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Okpan & Anigbogu *Declining Social Values and Internet Crime in Owerri Municipal, Imo State, Nigeria.*

DECLINING SOCIAL VALUES AND INTERNET CRIME IN OWERRI MUNICIPAL, IMO STATE, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

In every society, there are certain cultural values and value systems that guide every aspect of human behavior. In Nigeria, our time-honored value systems are seriously endangered. This is attributable among other things, to the steady encroachment of alien values associated with colonialism and westernization. Today, internet crime has emerged as one of the most pronounced social vices plaguing society. In Nigeria, numerous internet assisted crimes are perpetrated daily in varying forms such as identity theft, desktop counterfeiting, internet chat room, cyber harassment, fraudulent electronic mail, Automated Teller Machine spoofing, piracy, hacking, phishing and spamming. It is therefore obvious that the seemingly escalating rate of internet crime has become a strong threat to Nigeria's e-commerce growth and has led to ill-reputation intentionally with attendant consequences. This paper examined the impact of declining social values on internet crime in Owerri Municipal Council Imo State using the differential association theory as framework. Multi-stage sampling technique was adopted in selecting 250 respondents for the study. Quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection were utilized. Findings indicate that decline in social values, poverty, and unemployment are some of the major factors influencing internet crime.

Keywords: Value system, Internet crime, Society

Introduction

Sociologically, it is imperative to understand that in all aspects of human endeavour, value dictates the choices made by man. Furthermore, choice influences the behavior of every man. Each individual develops his or her own personal goals and ambitions yet, culture provides a general set of objectives for members. Like norms, values are subject to change as a society encounters destructive pressures and strains. According to Egbue & Mathias (2013) values are preferences concerning appropriate courses of action or outcomes. As such, values reflect a person's sense of right and wrong or what ought to be. For example, the idea of: 'equal rights for all' or 'excellence deserves admiration' or people should be treated with respect and dignity', etc. all represent values. Schaefer (2003) in his own view asserts that values are those collective conceptions of what is considered good, desirable, and proper or bad,

undesirable, and improper in a culture. They indicate what people in a given culture prefer as well as what they find important and morally right (or wrong). Values may be specific such as honoring one's parents and owning a home, or they may be more general such as health, love, and democracy. Values tend to influence attitudes and behavior. For instance if a person who values 'equal rights for all' goes to work for an organization that treats its managers much better than it does its workers, one may form the attitude that the company is an unfair employer, and proceed to respond accordingly. Likewise, in an environment where emphasis is placed on wealth without considering the means by which it is acquired, the people's attitude towards wealth acquisition would be so inclined.

Values influence people's behavior and serve as criteria for evaluating the actions of others. There is often a direct culture. For example, if a culture highly values the institution of marriage, it may have norms and strict sanctions which prohibit the act of adultery. If cultures view private property as a basic value, they will probably have laws against theft and vandalism. When we learn people's values, we understand a great deal about them, for values are the standards by which people define what is good and bad, beautiful and ugly. Values underlie our preferences, guide our choices and indicate what we hold worthwhile in life (Henslin, 2007).

What we call African values are components or elements of the essentials of the African way of life. Therefore, values in this sense embrace the concepts of norms, attitudes and African symbols. Values are important components of behavior, which are necessary for the students and teachers of social and cultural behavior if they are to understand the behavior of the people in society. Values are usually inferred from observed behavior. Every human group develops expectations concerning the right ways to reflect its values. For instance, the Western society is predicated on organic solidarity (individualism) as the most acceptable value system, this is reflected on the capitalist structure of competition which reflects in every Western social relationship. Value system simply refers to the cultural outlook of the people, and the understanding of the belief system and cultural system of the people (Akinpelu, 1983 cited in Oli, 2013). These cultural values or value system regulates human behavior. It has been observed that changing social values as a result of globalization and Western influence have greatly affected the behavior of individuals in our societies, this may be part of the reason for increase in crime especially internet based crime.

Traditionally, Africans place more emphasis on the group rather than on the individual, more on solidarity than on the activity and needs of the individual, more on the communion of persons than on their autonomy. African society is a community society; its solidarity is on the general activity of the group. The continuance of strong ties with the extended family by the elite is a symbol of ritual attachment to the African values. These symbols fit with the African societal frame work, they are valued as part of our morality or moral code. Moreover, these symbols which usually occur in stylized patterns of activities are made use of in occasions such as rituals, ceremonials, gift exchange, prescribed patterns of joking, oath taking, acts of etiquette etc.

However, peer influence, abuse of modern technology such as the internet (social media) and inadequacy of legitimate means and several other elements may spore certain groups to violate existing social values. The overall effect is, a society where education, entrepreneurship skills, hard work, honesty and sincerity have been relegated to the background and emphasis laid on wealth without due consideration to its sources. The dominant value is predicated on how much wealth one has, irrespective of how it is acquired. This, to a great extent, has affected the psyche of most youths, who now perceive education as a fruitless waste of time.

