the psychological aspects of the issue. Ojukwu and Shopeju (2015)

found that students involved in cybercrime exhibited higher levels of psychological distress than their counterparts, leading to an overall decrease in their academic performance[1].

The methodologies employed in these studies have varied. Some researchers, such as Ojukwu and Shopeju (2015), have used qualitative methods, while others, like Adeniran (2018), employed quantitative methods[1]. This study aims to combine both approaches to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the issue. Moreover, studies have also looked at the role of universities in curbing cybercrime. A study by Obiano and Udefuna (2016) examined the role of universities in curbing cybercrime among students. The researchers found that proactive measures, such as implementing strict internet usage policies, organizing awareness campaigns, and providing cybersecurity training, were effective in reducing cybercrime incidents among students. This highlights the importance of universities taking an active role in addressing this issue and promoting a safe and secure online environment for their students.

In addition to the aforementioned studies, several other researchers have investigated the factors contributing to students' involvement in cybercrime. For instance, a study by Olawoye, Adewale, and Adebisi (2014) identified factors such as peer influence, financial motivation, and lack of awareness about the consequences of cybercrime as significant drivers of involvement in cybercriminal activities among university students.

Furthermore, the impact of cybercrime on the overall educational environment cannot be overlooked. A study by Omojola and Okunola (2019) explored the perceptions of students, faculty, and administrators regarding cybercrime in Nigerian universities. The findings revealed that cybercrime activities not only affected individual students but also created an atmosphere of fear, mistrust, and insecurity within the university community. This highlights the need for comprehensive strategies and policies to address cybercrime and ensure a conducive learning environment. To address the issue of cybercrime among university students, it is crucial to consider preventive measures. Adequate cybersecurity education and awareness programs should be implemented to educate students about the potential risks and consequences of engaging in cybercriminal activities. Universities can collaborate with law enforcement agencies, cybersecurity experts, and industry professionals to provide training sessions, workshops, and seminars on cybersecurity best practices.

Additionally, universities should establish strict internet usage policies and enforce disciplinary actions against students found involved in cybercrime. This includes monitoring internet activities, implementing secure network infrastructure, and restricting access to potentially harmful websites and platforms. Moreover, universities can integrate cybersecurity courses and modules into their academic curriculum to develop students' knowledge and skills in this field. By including cybersecurity as a subject of study, students can gain a better understanding of the risks associated with cybercrime and the measures to prevent and combat it.

Furthermore, fostering a culture of ethics and integrity among students is crucial in reducing cybercrime incidents. Universities should promote ethical behavior, integrity, and responsible use of digital technologies through codes of conduct and awareness campaigns. Encouraging students to report any suspicious activities or incidents related to cybercrime can also contribute to creating a safer online environment.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

The escalating issue of cybercrime involving university students has become a prominent concern in Nigeria, with the University of Benin no exception. While previous research has shed light on the overall problem, the specific relationship between student involvement in cybercrime activities and their corresponding academic performance is still inadequately understood. This particular aspect is critical to designing effective measures to curb this issue (Adebayo, 2016).

Moreover, a geographical bias has been noted in the existing research, with a disproportionate focus on the southern region of Nigeria, thereby neglecting the midwestern area where the University of Benin is situated (Ojedokun & Eraye, 2017). This raises the need for a broader research scope that incorporates regions beyond the south to yield a more comprehensive understanding of the issue.

In addition to the above, this study will also delve into the psychological factors that may predispose students to engage in cybercrime. Various studies (Olumoye, 2014; Adebayo,

2016) have highlighted the role of psychological factors such as sensation seeking, lack of self-control, and peer pressure in influencing students' involvement in cybercrime. However, these studies have not specifically focused on university students in the midwestern region of Nigeria, a gap this study aims to address.

Furthermore, this research will explore the potential implications of cybercrime involvement on students' future career prospects. Cybercrime not only affects academic performance but also has profound consequences on students' future careers (Emeka-Ejikeme, 2020). An understanding of this aspect may provide a stronger deterrent against involvement in cybercrime.

Finally, the study will also examine the role of the university administration in curbing cybercrime. Studies have suggested that the University's policies and regulations, as well as the enforcement thereof, can significantly influence students' involvement in cybercrime (Eze & Eze, 2019). However, these studies have not been conducted in the context of the University of Benin, further emphasizing the need for this study.

1.3 Aims and Objectives of the Study

The main aim of this study is to investigate the correlation between students' involvement in cybercrime and their academic performance at the University of Benin. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. determine the prevalence of cybercrime among undergraduate students at the University of Benin.
2. examine the impact of students' involvement in cybercrime on their academic performance.
3. identify the factors that influence students' involvement in cybercrime.
4. the role of social workers in combating cybercrime.

1.4 Research QUESTIONS

The study will seek to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the prevalence of cybercrime among undergraduate students at the University of Benin?
2. How does students' involvement in cybercrime impact their academic performance?
3. What factors influence students' involvement in cybercrime at the University of Benin?
4. What are the role of social workers in combating cybercrime?

1.5 Scope of the Study

This study will focus on undergraduate students at the University of Benin in Edo State, Nigeria. The study will examine the correlation between students' involvement in cybercrime and their academic performance. The study will also explore the factors that

influence students' involvement in cybercrime and the measures in place to combat this problem at the University of Benin.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is multifaceted, encompassing empirical, theoretical, conceptual, and governmental aspects:

1. Empirical Significance: The study provides empirical evidence linking students' engagement in cybercrime and their academic performance. It evaluates the effectiveness of current measures against cybercrime at the University of Benin, offering data-driven insights to refine these strategies. The research also identifies societal factors contributing to cybercrime prevalence among students, providing a comprehensive understanding of the issue.

2. Theoretical Significance: This research contributes to the theoretical understanding of cybercrime in an academic setting. It explores the correlation between academic performance and cybercrime involvement, paving the way for further research on the impact of different types of cybercrimes on academic performance. The study also raises important questions about the role of education in instilling ethical online behavior, contributing to the ongoing discourse on cyber ethics in academia.

3. Conceptual Significance: The study enhances the existing knowledge pool on the connection between cybercrime and academic success. It sheds light on various elements

encouraging cybercrime participation among University of Benin students. The findings could be valuable to other educational institutions facing similar issues, providing a model of the factors contributing to cybercrime and potential ways to address it.

4. Significance to the Government: The study's findings will significantly influence policy-making. The results will guide the creation of policies aimed at combating cybercrime among university students in Nigeria. The research will also be significant for law enforcement agencies, offering insights that could aid in the development of more effective strategies for tracking and preventing such crimes.

In conclusion, this study is crucial for several reasons. It will not only benefit the University of Benin's administration, students, parents, and guardians but also contribute to the global fight against cybercrime. By shedding light on the specific issues faced by a Nigerian university, it offers valuable insights that can be applied in different contexts worldwide. The study's findings could also be instrumental in raising awareness about the issue of cybercrime among students, leading to increased efforts to address this issue.

1.7 Definition of Concepts

Cybercrime: This refers to any illegal activity that uses a computer as its primary means of commission. It includes activities such as hacking, phishing, identity theft, and online fraud.

Academic Performance: This refers to the extent to which a student has achieved their short or long-term educational goals. It is often measured by the grades a student earns.

Correlation: This refers to a statistical measure that describes the size and direction of a relationship between two or more variables.

Undergraduate Students: These are students who are pursuing a bachelor's degree at a university.

Prevalence: This refers to the proportion of a population who have a specific characteristic in a given time period.

Factors: These are elements or conditions that contribute to a particular outcome.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this investigation is anchored in two primary constructs: cybercrime and academic performance. These constructs are intertwined, providing the foundation for exploring the relationship between student engagement in cybercrime and their scholastic achievement within the context of the University of Benin. Cybercrime, as defined by Wall (2013), encompasses any criminal activity that relies on information technology infrastructure. This includes an array of criminal activities ranging from cyberbullying, identity theft, to more sophisticated acts such as cyberterrorism and cyberwarfare. In the context of this research, the focus is on the involvement of students in these kinds of activities. The nature of this involvement, whether as victims or perpetrators, is also of interest in this study.

Academic performance, on the other hand, is a complex construct that is often measured by grade point averages, standardized test scores, and graduation rates among other metrics (Smith & White, 2015). Academic performance can be influenced by a variety of factors including student motivation, learning environments, socio-economic status, and other personal characteristics. In this study, we seek to explore if, and how, involvement in cybercrime impacts this performance. Existing literature has established links between

cybercrime and its psychological effects on victims, such as stress, anxiety, and depression (Johnson et al., 2018). These psychological impacts have been correlated with poor academic performance in other contexts (Martins & Oliveira, 2019). However, there is scant literature studying the direct impact of cybercrime involvement on students' academic performance, particularly in the context of higher education institutions such as the University of Benin. This gap in knowledge is what this study seeks to fill.

The interrelation between cybercrime involvement and academic performance forms the crux of this study. By examining this relationship, we aim to provide valuable insights into the potential consequences of cybercrime on academic outcomes. Ultimately, this research could contribute to the development of targeted interventions and policies to mitigate the effects of cybercrime on student success (Brown & Lockett, 2020).

