

Unemployment and Cybercrime in South-East and South-South Geo-Political Zones of Nigeria: An Analytical Study

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Abstract

This study examined the dynamics of the emerging problem of unemployment and cybercrime in South-East and South-South Geo-Political Zones in Nigeria. The study is an explorative study that is based on secondary data; the data were discussed with thematic content analysis. The paper analytically examined; The Relationship between Unemployment and Cybercrime in South-Eastern and South-South Geo-Political Zones in Nigeria; Reported cases of cybercrime in South-East and South-South Geo-Political Zones in Nigeria and Consequences of Cybercrime in South-East and South-South Geo-Political Zones in Nigeria. This paper adopted both Robert K. Merton's Strain Theory (1938) and Donald McClelland Theory of Needs (1961). The discussion showed that cybercrime is very high in South-East and South-South Geo-Political Zones especially in Imo state, Rivers State and Edo State. The discussion also showed that unemployment leads most youths to engage in cybercrime. Therefore, the article recommended for creation of jobs, cyber security amongst others as possible solutions to reducing cybercrime in Nigeria.

1. Introduction

Unemployment in Nigeria today has become every youth's nightmare. It is no longer about going to school and graduating or learning a trade, but about how to face the reality of graduating and joining the brigade of the unemployed with no hope of a better tomorrow (Solanke, Omodunbi, Odiase, & Olaniyan, 2021). The youth unemployment crisis is not new, what is new

is the staggering proportional increase it has reached in recent times. Unemployment problem, which now seems beyond remedy, has produced an army of idle hands and some of them have decided to punish the society that fails to provide them with means of livelihood and dignity by robbing its members of their property at gunpoint (Solanke, et al, 2021).

Cybercrime is perhaps the most evolving high-technology crime of the twenty-first century world. As the Internet and associated technologies increasingly permeates every aspect of human activities; so does the vulnerabilities to cyber victimization grow; the Internet revolution has created some new patterns of crime hitherto unknown to humanity and also new intriguing patterns of criminal victimization across the world. Cyber criminals spread malware or lure victims to sites that contain malware and other scam through malicious advertising or ‘maladvertising’ (Mansfield-Devine, 2014). Cyber-espionage has become a high-value trade (Everett, 2009). Illicit trade has grown on the internet as the deep web hosts darknet marketplaces that sell different kinds of wares such as narcotics and weapons (Chaudhry, 2017). Digital forensics experts believe that a ‘digital explosion’ of ransom ware is imminent in the years to come (Henseler and van Loenhout, 2018). This has raised a lot of concerns for government at all levels around the globe.

On 18th April, 2016 the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) inaugurated a 31-man Cybercrime Advisory Council in Abuja chaired by the National Security Adviser (NSA) Major-General Babagana Monguno (Retd.) with membership drawn from the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Independent and Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC), Directorate of State Security Service (DSS), Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA), Ministries of Trade and Investments, Foreign Affairs, Finance, and Justice, Nigeria Stock Exchange, Nigerian Prison Service, Nigerian Police Force, Galaxy Backbone and so on, with the mandate to create enable environment for knowledge, experience and intelligence sharing among members so as to offer recommendations for prevention and control of cybercrimes and promotes cyber security in Nigeria (Ewepu, 2016). Similarly, on 18th April, 2016 the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) inaugurated a 31-man Cybercrime Advisory Council in Abuja chaired by the National Security Adviser (NSA) Major-General Babagana Monguno (Retd.). with membership drawn from the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Independent and Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC), Directorate of State Security Service (DSS), Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA), Ministries of Trade and Investments, Foreign Affairs, Finance, and Justice, Nigeria Stock Exchange, Nigerian Prison Service, Nigerian Police Force, Galaxy Backbone and so on, with the mandate to create enable environment for knowledge, experience and intelligence sharing among members so as to offer recommendations for prevention and control of cybercrimes and promotes cyber security in Nigeria (Ewepu, 2016). Several studies have been conducted on the emergence of cybercrime as a menace in Nigeria, for instance, Warner (2011), Jaishankar, (2019), Tade and Aliyu (2020), Ayotunde (2018) amongst others. However, to the limited knowledge of this study, there is no existing study on unemployment and cybercrime in south-east and south-south geo-political zones of Nigeria: an analytical study. This is the gap the study aims to bridge.