Furthermore, some parents tend to encourage their children to replicate the feats achieved by their friends and peers who parade fleets of exotic cars without any legitimate means of income. Again, some dubious traditional rulers within communities' are known to confer chieftaincy titles on persons with questionable character and even organize lavish recognition parties for them, thereby, elevating them to the status of societal models.

In addition, the pervasive drive for illegitimate wealth acquisition mostly strives in an environment where the institutions responsible for enforcing sanctions are inept. As a consequence to the perceived inefficiency of law enforcement agencies, negative values tend to become socially acceptable. For example, internet fraud, which has been embraced by many Nigerian youths and perfected as a lucrative source of wealth amidst high rate of unemployment is not only a disruptive value but also a deviant behavior. Rose (1983) cited in Ndubueze (2013) defines deviance as "behavior that does not conform to social expectations." Shinder (2002), defines internet crime as any criminal offence committed using the internet or another computer network as a component of the crime. Internet crimes are offences that are committed against individuals or group of individuals with a criminal motive to internationally harm the reputation of the victim or cause physical or mental harm to the victim, directly or indirectly, using modern telecommunication networks such as internet and mobile phones. Such crimes may threaten national security and financial health (Akogwu, 2012).

The rate of internet based crime in Nigeria is increasing at an alarming rate. Dasuki (2014) expresses concern that in every 9 seconds, a Nigerian commits crime on the internet, more so this trend has seen a sharp rise from 0.9% in the 90s to 9.8% in 2014. It must be stated that information technology revolution associated with the internet has brought about two edge functions: that is, on one hand, it has contributed positive values to the world. While on the other hand, it has produced so many maladies that threaten order in society and has introduced a new wave of crime to the world. Some of the most prevalent internet crimes in Nigeria today are;

- **Yahoo boys:** these are called 419's they use e-mail addresses obtained from internet access points to access private e-mails.
- **Hackers:** hackers are engaged in cracking of security codes for e-commerce and e-marketing product sites of computer systems in order to steal or destroy data.
- **Software Piracy:** this act involves the unlawful reproduction and sharing of applications software for example games, movies/videos and audios.

- **Credit Card or ATM Fraud:** these can be stolen by hackers when users type the credit card number into the internet page of the seller for online transaction or when withdrawing money using ATM card.
- **Internet Terrorism:** internet terrorism is any premeditated, politically motivated attack against information, computer systems, computer programs, and data which results in violence against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents.

Furthermore, the findings of a study conducted by Institute of Digital Communication, a market research institute based in South Africa indicates that Nigeria is losing about \$ 80 million dollars yearly to software piracy. Also, the American National Fraud Information Centre reported Nigeria as having the fastest growing online scam rate of up to 90 % in 2001. The centre also ranked Nigeria cybercrime impact per capita as being exceptionally high.

According to Saulawa & Abubakar (2014), email scams and spam are the most repulsive phenomena among internet crimes, as, these are ways used to present false financial investment. Undoubtedly, Nigeria's image has suffered irreparable damage as a result of the substantiated involvement of her citizens in internet fraud. The activities of these conmen include for instance, sending emails with alluring content such as, naming the victim as the sole beneficiary to the will of an estranged relative and therefore stands to benefit the estate or the trust fund. Sometimes, they use online charity; carefully crafted emails are sent to victims soliciting for funds and assistance to fictitious charitable organizations. The foregoing discussion is not meant to portray Nigeria as a fraudulent nation, however given the magnitude of this social malaise, it is important to put the problem in proper context.

Statement of the Problem

Values are considered legitimate and binding. They set standards through which the ends of actions are selected (Hogan, 2006). The traditional Nigerian society saw the codification of a set of national values that are oriented towards very high moral standards and ethics. A good name was a virtue so highly esteemed that it would not be traded for mere wealth by society. Unfortunately, this value is seemingly eluding the Nigerian society. The once cherished traditional values are now been compromised. The transition in Nigeria's traditional values (national character) is further aggravated by the growth of digital technologies. Apparently, computer technology – induced modernity, has given birth to new forms of crime and criminality in Nigeria, one of which is internet crime. Traditional values of faith, modesty, brotherliness, temperance, hospital, tolerance, respect for elders and peace, progress, unity are fast declining. Consequently, greed, materialism, ethnicity, nepotism, individualism, malice, strife, violence, disunity are becoming the order of the day. The emphasis on wealth and materialism has indirectly encouraged criminal behavior and escalation of vices such as internet fraud.

The contribution of the internet to the development of the nation has been marred by the evolution of new internet based crimes. The internet has also become an environment where the most lucrative crimes thrive. Internet crime has become a global threat from Europe to America, Africa to Asia.

