

**ORIGIN AND SOCIAL EFFECT OF CYBERCRIME IN BENIN CITY,
UPPER SOKPONBA AREA IN FOCUS FROM 1990- 2020.**

BY

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**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
FACULTY OF ARTS,
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN**

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**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND
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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this Project was carried out by **Christiana Edoghogho OMOREGBEE**, With Mat. No. ART1801014 in the Department of History and International Studies, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin, Benin City

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DEDICATION

This Project is dedicated to God Almighty for His Mercy and to my family.

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With joy in my heart, I give God all the glory for seeing me to the end of this program successfully. My appreciation also goes to my parent Mr. and Mrs. Akonedo Alfred Omoregbee for giving me this invaluable gift of education. Special thanks to my lovely aunty Mrs Izenigbe Pat Ebuka-Onouha for been a source of encouragement to me through my stay in school. To my elder brother Omoregbee Michael for his moral support, I will never forget your contributions to my success story. May God reward you all.

My immense gratitude also goes to my supervisor Mr. Daniel Orobator, who diligently supervised me through this project work. May God bless you abundantly sir. Also, I want to say thank you to all the lecturers in the Department of History and International Studies; Prof. E.O. Erhagbe, Prof. O.B. Osadolor, Late Dr. O.M. Osiki, Mr. V.O. Aiguoarueghian, Mrs. Mary Isibor too mention but a few for ensuring that I excelled academically. I am eternally grateful for being admitted into this great department.

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO STUDY

Introduction

Cyber crime has grown to be one of the biggest problems facing law enforcement agencies as a result of the development of computer and the information technologies.¹ Some of the few numbers of attacks carried out by cyber criminals in 2006 was about 3.24 millions, in 2019 cybercrime was estimated to cost the global economy \$2 trillion, also the global average cost of a data breach was \$3.86 in 2020.² Some crimes committed online even outnumbered the ones committed offline. However, researchers predict that around 90% of cyber crime get unreported.³ Criminal act is a dynamic phenomenon. Criminal have used a variety of mediums over time to further their illegal goals. The development of computer technology opened up numerous options for commerce and communication, as well as numerous chances for traditional crime to be committed daily.⁴ Government, industry and the general public all used the umbrella word "cyber crime" to describe a wide range of illegal activities and bad behavior involving the use of computers, the internet and the ICTs.⁵

Various terms have been used to describe "cyber crime" since the inception of the field. In the past cybernetics where the prefix "cyber" first appeared and had specific connotations. However, as the technology's use and popularity grew in 1980s and 1990s, the term "cyber" came to mean nearly everything connected to

computers and cyber surfing.⁶ A key finding of this review is that there is no clear, precise and widely accepted definition of cybercrime, which is acknowledged by both academics and institutions. "According to recent literature review by Akeemir, sungur, and Basaranel,⁷ the two most commonly cited academic definitions of cybercrime have been put forward by Thomas and leader, Gordon and ford, Thomas and leader (in 2000) define cyber crime as "computer motivated activities which are either illegal or considered illicit by certain parties and which can be conducted through global network"(P.3),⁸ whereas Gordon and ford (in 2006) define cybercrime as "any crime that is facilitated or committed using a computer, network, or hardware device (p.14)",⁹

Despite the fact that there isn't a single, uniform definition of what constitutes cybercrime, it is widely understood that the term is used to describe a multitude of crime and negative behaviors, while these definitions of cybercrime may be general and vague, they are essentially accurate. Wall(p.3)¹⁰ Defines it as the occurrence of a harmful behavior that is somehow related to a computer. The majority of cybercrime consists of an attack on data pertaining to people, business or government. Wall's (2001, pp 3-7)¹¹ classifies cybercrime into four well-established legal groups:

Cyber-Trespassing: Includes hacking, defacing and spreading viruses, involves crossing boundaries into other people's property and causing damage.

Cyber-Deception and Theft: These crime include Credit card fraud, theft of intellectual property (also known as piracy) and stealing (money, property)

Cyber-Ponography: violates law against obscenity and decency.

Cyber-Violence: includes hate speech and stalking is the act of physically or psychologically harming or inciting others to severe harm.

A classification like this is beneficial because it enables us to connect cybercrime to existing notions of unlawful and destructive behaviour. In ranking, out of the top 10 nations in the world with a high frequency of cybercrime, four are located in Africa: they are Nigeria, Cameroon, Ghana and South Africa, according to a 2011 World Bank report. In terms of countries with the highest prevalence of cybercrime, Nigeria, in 2010, was rated third (3rd) Internet Crime Complaint Centre Report As a result, Nigeria is regarded as one of the world's main centre of Cybercrime.¹²

Over the past decades, cybercrime has become big business in Nigeria, those involved in cyber crime in Nigeria are popularly called yahoo boys. This term yahoo boys refer to a person (either boy or girl) who commit 419 fraud, the number '419' is a Nigerian criminal code that deals with fraud, in another word the term "yahoo boy or boys" is used to refer to young people who indulge in different form of cybercrime in Nigeria. Due to the actions of these cybercriminals known as

"yahoo boys", Nigeria has an unfavorable reputation in cyberspace.¹³ hacking, piracy, fraudsters are among the most prevalent cybercrimes on Nigeria's internet.¹⁴

Depending on the circumstances and their intended victim, cyber criminals use a combination of diverse, highly flexible tactics. These include the methods they use to identify their victims, the use of women as collaborators, Cooperation with security agents and bank officials, Local And worldwide networking, and the use of Supernatural power.¹⁵ During an interview, a specific 19yrs old boy said in pidgin "if you know about slavery, you go know say yahoo no be crime".¹⁶ this mentality is what most people use to justify their actions. According to Machiavelli's theory where he stated that "the end justifies its means" this is what they put at the back of their head when they get themselves involved in cyber crime. In this project we will be focusing on Upper Sokponba, in Benin City, Edo State Nigeria.