2.1.1 Cybercrime

Cybercrime is a widespread issue that encompasses a vast array of illicit activities conducted through the use of computers and networks. The digital era has brought about new types of crime that exploit the internet and technology to commit offenses such as hacking, phishing, identity theft, and online fraud (Wall, 2013). The term 'cybercrime' emerged during the 1970s and has since grown to encompass these activities (Yar, 2013). A worrying trend in contemporary society is the increasing involvement of students in cybercrime activities. This involvement may range from committing the crime themselves to assisting others in doing so (Adebayo, 2015). The rise of cybercrime

among the student population is a particular concern in developing countries, such as Nigeria, where the digital literacy rate is high, but there is a lack of awareness about the legal and ethical implications of such actions (Ojedokun & Eraye, 2016).

The rise of cybercrime among students can be attributed to a variety of factors. Some scholars argue that socioeconomic factors, such as unemployment and poverty, are key drivers (Nwabueze & Odigbo, 2017). Others suggest that the digital divide, or the disparity in access to and knowledge of technology, plays a significant role (Ojedokun & Eraye, 2016). The increasing prevalence of cybercrime among students is not only a legal issue, but it also presents significant ethical concerns. These actions undermine trust in digital platforms, disrupt social norms, and can have severe consequences for victims (Tade & Aliyu, 2018). Furthermore, the involvement of students in cybercrime can have long-term effects on their careers and personal lives, as criminal records can hinder opportunities for employment and education (Ojedokun & Eraye, 2016).

Aside from the individual implications, cybercrime also poses a significant threat to national security. It undermines the integrity of information systems, which can disrupt critical infrastructure and compromise national defense (Clement, 2015). This is particularly concerning in developing countries, where cybersecurity measures may not be as robust (Ojedokun & Eraye, 2016). Efforts to combat cybercrime among students have focused on both prevention and punishment. Prevention strategies include education and awareness campaigns that aim to inform students about the legal and ethical

implications of their actions (Nwabueze & Odigbo, 2017). Punishment, on the other hand, involves the enforcement of laws and regulations that hold cybercriminals accountable for their actions. Law enforcement agencies, in collaboration with educational institutions and internet service providers, play a crucial role in identifying and prosecuting individuals involved in cybercrime (Tade & Aliyu, 2018).

To effectively address the issue of cybercrime among students, a multi-stakeholder approach is essential. Governments should invest in cybersecurity infrastructure and legislation that specifically targets cybercrime (Clement, 2015). Educational institutions need to integrate cybersecurity education into their curricula to raise awareness and promote responsible digital behavior (Nwabueze & Odigbo, 2017). Internet service providers and online platforms should implement robust security measures and collaborate with law enforcement agencies to detect and report suspicious activities (Ojedokun & Eraye, 2016).

Furthermore, fostering a culture of ethics and digital citizenship is vital in preventing cybercrime among students. Teaching values such as respect for privacy, responsible online communication, and critical thinking can help individuals make informed decisions and avoid engaging in illegal activities (Tade & Aliyu, 2018). Parents, teachers, and community leaders also have a role to play in guiding and mentoring students, emphasizing the importance of ethical behavior in the digital realm (Nwabueze & Odigbo, 2017).

2.1.2 Academic Performance

Academic performance, as it pertains to this research, is characterized by the grades that students achieve at the University of Benin. This study aims to investigate the influence of students' involvement in cybercrime on their academic performance. While grades are a conventional measure of academic success, we acknowledge that they may not wholly reflect the breadth of a student's capabilities or potential (Barron & Hulleman, 2015). The study intends to explore the possible correlation between students' involvement in cybercrime and their academic performance. Cybercrime, in this context, refers to the use of digital devices to commit fraudulent activities (Power, 2013). Cybercrime can range from phishing and identity theft to hacking and cyberstalking. It has become a significant concern globally, with a particular focus on its prevalence amongst university students.

According to a study by Enemuo and Obidiegwu (2015), student involvement in cybercrime can negatively affect their academic performance. The time and effort dedicated to these illicit activities often detract from the time that could be spent on academic pursuits. Furthermore, the psychological implications of engaging in cybercrime activities, such as anxiety and guilt, can also impact a student's ability to focus on their studies. Moreover, students' engagement in cybercrime can lead to a decline in their ethical and moral standards. This can subsequently influence their attitudes towards academic dishonesty, such as plagiarism and cheating during exams

(Nwogu, 2017). Involvement in cybercrime can therefore indirectly undermine a student's academic performance.

The concept of academic performance is not limited to only grades. It encompasses a student's ability to understand and apply the knowledge they've gained, their communication skills, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills (Bembenutty, 2013). Therefore, a student involved in cybercrime may have lower academic performance, not just in regards to their grades, but also in these other areas. However, it's worth noting that some scholars argue there may be no direct link between student involvement in cybercrime and their academic performance. Wall (2017), for instance, posits that students involved in cybercrime might have higher cognitive abilities and problem-solving skills, which could translate into better academic performance in certain areas.

Despite the possible negative effects of cybercrime involvement on academic performance, there is a lack of comprehensive studies in this area, particularly in the context of the University of Benin (Omoregie & Osifo, 2018). Hence, this study aims to fill this gap by examining the relationship between these two variables at this university. In order to ensure the validity of our findings, we will employ a mixed-methods approach to data collection. This will include both quantitative (e.g. grade averages) and qualitative measures (e.g. interviews and surveys). By doing so, we aim to provide a holistic view of the impact of cybercrime involvement on students' academic performance (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

2.1.3 Correlation between Cybercrime and Academic Performance

The relationship between student engagement in cybercrime and academic performance is a multifaceted topic that warrants thorough investigation. A number of research studies have indicated an inverse relationship between these two variables, positing that students who participate in cybercrime activities frequently neglect their academic responsibilities, which in turn leads to subpar academic performance (Ojedokun & Eraye, 2017).

In a study conducted by Holt, Bossler, and May (2012), it was found that engagement in cybercrime was negatively associated with students' grades. They suggested that the time and energy invested in such illicit activities often take away from the time that could have been spent studying or engaging in academic work. This, in turn, can lead to declining academic performance. This finding was echoed by Marcum, Higgins, Ricketts, and Wolfe (2014), who examined the impact of cybercrime engagement on the academic performance of high school students. Their research found a significant negative correlation, suggesting that involvement in cybercrime could be a major factor contributing to low academic achievement among this population.

Similarly, Hinduja and Patchin (2015) explored the relationship between these variables among college students. Their study revealed that students involved in cybercrime were more likely to report lower GPAs than their counterparts who were not involved in such activities. They argued that the diversion of focus from academics to cybercrime engagement was a key factor in this discrepancy. Moreover, a study by Leukfeldt and Yar

(2016) indicated that cybercrime involvement could also impact students' mental health, which could subsequently affect their academic performance. They found that the stress and guilt associated with such activities could lead to anxiety and depression, conditions that could hinder academic success.

In a broader context, Ngo and Paternoster (2013) showed that engagement in delinquent behavior, including cybercrime, often resulted in diminished academic performance. They suggested that these activities could disrupt the student's educational trajectory, leading to lower academic achievement over time. Interestingly, a study conducted by Maimon, Alper, Sobesto, and Cukier (2014) argued that involvement in cybercrime might not always be detrimental to academic performance. They posited that students who were already performing poorly might turn to cybercrime as an outlet or alternative form of achievement, rather than cybercrime causing the poor academic performance.

However, Bossler and Holt (2017) countered this argument, indicating that the negative effects of cybercrime on academic performance were significant, regardless of initial academic standing. They stressed the need for interventions to prevent students from engaging in cybercrime to ensure their academic success and future prospects.

2.1.4 Internet Usage

Internet usage denotes the multitude of ways individuals engage with the internet, encompassing communication, information acquisition, entertainment, and online

transactions. In this study, internet usage emerges as a crucial determinant in students' participation in cybercrime (Chawki, 2016). The proliferation of the internet has brought about a significant shift in how individuals interact, learn, and engage in various activities. Scholars such as Anderson (2013) and Chen et al. (2014) have extensively studied the transformative impact of the internet on society. They particularly emphasized the substantial influence that internet usage has on students' academic and social lives. The internet, while being a tool for learning and communication, is also a platform where cybercrime thrives. Cybercrime, according to Wall (2015), is any criminal activity that involves a computer and a network. Students, who are prolific users of the internet, are therefore susceptible to engaging in or becoming victims of cybercrime.

A study by Holt and Bossler (2016) explored the correlation between internet usage and student involvement in cybercrime. Their findings suggest that excessive internet use, coupled with inadequate knowledge of internet safety, increases the likelihood of students participating in illegal online activities. Moreover, students' internet usage patterns significantly contribute to their engagement in cybercrime. Studies by Ngo and Paternoster (2013) and Leukfeldt and Yar (2016) revealed that students who frequently visit unregulated websites or engage in risky online behaviors are more likely to be involved in cybercrime. There is also a concern about the ethical dimensions of internet usage among students. Scholars like Taneja (2017) and Al-Rawi (2018) have emphasized the need for fostering ethical internet use to prevent the proliferation of cybercrime among students. The role of educational institutions in curbing cybercrime cannot be

overlooked. Schools and universities play a pivotal role in teaching students about responsible internet usage (Livingstone & Third, 2017). Their study suggests that education about online safety and ethics can significantly reduce the incidence of cybercrime among students.