The damage done by Nigeria's internet crime - induced reputation deficit is immense. Many Nigerians are relegated to the status of second - class internet citizens, denied acceptance and participation in many aspects of the digital economy. Where they are not locked out, they are often made to satisfy unusually onerous conditions that aren't required of non- Nigerians. It is also leading to the erosion of confidence in genuine Nigerian commercial credibility and today, many western countries with France taking the lead, have moved to deny legitimate Nigerian businessmen and women the rewards of e-commerce. The situation is such that today, France requires web camera verification for most online business transactions from Nigeria (Okeshola & Adeta, 2013).

In addition, most studies that focus on internet crime largely concentrate on situations in the western world forgetting that the nature of cyber crime is such that geographical and political boundaries are being rendered irrelevant. A person who has access to a computer and is connected to the internet might be participating, attempting or planning a criminal act anywhere in the world (Kumar, 2003). Awe (2009), confirmed that computer attacks can be generated by criminals from anywhere in the world, and executed in other areas, irrespective of geographical location. And often, these criminal activities can be faster, easier and more damaging with the use of the internet.

The above statement shows the global nature of the problem which has locally become an image nightmare, leaving the Nigerian government scampering to identify remote causes and proffer solutions. Attempts to address internet crime by various governments and international organizations have not been successful owing to the fact that the identities of the perpetrators remain unknown. A study by Zero Tolerance (2006) indicates that internet criminals are usually within the age of 18 and 30 years and they indulge in the crime in order to survive and have a taste of good life. In view these observations, it is important to be able to identify core attributes possessed by internet criminals and as well as other motivating factors.

In an attempt to fight the menace of internet crimes in Nigeria, Akano (2013) stressed that Nigeria has to prepare for internet warfare to protect its economy in the 21st century, more so, because in 2012, an estimated \$ 1 trillion was lost to internet-related frauds globally although only \$390 billion was reported for obvious reasons. According to Ude (2015), the consequence of the menace on the banking landscape has been reputational damage, loss of share value, loss of customer confidence and increased audit costs. While citing NIBSS reports on the loss of revenue to fraudsters, he noted that between 2000 to the first quarter of 2013, banks had already lost N159 billion, and subsequently lost N40 billion for the rest of that year, while from January to September 2014, N4 billion more was lost. According to him, fraudulent activities are on the increase, which amount to severe consequences for the financial industry in Nigeria, even as most electronic fraud in recent times assumed the insider abuse dimension, including "dedicated employees."

Scope of Internet Crime in Nigeria

According to Vladimir (2005) the internet is a global network which unites millions of computers located in different countries and opens broad opportunities to obtain and exchange information. Agba (2002), is of the view that the internet is the most technologically advanced medium of interaction. It is the information revolution that has turned the world into a global village.

As a developing country, Nigeria is faced with so many economic challenges such as poverty, corruption, unemployment among others, thereby, creating the enabling environment for deviant acts like internet crime to thrive. However, it will be inconclusive to view economic challenges alone as the cause of internet crime in Nigeria; there might be other causes too. It is assumed that internet usage in Nigeria is growing due to increasing availability of broadband connections and by observation, a decrease in subscription fees. This observed increase of internet users in Nigeria has made the internet a popular medium of communication and interaction as well as a forum for on-line enterprises, such as, internet service provision (ISP), internet cafes and also cyber crime, which has been appropriately described by Ayantokun (2006) as all unlawful activities involving computer and the internet.

Internet services have reduced the world into a global village which makes it look as if everybody is in the same place at a particular point in time, given that, online communication and transactions are consummated at the speed of lightening. Oyewole & Obeta (2002), state that the internet is the inter connection of computers across the world thereby, creating unlimited opportunities for mankind. According to Ehimen & Bola (2009), the internet has created geometric growth and accelerated windows of opportunities for businesses as well as the removal of economic barriers hitherto faced by nations of the world. Considering these limitless advantages of the internet, one can easily subscribe to the fact that it is an important tool for national development in a developing country like Nigeria.

McConnel (2000) argued that cybercrimes differ from most terrestrial crimes in four ways which are: they are easy to learn; they require few resources relative to the potential damage caused; they can be committed in a jurisdiction without being physically present and they are often not clearly illegal. As such, cyber crime has become one of the major security issues for law enforcement agencies and the world in general.