Upper Sokponba is a community in Benin city, Edo state. The community which spans more than 25 kilometers from Muritala Mohamed Way (3rd junction) to Idogbo (the Ikpoba-OkhaQQ L.G.A Headquarters), a rural community bordering the states of Edo and Delta states.¹⁷ The Upper Sokponba community is said to be populated by indigenous Binis. One of the major problems of the community was their abject poverty which prompted them into various crimes, and even prostitution. Before yahoo became invoke, Upper Sokponba community suffered from the hands of cultist, Armed robbers, and other criminal activities, which was

detrimental to the life and properties, for years the name upper sakponba, do ring a bell that instigate fear in the minds of the people. In the quest to make money and avoid being poor, most youths, began to go into cybercrime (first it was at the local level, then they migrated to internet scam).¹⁸

PICTURE OF UPPER SOKPONBA



St. Saviour Junction



Nomayo Junction



Jesus Christ Junction

In Upper Sokponba, it is quite simple to facially-recognize yahoo boys. They are known for their excess boasting, sagging, and they act out loudly, they drive around in flamboyant cars, they play loud music, dress in designer clothes and accessories with expensive jewelry.¹⁹

Picture of Yahoo Boys Lifestyle



Also they have a way they relate to one another, they spend lavishly and attend frequent night clubs. They are known for picking up prostitute (popularly called hookup girls) at late night events, they are known to travel in group of twos and threes and four, they utilize coded words like “mugu”, ‘maga” and “maga don pay” which indicates “ the fool (who is their victim) has paid”. They also speak several coded languages and they have names they call themselves.²⁰ Among Wilson, point out some of their names which are first the Aza man (the person who uses his bank account to collect money from client) These set of persons are also called Pickers, Also words like “HK” is used which depict Headquarter in which various guys come together to stay in a location where they do there yahoo business.²¹

Aim and Objectives

The aim of this duty is identifying and discussing the social effect of cybercrime in Benin City and Upper Sokponba community to be precise.

The specific objective are as follows:

1. To know what cybercrime is all about, their format and the implications that come with it.
2. To have some clarity on the cause and the psychological effects of cybercrime and the way citizens should never join or support cybercrime.
3. Government and agencies role in the war against cybercrime.

Scope of Study

The scope of study is however focused on the region (i.e Upper Sokponba Community) and the people involved in the cybercrime (Yahoo boys) between the period of 1990 to 2020.

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Research methodology deals with the different ways or methods the research is applied in order to carry out research as well as instruments used for gathering data. There are several research methodologies appropriate for achieving the goals of this project. The type of research methodology is going to be field work (i.e oral resources) while the secondary methods are data, and relevant information through personal experience, different books, magazines, internet Etc. just to validate it.

Literature Review

Cybercrime was an obscure topic to write about generations ago, now it the Central feature of many books , whether it is criminal gangs, phishing to steal sensitive data to sell in the dark web, or daily texts asking us to click on a link to claim a price or verify payments, pension scams identity thefts all those strangers following us everywhere we turn to, someone is trying to turn the technology which we rely on against us, from online stalking to billion-dollar banking fraud, that are done either with a computer laptop or phone, Some prominent scholars

have contributed literal materials to this study and some of them were used during writing of this project, thus the once that were used are reviewed below:

Olubukola Stella Adesina in “Cybercrime and poverty in Nigeria”²², talked about the abject poverty of the country that made the youth venture into cybercrime. She examined the efforts of the Nigeria Government in forestalling Cybercrime, and also suggested measures that could be put in place to help in curbing cybercrime as well as bringing about poverty alleviation.

Joshua O.A PhD, and Suraj Olaleka A, Msc “understanding cybercrime perpetrators and strategies they employ in Nigeria”²³, discussed the need for re-orientation of Nigeria youths in higher institutions, and various methods as guiding principles for potential victims.

Nzeakor, O. F, Nwokeoma, B. N, hassan I, Ajah B. O& okpa, J. T(2022). Emerging Trends in Cybercrime Awareness in Nigeria”,²⁴ international journal of Cyber security intelligence and Cybercrime examine the current trend in Cybercrime Awareness and the relationship such trends has with Cybercrime vulnerability or victimization.

Suleiman Ibrahim, “Social and Contextual taxonomy of Cybercrime: socioeconomic theory of Nigeria Cybercriminals”.²⁵ This study provide new ways of making sense of the voluminous variances of cybercrime. It enables clearer conceptualisation of cybercrime in Nigeria and elsewhere, because jurisdictional cultures and nuance apply online as they do offline.