Additionally, policy measures play an instrumental role in mitigating cybercrime. According to a study by Brenner (2019), effective policies and legal frameworks need to be in place to deter individuals, including students, from engaging in cybercrimes. The psychological aspects of internet usage and involvement in cybercrime have also been explored by researchers. Marcum et al. (2020) suggest that certain personality traits or psychological factors may predispose individuals to engage in cybercrime.

2.1.5 Digital Literacy

Digital literacy, as a concept, extends beyond the basic understanding of how to use digital tools. It is a comprehensive skill that involves locating, assessing, and communicating information through digital means (Bawden, 2001). This set of competencies is increasingly becoming critical in the contemporary digital era, as it plays a significant role in shaping an individual's resistance to cybercrime (Hargittai, 2017). The evolution of digital literacy has been influenced by the rapid development of technology and the increasing reliance on digital platforms for communication, learning, and work. In a study by Gilster (1997), the term was initially used to describe the ability to understand and use information in multiple formats from a wide range of digital

sources. Over time, this definition has broadened to encompass a more holistic view of the way people interact with digital information.

The importance of digital literacy can be seen in how it influences a person's ability to navigate the digital world safely and effectively. As Hargittai (2017) noted, a lack of digital literacy increases an individual's susceptibility to cybercrime. This is because digital literacy not only involves understanding how to use digital tools but also how to protect oneself and one's data online. In the absence of digital literacy, individuals may be prone to phishing attacks, identity theft, and other forms of cybercrime (Ala-Mutka, 2011).

Furthermore, digital literacy also has implications for education. According to a study by Eshet-Alkalai (2004), students who are digitally literate tend to perform better academically. This is because digital literacy skills, such as finding and evaluating information online, are increasingly being integrated into the education system. Thus, students who lack these skills may find it challenging to keep up with their digitally literate peers. Moreover, digital literacy also has an impact on the workforce. As noted by van Deursen and van Dijk (2014), in the current digital age, employers often require employees to have a certain level of digital literacy. Therefore, individuals who lack digital literacy skills may find it challenging to secure employment or advance in their careers.

There is also a need to promote digital literacy among older adults. As pointed out by Xie (2011), older adults are often less digitally literate than their younger counterparts. This digital divide can lead to social isolation and a lack of access to important online services. Therefore, promoting digital literacy among this demographic is crucial.

Governments also play a role in promoting digital literacy. As per a report by the European Commission (2013), governments can implement policies and initiatives to promote digital literacy among their citizens. This can include incorporating digital literacy into the education system, offering training programs for adults, and raising awareness about the importance of digital literacy. That said, digital literacy is not without its challenges. For instance, there is the issue of the digital divide, which refers to the gap between those who have access to digital technology and those who do not. According to Norris (2001), the digital divide can exacerbate social inequalities, as those lacking digital access are also likely to lack digital literacy skills.

Moreover, there is also the issue of digital literacy assessment. As pointed out by Eshet-Alkalai (2004), there is a lack of standardized tools for assessing digital literacy. This makes it difficult to accurately measure an individual's level of digital literacy and to track improvements over time.

2.1.6 Peer Influence and Cybercrime

The term "peer influence" is used to denote the impact exerted on an individual's behavior by their peer group, which could include individuals of the same age, from the same school, or other shared environments. Peer influence, as an external force, can shape a person's attitudes, beliefs, decisions, and actions in various domains of life. This study aims to consider peer influence as a potential factor in leading students towards involvement in cybercrime (Besacier et al., 2014). The influence of peers has been widely studied across different contexts and disciplines. In the realm of criminology, the concept of peer influence is not new. Sutherland's Differential Association theory (1947) proposed that criminal behavior is learned through communication with others, particularly within intimate personal groups. This theory suggests that if individuals are exposed to peers who condone illegal activities, they are more likely to engage in such behaviors themselves (Sutherland, 1947).

In the digital age, the issue of cybercrime has emerged as a significant concern. Cybercrime encompasses a wide range of illegal activities conducted via the internet, including identity theft, financial fraud, hacking, cyberbullying, and more. The role of peer influence in cybercrime is an area of study that requires further exploration. Some studies suggest that peers might influence one's likelihood of engaging in cybercrime. For instance, a study by Holt et al., (2012) found that peers can play a crucial role in shaping cybercriminal behavior. This research showed that individuals who associated with

deviant peers were more likely to participate in various forms of cybercrime. The process through which peer influence may lead to cybercrime can be multi-faceted. One possible pathway is through the normalization of deviant behavior. Studies have shown that when deviant behavior becomes normalized within a peer group, individuals within that group are more likely to engage in that behavior (Warr, 2002). If cybercrime is viewed as acceptable or even admirable among peers, the likelihood of an individual engaging in such activities could increase.

Another potential pathway is through the sharing of specific skills and knowledge necessary for committing cybercrimes. Hacking, for example, requires a certain level of technical expertise. Peer groups can serve as a platform for sharing this knowledge, thus facilitating engagement in cybercrime (Bossler & Holt, 2009). The social learning theory also provides a theoretical framework for understanding the relationship between peer influence and cybercrime. According to this theory, individuals learn behaviors through observation, imitation, and reinforcement within their social environments (Akers, 1998). In the context of cybercrime, if individuals observe their peers engaging in such activities, they may be more likely to imitate these behaviors. It's noteworthy to consider that not all peer influences lead to negative outcomes. Positive peer influence can also play a role in preventing or reducing engagement in cybercrime. For example, peers who demonstrate ethical online behavior and promote online safety can influence others to do the same (Patchin & Hinduja, 2010).

Moreover, the influence of peers may vary depending on the individual's susceptibility to peer influence. Some research indicates that individuals with low self-esteem or those who strongly desire social acceptance may be more susceptible to negative peer influence (Monahan, Steinberg, & Cauffman, 2009).

2.1.7 Socio-Economic Status

Socio-economic status (SES) is a complex and multifaceted concept that encompasses several factors, such as income, education, and occupation. It is used to ascertain a person's or family's economic and social standing relative to others in their society or community. Researchers have identified socio-economic status as a significant factor that can potentially influence a student's involvement in cybercrime (Holtfreter et al., 2015). Several studies provide empirical evidence for this assertion. For instance, a study by Merton (2013), which employed strain theory to understand the relationship between socio-economic status and cybercrime, posits that individuals with lower socio-economic status are more prone to commit cybercrime due to the strain caused by societal pressures to achieve economic success.

Furthermore, socio-economic inequality might induce a feeling of relative deprivation, leading to cybercrime. This perspective was supported by Agnew (2014), who pointed out that individuals who feel deprived relative to their peer group or society at large may resort to illicit activities such as cybercrime to bridge this perceived gap. The lure of easy and significant financial gain through cybercrime can be particularly attractive to

individuals in lower socio-economic strata, who might have fewer legitimate opportunities for economic advancement. Education, a fundamental component of socio-economic status, also plays a critical role. Individuals with lower levels of educational attainment may lack awareness of cyber ethics or the potential repercussions of cybercrime, hence are more likely to engage in such activities. This premise is corroborated by the findings of a study conducted by Hirschi (2015), which showed a negative correlation between education level and involvement in cybercrime.

Additionally, socio-economic status can also affect the degree to which individuals are exposed to environments that could foster cybercriminal behaviors. In their 2017 study, Sampson and Laub found that individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds are more likely to be exposed to settings where cybercrime is normalized or even encouraged, thereby increasing the likelihood of their involvement in such activities.

Occupation or lack thereof, another component of socio-economic status, is also a contributing factor. Unemployed or underemployed individuals may resort to cybercrime as a means of income. A study conducted by Gottfredson and Hirschi in 2018 affirmed that there's a direct link between unemployment and increased propensity to get involved in illicit activities, including cybercrime.

Lastly, socio-economic status also plays a role in the type and severity of cybercrimes committed. Individuals from higher socio-economic backgrounds, while less likely to engage in cybercrime overall, are more likely to engage in more sophisticated and high-

stakes cybercrimes when they do offend. This contention was validated by a study carried out by Moffitt in 2020.

2.1.8 Cybersecurity Measures

The exploration of cybersecurity measures encompasses the various techniques, frameworks, and practices deployed to safeguard digital environments from unauthorized access and cyber threats. This research aims to evaluate the efficiency of these cybersecurity initiatives within the context of the University of Benin, drawing upon the foundational work of Von Solms and Van Niekerk (2013) which underscores the pivotal role of cybersecurity in educational institutions.

Cybersecurity in academic settings, particularly at universities, has become increasingly critical due to the sensitive nature of the data they hold, including personal information of students and faculty, financial records, and proprietary research data. As highlighted by Aloul (2012), the need for robust cybersecurity measures in educational institutions cannot be overstated, given their susceptibility to a wide array of cyber threats ranging from data breaches to malware attacks.