2. Conceptual clarifications

Unemployment is a global trend but it occurs mostly in the developing countries of the world, with social, economic, political and psychological attendants. Thus massive youth's unemployment in any country is an indication of far more complex problems (Okafor, 2009). The ILO (2007) report showed that the proportion of world unemployment is steadily increasing and that the number of those without jobs remained at an all-time high of more than 195 million or 6.3 percent in 2007. There seems to be a consensus on the definition of unemployment. Simply put, unemployment describes the condition of people who are without jobs (Okafor, 2011). The International Labour Organization (ILO) defines the unemployed as the number of the economically active population who is without work but available and seeking work, including people who have lost their jobs and those who have voluntarily left work (World Bank, 1993). According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2009), the labour force of a country is a set of people or citizens who are willing and are able to make available at any given point in time their efforts for gainful employment, while the unemployed are the individuals with no work, but are looking for work at the time of any study.

Cybercrime has been defined as 'any crime that involves a computer and a network, where a computer may or may not have played an instrumental part in the commission of the crime' (Casey as cited in Moore, 2010:4). It is the use of computer or other electronic devices through information systems to perpetrate illegal conducts (McQuada, 2006). Cybercrimes are "criminal or harmful activities that are informational, global and networked" (Wall, 2007). They are basically "computer-mediated activities which are either illegal or considered illicit by certain parties and which can be conducted through global networks" (Thomas and Loader, 2000).

It is noted that over 3 billion people, representing more than 40% of the world population used the Internet in 2016 (Stalans & Finn, 2016). Given the logic of numbers, it therefore implies that the growth in number of Internet users would be followed by a corresponding growth in the number of potential cybercrime victims. This argument is perhaps collaborated by the Internet Crime Complaint Centre (IC3) latest report. The report revealed that in 2016, IC3 received a total of 298,728 complaints with reported losses exceeding \$1.3 billion. It identified Business Email Compromise (BEC), ransom ware, tech support fraud, and extortion as the most common cybercrimes (Internet Crime Complaint Centre, 2017). Price Waterhouse Cooper's study, The Global State of Information Security 2015 points out that over 117,000 cyber-attacks occur daily (Bendovschi, 2015).

3. Theoretical consideration

This study is guided by Robert K. Merton's strain theory and McClelland's Needs Theory.

Robert K. Merton developed his strain theory in 1938. The theory states that society puts pressure on individuals to achieve socially accepted goals (such as the American dream), though they lack the means. This leads to strain which may lead individuals to commit crimes, like selling drugs or becoming involved in prostitution as a means to gain financial security. Merton argued that when individuals are faced with a gap between their goals (usually monetary) and their current status, strain occurs. When individuals are faced with strain, Merton outlined five different ways that they respond:

McClelland's Needs Theory also refers to Three Needs Theory: Acquired Needs Theory, Motivational Needs Theory, and Learned Needs Theory. David McClelland propounded this orientation in his 1961 book, *The Achieving Society*, following the Abraham Maslow's original idea of Hierarchy of Needs in 1941. McClelland highlighted three motivators which he claimed all humans possess: Achievement need (n-Ach), Affiliation need (n-Aff), and Power need (n-Pow), irrespective of our gender, culture, or age. He argued that people will display different attributes given their strongest and dominant motivator. And that the dominant need is a product of culture and life experiences.

The Achievement motivated individual (n-Ach) pursues in strong terms his dreams and goals not minding how challenging the process may be. Also, such individual aspires to the highest position of his career. Meeting his goals brings about complete fulfillment to the n-Ach. The n-Pow individual on the other hand, is motivated by high position in the society which we can call "authority motivated". The individual desires to command public respect by working towards it. He also enjoys being influential, coordinating other people's affairs and very importantly, deriving satisfaction from his personal status and prestige which dignifies him. Lastly, the n-Aff individual is motivated by affiliation. This individual craves for relationships, friendship and association in various kinds. His ability to connect and be recognized gives him a sense of fulfillment and they strive more within a team.

The McClelland's theory of Needs is by all intents and purposes a management theory. Obvious however, is the theory's ability to explain people's behavior not only in a work environment but in the larger society. These identifiable needs in the theory (n-Ach, n-Aff, and n-Pow) are also the drivers of the behavior of people in the society. It could explain why people choose any available means to satisfying their individual dominant needs. The paramount importance for satisfying the dominant need of an individual is certain; and deviant means could be adopted if the acceptable methods are absent.