According to a publication by the Economic Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) in Nigeria named Zero Tolerance (2006). A retired civil servant with two (2) other accomplices defrauded a German citizen named Klaus Wagner to the tune of USD 1,714,080 through the internet. In the same vein, a 2007 internet crime report listed Nigeria as third in terms of online crime activity and the prevalence of cyber crime among a sizeable number of young Nigerians (Sesan, 2010). On his part, Ribadu (2007) reports that the most prominent forms of cyber crime in Nigeria are cloning of websites, false representations, internet purchase and other e-commerce kinds of fraud. Olugbodi (2010), states that the most prevalent forms of cyber crime are website cloning, financial fraud, identity theft, credit card theft, cyber theft, cyber harassment, fraudulent electronic mails, cyber laundering and virus/ worms/ trojans. The internet creates unlimited opportunities for commercial, social and educational activities. However, it has introduced its own peculiar risks that pose danger to the

economy, which could affect spheres of society and negatively impact on national development. Some of the possible adverse effects include the destruction of the country's image both at home and abroad, insecurity of both life and properties, fear of doing business with Nigerian citizens and economic loss associated with spending substantial amounts of money on the prevention and control of internet crime among others.

Theoretical Inclination

In sociological analysis, theories are indispensable. They form an integral part of sociological research as it is a general principle that explains or predicts facts, observation or events. The theory of differential association was adopted for this study. This theory was propounded by Edwin Sutherland an American Sociologist. The differential association theory holds that through interaction with others, individuals learn the values, attitudes, techniques and motives for criminal behavior. According to this theory, the environment plays a major role in deciding which norms people learn to violate (Sutherland, 1939).

The principle of differential association asserts that a person becomes delinquent because of an "excess" of definitions favorable to violation of law over definitions unfavorable to violation of law. What this means is that an individual will become a criminal because they are exposed to more favorable criminal behavior. That is, when one is exposed to more criminal influence rather than more favorable legal influence. In other words, criminal behavior emerges when one is exposed to more social messages favoring misconduct than pro-social messages. This can be seen in environments with poor socio-economic conditions which may encourage negative views towards the law and authority. According to Sutherland (1939) cited in Okeshola & Adeta (2013), criminal behavior is learned. Criminal behavior is learned in interaction with other persons in a process of communication. This would mean an individual is influenced to participate in criminal behavior through watching and interacting with other individuals who are engaging in the criminal behavior. The principal part of the learning of criminal behavior occurs within intimate personal groups.

When criminal behavior is learned, the learning includes techniques of committing the crime, which are sometimes very complicated, sometimes simple, and they learn the specific direction of motives, drives, rationalizations and attitudes for committing a crime. This means that an individual will be influenced into believing that, behavior, which they may have previously believed was wrong, is right after all through, rationalization of their action.

Furthermore, an individual will be pushed into deviant behavior depending on their view of the legal code as being favorable or unfavorable. A person becomes delinquent because of an excess of definitions favorable to violation of law over definitions unfavorable to violation of the law. Therefore, an individual will break a law if they see more reasons to break it than to stay in compliance with it. Differential association may also vary in frequency, duration, priority and intensity. The process of learning criminal behavior by association with criminal and anti-criminal patterns involves all of the mechanisms that are involved in any other learning. This means

that individuals learn criminal actions and legal through the same way. This theory states that while criminal behavior is an expression of general needs and values, it is not necessarily the fulfillment of these needs and values that cause deviant behavior since non-criminal behavior is an expression of these same needs and values.

The theory of differential association can be applied to analysis of internet crimes. The main premise behind this theory is that criminal behavior is learned through social interactions with others. The profile of a cyber criminal is one who is very smart, highly knowledgeable and who is computer savvy. Their social interactions may come through electronic communications with other individuals who share similar technological interests. If they do not currently have any desire to commit malicious acts through electronic means, such as an act in violation of the computer fraud and abuse act, then they may become influenced through another individual with whom they share electronic communication. As a theory which was developed to help explain white collar crime, the differential association theory fits in well explaining internet crime which by itself is largely an elitist crime. According to a research conducted by Imhof (2010), a lot of systems hacking occur in colleges. Therefore, is it discernible that many prospective internet criminals spend time with people who share similar interests.

The differential association is therefore a theory with a number of postulations which help to explain the reasons why internet crimes are increasing so quickly in society, how an individual learns to become a cyber criminal as well as, the existence of a wide spectrum of different kinds of offenders and motivations.

Methodology

Sample and Sampling Procedure

The study was carried out in Owerri Municipal Council in Imo State, Nigeria, in 2015. It adopted a cross sectional survey design. According to 2006 National Population figure, Owerri Municipal Council has a population of 127, 213 made up of 64,223 females and 62,990 males. The target population for this study were adults aged 18 years and above. The multi stage sampling method that involves successive random sampling was employed in selecting communities, streets, households and respondents in the study. The multi – stage design was very relevant because the study population was very large and made up of several clusters like towns, streets, and households.

A sample size of 250 was used for the study and the major instrument for collecting data was a questionnaire. A uniform set of questionnaires were administered to all the respondents. The In-depth interview guide (IDI) was used to complement data generated from the questionnaire. Four IDI's were conducted with two males and two females purposively selected based on their knowledge of the subject matter. Care was taken to maintain gender balance in the selection of interviewees who participated in the survey. Out of the 250 questionnaires distributed, 246 were correctly filled and returned, giving a response rate of 98 percent.