Odumesi John Olayemi, “A social technological analysis of cybercrime and cybersecurity in Nigeria”.²⁶ The study was set out to examine the sociological and technological factors that impact cybercrime and cybersecurity and thereby articulate the relevant circumstances and threats of cybercrime in Nigeria.

Suleiman Ibrahim; “causes of socioeconomic cybercrime Nigeria (parents perspectives).²⁷ This book aims to explore parents' perception of the factors that cause socio economic cybercrime in Nigeria.

Suleiman Lazarus, “Birds of the same feather flock together: The Nigerian cyber fraudsters (Yahoo Boys) and hip hop Artists”.²⁸ Set out to examine the way Nigerian cyber fraudsters (yahoo boys) are represented in hip hop music.

Felix Eboibi and I. Mac-Barango, O. Okwah “A critical examination of cybercrime investigation Agency under the Nigerian cybercrime ACT 2015”.²⁹ This paper addresses the failure of the Act to provide for a specific agency for investigating cybercrime in Nigeria and the legal implications of such a lacuna.

O.M. Madubuike, “ The black book of cyber fraud”.³⁰ We get to know how cybercriminals carry out their activities and how you can protect yourself from becoming a victim.

Adebusuyi I. Adenine, “The internet and emergence of Yahoo boys subculture I’m Nigeria”.³¹ This study aims to give us an understanding that the internet has not only facilitated the growth of Yahoo boyism in Nigeria, but has

equally enhanced the level of sophistication of related finance based criminality among the youths.

Usman Adekunle and Michael Christopher Eraye. “Socioeconomic lifestyles of the Yahoo boys: A study of perception of university students in Nigeria”.³² This study looked at how students at a particular specific college felt about how students that engage in cybercrime live socioeconomically.

Oludayo Tade, “A spiritual dimension to cybercrime in Nigeria: The ‘Yahoo plus’ phenomenon.”³³ This book investigates the causes of this spiritual component (cyber spiritualism) to cybercrime and explores some of the tactics used to keep it going.

Chapterization

This study consists of Five (5) chapters

Chapter One

This chapter comprises the background to study, aim and objectives, scope of study, research methodology, literature review and lastly chapterization.

Chapter Two

This chapter start with the genesis of cybercrime in Nigeria then we will reviews the major factors responsible for cybercrime in Upper Sokponba, Benin City, Edo State.

Chapter Three

This chapter discussed in detail the effects of psychological derailment of the individual involved in cybercrime.

Chapter Four

Chapter four talked about the measures taken by relevant authorities in controlling the social disorder.

Chapter Five

Chapter Five, conclusion

Conclusion

Numerous academic have studied cybercrime but they have not critically examined the social impact it has had on individuals involved, i.e. the psychological wellness of those involved has not been discussed. The remaining chapter will concentrate on its causes, followed by the psychological effects of this menses before moving on to the techniques implemented to regulate it.

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CHAPTER TWO

THE GENESIS OF CYBER CRIME IN NIGERIA

Research shows that the advent of globalization fostered cyber crime. The term globalization, refers to the increasing economic relationships between nations on a global level as a result of the large amount and variety of international trade in goods and services of foreign investment as well as the quick and extensive growth of information and technology. ¹ Despite the fact that globalization encourages a quick exchange of money, ideas and social connection also had an impact on the life of people. Globalization has left the mark throughout Africa and this is seen from the way people conduct themselves from their cultural practices to social trends like the usage of modern technologies. In Nigeria, the prevalent form of youth crime prior to the expansion of computer technology in Africa was armed robbery, assassination, rape looting of public funds as well as the blood money phenomenom (human sacrifice for money), pickpocketing and so on.

Technology advancement appears to have sparked a new type of criminal activity (cyber crime). Owing to its anonymity, cyber crime is now favoured by all due to poverty, unemployment, political unrest, corrupt leaders, need to fit in with your friends and many other factors.

Coming down to Upper Sokponba region, large number of the people there are petty traders, low income earners, cultist, criminals, prostitute and the Benin history contends that it is known for cultism. There, you will have club cult,

secondary school cult and even the university cult. Most international prostitute, migrated from Upper Sokponba and some left their children in the hands of either their grand parents, relatives or even a guardian. There is little or no proper care and attention to the abandoned children, some of the kids grew up on the street and ended up constituting nuisance in the community by venturing into different forms of crime “².

Mr Kingsley Osaheide, who is a petty trader, gave an account that fraud is not frowned at by vast majority by adults in Upper as it is believed that the money gotten from fraud by these criminals are used to build businesses and establish homes. These cyber criminals are encouraged by their parents, local business owners. Like myself, being a trader who specializes in sales of cloth is happy because he now know have lots of patronage with huge profits from this criminals³.

Cyber crime has become more prevalent in Upper Sokponba as a result of the economic hardship, the urge to make quick money. The desire to be around people with great affluence, buying expensive clothes and designers and following social media trends. Some persons went as far as to become diabolical in order to keep their clients payments coming in without hindrance or investigation. With that been said, let’s discuss in more depth, the main reason young people in Upper Sokponba turned to cyber criminal.