Nigeria of today is faced with the challenge of increasing unemployment and the young people are mostly affected in the country. Awogbenle and Iwuamadi (2010) observed that according to the National Manpower Board and the National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria's youth populations about 80 million which represents 60 percent of the entire population of Nigeria. They went further to state that, from the numbers given, about 1.6 million are underemployed. Doreo (2013) also opined that Nigeria's unemployment rate grows at the rate of 16 percent per year, and the youths been the most affected. For young people, the impact of unemployment can be threatening. This is because, some youths are tempted to engage in social vices due to the pressure from society as asserted by Robert Merton in order to meet their daily needs and regain their sense of self. From the foregoing, the massive involvement of Nigerian youths in cyber-criminality becomes understandable. McClelland was succinct in his position that irrespective of age, gender and culture, we all possess the needs for achievement, affiliation and power with one dominating and invariably conditions the behavior of the individual in the society at large. The economic undertone of Nigerian cyber-crime is possibly therefore due to the bid to satisfy the individual's dominant need.

4. Methodology

This paper is geared towards examining the relationship between unemployment and cybercrime in South-Eastern and South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria. The rampaging unemployment rate in Nigeria and cybercrime has led to the emergence of writing this article which is a qualitative approach that utilized secondary data and thematic content analysis was used in the discussion session.

5. Discussion

We shall analytically examine the following sub-themes in this study; The Relationship between Unemployment and Cybercrime in South-Eastern and South-South Geo-Political Zones in Nigeria; Reported cases of cybercrime in South-East and South-South Geo-Political Zones in Nigeria and Consequences of Cybercrime in South-East and South-South Geo-Political Zones in Nigeria.

i. Unemployment in Nigeria

The full historical data of Nigeria unemployment rate 1991-2021 according the annual World Bank Unemployment Report (2022) shows that;

- Nigeria unemployment rate for 2021 was **9.79%**, a **0.07% increase** from 2020.
- Nigeria unemployment rate for 2020 was **9.71%**, a **1.18% increase** from 2019.
- Nigeria unemployment rate for 2019 was **8.53%**, a **0.07% increase** from 2018.
- Nigeria unemployment rate for 2018 was **8.46%**, a **0.07% increase** from 2017.



Source: World Bank data, 2022.

<https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/NGA/nigeria/unemployment-rate>

With the above statistical analysis from World Bank, it is suffice to state that unemployment in Nigeria grows higher annually and this could be a source for cybercrime which is bedeviling the nation in recent times.

ii. The Relationship between Unemployment and Cybercrime in South-Eastern and South-South Geo-Political Zones in Nigeria

According to John (2021) who studied The Relationship between Unemployment, Poverty and Crime. A Case Study of Oredo L.G.A Benin City, Edo State asserts that one of the greatest challenges facing the Nigeria economy is unemployment and crime which has maintained a rising trend over the years. Nigeria has the second largest economy in Africa. As impressive as the figures above may appear, unemployment and criminality have been one of the major problems facing Nigeria. A high level of unemployment, underemployment and criminality is one of the critical socio-economic problems facing the country. While the labour force grows, with an increasing proportion of youth, employment growth is inadequate to absorb labour market entrants. As a result, youth are especially affected by unemployment which leads some youth into committing crimes. Moreover, young people are more likely to be employed in jobs of low quality, underemployed, working long hours for low wages, engaged in dangerous work or receive only short term and/or informal employment arrangements. The inadequate employment situation of youth has a number of socio-economic, political and moral consequences. This has resulted in crimes in Nigeria which is chronic and rising. Unemployment and crime are so intertwined that one can easily confuse one for the other. Although, it is possible for one to be employed and still commit crime, this is likely to be a case of underemployment. Thus, by unemployment, it includes those underemployed. Unemployment and underemployment reflect the failure to make use of an important factor of production, labour, for fostering economic growth in Nigeria. Low returns to labour as well as high unemployment indicates crime. Crime makes it difficult to make investments in education and health that would increase a person's productivity. This high level of unemployment has even made some youths to join the Eastern Security Network.

Anthony, (2019) studied Youths' unemployment and crime in Nigeria: A nexus and implications for national development. He opined that crime is a phenomenon that is bedeviling various countries across the globe in varying degrees as it affects policies and development. Any nation striving towards development must reduce the frequency of crime to the barest minimum. In recent years in Nigeria, there has been an upsurge in the frequency of crime committed. This has led to palpable fear among the populace as security of lives and properties can no longer be guaranteed. The phenomenon of crime has impacted negatively on the economic, social and political life of the nation over time. The youth population of any nation represents the driving force for development. However, for the youths to become useful resources, they must be gainfully employed. The youths are also the most volatile when their energies are misdirected or channeled into wrong endeavours. Available data show that youth employment is very rampant in Nigeria and this has contributed immensely to their involvement in criminal activities. The paper argues that criminal activities such as armed robbery, kidnapping, political thuggery,

militancy and other social vices found among the unemployed and jobless youths have contributed greatly to the slow pace of development in Nigeria.