Data Analysis

The researcher got approval from the respondents before administering the questionnaires. The interviewees gave their consent before the in-depth interviews were conducted. Data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were used to analyze the quantitative data. For the qualitative data, in-depth interviews were subjected to manual content analysis. However, illustrative quotes were identified and organized under distinct themes.

Results

Socio-demographic Attributes of Respondents

This section presents the socio- demographic attributes of the respondents. The attributes are age, gender, marital status, educational qualification, occupation and religion of respondents.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by socio-demographic characteristics

<i>Socio – Demographic characteristic</i>	<i>Frequency (F)</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Age		
18 – 28	219	89.0
29 – 39	14	5.7
40 – 50	6	2.4
Above 50	7	2.8
Total	246	100
Gender		
Male	211	85.8
Female	35	14.2
Total	246	100.0
Marital Status		
Single	222	90.2
Married	19	7.7
Widowed	5	2.0
Total	246	100.0
Educational qualification		
Primary	7	2.8
Secondary	12	4.9
NCE/OND/ HND	66	26.8
University degree or higher	161	65.4
Total	246	100.0
Occupation		
Unemployed	86	34.9
Civil Servant/Public Servant	13	5.3
Apprentice	10	4.1
Self Employed	12	4.8
Business/Trading	11	4.5
Farmer	6	2.4
Student	108	43.9
Total	246	100.0

Religious affiliation		
Christian	239	97.2
Moslem	7	2.8
Total	246	100.0

Table 1 clearly indicates that majority (89.0%), of respondents were aged 18-28 years and that while 85.8% of the respondents are males, 14.2% are females. The number of male respondents who participated in the study outweighs the female respondents because many of the females who declined to participate felt it was a male issue. In terms of marital status, most of the respondents are single (90.2%). The educational qualification of the respondents' shows that majority of them have a first or second university degree (65.4%), while 26.8% of them have an NCE, OND or HND. About 34.9% are unemployed, while 43.9% are students. Also, majority of the respondents are Christians, this is basically because the study area is dominated by Christian worshippers.

Figure 1: Distribution of Respondents on awareness of Internet Crime

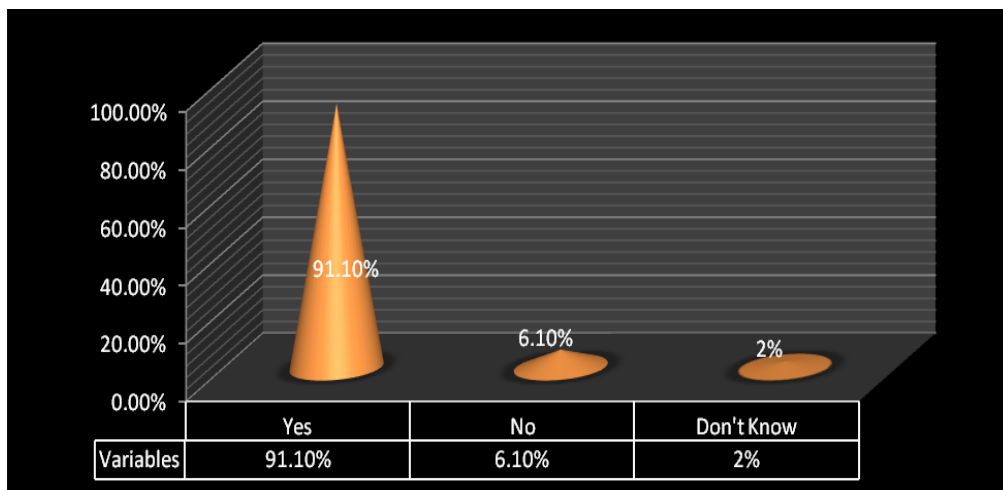


Figure 1 indicates that 91.10% of respondents are aware of internet or cyber crime. This means that a very high percentage of respondents are aware of the existence of internet crime and therefore capable of providing informed opinions. Also, the results from the in-depth interviews conducted show that most the respondents interviewed were aware of the term cyber crime. One of the female respondents interviewed described cyber crime as follows:

Cyber crime is derived from two words “cyber” and “crime”. Cyber refer to any activities either sales or transaction of services in the cyber space while crime are unacceptable activities. When joined together, it means all fraudulent, illicit and unacceptable activities related to cyber (Female, 39 years, Teacher)