Get Rich Quick Syndrome

This has been regarded as a key contributor to the rise in numerous crimes in Nigeria most notably cyber crime. People who have this syndrome may feel that they have no other choice but to turn to cyber crime as a way to make quick money. Though some persons obsession is as a result of poverty, some just have this obsession of get rich quick syndrome because they want to follow the trends in the society. In the case of miss linda, who lost her father due to their inability to pay for his medical bill, thought of ways she could make quick money. Her friends lured her into cybercrime, because her tailoring business was not bringing enough money to cater for her mum and younger siblings⁴. Depression, anxiety, psychological discomfort, suicidal and poverty are sometimes linked to get rich syndrome ⁵. So the fear of been poor and not been able to meet up to societal demands prompted youth to venture into cybercrime. Kingsley Osaheide in his quest to make quick money, registered hospital son into the yahoo business, due to the connection of one of his yahoo customers. All he needed was for his son to learn it, start making money from it so as to prove to his fellow businessmen that he has made it⁶. Sometimes the environment do triggered the urge to have this obsession with get rich quick, so any means to uplift themselves from their present state is been adhered to, even if it goes against moral standard of the community. One can never be easily free from get rich quick syndrome but it can be minimised to some extent.

Peer Pressure

Peer pressure is the influence that a group of friends have on a person's behaviour, attitudes or beliefs.

Many young people feel pressured to follow the path of their friends out of a desire for acceptability and curiosity while those who are not yet involve aspire to do so . In the case of .Osaretin, his classmate from secondary school ,influenced him ,he left his mechanic business and focused on cyber crime just because he wanted to feel among .During an interview he narrated how he barely fed himself but he is now married and now he owns a guest house along Avaimba and his personal house is located in Idogbo. He believes cyber crime is a good business due to the influence of his friends and his curiosity ⁷.

Miss Linda who because of poverty thought about going into cyber crime was greatly pressured by her friends. According to her she had the thought but she was scared, her friends who were into it gave her reasons not to be scared, she should look on the brighter side full of luxury ⁸.

Peer pressure does not only work physically one can also get pressured through cyber space this was in the case of Goodluck Osapolor. During an interview, he said he was angry with himself when he sees his age mate loving the life of luxury ,while he can barely feed himself .(they were all between the age of 17 to 20 years) He began to fins ways to get involved in yahoo because he feels that's the only way out of poverty .His peer group online gave him that notion that

yahoo pays. Now Goodluck is proud of his achievement Through he joined during coviding 19, he has been able to build a duplex for his parent and two storey building are on rent ⁹.

Unemployment

High rates of unemployment, challenging economic situation have all been linked to cyber crime .Nigeria is home to about 20 million unemployed graduating into the depressing world of unemployment each year, according to the Nigerian National Bureau of statistics. This demonstrates clearly how many young people lack jobs. An old saying goes, “An idle man is the devil workshop”. Because of this, the majority of our youth use their time and knowledge as a base for illegal behaviour in order to better their lives and made ends meet¹⁰. This was in the case of Jonathan Moses Popularly called Pablo, was a graduate with no job for the past five years. He tried his best to make an honest living, but could not continue after two years. So during an interview he point out the fact that he has spent three years engaging in yahoo, “these yahoo can take many different forms” and according to him, he engaged in international bank transfer, i.e moving money from one bank to another, Particularly those that are listed on a stock exchange. He went on by saying that he had diverted between 10 to 20 million naira from a rich man’s account to his own bank. “The country has fail me. Who will ever believed i went to school. Because no job and i then resolved in cybercrime and through my involvement i started smoking, which I clearly know that it was not good for my

health ¹¹. While unemployment may not be a primary reason why people turn to cybercrime, it is something that is linked to the main cause, which is the get-rich-quick syndrome and poverty.

Negative Role Model

Youth serve as social mirrors, so it is unfortunate that parents often fail to fulfil their legal obligations¹². I observed that many parents nowadays pass along criminal values to their children through socialization as if it's a socio and Cultural standards that the next generation needed to learn. A lot of entertainers promote yahoo through their songs, Olu Maintain's on his song titled "yahooze" album which was released in 2007, Kelly Abolore Adigun's "living kings" which was released in 2017, Bella Shmurda's titled "vision 2020" which was released in 2018 alongside countless members of the entertainment ¹³, and also fashion industries who brand their creations as yahoo tees, which represents the high-end fashion sense and style of young money bags¹⁴. Mrs. Patience explained by giving a life story of a family of yahoo. According to her, the son supplies the father with vital information to hack into someone's bank account via the computer system while the mother poses as the account owner at the bank¹⁵. Another woman named Itohan also points out the fact that, the way parents push their children to learn yahoo is alarming. "you will see them comparing their child with other children who have made it". She witnessed a mother telling her child to make one wealth yahoo guy in the area his mentor. She even paid for the son to go learn yahoo business from him.

The child who was just 17 years old did not have a choice than to go to the man for teachings.¹⁶. So right now, most of the younger generations will perceived that there is nothing wrong with cyber crime, due to the negative role models that influence them, either their parents social media or an influencer or someone who just have money.

Weak Administration of Cybercrime Laws and Inadequate Law Enforcement

The insufficient ability of some laws enforcement agency to investigate, prosecute, and discourage cybercriminals is one of the elements that leads to the rate at which cybercrime persisted¹⁷. Mr Itohan further explain that, “the reason people no longer fear the authority is that the police, Efcc, SSS in this part of Benin, are all aiding them. Everything boils down to the way you settle them¹⁸. As a result some Nigeria’s law enforcement officials being corrupt, cybercriminals tends to continue their Internet fraud. Some EFCC and police officers act as crucial informants, sharing information that could help prevent their possible arrest¹⁹. Mr Clement, stated that due to some unprofessional officer in upper sokponba locality, the EFCC and police officers are now under criticism for their poor response to the problems of cybercrime in upper sokponba region²⁰.