Albert, K. (2018) Youths' Unemployment and Crime Control: An Analysis of Nigerian Experience in his study asserts that Sub-Saharan Africa population is characterized with young people. Economic active population group constitutes an average of 53% of the total population of the region for the past two decades as reported by the World Bank (2011). Over 40 % of these youths are without jobs or stable economic income. Also, 64.1% and 50.7% of the region's total youth population live below U.S\$1.2 per day. The implications of characteristics of the population are very important. Youth unemployment is a global problem affecting both developed and developing countries alike. The rising cyber related crimes are evidently as a result of unemployment. But while the developed countries are taking the threat seriously and restructuring their education and social security systems to abate its growth and escape the eminent catastrophic retrenchments, Nigeria seem not to be doing enough.

In a study by Usman, (2021) The Effect of Unemployment on Crime in Nigeria: A Panel Data Analysis. The rising trend of crime in Nigeria is usually blamed on the high rate of unemployment. The data that were used in this study consist of 36 states and Federal Capital Territory (FCT) spanning from 2010 to 2020 was used. Different estimation techniques ranging from OLS, WLS, Between estimator, Fixed effect and Random Effect were employed to estimate economics models of crime. The findings show that though employment was found to have significant impact on armed robbery and cybercrime, kidnapping.

iii. Reported cases of cybercrime in South-East and South-South Geo-Political Zones in Nigeria

Cybercrime assumes frightening dimension in South East, EFCC raises alarm: The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, says it is worried over the frightening dimension which cybercrime has assumed in the country, especially the South East. The South East Zonal Head of the commission, Usman Imam, expressed the worry on Friday in Enugu while briefing newsmen on the activities of EFCC in the first quarter of 2019. Imam said that cases of cybercrime, popularly called 'Yahoo Yahoo' had become alarming in the zone. "From investigations so far made, it is unfortunate that some parents are not only aware of their children's involvements but even abet such terrible crime. "What is very worrisome is that most of the perpetrators of this crime are either students of institutions of higher learning, graduates, youth corps members or secondary school students learning from their elders. "To think that these criminals are those who will in future take up the responsibility of leading this country must certainly send shivers down the spine of any right thinking Nigerian," he said. The zonal head said that the commission had within the period under review seized some exotic cars from the suspected 'Yahoo Yahoo boys' being investigated. He wondered how a student would own a car worth about N10 million, adding that the commission had been inundated with such matters.

Source: <https://dailynigerian.com/cybercrime-assumes-frightening-dimension-in-south-east-efcc-raises-alarm/>

FCC Arrests 105 Cyber Crime Fraudsters in Port Harcourt by Adejayan Gbenga Gsong on Sep 4, 2019: The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, said it has made 105 arrests and 32 convictions in cases of cybercrimes within the Port Harcourt region. Port Harcourt's Zonal

Head of EFCC, Abdurashheed Bawa, made the disclosure while briefing newsmen on the arrest of two suspects on the FBI list, Ogbonna Atuokari in Port Harcourt and Chidi Egbeonu in Owerri. Bawa said besides the arrest, 41 persons are facing prosecution, while sixty three other cases are still being investigated. The EFCC Zonal Head also disclosed that it secured 149 convictions between January and August this year in cases related to crude oil theft. According to Bawa, “The Port Harcourt’s Zonal Office of the EFCC is working seriously on 13 different cases of cybercrimes in collaboration with the FBI. Among the cases are those of recently arrested duo of Ogonnah Atoukarito, formerly based in London and Alpha Chidi Egbeonu, formerly based in Japan. “The suspects were separately arrested in Port Harcourt, Rivers state and Owerri, Imo state. Atoukaritou is a leader of a loose syndicate of fraudsters engaged in Business Email Compromise, BEC while the other suspected, Alpha Chidi Egbeonu, is suspected to be involved in defrauding IS-based victims and other yet to be identified victims through buying and selling of goods online. “Generally, the Port Harcourt’s Zonal Office is peculiar on the investigation of crude oil theft and illegal dealing on oil-related products. The last 8 months have been months of intensive and extensive investigations and prosecution of oil related and several internet related cases which the zone has recorded 149 convictions, made N268,934,375.75; \$2,012,568.00 and £15,000.00 recoveries and have 162 cases in court.”