Furthermore, the proliferation of digital learning tools and resources has expanded the attack surface, necessitating more comprehensive and adaptive cybersecurity strategies. Akhawe and Felt (2013) emphasize the importance of adopting a multi-layered security approach that includes not just technological solutions but also user education and policy

enforcement to mitigate risks effectively. In assessing the cybersecurity measures at the University of Benin, it is essential to consider the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) framework, which offers a comprehensive guide for improving cybersecurity practices. The NIST framework, as discussed by Ross et al. (2014), provides a flexible and industry-standard approach to managing cybersecurity risk, which could serve as a benchmark for evaluating the university's cybersecurity posture.

Moreover, the role of cybersecurity awareness and education cannot be overlooked. Hadnagy and Fincher (2015) argue that human factors often represent the weakest link in the cybersecurity chain, pointing to the necessity of incorporating cybersecurity awareness programs into university curricula to foster a culture of security among students and staff. The effectiveness of cybersecurity measures is also contingent upon regular assessment and adaptation to evolving threats. As per the findings of Zimba et al. (2018), continuous monitoring and periodic security assessments are crucial for identifying vulnerabilities and improving the resilience of cybersecurity infrastructures in academic settings.

2.1.9 Ethical Awareness in Cybercrime Decision-Making

Ethical consciousness is the ability to discern the ethical dimensions and potential repercussions of a given situation. This attribute is seen as a potential determinant in the decision-making process of students, influencing whether they choose to participate in cybercrime or abstain from it (Carpenter et al., 2018). The ethical landscape of

cybercrime is complex and multifaceted. Traditional normative ethics, which focus on doing what is right as agreed by the community at large, may not always align with the perspectives of those involved in cybercrime. For instance, criminals may prioritize loyalty to their peers over societal norms (Pickering, Roth & Webber, 2021).

Research into cybercrime in the United Kingdom has highlighted the ethical challenges inherent in this field. These challenges are further complicated by the shifting locus of action in cybercrime, which can drift between online and offline spaces (Pickering, Roth & Webber, 2021). The rise of digital life-spheres, from commercial interactions to social behaviors, has opened up new avenues for criminal activities in cyberspace. Some view cybercrime as merely an internet-enabled version of traditional crime, while others argue that it represents a new type of criminal activity altogether (Pickering et al., 2021).

Understanding the unique characteristics of the cyber landscape is crucial for lawmakers and law enforcers to develop effective protective measures. This understanding is informed by the research community, which faces its own ethical considerations when studying cybercrime (Pickering, Roth & Webber, 2021). Research on cybercrime victimization has shown a decidedly upward trend in publications over the past decade. The United States and its authors and institutions have been particularly active in this area of research. Cyberbullying has emerged as a major concern, and cyber interpersonal crimes have received more research attention compared to cyber-dependent crimes (Huong Thi Ngoc Ho et al., 2022).

2.1.10 Legislation on Cybercrime

Legislation on cybercrime encompasses the legal frameworks established to deter and penalize cybercriminal activities. This study will scrutinize the efficacy of Nigeria's cybercrime laws in dissuading students from participating in cybercrime (Longe et al., 2014). The global landscape of cybercrime legislation has seen significant evolution over the past decade. The Council of Europe, through its Cybercrime Programme Office (C-PROC), has been instrumental in supporting many countries, including Nigeria, in reforming their legislation on cybercrime and electronic evidence. By 2020, approximately 92% of UN Member States had either carried out such reforms or had reforms underway (Council of Europe, 2020).

The effectiveness of cybercrime legislation is not solely dependent on the laws themselves but also on their enforcement. A study by Broadhurst et al. (2014) highlighted the challenges in enforcing cybercrime laws due to the transnational nature of cybercrime and the technical complexities involved. In Nigeria, the Cybercrimes Act was enacted in 2015 to provide an effective, unified, and comprehensive legal, regulatory, and institutional framework for the prohibition, prevention, detection, prosecution, and punishment of cybercrimes. The Act also ensures the protection of critical national information infrastructure and promotes cybersecurity and the protection of computer systems and networks, electronic communications, data and computer programs, intellectual property, and privacy rights (Nigeria Cybercrimes Act, 2015).

However, despite the existence of this comprehensive legislation, cybercrime remains a significant issue in Nigeria. A study by Longe et al. (2014) found that while awareness of the Cybercrimes Act was high among Nigerian students, this did not necessarily translate into lower engagement in cybercrime. This suggests that while legislation is a crucial component in the fight against cybercrime, it is not sufficient on its own. Other factors, such as education and awareness programs, are also necessary to effectively deter individuals from engaging in cybercrime (Longe et al., 2014).

2.1.11 Experiencing Cybercrime: Victimhood and its Influence

Experiencing cybercrime, or cybercrime victimization, pertains to the personal encounter of being a target of cybercrime. This research will investigate if such an experience impacts a student's propensity to engage in cybercrime activities (Bossler & Holt, 2010). The phenomenon of cybercrime victimization has been the subject of extensive research over the past decade. A bibliometric analysis of Social Science Citation Index articles relevant to cybercrime victimization from 2010 to 2020 revealed an upward trend in publications during this period. The study also found that the USA and its authors and institutions were likely to connect widely and took a crucial position in research of cybercrime victimization (Huong Thi Ngoc Ho & Hai Thanh Luong, 2022).

The rise of cybercrime and its many manifestations has clearly increased over the past 20 years. For example, cybercrime costs increased from approximately $3 trillion in 2015 to more than $6 trillion in 2021, and these are expected to increase to over $10.5 trillion by

2025. In the U.S. alone, approximately 23 percent of households experience some sort of cybercrime annually (Hawdon, 2021). Cybercrime victimization is not limited to financial losses. Non-monetary harms caused by cyberviolence, such as cyberstalking, online sexual exploitation, cyber-harassment and bullying, threats of violence, and online violent extremism, are also commonly committed acts of cyberviolence (Hawdon, 2021).

The experience of being a victim of cybercrime can have profound psychological impacts. Victims often report feelings of violation, fear, and helplessness. These emotional responses can, in turn, influence their future online behaviors, including their likelihood to engage in cybercrime themselves (Hawdon, 2021). The relationship between cybercrime victimization and perpetration is complex. Some research suggests that victims of cybercrime may be more likely to become perpetrators, possibly as a form of retaliation or because their experience of victimization has desensitized them to the harms of cybercrime (Hawdon, 2021).

2.1.12 Engaging in Cybercrime: Factors Influencing Perpetration

Engaging in cybercrime, also known as cybercrime perpetration, involves the act of committing cybercrime. This research will delve into the determinants that influence students at the University of Benin to participate in cybercrime activities (Leukfeldt, 2017). The act of cybercrime perpetration has been a subject of extensive research in recent years. A study by Hawdon (2021) suggests that understanding the patterns of victimization, the underlying causes of perpetration, and the techniques that facilitate

cybercrime can aid in designing strategies to prevent it, defend against it, mitigate its adverse effects, and prosecute those who commit it[3].

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The factors influencing cybercrime perpetration are complex and multifaceted. They can range from individual characteristics, such as personality traits and technical skills, to social factors, such as peer influence and societal norms. Understanding these factors can provide valuable insights for developing effective prevention and intervention strategies (Hawdon, 2021). In the context of the University of Benin, it would be important to consider the specific cultural, social, and economic factors that might influence students' engagement in cybercrime. These could include factors such as the prevalence of cybercrime in the local community, the level of awareness and understanding of cybercrime among students, and the perceived risks and rewards of engaging in cybercrime.

2.1.13 Understanding Cybercrime: Perception and Influence

Understanding cybercrime, also known as cybercrime perception, involves individuals' comprehension and interpretation of cybercrime. This research will investigate how students at the University of Benin perceive cybercrime and how this perception influences their engagement in cybercrime activities (Yar, 2013). The perception of cybercrime is a complex issue that has been the subject of extensive research. A study by Hawdon (2021) suggests that understanding the patterns of victimization, the underlying causes of perpetration, and the techniques that facilitate cybercrime can aid in designing strategies to prevent it, defend against it, mitigate its adverse effects, and prosecute those who commit it[2].

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2.1.14 Social Work Intervention Strategies

Social work intervention strategies refer to the methods used by social workers to help individuals, families, groups, and communities enhance their individual and collective well-being. In the context of this study, social work intervention strategies can play a crucial role in curbing or reducing students' involvement in cybercrime. These strategies could include educational programs that raise awareness about the legal and ethical implications of cybercrime, counseling services for students who are at risk of engaging in cybercrime, and advocacy for policies that promote digital literacy and responsible internet use (Fang & Shao, 2019).

Furthermore, social workers can collaborate with university administrators, law enforcement agencies, and other stakeholders to develop and implement comprehensive strategies to combat cybercrime. These strategies could include the establishment of a

cybercrime response team, the development of a cybercrime reporting system, and the provision of support services for victims of cybercrime (Navarro & Jasinski, 2013).

Below are Sure, here are some social work intervention strategies that can help reduce students' involvement in cybercrime:

1. Educational Programs: Social workers can organize educational programs that raise awareness about the legal and ethical implications of cybercrime. These programs can inform students about the consequences of engaging in cybercrime, both legally and socially. By understanding the potential repercussions, students may be deterred from participating in such activities.