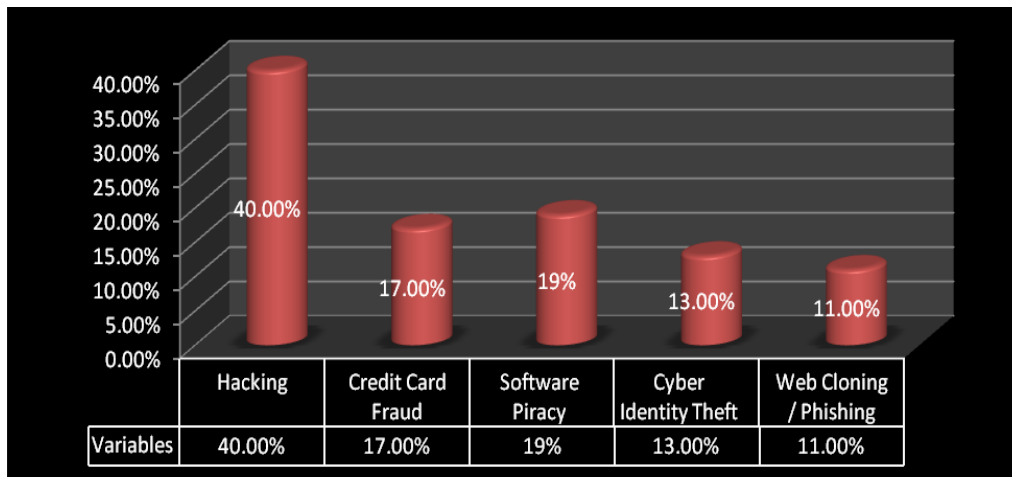
Figure 2: Views of Respondents on most Common Form of Internet Crime

Figure 2 shows the most common forms of internet or cyber crimes committed in the study area. Findings reveal that majority of the respondents are of the view that hacking (40.00%) is the most common form of internet crime in the study area. However, software piracy (19%), and credit card fraud (17.00%), cyber identity theft (13.00%) and web cloning/phishing (11.00%) are other forms of internet crime that exist at lower rates.

The in-depth interviews also revealed other types of internet crimes to include alteration or disclosure of sensitive data, trafficking in passwords and credit card number, lottery scam, educational scam where students only pay half the tuition fees and stealing of direct TV signals by modifying the card that goes into the satellite receivers. More specifically, a male respondent had this to say on the form of cyber crime his close friend indulges in. He stated that:

He is into phishing and the use of social network to get his (maga) victim. What he does mainly is to pretend as an imposter via online dating. He looks for the profile of people that is, male or female that live outside the country. He always poses to them as a single female looking for a male partner or as big man who needs a wife or tell them stories on how his wife disappointed him and took away his property and children, or as a widower. All this is polished in a pitiable way with some pictures to even convince them whenever he is chatting with them. From there, he begins to play his pranks (Male, 27 years, Unemployed).

Figure 3: Views of Respondents on Major Cause of Internet Crime

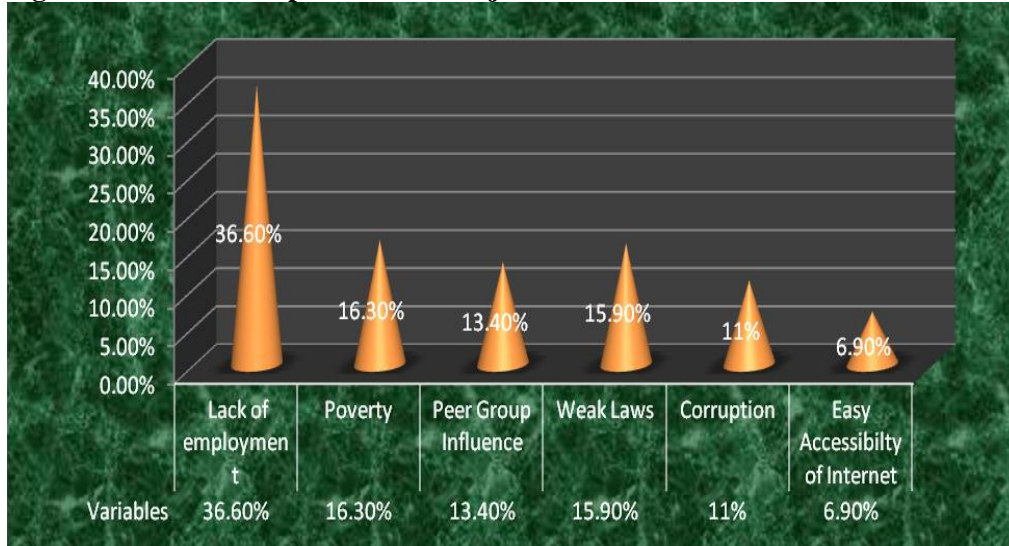
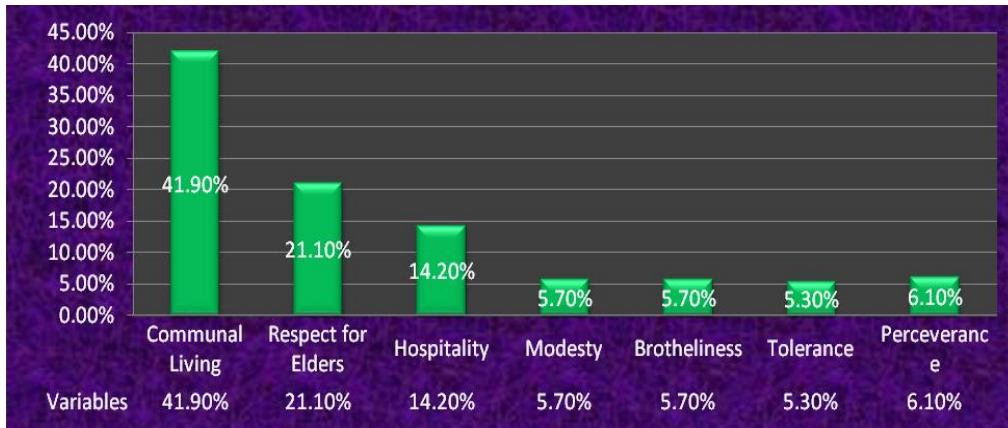