Conclusion

This chapter has been able to establish a nexus between getting rich quick syndrome, peer pressure, unemployment, negative role models, weak administrative law agencies to cybercrime in upper sokponba. To the youth, yahoo

business is a means of escape to them, because they feel the only way out is by venturing into crime. All these do have a psychological effects on them. We will be devoting next chapter to discuss everything in details.

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CHAPTER THREE

PSYCHOLOGICAL DERAILMENT OF THOSE INVOLVED IN THE

CRIME

The psychological effects of Internet fraud among Nigerian youth cannot be overemphasised. In Benin for example, it has totally transformed the mindset of most young people. For them, make money and forget about how the money was made. The end now justifies the means. These boys popularly known as yahoo boys or girls have brought about glamour and class to their hustle. Most of them live like celebrity, some of them even joined the music industry and also became famous through the wealth they get from internet fraud. A very popular Benin politician is also regarded as a yahoo boy. He is now an inspiration to others, that after making wrong money, you can buy legitimacy by investing in legitimate business.

Thus, there is a psychological derailment among many youth in their pursuit of quick wealth through Internet fraud. Oxford dictionary explained psychology as the scientific study of human mind, its functions especially those affecting behaviour in a given context. While derailment means the obstruction of a process by diverting it from its intended course¹. On this note, we can say that psychological derailment is a period whereby the youth's mind is being turned towards illegal activity due to the get-rich-quick syndrome, which can be detrimental to their lives. Due to the fact that this money comes so quickly, they don't have plans on how to properly use it. Most of them squander the money on flashy cars, properties, drugs and women.

This usually becomes their way of life. It is against this background that this chapter seeks to interrogate the psychological effects of the yahoo boys' lifestyle.

This chapter is divided into the following sections:

Drug Addict

The time difference between the yahoo boys and their clients made them frequently stay up late, just so they stay in touch with them. They ultimately got themselves engaged in drugs like cocaine, loud and other stimulant in order to be able to stay awake all night. Mayo clinic made us understand that drug addiction also known as substance use disorder, is a condition that impairs a person's capacity to control their use of drugs and medications, whether they are legal or not ². There are various complications one gets when one gets involved in drugs. Mr. Jude gave a real-life example of one of his close companions who they were doing this yahoo business together. He claims that they both used narcotics, before he gave his life to Jesus. But his friend went deep into drugs and their friendship started to fall apart. At the time of this interview, his friend was already in a psychiatrist hospital³. Mr. Iyare also contends that yahoo business put the lives of young people who are in quest for money at a tender age in danger. According to him, when they are being carried away by money, they will want to do anything to make sure they get it and also they live their friends, introduce them to drugs, just so they can stay up all night and sometimes for 7 nights they won't sleep, all they do is to take some substance (drugs) to keep them awake⁴. Being addicted to drugs will lead to

deteriorating in their health. We began to see cases of those that ran mad, having kidney and lungs failure, most of them could not survive it. This drug addiction did not start one day. They started with little drugs before they move to the higher one that later destroyed their lives.

Mindset

Mindset is key in all that we do. Our mentality in everything we do matters a lot. Mindset theory has shown to be a useful tool for enhancing learning patterns by increasing self-affirmation in both educational and psychological environments. The idea that a person's human characteristics are changeable is known as mindset⁵. In all, the psychological effects of doing yahoo do reflect on how they think. These yahoo boys feel that for you to have honour, respect from your family and friends, you always need to have money. There are different forms of mindset. We have the growth mindset and the fixed mindset. The growth mindset always makes room for opportunity and tries to learn anything but the fixed mindset believes that intelligence is predetermined and unchanging and this is the mindset of yahoo boys⁶. They believe that belief is the only way to make money. Miss Linda who is already deep into yahoo said that "Yahoo is the only way I could have achieved all these without stressing too much too much or looking for money to Start it up. With my smart phone and small data, I can make millions⁷". Mr. Clement shared with me the behaviour of one of his students that is already making money through yahoo. His student's mindset was that as long as he has money, he can have his way

with his teachers and even his fellow students. "That my student is just 17 years old with this kind of irritating pride."⁸

These yahoo boys have framed their mind to act a certain way, dress a certain way just so they can prove to people that they've made money. Their mindset also leads to competition, among themselves in terms of who spends more. Competition among them leads them to depression when things did not work as they planned. All they are concerned about is how to just make more money and when the money is not coming, it reduces their morale on how they relate with their peers.

Distortions of Good Values and Culture

Values are the norms and beliefs that are significant to us and guide our behaviour. Our values in Nigeria include: respecting elders, telling the truth, working hard to learn something worthwhile, being courteous, being on time and not wasting anything. But then, the decline of Nigeria in terms of the needs of the people has pushed some youth into committing different atrocities. Corruption, dishonesty, greed, violent crimes and the trending one which is cybercrime, is now an order for the day. The coming of cyber crime has distorted the good value system that was in place. We hear cases of a yahoo boy that killed his mother and raped the corpse in the quest to make quick money, and another case was when a yahoo boy's mother came to visit her son, that she had to run for her life, because the son planned to killed her ¹⁰.