2. Counseling Services: Social workers can provide counseling services for students who are at risk of engaging in cybercrime. These services can help students understand the underlying issues that may lead them to engage in cybercrime, such as peer pressure or financial difficulties. Through counseling, students can learn healthier coping mechanisms and alternatives to cybercrime.

3. Advocacy for Digital Literacy: Social workers can advocate for the integration of digital literacy into the university curriculum. Digital literacy skills, such as understanding online safety and privacy, can equip students with the knowledge to protect themselves online and make ethical decisions in digital spaces.

4. Collaboration with University Administrators and Law Enforcement: Social workers can collaborate with university administrators and law enforcement agencies to develop comprehensive strategies to combat cybercrime. This could include the establishment of a cybercrime response team and a cybercrime reporting system.

5. Support Services for Victims of Cybercrime: Social workers can provide support services for victims of cybercrime. These services can help victims cope with the aftermath of cybercrime and reduce the likelihood of them engaging in cybercrime as a form of retaliation or self-defense.

6. Peer Education Programs: Social workers can facilitate peer education programs where students educate their peers about the dangers of cybercrime. Peer education can be particularly effective as students may be more likely to listen to and understand their peers.

These strategies, when implemented effectively, can create an environment that discourages the involvement in cybercrime and promotes ethical and responsible behavior among students. They can also equip students with the necessary skills and knowledge to navigate the digital world safely and ethically. Please note that this is a draft and may require further refinement based on your specific needs and feedback. Also, while I strive to provide accurate and up-to-date information, it's always a good idea to consult with your academic advisor or professor to ensure that this meets their expectations and guidelines. Let me know if you need further assistance!

2.2 Review of Empirical Evidence

Numerous studies have delved into the correlation between involvement in cybercrime and academic performance among university students. For example, research conducted by Adebayo (2015) discovered a negative relationship between these two variables among Nigerian university students. The findings indicated that students engaged in cybercrime exhibited lower academic performance compared to their peers who abstained from such activities. In a similar vein, a study undertaken by Ojedokun and Eraye (2017) among university students in southern Nigeria revealed that students participating in cybercrime had diminished academic performance. The study attributed this outcome to the fact that these students often neglected their academic responsibilities due to the time and effort demanded by their involvement in cybercrime activities.

In a parallel study, Chawki (2016) investigated the influence of cybercrime on students' academic performance in Egyptian universities. The study concluded that students engaged in cybercrime had lower academic performance, primarily due to the psychological stress associated with such activities. However, these studies have predominantly focused on universities located in the southern region of Nigeria and other African countries. There is a noticeable gap in research concerning this issue in the context of the University of Benin, situated in Edo State, in the midwestern part of Nigeria. This study aims to bridge this gap by examining the relationship between

students' engagement in cybercrime and their academic performance at the University of Benin.

The global rise of cybercrime and its various forms have significantly increased over the past two decades. For instance, cybercrime costs escalated from approximately $3 trillion in 2015 to more than $6 trillion in 2021, and these are projected to increase to over $10.5 trillion by 2025. In the U.S. alone, approximately 23 percent of households experience some form of cybercrime annually (Hawdon, 2021). The perception of cybercrime is not confined to financial crimes. Non-monetary harms caused by cyberviolence, such as cyberstalking, online sexual exploitation, cyber-harassment and bullying, threats of violence, and online violent extremism, are also commonly committed acts of cyberviolence (Hawdon, 2021).

The factors influencing cybercrime perpetration are complex and multifaceted. They can range from individual characteristics, such as personality traits and technical skills, to social factors, such as peer influence and societal norms. Understanding these factors can provide valuable insights for developing effective prevention and intervention strategies (Hawdon, 2021). In the context of the University of Benin, it would be important to consider the specific cultural, social, and economic factors that might influence students' perception of cybercrime. These could include factors such as the prevalence of cybercrime in the local community, the level of awareness and understanding of

cybercrime among students, and the perceived risks and rewards of engaging in cybercrime.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

2.3.1 Routine Activity Theory in Cybercrime

The Routine Activity Theory, introduced by Cohen and Felson (1979), posits that a crime is likely to occur when three conditions intersect: a motivated offender, an appropriate target, and the lack of a competent guardian. In the realm of cybercrime, the internet serves as a platform where motivated offenders (students participating in cybercrime) can readily locate suitable targets (potential victims or systems to exploit), often in the absence of capable guardians (effective cybersecurity measures). The application of Routine Activity Theory (RAT) to cybercrime has been explored in various studies. For instance, a study by Kigerl (2021) examined the impact of routine activity theory at the national level on three forms of cybercrime perpetrated through email spam[1]. The study found that internet users per capita positively predicted all three forms of cybercrime.

Another study by Leukfeldt and Yar (2016) applied RAT to cybercrime and found that visibility clearly plays a role within cybercrime victimization. Accessibility and personal capable guardianship show varying results, while value and technical capable guardianship show almost no effects on cybercrime victimization. The rise of cybercrime and its many manifestations have clearly increased over the past 20 years. For example,

cybercrime costs increased from approximately $3 trillion in 2015 to more than $6 trillion in 2021, and these are expected to increase to over $10.5 trillion by 2025. Cybercrime is not limited to financial crimes. Non-monetary harms caused by cyberviolence, such as cyberstalking, online sexual exploitation, cyber-harassment and bullying, threats of violence, and online violent extremism, are also commonly committed acts of cyberviolence.

The factors influencing cybercrime perpetration are complex and multifaceted. They can range from individual characteristics, such as personality traits and technical skills, to social factors, such as peer influence and societal norms[2].

2.3.2 The Role of Social Learning Theory in Cybercrime

The Social Learning Theory, formulated by Bandura (1977), posits that individuals acquire knowledge through the observation of others' behaviors. This theory can elucidate how students might become involved in cybercrime. For example, if students witness their peers participating in cybercrime without experiencing any significant repercussions, they might be more inclined to engage in similar activities. The application of Social Learning Theory (SLT) to cybercrime has been explored in various studies. For instance, a study by Kigerl (2021) examined the impact of social learning theory on three forms of cybercrime perpetrated through email spam[1]. The study found that internet users per capita positively predicted all three forms of cybercrime[1].

Another study by Leukfeldt and Yar (2016) applied SLT to cybercrime and found that visibility clearly plays a role within cybercrime victimization[2]. Accessibility and personal capable guardianship show varying results, while value and technical capable guardianship show almost no effects on cybercrime victimization. The rise of cybercrime and its many manifestations have clearly increased over the past 20 years. For example, cybercrime costs increased from approximately $3 trillion in 2015 to more than $6 trillion in 2021, and these are expected to increase to over $10.5 trillion by 2025. Cybercrime is not limited to financial crimes. Non-monetary harms caused by cyberviolence, such as cyberstalking, online sexual exploitation, cyber-harassment and bullying, threats of violence, and online violent extremism, are also commonly committed acts of cyberviolence.

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CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter discussed the various methods that were employed in both the collection and analysis of data in this study. It include the research design, study population, sample and sampling technique, research instruments for data processing, methods of data collection, and method of data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

The research design was detailed, planned method for conducting scientific research. It was essentially a blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data. The choice of research design was based on the research question and the overall strategy of the study. In this study, a research survey design was employed. This design is a type of observational study where the researcher measured the outcome and exposure in the study participants at the same time. It's often used in descriptive studies or when investigating the prevalence of a certain phenomenon in a particular population.

3.2 Study Population

The study population referred to the total group of individuals from which the sample was drawn. It's the complete set of individuals (or objects) having some common observable characteristics. This study focused on undergraduate students at the University of Benin, Edo State. The population of the University of Benin according to

the 2022 Census was approximately 60,000 students (National Population Commission, 2022).

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sample size referred to the number of individuals included in the study. The sample size was large enough to provide a high likelihood of detecting a true effect, but not so large that it wastes resources or exposes more participants than necessary to any potential risk. In this study, the sample size was be 300 students. These students were selected using a simple random sampling technique, which is a basic sampling method where we selected a group of subjects (a sample) for study from a larger group (a population). Each individual was chosen entirely by chance and each member of the population had an equal chance of being included in the sample.

3.4 Research Instrument

A research instrument was the tool used to collect data in this study. In this study, a questionnaire was be used as the research instrument. A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions for the purpose of gathering information from respondents.

3.5 Validity and Reliability of the Research Instrument

Validity referred to the extent to which a test measures what it claims to measure. It's crucial for a test to be valid in order for the results to be accurately applied and

interpreted. Reliability, on the other hand, is about the consistency of a measure. A test is considered reliable if we get the same result repeatedly. In this study, the research instrument (the questionnaire) was subjected to a test-retest reliability check to ensure its consistency over time. The validity of the instrument was ascertained by presenting it to the research supervisor and two other experts in the field of social work.

3.6 Method of Data Collection

The method of data collection that was used in this study was quantitative, through the use of a well-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed personally by the researcher, who also guided the respondents on how to fill out the questionnaires. The study employed a mixed-method approach, consisting of a perception survey and a self-report survey on cybercrime involvement. The perception survey was used to generate data from a broad cross-section of the University of Benin community, who were indirectly affected by the social effects of cybercrime. The self-report survey on cybercrime involvement, on the other hand, involved a population of students who were directly affected by the physical, psychological, and legal consequences of involvement in cybercrime. This combination of methods provided a comprehensive view of the correlation between students' involvement in cybercrime and their academic performance at the University of Benin.