Figure 3 shows that majority of the respondents (36.60%) agreed that unemployment is a major causal factor of internet crime, 16.30% think it can be attributed to poverty, while 15.90% of the respondents believe that it is attributable to weak laws. This is in agreement with responses from the in-depth interviews. More specifically, a female IDI respondent answered thus;

Unemployment is the major factor that causes internet crime. When you have nothing to do for several years after graduation won't you help yourself? I graduated with a second class upper several years ago, but no job because I have no body to connect me. So, unemployed youths may turn to such as a last resort (Female, 28 years, Unemployed)

Figure 4: Views of Respondents on what they consider core African values



From the figure above, it could be observed that majority of the respondents identified core African values as communal living (41.90%), respect for elders (21.10%). While only few respondents' (14.20%) indicated tolerance. This shows that to a large extent, many respondents agree that certain values still stand out till date as uniquely African values.

Figure 5: Views of Respondents on if there is a decline in core African social values

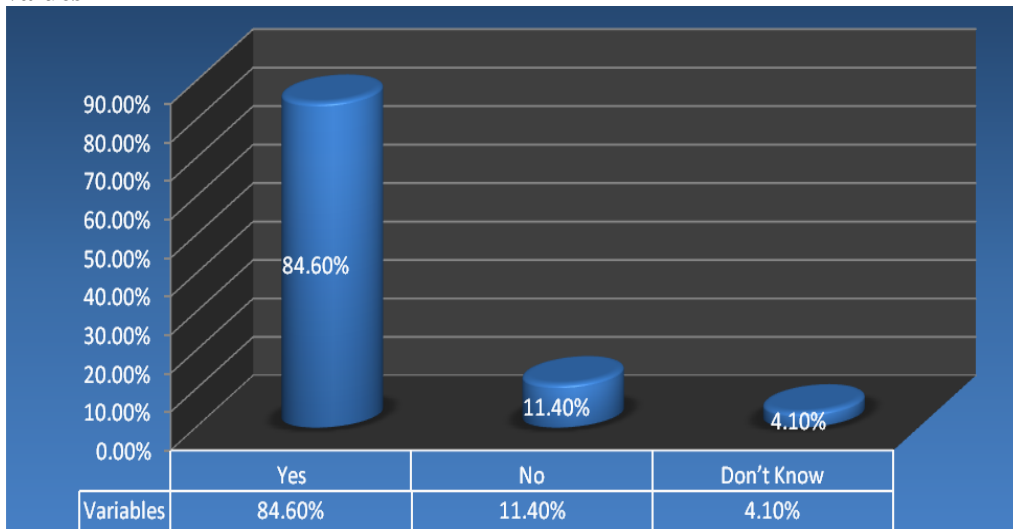


Figure 5 indicates that majority of the respondents (84.6.10%) assert that there is a decline in core African social values. This means that a very high percentage of the respondents are aware of the fact that the core African value system is experiencing abysmal decline. Among other things, this could be attributed to the increase in modern deviant trends like internet crimes, as African values of communal living and brotherliness are not only disregarded by youths, but is being replaced by the capitalist doctrine of individualism.

One of the female respondents interviewed stated thus:

Our youths don't respect anybody again, especially those of them that drive big cars they acquired through questionable means. The drive to make wealth has overridden whatever you consider value of honesty and hard work, the ideal value now is wealth at all cost. The youths insult, kill, steal and loot just to make fast money (Female, 39 years, Teacher)

A male IDI interviewee also noted that:

My brother, cyber crime is a very common phenomenon in Nigerian society and even in Owerri here. Can you sincerely tell me your not involved? Who cares about value system, what is valued most is that which puts money in our pockets, at least we are not killing anybody. What of those politicians that are stealing our money do they have values? Nobody has value in Nigeria everybody wants to get money that's our value (Male, 27 years, Unemployed).