You can see how guys no longer value the unity of a family. With fear, they went ahead to kill the same person that brought them to life. Our humanity depends on culture and good value system. Also, parents that are supposed to teach the youth our values and cultural heritage are now in support of them. They encourage their children to go into yahoo. At the end of the day, due to the damaged mindset of the yahoo boys, they ended up bringing down the value system of the family and the society at large. Itohan explained that it is rare to see a yahoo boy that respects his elders, all they care about is how to make more money and spend lavishly; how they make the money is none of their business. "One of my distant cousins killed the father and made the mother very sick, it was when he planned to kill his sister that it back fired. He actually confessed before he died¹²." When parents fail to train their children well, they end up being the victim and when a child lacks good values, he is bound to make mistakes. Cybercrime made the youth forget about any existing culture or values and the psychological effects it has on them is that they will end up being heartless just because they want to make money by all means.

The Restoration of Black Magic Factor

In Nigeria, black magic is known as spiritual power, juju or witchcraft. It was an interesting factor that came up during an interview, though they stated the disadvantage but they all preferred to be positive when using black magic for their clients. The perpetrators believed that black magic can be used to beguile their victims into parting with their money without careful thought¹³. The youth

obsession with the get-rich-quick syndrome even made them go as far as combining this Black magic with internet usage just so they could increase the number of online victims. In this light, Mr. Osaretin explained on how he started yahoo at the age of 19, he was able to get paid twice on different occasions. After sometime, he observed that these people were becoming smart and extra careful. It was at that time, he seek the help of Black magic so as to make his client pay without stress¹⁴. Spiritual powers are said to come from a variety of places. According to Nwolise, they include " local deities, juju, witchcraft, curses, oat-taking through native doctors, possessed plants and animals, and stones, ghosts and ancestral spirit, bewitched or charmed objects, spiritual covenants and many more.¹⁵ " Goodluck disclosed that he consented a native doctor just so some rituals can be done so he can have money. He explained that when he started the yahoo business, he was not cashing out like his mates. He then went to meet a native doctor that gave him a condition¹⁶. The effect these black magic have on them is that they are giving some conditions and if they alter it, the consequences are dangerous. In some cases, it leads to death. This was in the case of a girl in my area that was into this yahoo business that consulted a spiritual diviner and was told that she has to sleep with a madman at midnight. If she fails, then she will die after three days. She had to confess and start pleading for the parents to forgive her before she gave up the ghost, days later. These involvement of yahoo in black

magic is also called yahoo plus and the consequences of indulging in it leads to either death or they run mad or they will have one complication or the other.

Conclusion

All these criminals operate with secrecy and even with the stress, anxiety and fear, they can't share their problems with anyone that's not part of them. In this chapter, we've been able to expatiate on the various psychological derailment of those involved in cybercrime and with the above interview, we were able to understand that our actions towards our desires can either grow us to be a better version of ourselves or destroy us. We just have to choose wisely. The next chapter will be devoted to how the government can help to find this social disorder

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CHAPTER FOUR

**MEASURES TAKEN BY RELEVANT AUTHORITIES IN CONTROLLING
THE SOCIAL DISORDER**

“Every culture has a standard that determines what is considered proper conduct, but what happens when there is a discrepancy between what is taught and what is observed? Can the youth really be expected to shun fraud when they can see that cyber criminals have great affluence and society does not despise them for their questionable wealth”¹. Indeed, the recognition of this growing acceptance of cybercrime, as a way of life among the youths has compelled the federal government to formulate measures to contain the trend at different pointing time². The government efforts to reduce cyber crime throughout the years have not really produced many positive results, and it’s due to the fact that yahoo boys receives assistance from variety of sources to commit their crimes. Some families, entertainment industry, religious leaders, government, Police officers and bank employees are all potential sources of assistance to them³. Also, many African economies view cybersecurity as a costly budget rather than a necessity, and even financial institutions, which are most vulnerable to cyberattacks, lack adequate cybersecurity. Its significance is still not fully understood throughout the continent⁴. In this chapter I will be analysing the measures taken by relevant authorities like the government in curbing cybercrime and the obstacles they do face.

Measure Taken By Relevant Authorities

One of the key elements in reducing cybercrime is having sound regulations in place. In order to create cybercrime legislation, the Nigerian government set up the Nigerian Cybercrime Working Group in 2004. This group consist of individuals from both the public and private sectors. In addition, the government created the Directorate for Cyber Security (DfCS) in 2007 to address security concerns brought on by the country's expanding use of the internet and other information and communication technologies (ICTs). Alongside these initiatives, there are general laws that are being enforced to deal with the crime despite not being directly tied to cybercrime. The Nigerian Criminal Code (1990), the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) established Act (2004), and the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Related Offences Act (2006) are a few of the laws that are going to be discussed below⁵.