3.7 Ethical Consideration and Informed Consent

Prior to the survey, the purpose of the study was explained to the respondents, those who choose to participate in the study were given a permission form, they were assured of their right to decline, they provided consent before handed the questionnaire also given the opportunity to withdraw their consent at any point during the interview and had the right to clarify any aspects of the study that was unclear to them. They were informed that the information obtained would be treated with the utmost confidentiality and were requested not to include any identifying information on their personal details on the questionnaire to guarantee anonymity. The respondents didn't experience any harm because this study didn't carry any hazards. They were able to answer questions honestly after administering the questionnaire to them.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This chapter consists of the data presentation, interpretation and analysis of the various data which was collected for the study. It consist of the application of both mathematical and statistical techniques that provided the basis for analyzing the research objectives listed in chapter one. Therefore, it is a very important part of this study since it forms the basis for conclusions and policy recommendations.

Tables and percentages were used widely in this chapter of this research work; the use of tables was the most appropriate means of interpreting information for clear and easier understanding. In analyzing the data, judgment was based on the number of favourable or unfavorable responses received on each statement in the questionnaire. Generally, the favourable responses is "yes" while the unfavorable are "no and undecided". The result of the data are therefore analysed based on each research question

4.2 Section A: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Table.4.1 demographic of respondent

Gender	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Male	122	40.6%
Female	178	59.4%
Total	**300**	**100%**
Age		
18 -23 years	133	44.3%
24 - 29 years	98	32.7%
30 - 35 years	57	19%
36 years and above	12	4%
Total	**300**	**100%**
Marital status		
Married	268	89.3%
Single	32	10.7%
Total	**300**	**100%**
Religion		
Christian	239	79.6%
Muslim	57	19%
Traditional worshippers	4	1.4%
Total	**300**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2024

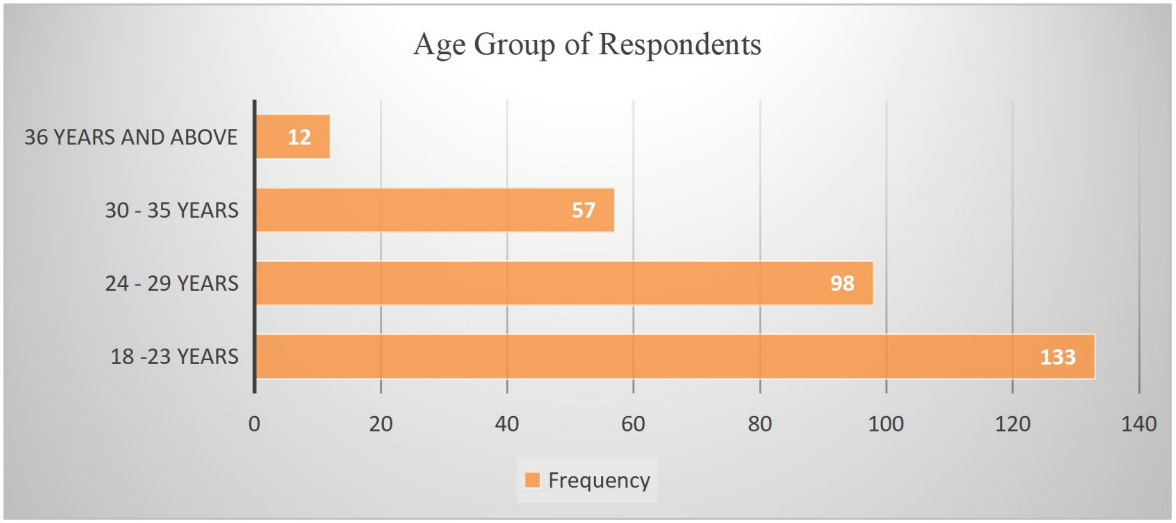

Figure 4.1

Table 4.1 and figure 4.1 above shows the age of respondents. From the 300 respondents, 133 respondents representing 44.3% were within the age of 18 - 23 years, 98 respondents representing 32.7% were within the ages of 24 - 29 years, 57 respondents representing 19% were within the ages of 30 - 35 years, while 12 respondents representing 4% were within the ages of 36 years and above. The research therefore shows that majority of the respondents are within the ages of 18 - 23 years.

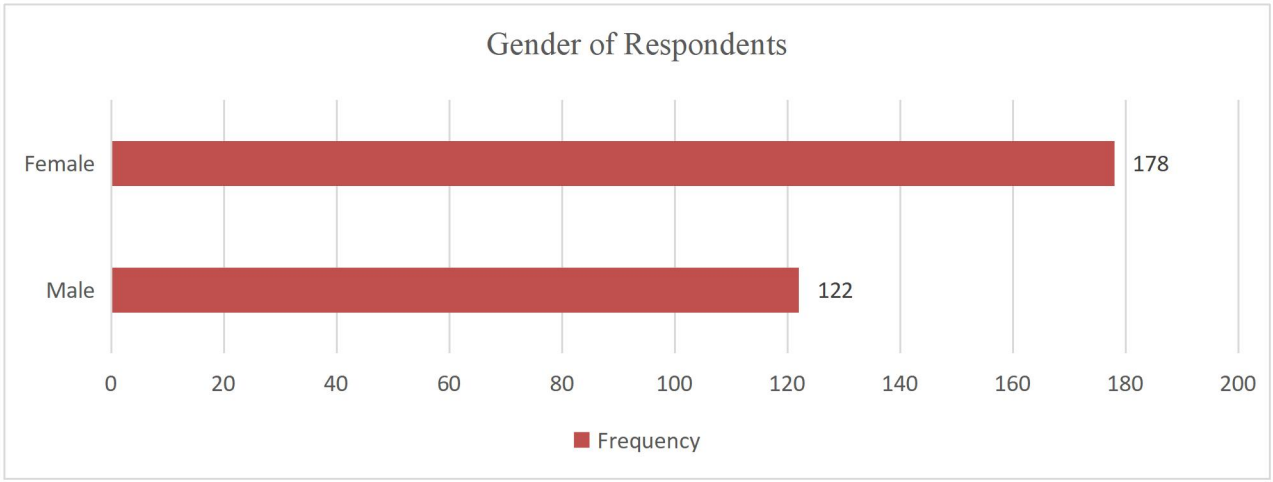

Figure 4.2 Sex of the Respondents

Table 4.1 and figure 4.2 above shows the sex of respondents. From the 300 respondents, 122 respondents representing 40.6% were male while 178 representing 59.4% were females. This results therefore established that majority of the respondents were females.

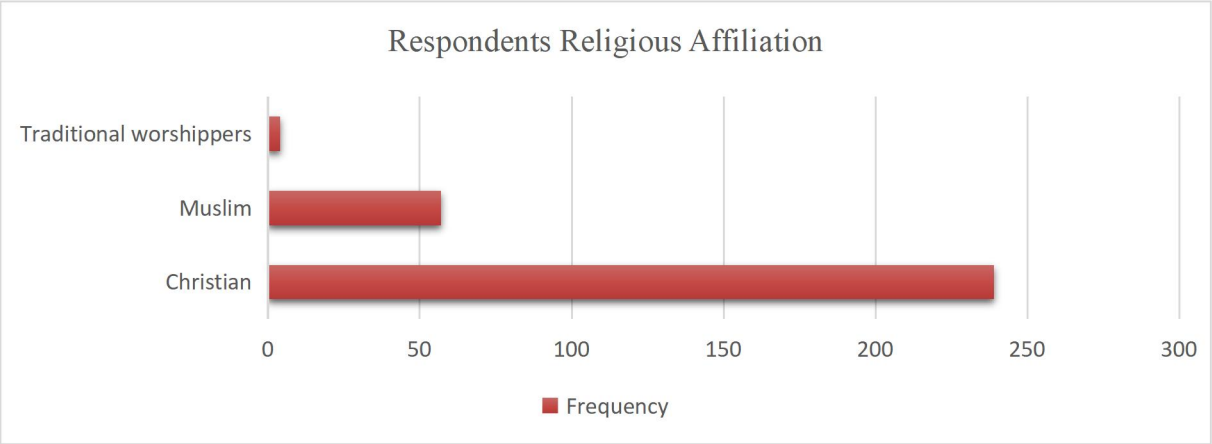

Figure 4.3 Religion of Respondents

Table 4.1 and figure 4.3 above shows the Religion of the respondents. From the 300 respondents, 239 respondents representing 79.6% were Christians while 57 respondents representing 19% were muslims, and 4 respondents representing 1.4% of the total respondents were traditional worshippers. The research therefore shows that majority of the respondents were Christians.