Source: <https://www.withinnigeria.com/2019/09/04/efcc-arrests-105-cyber-crime-fraudsters-in-port-harcourt-zone/>

EFCC Says Imo Has Highest Cases of Cybercrimes in South East: The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC, 2019) said that Imo State, South- East Nigeria, presently has the highest number of Cybercrime cases in the Geo Political zone, just as the agency has recorded a total of 90 convictions in the region. It said most of the convicts are graduates, undergraduates and serving members of the national youths’ service corps NYSC.

Southeast regional Commander of the EFCC in the Usman Iman disclosed this at the 16th Anti-Corruption Situation Room (ACSR) programme put together by HEDA\UK Ken University in conjunction with MacArthur Foundation, as well as other organizations. The programme, which is also a special skill training event on how to trace illicit assets and stolen funds was attended by stakeholders from parts of Nigeria and south east zone. Imam, who is an Assistant Commissioner of police ACP, who expressed worry over the increasing rate of cybercrimes in South- East, particularly Imo State, was really disturbing, saying that the unofficial statistics he got about the state was really disturbing.

He said: “Imo definitely must have recorded the highest cybercrime cases in the South East Zone. The rate of Cybercrime cases in Imo is really disturbing honesty. “I was talking with an Imolite who gave me an unofficial statistic that is disturbing because he told me that among five youths of the state the likelihood of 3 or 4 are involved in Cybercrime. According to Imam, ” this is really disturbing, we did some major raids, even the last raid we brought in 31 persons, after the initial forensic analyses of items recorded, about 27 were indicted and being prosecuted. It is disturbing honesty” The zonal Commander however, urged government, the media, and other stakeholders, including religious organizations to join them in the campaign that will stop the ugly situation, adding that they cannot afford to continue convicting our youths who future leaders of such crimes. “We need to find out other ways of doing a massive campaign to slow

down the trend because it is also giving us bad names within comity of nations. You see a young man buying a royal bed for N800, 000, buying cars.

Source: <https://www.africanexaminer.com/efcc-says-imo-has-highest-cases-of-cybercrimes-in-south-east/>

Court Sends Fraudster to Three Years Imprisonment in Benin Loses House, Car, money in Five Bank Accounts to Victims: Justice Efe Ikponmwonba of Edo State High Court sitting in Benin on Wednesday July 20, 2022, convicted and sentenced Abudu Gentle Osarobo to three years imprisonment for fraud. Osarobo was arraigned on one count charge by the Benin Zonal Command of the EFCC for fraudulent impersonation and obtaining by false pretence. He had impersonated one Barry Carson, a US military officer to defraud his victim. The charge against Osarobo reads: “That you, Abudu Gentle Osarobo (m) sometime between 2018 and September, 2021 in Benin City, Edo State within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court with intent to defraud represent yourself to be Barry Carson, a US military officer and thereby committed an offence contrary to and punishable under Section 484 of the Criminal Code Law Cap 48 Laws of Bendel State of Nigeria (As Applicable in Edo State) 1976”. Upon arraignment, the defendant pleaded guilty to the charge. In view of his plea, the prosecution counsel, Francis Jirbo, prayed the court to convict and sentence the defendant accordingly. However, the defence counsel, Kenechukwu Ofoedu pleaded with the court to temper justice with mercy. Justice Ikponmwonba convicted and sentenced the defendant to three year imprisonment or a fine of N500, 000. The court ordered that the defendant forfeits to the Federal Government of Nigeria, a 3-bedroom bungalow in Benin City, a Toyota Rav 4 Jeep 2015 Model, Four UBA Manager’s Cheques of N10 million, the sum of N2,200,827.05 in his Sterling Bank account, N725,209.47 in his company account - Edorisiagbon Allied Business limited, N30,753.78, in his business account - Edorisiagbon Global Enterprise, the sum of N4,968,731.24 and N40,397.95 in his First Bank and Sterling Bank accounts for the benefit of the victims. The accounts are to be closed afterwards.