The Nigerian Criminal Code (1990)

Under the Nigerian Criminal Code (1990) it's said that any type of financial theft, regardless of any form, is a crime that is subject to punishment. Even though it is not specifically addressed in the Act, cybercrime is a kind of theft that is illegal and is therefore penalized by law. The Act's Chapter 38 addresses "obtaining Property by false pretenses—Cheating." Section 419 of the Act specifically addresses cybercrime, while Section 418 defines what an offense under the Act is. Section 418 states that: Any representation made by words, writing, or conduct, of a matter of fact, either past or present, which representation is false in fact, and

which the person making it knows to be false or does not believe to be true, is a false pretense. While Section 419 declares that anyone who obtains anything from another person that can be stolen through the use of a false pretense or who persuades another person to deliver anything that can be stolen to another person, is guilty of a criminal offense and faces a jail term of three years⁶.

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) established Act (2004)

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission was established in 2002. However the bill for its establishment i.e. advance fee fraud Act was signed into law 2006⁷. They provide the legal framework for the establishment of the Commission. EFCC has a lot of function as a commission, but I will be listing some of the major responsibilities of the Commission, according to part 2 of the Act⁸:

Investigating all financial crimes, such as computer credit card fraud, advance fee fraud, money laundering, counterfeiting, unlawful charge transfers, fraud on the futures market, and fraud involving the encashment of negotiable instruments.

All laws against economic and financial crime must be coordinated and enforced, and any other authority or person cannot be entrusted with these duties.

The analysis and investigation of all alleged instances of economic and financial crime with a goal to finding those responsible, whether they be people, companies, or organisation.

Conducting research and other related activities to ascertain the manifestation, scale, and impact of economic and financial crimes and advising the government on the most effective interventions to counteract them.

In collaboration with the Attorney-General of the Federation, taking charge of, overseeing, controlling, and coordinating all duties, tasks, and initiatives associated with the ongoing investigation and prosecution of all offenses connected to or relating to economic and financial Crimes

The Commission is also tasked with enforcing the provisions of the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Fraud-Related Offences Act 1995, the Banks and Other Financial Institutions Act 1991, the Failed Banks (Recovery of Debts) and Financial Malpractices in Banks Act 1994, as amended, and the Miscellaneous Offences Act (EFCC, 2004).

These are some of the measures taken by various relevant authorities in curbing cybercrime in Nigeria. However, there are still some challenges, obstacles and gaps that need to be addressed.

Obstacles in Curbing Cybercrime

When it comes to addressing the obstacles faced by relevant authorities in curbing cybercrime, it's essential to highlight the key challenges they encounter.

This study identified six fundamental agents that are responsible for posing challenges in the fight against cybercrime and they are: Some families, entertainment industry, religious leaders, government, and Police officers.

Families

In a world where parents don't care about their kids' welfare or personalities, it becomes difficult to stop yahoo, either directly or indirectly. Before society even has an opportunity to nurture a child, their life is first nurtured at home. A strong family atmosphere and a good family personality should serve as a continual reminder to children and keep them away from bad or demeaning practices that will bring dishonor to the family. Families are designed to be the foundation of society. However, some persons explained that some parents do not care where their children's wealth comes from during the course of the interview. "Any parent who denies being ignorant of the meaning of Yahoo or Yahoo Boys is not being truthful. However, it's not their fault because who doesn't like money? They don't bother to question their children when they bring expensive items home or ask how they were able to get them. instead, they applaud them, encourage. Them and even make them feel special. All I can say is that the lack of parental authority, supervision, and support resulting from single parenthood, divorce, poverty, and soon, are all barriers to reducing cybercrime."¹⁰ The key note is that home plays important roles in encouraging and discouraging cybercrime among children.

Entertainment Industry

In the entertainment industry, we have skit makers, musicians, comedians who support these cybercriminals. Youths in Nigeria have been impacted by their favourite bands, celebrities, skit creators, etc. over the years and up to the present. A common kind of promotion for cybercrime in recent times has been music. The wealthy and powerful yahoo-boys have skillfully promoted their worth and maintained their position by leveraging on music and social media¹¹. The few musicians i listed here that promoted yahoo through their songs are Olu Maintain in his song "yahooze" album, which was released in 2007, Kelly Abolore Adigun's "living kings," which was released in 2017, and Bella Shumurda's "vision 2020," which was released in 2018. Numerous other members of the entertainment have also promoted Yahoo through their music¹². Fashion designers have also branded their creations as Yahoo tees, which symbolise the high-end sense of style and taste of young money bags.¹³ All these have a negative impact on the mindset of the youth, and because they have the backings of these celebrities it makes it difficult for them to be caught.

Religious Leaders

Some yahoo guys noted that the conventional diviners are not the only ones with the ability to communicate with the spiritual world when describing religious leaders as one of the fundamental forces behind Yahoo Plus. They clarified that the religious authorities of Christianity and Islam also support the yahoo guys by

giving them the spiritual strength they need to successfully hypnotise their victims and commit financial fraud¹⁴. On this issue, a lady in a conversation revealed that: High religious leaders in Islam have the knowledge to call upon spiritual energies whenever they like by memorising specific Quranic phrases. The majority of the time, these powers should be used to improve the world, but some evil people abuse them for their own self-serving ends, such as assisting the yahoo guys in becoming wealthy i am talking from experience; my ex-boyfriend is a yahoo boy and the person that does his goodwill charm for him is an afá¹⁵. In some churches and mosques the wealthy are praised regardless of how they came into their fortune; they are given high positions and required to sit in prominent locations in the church or mosque. The members' faith has been badly impacted by all of the sermons regarding money and financial positions in the church. Instead of serving a wide range of people regardless of their socioeconomic status, churches and mosques have evolved into places of oppression and ostentation. Since everyone wants to be accepted, they will use whatever means necessary to obtain money, including illegal ones like yahoo-plus.