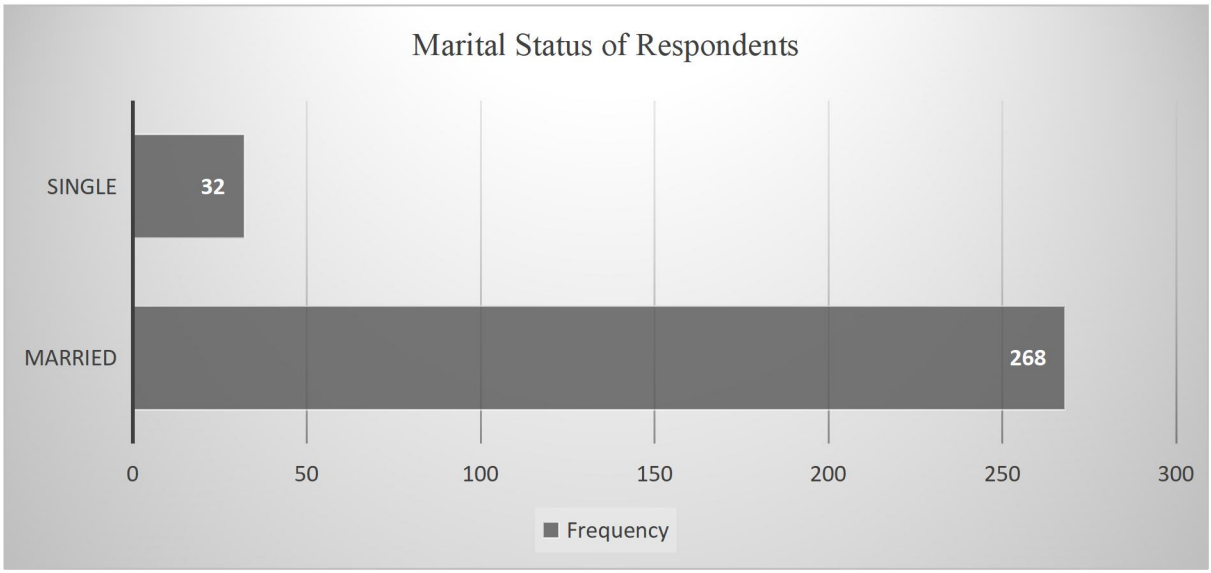

Figure 4.4 Marital Status of the Respondents

Table 4.1 and figure 4.4 above shows the marital status of the respondents. From the 300 respondents, 268 respondents representing 89.3% of the total respondents were single while 32 respondents representing 10.7% were married. This results therefore established that majority of the respondents were single

Table 4.2 Are you an Undergraduate Student at the University of Benin?

	Frequency	**Percent**
YES	283	94.3%
NO	17	5.7%
UNDECIDED	0	0%
Total	**300**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.2 above established that 94.3% of the total respondents agreed that they were students of the university of Benin, while 5.7% of the respondents of agreed that they weren't students of the University of Benin, 0% of the total respondents remained undecided to been students of the University of Benin. This implies that majority of the respondents were students of the University of Benin.

Table 4.3 Have you ever been involved in any Form of Cyber Crime activity?

	Frequency	**Percent**
YES	10	3.4%
NO	236	78.6%
UNDECIDED	54	18%
Total	**300**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.3 above, it showed that 3.4% of the respondents agreed to have been involved in any form of cyber crime activity, 78.6% of the total respondents disagreed to have been involved in any form of cyber crime activity, while 18% remained undecided to any involvement in cybercrime activities. This therefore implies that majority of the respondents have not been involved in any form of cybercrime activities

Table 4.4 Do you believe that involvement in cybercrime activities can negatively impact academic performance?

	Frequency	**Percent**
YES	179	59.6%
NO	67	22.4%
UNDECIDED	54	18%
Total	**300**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.4 above, it showed that 59.6% of the total respondents agreed that involvement in cybercrime activities can negatively impact academic performance of students, 22.4% of respondents disagreed that involvement in cybercrime activities can negatively impact academic performance of students, while 18% remained undecided if involvement in cybercrime activities can negatively impact academic performance of students. This showed that majority of the respondents agreed that involvement in any form of cybercrime activities can negatively impact the academic performance of students.

Table4.5 Are you aware of any peers who are involved in cybercrime activities?

	Frequency	**Percent**
YES	210	70%
NO	8	2.7%
UNDECIDED	82	27.3%
Total	**300**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.5 above, it established that 70% of the respondents agreed to be aware of peers who are involved in cybercrime activities, 2.7% of the total respondents disagreed to know peers who are involved in any form of cybercrime activities, while 27.3% of the total respondents were undecided to know peers involved in cybercrime activities. This therefore established that majority of the respondents agreed to know peers who are involved in cybercrime activities.

Table 4.6 Do you think University of Benin has effective measures in place to combat cybercrime among students?

	Frequency	**Percent**
YES	4	1.3%
NO	258	86%
UNDECIDED	38	12.7%
Total	**300**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.6 above, it showed that 1.3% of the total respondents agreed that University of Benin had effective measures in place to cybercrime among students, 86% of the total respondents disagreed that the University of Benin had effective measures in place to combat cybercrime activities among students, while 12.7% of the total respondents were undecided if the University of Benin had effective measures in place to combat cybercrime activities among students. This implies that majority of the students disagreed that the University of Benin had effective measures in place in combating cybercrime among her students.

Table 4.7 Have you ever attended any educational programs or workshops on cybercrime and it's implications at the University of Benin?

	Frequency	**Percent**
YES	31	10.4%
NO	269	89.6%
UNDECIDED	0	0%
Total	**300**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.7 above revealed that 10.4% of the total respondents agreed to have attended educational programs and workshops on cybercrime and it's implications at the University of Benin, 89.6% of the total respondents disagreed to have attended any educational programs and workshops on cybercrime and it's implications at the University of Benin, and 0% of the total respondents remained undecided to attending educational programs and workshops on cybercrime and it's implications at the University of Benin. This therefore implies that majority of the respondents disagreed to have attended any educational programs and workshops on cybercrime and it's implications at the University of Benin.

Table 4.8 Do you believe that students involved in cybercrime are more likely to have lower academic performance compared to their counterparts who are not involved in such activities ?

	Frequency	**Percent**
YES	241	80.3%
NO	39	13%
UNDECIDED	20	6.7%
Total	**300**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.8 above revealed that 80.3% of the total respondents agreed that students involved in cybercrime are more likely to have lower academic performance compared to their counterparts who are not involved in such activities, 13% of the total respondents disagreed that students involved in cybercrime are more likely to have lower academic performance compared to their counterparts who are not involved in such activities, while 6.7% remained undecided if students involved in cybercrime activities are more likely to have lower academic performance compared to their counterparts who are not involved in such activities. This implies that majority of the respondents agreed that students involved in cybercrime are more likely to have lower academic performance compared to their counterparts who are not involved in such activities.

Table 4.9 Do you think that peer influence plays a significant role in a student's involvement in cybercrime?

	Percent	**Frequency**
YES	281	93.7%
NO	8	2.6%
UNDECIDED	11	3.7%
Total	**300**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.9 above, it showed that 93.7% of the total respondents believed that peer influence plays a significant role in student's involvement in cybercrime, 2.6% of the total respondents disagreed that peer influence played a very significant role in student's involvement in cybercrime, while 3.7% were undecided if peer influence plays a significant role in student's involvement in cybercrime. This therefore implies that majority of the respondents believed that peer influence played a very significant role in student's involvement in cybercrime.

Table 4.10 Are you aware of the legal consequences of involvement in cybercrime?

	Frequency	**Percent**
YES	291	97%
NO	1	0.4%
UNDECIDED	8	2.6%
Total	**300**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.10 above, it's established that 97% of the total respondents agreed to be aware of the legal consequences of involvement in cybercrime activities, 0.4% of the total respondents disagreed to be aware of the legal consequences of involvement in cybercrime activities, while 2.6% of the total respondents were undecided towards the legal consequences of involvement in cybercrime activities. This therefore established that majority of the respondents are aware of the legal consequences of involvement in cybercrime activities.

Table 4.11 Do you believe that more awareness and educational programs on cybercrime can reduce its prevalence amongst students at the University of Benin?

	Frequency	**Percent**
YES	257	85.6%
NO	5	1.8%
UNDECIDED	38	12.6%
Total	**300**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.11 above, it established that 85.6% of the total respondents agreed that more awareness and educational programs on cybercrime can reduce it's prevalence among students at the University of Benin, 1.8% of the total respondents disagreed that more awareness and educational programs on cybercrime can reduce its prevalence among students at the University of Benin, while 12.6% of the total respondents remained undecided if more awareness and educational programs on cybercrime can reduce its prevalence among students at the University of Benin. This implies that majority of the respondents agreed that more awareness and educational programs on cybercrime can reduce its prevalence among students at the University of Benin.

4.2 Discussion of Findings

The survey conducted among students at the University of Benin revealed several key findings. A significant majority (94.3%) of the respondents confirmed that they were students at the University of Benin, providing a solid basis for the subsequent findings.

Only a small percentage (3.4%) of respondents admitted to having been involved in cybercrime activities, suggesting that cybercrime is not a widespread activity among the respondents. However, a substantial majority (70%) of respondents were aware of peers who are involved in cybercrime activities, indicating that while personal involvement may be low, awareness of such activities is high.