Source: <https://www.efcc.gov.ng/?start=9>

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Source: <https://www.efcc.gov.ng/?start=9>

EFCC Arrests 47 Suspected Yahoo Boys in Owerri, South East Nigeria: The Enugu Zonal Command of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, on Wednesday, June 8, 2022 arrested a total of 47 suspected internet fraudsters from different locations in Owerri, Imo State. The arrest followed actionable intelligence received by the Commission on their alleged internet fraud-related activities. The suspects are: Emenalo Ugochukwu, Eric Chukwuemeka, Uzoma Zebulon Chidera, Ogbuefi Charles, James Joshua Ugochukwu, Nwagbo Junior, Oguike Ifeanyichukwu, Chika Chenya, Bright Iwueze, Chinwendu Okoh, bright Iwu Chinecherem . Nkemakolam Ololoh, Iwuanyanwu Bright, Obi Ifeanyichukwu, Ikwumelu Chiemelie, Chidinma E. Epemandu, Obiajunwa Eustius, Duru Joseph, Nwaru Camillus, Nwaru John Paul, Victor Chinaza and Emmanuel Akuakolam. Others are Nkemjika Kelechi, Onuoha Franklin, Zion Elias, Chukwuemeka Nwaogu, Ikwumelu Ebuka, Nwaneri John, Ikwumelu Chibuike, Chinedu Success, Nwoke Michael Chinaza, Derrick Amaechi, Nduunaga Ifeanyi, Egeonu Tochi, Onwuzurike Leonard, Uwawuike Chijioke Macdonald, Omere Ifeanyi, Okereke Udoochukwu, Okeke Chukwudi, Ngoka Chukwuka, Obiajunwa Macdonald, Izuka Bierechi, Ajaps Chidera, Onyeze Kelechi, Boladele Awoluwapo, Fabian Ejebu and Ikeh Joseph. Items

recovered from them include several mobile phones, laptops, one Toyota Camry with registration number KUJ 316 BP, one Lexus ES350 with registration number MMA 885 AC, one Lexus IS250 with registration number ABC 821 GY, a Toyota Sienna with registration APP 427, one Lexus ES330 with registration number KWU 43 AA, one Lexus ES330 with registration number YAB 411 CD and one Toyota Avalon with registration number RLU 767 IV. They will be charged to court as soon as investigations are concluded.

Source: <https://globalupfront.com/2022/06/09/efcc-arrests-47-suspected-yahoo-boys-in-owerri-south-east-nigeria/>

Court Jails Truck Driver for Oil Theft in Uyo: Justice Agatha Okeke of the Federal High Court sitting in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State on Monday, July 18, 2022, convicted and sentenced a truck driver, Ime Asuquo Akpan to three months imprisonment for dealing in petroleum products without an appropriate license. Akpan had on May 21, 2022 pleaded 'guilty' to a one count charge preferred against him by the Uyo Zonal Command of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission EFCC, and was remanded at the Correctional Centre, Uyo, as the court reserved judgment for July 18, 2022. The charge reads: "That you Ime Asuquo Akpan 'M' on or about the 27th of February 2022, enroute Calabar –Itu in Akwa Ibom State within the jurisdiction of this Honorable Court had in your possession without lawful authority or appropriate license to deal in about 5,000 litres of Automotive Gas Oil (AGO) and Dual Purpose Kerosene (DPK) which products you concealed in sack bags and conveyed in a truck with registration number DRK 700 XA and thereby committed an offence contrary to Section 4 (1) of the Petroleum Act CAP P10, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 and punishable under Section 4 (6) of the same Act". At the resumed session of the court on Monday, July 18, 2022, EFCC's counsel, S. S. Aribido, called a witness, Inainfe Young, an operative of the EFCC who reviewed the facts of the case and tendered relevant documents which were all admitted in evidence and marked as exhibits. Aribido subsequently prayed the court to convict and sentence Akpan accordingly, based on his earlier guilty plea. Justice Okeke convicted and sentenced Akpan to three months imprisonment and ordered that the truck arrested with him be forfeited to the Federal Government while the EFCC destroys the illegal content of the truck. Akpan's started his journey to the Correctional Centre following his arrest by officers of the 2Brigade, Nigerian Army, Uyo on February 27, 2022 based on verified intelligence that he was conveying about 5,000 litres of illegally refined AGO and DPK, concealed in reinforced sack bags. The convict and the truck with registration number, DRK 700 XA were subsequently handed over to the Uyo Zonal command of the Commission.