Government

When a terrible example has been set, it might be challenging to change the outcome. The government is so corrupt that after promising its population a change in government, what they actually do is change for the worse. In the case of Mr. Osaretin, who had degree in business administration later became a mechanic. He

claims that the nation has failed the youth. If the country's economy is good for everyone, youth will not participate Yahoo¹⁶. The government have failed to tackle the issue of unemployment and poverty in the society. If this problem is 50% solved then controlling cybercrime will also be 50% solved.

Police Officers

The majority of the persons I spoke with on this subject acknowledged that police personnel, particularly the SARS, served as barriers to reducing Yahoo Plus because of their high rate of corrupt behaviour. SARS are the most corrupt division of the Nigerian police force, according to someone who has experience with them. The Nigerian police are a disgrace to the legal system as a whole. The government's refusal to pay them fairly at the beginning of the corruption cycle leaves them hungry and in need. They so used Yahoo Boy as an avenue to obtain their daily food. The issue I have with them is that they intentionally harm innocent people while allowing the evil folks to get away with it. According to him, he was present when a yahoo boy gave them 250 000 naira, and they let him go without hurting him. However, you will frequently see them arrest innocent people and cause them pain, and occasionally those people are killed¹⁷. According to law, the police's duties include apprehending criminals, maintaining the law, detecting and preventing crime. They are given the authority to conduct criminal prosecutions, detain people in specific situations without a warrant, release detainees on bail, and search suspected person in order to carry out their duties effectively. Police,

however, are abusing these authorities; they utilise them to pursue Yahoo Boys in order to extract bribes from them. Nigerian youths have protested on social media using the well-known hashtag #EndSARs to demand that the country's special anti-robbery squad (SARS) be disbanded. numerous accounts of SARs abusing their authority and oppressing the innocent youth were posted online.

Conclusion

With all of these challenges, the government and relevant authorities should take a seat and thoroughly investigate the situation by addressing the problem at hand. While simply arresting them won't stop it, there will be some relief when the issue is addressed from the root. The government should first stop acting in a corrupt manner, and only then should it pay attention to why people go into cybercrime

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CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the analysis of the origins and social impacts of cybercrime in Benin City, with an emphasis on Upper Sokponba, reveals a dynamic and diverse story formed by societal, technological, and historical influences. The growing adoption of digital technologies into daily life has represented the global trend of cybercrime and accelerated its growth in this region.

Historically, Benin City's journey into the digital age laid the groundwork for cybercriminal activities in Upper Sokponba. As the city embraced technological advancements, it unwittingly opened avenues for illicit activities, marking a shift from conventional forms of crime to sophisticated cyber threats.

The origin of cybercrime in this context is intertwined with broader global trends, such as increased connectivity, globalization, and the rise of digital platforms. Economic disparities, limited cybersecurity infrastructure, and a lack of awareness further contributed to the vulnerability of the community to cyber threats.

The social impact of cybercrime in Upper Sokponba is profound, especially on those involved in it. We saw that a lot of them suffer from a lot of things like, their mind-set, they get into drugs due to many reasons, some was to make them active then it became a habit that they find it difficult to break. As time goes by some ran mad.

Despite these challenges, there is a growing recognition within the community of the need to address cyber threats. Initiatives focusing on education, awareness campaigns, and collaboration with law enforcement demonstrate a commitment to building resilience against cybercrime. The establishment of local cybersecurity measures and partnerships with international agencies reflects a proactive approach to safeguarding the digital future of Benin City, particularly in Upper Sokponba.

In essence, the historical analysis of cybercrime in Benin City, Upper Sokponba, emphasizes the importance of a nuanced understanding of the past to inform present and future strategies. As the community navigates the complexities of the digital landscape, a concerted effort is required to mitigate the social impact of cybercrime, foster digital literacy, and build a resilient and secure environment for the residents of Upper Sokponba and beyond.

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(a)List of Informant

NAME	AGE	OCCUPATION	PLACE OF INTERVIEW	DATE OF INTERVIEW
Joshua Omorodion	19	Yahoo boy	Umelu	27 06 2023
Amone Wilson	26	POS agent	Avaimba	12 07 2023
Izenigbe Pat Ebuka-Onuoha	40	Lecturer	University of Benin	25 10 2023
Kingsley Osaheide	47	Trader	Saint savior market	5 08 2023
Linda Omoruyi	23	Yahoo girl	Jesus Christ	24 08 2023
Osaretin Iyhoa	25	Yahoo boy	Avaimba	22 07 2023
Goodluck Osakpolor	19	Student	Saint savior	22 06 2023
Jonathan Moses	28	Pastor	Oka market	1 10 2023
Patience Omoruyi	39	Trader	Avaimba	10 07 2023
Itohan Lucky	32	Trader	Umelu	10 09 2023
Clement James	25	Teacher	Idogbo	5 08 2023
Jude Osariemen	26	Yahoo boy	Upper Eradiawa	26 08 2023
Iyare heart	25	Graduate	Welfare	14 09 2023

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