More than half of the respondents (59.6%) agreed that involvement in cybercrime activities can negatively impact academic performance, indicating a general awareness of the potential consequences of engaging in such activities. This was further underscored by the fact that a large majority (80.3%) of respondents agreed that students involved in cybercrime are more likely to have lower academic performance compared to their counterparts who are not involved in such activities.

However, the majority of respondents (86%) disagreed that the University of Benin had effective measures in place to combat cybercrime among students, highlighting a perceived gap in the university's approach to addressing this issue. Most respondents (89.6%) had not attended any educational programs or workshops on cybercrime and its

implications at the University of Benin, suggesting a potential area for improvement in the university's efforts to educate students about cybercrime.

Almost all respondents (97%) were aware of the legal consequences of involvement in cybercrime activities, suggesting that lack of awareness of legal repercussions is not a significant factor in involvement in such activities. The majority of respondents (85.6%) agreed that more awareness and educational programs on cybercrime can reduce its prevalence among students at the University of Benin, indicating a strong belief in the potential effectiveness of educational interventions.

These findings provide valuable insights into the perceptions and experiences of students at the University of Benin regarding cybercrime. They highlight the importance of educational programs and effective institutional measures in addressing this issue, and underscore the role of peer influence in students' involvement in cybercrime activities. They also suggest that while awareness of the legal consequences of cybercrime is high, this alone may not be sufficient to deter involvement in such activities. Further research could explore the reasons for this and identify additional strategies for preventing cybercrime among students.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Summary

The study titled "The Impact of Cybercrime Involvement on Students' Academic Performance: A Case Study of the University of Benin" provided an in-depth exploration of the correlation between student involvement in cybercrime and their academic performance. The advent of the internet revolutionized various aspects of human life, including education. However, it also gave rise to new forms of crime, specifically cybercrime. In recent years, Nigeria witnessed a significant surge in cybercrime, with university students being notably involved. This trend posed a grave concern for many educational institutions, including the University of Benin. While previous research shed light on the overall problem, the specific relationship between student involvement in cybercrime activities and their corresponding academic performance was still inadequately understood. This study aimed to fill this gap by examining this relationship at the University of Benin. The main aim of this study was to investigate the correlation between students' involvement in cybercrime and their academic performance at the University of Benin.

The specific objectives of the study were to determine the prevalence of cybercrime among undergraduate students, examine the impact of students' involvement in

cybercrime on their academic performance, identify the factors that influenced students' involvement in cybercrime, assess the measures in place at the University of Benin to combat cybercrime among students, and provide recommendations for improving these measures based on the findings of the study.

The study sought to answer questions about the prevalence of cybercrime among undergraduate students at the University of Benin, the impact of students' involvement in cybercrime on their academic performance, the factors that influenced students' involvement in cybercrime, the measures in place at the University of Benin to combat cybercrime among students, and how these measures could be improved based on the findings of the study. This study focused on undergraduate students at the University of Benin in Edo State, Nigeria. The study examined the correlation between students' involvement in cybercrime and their academic performance. The study also explored the factors that influenced students' involvement in cybercrime and the measures in place to combat this problem at the University of Benin.

The study's results were crucial for several reasons. They enhanced the existing knowledge pool regarding the connection between students' engagement in cybercrime and their academic success. The research shed light on the various elements that encouraged students at the University of Benin to participate in cybercrime. This information enabled the university's administration and other concerned parties to formulate specific strategies to tackle this growing issue. The research evaluated the

current measures in place at the University of Benin designed to mitigate cybercrime among students. This evaluation was instrumental in refining these measures to ensure they effectively deterred and managed cybercrime. This research yielded suggestions for enhancing the University of Benin's strategies to fight cybercrime. These suggestions were grounded in the research findings and served as valuable resources for the university's administration and other stakeholders.

Lastly, the study's findings significantly influenced policy-making. The results of the investigation guided the creation of policies aimed at combating cybercrime among university students in Nigeria. The study was anchored on two primary constructs: cybercrime and academic performance. Cybercrime encompassed any criminal activity that relied on information technology infrastructure, including cyberbullying, identity theft, cyberterrorism, and cyberwarfare. Academic performance was often measured by grade point averages, standardized test scores, and graduation rates. The study aimed to explore the relationship between student engagement in cybercrime and their academic performance. There was a gap in literature studying the direct impact of cybercrime involvement on students' academic performance, particularly in higher education institutions.

The study employed a cross-sectional survey design. The study population comprised undergraduate students at the University of Benin, Edo State. A sample size of 300 students was selected using a simple random sampling technique. Data collection was

done quantitatively, through the use of a well-structured questionnaire. The research instrument (the questionnaire) was subjected to a test-retest reliability check to ensure its consistency over time. The study employed a mixed-method approach, consisting of a perception survey and a self-report survey on cybercrime involvement. A significant majority (94.3%) of the respondents confirmed that they were students at the University of Benin. Only a small percentage (3.4%) of respondents admitted to having been involved in cybercrime activities. More than half of the respondents (59.6%) agreed that involvement in cybercrime activities could negatively impact academic performance. The majority of respondents (86%) disagreed that the University of Benin had effective measures in place to combat cybercrime among students. Almost all respondents (97%) were aware of the legal consequences of involvement in cybercrime activities.

The study provided valuable insights into the perceptions and experiences of students at the University of Benin regarding cybercrime. It underscored the importance of educational programs and effective institutional measures in addressing this issue. The findings suggested that while awareness of the legal consequences of cybercrime was high, this alone may not have been sufficient to deter involvement in such activities. Further research could explore the reasons for this and identify additional strategies for preventing cybercrime among students.

5.2 Conclusion

This research project has illuminated the significant impact of cybercrime involvement on students' academic performance at the University of Benin, Nigeria. The findings underscore the importance of understanding the correlation between cybercrime involvement and academic success, particularly in the Nigerian context where cybercrime among university students has surged. However, the study reveals a gap between the perceived impact of cybercrime involvement and the actual academic performance of students, indicating a need for more targeted interventions and improved communication about these strategies. The study also highlights the need for more effective, visible interventions in managing cybercrime activities, and improved interdisciplinary collaboration with teachers, parents, and community organizations. While respondents acknowledge the negative impact of cybercrime involvement on academic performance, the study suggests a need for more proactive measures in universities. The research underscores the potential of strategic interventions to contribute significantly to the domains of academic performance, cybercrime management, and collaborative approaches in the Nigerian educational context. The findings of this study serve as a call to action for stakeholders in the education sector to recognize and address the impact of cybercrime on students' academic performance.

Furthermore, the study emphasizes the importance of educational programs and effective institutional measures in addressing cybercrime. It suggests that while awareness of the

legal consequences of cybercrime is high, this alone may not be sufficient to deter involvement in such activities. This finding underscores the need for further research to explore the reasons for this and identify additional strategies for preventing cybercrime among students. In conclusion, the study has not only filled a gap in the literature but also provided a foundation for future research, policy-making, and practice in the fight against cybercrime in higher education institutions. The findings serve as a valuable resource for the University of Benin and other similar institutions in their efforts to combat cybercrime and enhance students' academic performance. The results of the investigation guide the creation of policies aimed at combating cybercrime among university students in Nigeria, thereby contributing significantly to the body of knowledge and policy-making in this area.

5.3 Recommendation

1. **Cybercrime Awareness Programs**: The University of Benin should implement comprehensive cybercrime awareness programs. These programs should educate students about the various forms of cybercrime, their legal implications, and the potential impact on their academic performance and future career prospects.
2. **Counseling Services:** The university should provide counseling services to students who may be at risk of engaging in cybercrime. These services could offer guidance and support, helping students make informed decisions and resist the temptation to engage in illegal activities.

3. **Strict Enforcement of Cybercrime Policies:** The university should strictly enforce its cybercrime policies. This includes taking disciplinary action against students found to be involved in cybercrime activities, which could serve as a deterrent for other students.
4. **Collaboration with Law Enforcement Agencies:** The university should collaborate with law enforcement agencies to handle cases of cybercrime. This collaboration could include sharing information and resources to effectively combat cybercrime within the university community.
5. **Curriculum Integration**: Cyber ethics and the legal implications of cybercrime should be integrated into the university's curriculum. This could be done through specific courses or by incorporating relevant topics into existing courses.
6. **Peer Education Programs**: The university could implement peer education programs, where students are trained to educate their peers about the dangers of cybercrime. Peer education can be an effective strategy, as students may be more likely to listen to their peers.
7. **Parental Involvement:** The university should find ways to involve parents in the fight against cybercrime. This could include sending regular updates to parents about the university's efforts to combat cybercrime and providing them with information on how they can support these efforts.
8. **Research and Development:** The university should invest in research and development to stay updated on the latest trends in cybercrime and the most

effective strategies to combat it. This could include collaborating with other universities and research institutions.

9. **Regular Assessment of Anti-Cybercrime Measures:** The university should regularly assess its anti-cybercrime measures to ensure they are effective. This could involve collecting feedback from students and staff, and making necessary adjustments based on this feedback.
10. **Creation of a Cyber Security Team**: The university should consider creating a dedicated cyber security team. This team would be responsible for monitoring the university's digital infrastructure, investigating incidents of cybercrime, and implementing preventive measures.