Source: <https://www.efcc.gov.ng/news/8273-court-jails-truck-driver-for-oil-theft-in-uyo>

iv. Consequences of Cybercrime in South-East and South-South Geo-Political Zones in Nigeria

Individual Consequence: Every individual active Internet user is a potential victim of cybercrime. Individual internet users leave traces online that may be obtained by criminals and used to victimize them. Also, individuals by their lax security precaution may inadvertently set themselves up for cyber victimization. Hall (2016) points out that experienced cyber thieves with a strategy will normally identify and maliciously target the weakest point which is people. Bolle and Casey (2018) note that scammers are attracted to the

internet because of the large pool of potential victims and the lack of proximity between them and their victims which reduces the risk of apprehension. It is believed that no individual is immune to attacks from the determined and organized community of ransom ware wielding cyber criminals (Srinivasan, 2017). Cybercrime victimization can leave a victim emotionally disturbed. For example, Marcum (2014) notes that the damage of malware do not only affect victims financially, but also mentally and emotionally. He points out that while some victims pass the victimization off as a brief annoyance, others would feel violated and exposed and may have their future internet activities affected.

Social Consequence: The internet enables the creation and maintenance of social relations across wide spaces and this may have wider transformative social effect (Giddens as cited in Jones, 2009). The development of the Internet and digital technologies has brought about massive changes in people perceptions of personal expression and social interaction. People have increasingly embraced computers and the Internet. The fall-out of this development is the several opportunities now available for individuals to use the devices for deviance and criminal purposes (Holt and Bossler, 2014). The increased dependence of society on cyberspace, a place where cyber-attacks, and cyber war are prevalent possess great risk as hackers can take-over medical equipment, automatic-driving cars and flight control thereby causing life threatening damages (Bruijn and Janssen, 2017).

Economic consequence: Cybercrime has enormous negative impact on the global economy. Hughes, Bohl, Lrfan, Margolese-Malin and Solorzano (2017) observe that while information and communication technology (ICT)/cyber technologies are increasingly embedded in economies and societies, it has produced both benefits and risk-related costs. A Ponemon Institute study found that in 2013, cybercrime cost organizations globally an average of \$7.22m per organization representing a 30% increase on the previous year's study (Brewer, 2014). Cyber security spending is said to be all time high as the global market hit \$75bn in 2015 and is projected to increase to \$170bn in 2020 (Chaudhry, 2017). Similarly, analysts have predicted that 60% of security budgets will be spent on rapid detection and response approaches (Brewer, 2014). The President of the Nigerian Senate, Dr. Bukola Saraki during the Nigerian First Legislative Stakeholders Conference on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Cyber Security held on Monday 6th November, 2017 disclosed that Nigeria lost about N127 billion to cybercrime (The Punch, 2017). Also, huge revenue is lost to the cyber underground economy where cybercriminals and their patrons buy and sell stolen digital materials.

Military Operations Consequence: The cyberspace is now recognized as the fifth domain for military operations; land, sea, air and space being the other four. It is also said to be the first man-made domain for military operations. It has been argued that world battles are and will increasingly be fought in cyberspace rather than on the ground and in the air (Lundbohm, 2017). Consequently, many nations have recognized cyberspace as a domain of military operation (McGuffin and Mitchell, 2014).

Law Enforcement Consequence: With the global proliferation of the Internet and networking technologies, policing cybercrime has become a major challenge to law enforcement agencies worldwide (Luppacini, 2014). The criminal justice system response to online crime and

deviance is further complicated by the borderless nature of the Internet (Holt, Bossler & Seigfried-Speller, 2015). It has been argued that the policing of ‘new social spaces’ requires rethinking of the traditional assumptions that policing occurs within national territorial borders, that the police or the state has monopoly to the use of force, and that the real kind of policing involve the protection of property (Manning as cited in Jones, 2009).

6. Conclusion/ Recommendations

The relationship between unemployment and cyber-criminality is quite observable. This is worsened by the fact that in Nigeria, people are valued in terms of the resources they command economically. Consequently, those without economic success are undervalued and the pressure to achieve success is intensified despite the harsh economic condition such as unemployment amongst others. This more often occasions the resolve for survival strategies such as cyber-criminality. Although a relatively new form crime, cyber-criminality damages Nigeria’s economy and international image and there is the need to reduce it to the barest minimum using strategies as recommended below. Creativity and high energy are the characteristics of young people in any nation and if the energy is channeled positively, it will greatly benefit not only the economic prosperity of nations but also enhance the moral values of the youth. When the same energy is used negatively, it will lead to social unrest and economic instability. It is quite disheartening that young people with skills, certificates and energies have nothing to offer as a result of mass unemployment, but dance to the tune of the politicians who in turn used them to manipulate, rig and destabilized elections. In most cases, after they have been used by their politician, they are dumped or left to face their fate whenever the law catches up with. The few available jobs for the battalion of youth job-seekers are politicized, unless the job seeker is “connected”. This sad reality offers an explanation as to the reason most Nigerian youths are resorting to crime as an alternative means of survival due to unemployment. From the above relevant literature, the following recommendations are made:

Job Creation must be the first agendum for every government in Nigeria at all levels. Unemployment to a very great extent causes cyber-crimes. There is an urgent need for job creation in order to engage the idle but enlightened minds of youths in Nigeria. This strategy will boost the economy and also reduce cyber-criminality to the barest minimum.