Figure 6: Views of respondents on if criminality could be learnt through association.

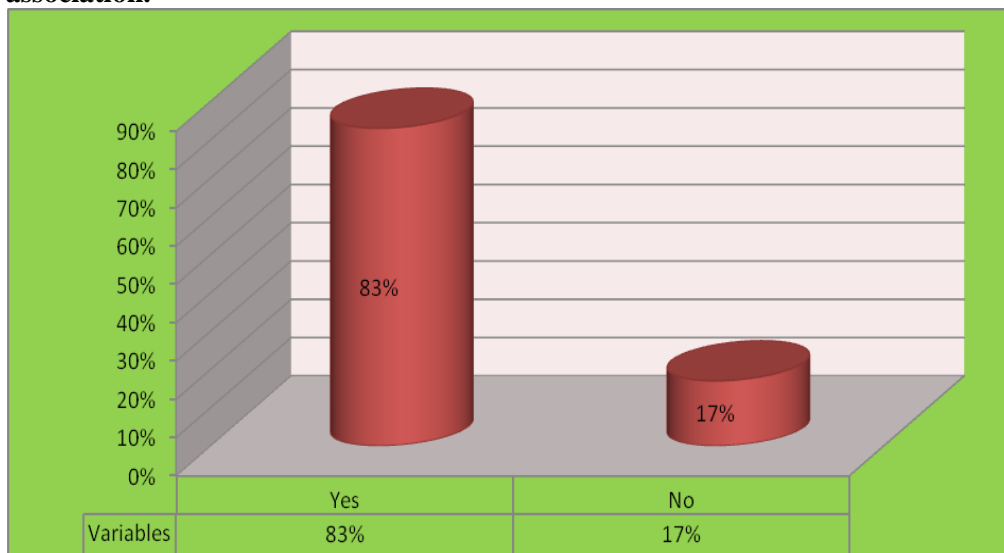


Figure 6 shows that majority of the respondents (83%) were of the view that criminality could be learnt through association with criminals. This finding lends support to the position of the differential association theory which posits that in an instance where one associates with criminals, the person will undoubtedly learn and commit crime.

The in-depth interviews conducted are quite revealing on some of the negative consequences of internet or cyber crime. For instance, a male respondent stated that:

Cyber crime creates a bad image for Nigeria and this has earned Nigeria her present ranking/rating in Transparency International where Nigeria is been listed as one of the most corrupt nations in the world. Another consequence of cyber crime is that it will

drive away investors due to the fact that most things are done electronically and if someone can attack your data base, then, he has everything about you at his disposal (Male, 37 years, Banker).

Another female respondent also opined thus:

Cyber crime has negative consequences. Take for instance, if a white man comes to Nigeria to survey in order to invest and discovered that he is receiving fraudulent mail from different people, he won't invest in the country again (Female, 28 years, Unemployed)

Table 2 tests to see if respondents differ significantly by gender and perception of decline in social values within the study area.

Table 2: Cross tabulation of Gender and Perception of Decline in Social Values

Gender	Do you think there is a decline in social values?			Total
	Yes	No	Don't Know	
Male	177(83.9%)	27(12.8%)	7(3.3%)	211
Female	31(88.6 %%)	1(2.9%)	3(2.9%)	35
Total	208(84.6 %%)	28(11.4%)	10(4.1%)	246 (100.0%)

$$X^2 = 4.722, df = 2, N = 246, P < .094$$

The cross tabulation in table 2 shows that most respondents regardless of gender believe that there is a decline in core social values. This is not unusual since it is glaringly clear that both males and females are equally affected by the decline in societal values with all the attendant consequences including internet or cybercrime. Statistically, ($X^2 = 4.722, df = 2, N = 246, P < .094$), there is also no significant difference in the views of male and female respondents.

Conclusion

Taking cognizance of the nature and effects of internet crime, there will always be new and unexpected challenges to stay ahead of cyber criminals and cyber terrorists, but this can only be done successfully through partnership and collaboration of both individuals and government. Much can still be done to ensure a safe, secure and trustworthy online environment. It is crucial not only to national sense of wellbeing, but also, to national security and economy. Currently in Nigeria, people are valued in terms of what they possess and command economically. Conversely, those without economic success are undervalued and the pressure to achieve success is intensified despite harsh economic conditions such as widespread unemployment. This has necessitated the ability of individuals to devise survival strategies and attain economic success at all costs by indulging in deviant acts like internet based crime, which is theoretically conceived of in this paper as an act often developed through social association as well as the ability of an individual to learn and perpetuate crime, as succinctly explained by the differential association theory. The perpetrators of

internet crime are not far-fetched they are brothers, friends, colleagues, distant relatives and neighbours who can be tamed under appropriate circumstances with the right and positive communication, orientation, education and empowerment.

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