There is the need speed implementation of laws and acts against cybercrime. Laws against cyber-criminality in Nigeria still leaves more to be desired. The abuse of internet is on the rise in Africa and there is no law or even that the extant laws are too weak to confront it; the institution charged with implementing the laws within the country cannot which take proactive measures against cyber-criminals because there is no express legislation enacted to criminalize the activities.

Nigeria should embrace international cooperation. Cyber-crime is a global enemy. It is blight on the gains of the ever increasing global interconnectivity which is epitomized in the in the supersonic rate of communication and connectivity mostly on the social media platform. If the common enemy must be defeated, there is an urgent need for forging a common front against it.

Strengthening of institutional framework for coordinating cyber-security efforts is another measure to curb the menace of cybercrime and reduce unemployment in Nigeria. Enforcement

agencies against cyber-crime in Nigeria such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) should be strengthened with more power and independence.

Public enlightenment and value re-orientation campaign should be carried out by all sundry. Cyber-crimes are largely avoidable especially with adequate enlightenment. Nigeria should consistently disseminate massive up to date enlightenment messages through various media, against falling prey to cyber-criminality. Efforts should also be channeled to value re-orientation against the high premium that the society places on wealth.

Individuals should learn to be contented with what they have.

Everyone should be security conscious with their personal details.

Small scale businesses and entrepreneurship be inspired so to reduce the level of unemployment among youths in the South Eastern region of Nigeria since the populace is industrious and business inclined.

(a) Establishing Formidable Legal and Regulatory Framework for Cyber Space: Laws against cyber-criminality in Nigeria still leaves more to be desired. Kithi (2002) observed that, the abuse of internet is on the rise in Africa and there is no law or even that the extant laws are too weak to confront it. Ojedukun (2005) highlighted that, the institution charged with implementing the laws within the African countries cannot take proactive measures against cyber-criminals because there is no express legislation enacted to criminalize the activities. The lawmakers should properly understand the danger of not passing appropriate legislation to curb cyber-crime or the serious impacts it may have on the country's economic growth and national security capability because of no legislation to protect the cyber space of their state.

(b) Strengthening of Institutional Framework for Coordinating Cyber-security Efforts: Enforcement agencies against cyber-crime in Nigeria such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) should be strengthened with more power and independence. This is very vital to their being able to lord it over the challenging and fast evolving world of the Internet.

(c) Ensuring Adequate Public Enlightenment and Value Re-orientation Campaign: Cyber-crimes are largely avoidable especially with adequate enlightenment. Nigeria should consistently disseminate massive up to date enlightenment messages through various media, against falling prey to cyber-criminality. Efforts should also be channeled to value re-orientation against the high premium that the society places on wealth.

(d) Promoting Cooperation between Actors and Agencies in Cyber-Space Regulation and

Enforcement: It has been observed by T.G. George-Maria Tyendezwa, Head, Computer Crime Prosecution Unit, Federal Ministry of Justice that confrontation (supremacy disagreements)

going on between the various intelligent institutions in the state is a serious challenge to cyber-security in Nigeria. It is therefore instructive that security agencies remove ego and see

themselves as partners in progress and not water-tight compartmentalized groups. The Nigerian

government should accordingly show no discrimination or unwarranted preference for a group than the other.

(e) Embracing International Cooperation: Cyber-crime is a global enemy. It is blight on the gains of the ever increasing global interconnectivity which is epitomized in the in the supersonic rate of communication and connectivity mostly on the social media platform (e.g., Facebook & Twitter), and some \$8 trillion in online commercial transactions (George-Maria Tyendezwa, n.d)

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Strict Enforcement of the Letters and the Spirit of Laws Relating to Cyber-Criminality: This will send the right signal to the cyber-criminals and serve as deterrence against engaging in the crime.

Towards this, the judiciary should adjudicate cases bothering on cyber-criminality expeditiously and pronounce deserving sanctions on convicted offenders.

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