

The Influence of Socio-Demographic Factors on Moral Disengagement and Cybercrime among Cybercrime Prisoners from Selected Prisons in Lagos and Edo States, Nigeria

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Abstract

Cybercrime among the youth has been identified as a global and progressive crime which poses a threat to individuals, corporate organizations and government institutions. The nature of cybercrime activities is an indicator of Bandura's (2016) moral disengagement which helps individuals to behave in harmful ways while retaining a virtuous self-view. The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of demographic factors on the moral disengagement and internet fraud among cybercrime prisoners. The study was anchored on Bandura's social cognitive theory. Correlational survey design was used with a target population of 250 cybercrime prisoners aged between 21 and 35 years old. The sample size was 231 inmates selected through simple random and purposive sampling techniques. Data were collected using Moral Disengagement Scale with reliability coefficient .962, and Cybercrime Questionnaire with reliability coefficient .956. Data from 195 participants were analyzed for descriptive statistics, using the statistical package for social sciences version 22 analyses. Results indicated that age, gender, education attainment, employment status, and recidivism had a strong influence on moral disengagement and involvement in cybercrime among the sample. Also, advantageous comparison was the most used moral disengagement mechanism, while internet fraud was the dominant variant of cybercrime among the sample. The findings could be relevant in developing a holistic preventive and remedial approach to tackling the problem of moral disengagement and cybercrime among youth in Nigeria. Psychologists, especially those working with youth and in correctional facilities could use the findings to come up with treatment plans for adolescents and youth in order to mitigate the individual determinants of moral disengagement and cybercrime in the country.

Key words: moral disengagement, age, gender, education attainment, employment status, cybercrime, prisoners

Introduction and Background

A global concern today is the issue of cybercrime among the youth which constitutes a huge security, economic, and mental health threat to individuals, corporate and government organizations in different countries. For example, a global economic crime survey by Armin et al. (2015) has put the annual cost of cybercrime to the global economy at more than 300 billion Euros, while the cost of cybercrime for the European Union (EU) was estimated to be 0.4% of its GDP amounting to € 13 billion per annum. The report noted that Poland, Germany, and United Kingdom lost € 377 million, € 2.6 billion, and € 2 billion per annum respectively (Armin et al., 2015). These figures, among others, showed that, globally, cybercrime constitutes a serious financial threat to the economy, and the well-being of their innocent victims. It also follows logically that a crime of this magnitude is possible when individuals remove self-censure and self-sanctions from their behaviour.

A recent study by the Internet Organized Crime Threat Assessment (IOCTA 2017) indicated that North America alone has 88% internet penetration and 86% internet users, which is a core target for financially motivated cybercrime (Wainwright, 2017). Thus, North America is host to 37% business email frauds, 49% of global data breaches, top target for ransom ware with 34% of all ransom ware detection, top target for banking malware, host to 50% of world phishing sites, 39% of global botnet control serves, and primary origin of child abuse imagery (Wainwright, 2017). All this shows that cybercrime comes in different forms and targets anyone, hence the need to examine this social reality.

Another global study that the Center for Strategic and International Studies [CSIS] (2014) conducted in New York has it that the likely annual cost to the global economy from cybercrime was more than USD 40 billion. A conservative estimate would be USD 375 billion in losses, while the maximum could be as much as USD 575 billion. The cost of cybercrime includes the effect of hundreds of millions of people having their personal information stolen. Cases of cybercrime in 2013 alone included over 40 million people in the US, 54 million in Turkey, 20 million in Korea, 16 million in Germany, and over 20 million in China (Ajayi, 2016). Figures such as those presented in terms of number of victims and the staggering term of economic losses do not take into consideration some psychological effects such as depression, trauma, PTSD, anxiety, and low self-esteem which the victims may

suffer as a result of these acts. It also does not look at the personal determinants promoting these despicable behaviours among the youth.

The progressive nature of cybercrime activities are indicator to Bandura's moral disengagement which helps individuals to behave in harmful ways while retaining a self-view as virtuous (Bandura, 2016). The eight mechanisms of moral disengagement as postulated by Bandura have been grouped into four broad categories, namely, behavioural reconstrual, agentic role of action, the effects of action, and victim aspect of moral disengagement. The first set of moral disengagement consists of three psychosocial mechanisms, namely, moral justification, euphemistic labelling, and advantageous comparison. These mechanisms are used by the individual to reconstrue or turn harmful behaviour into good behaviour (Bandura, 2016). In social and moral justification, people adduce different reasons through rationalization as justifications for their behaviour. People also use euphemistic labels to detach and depersonalize doers from harmful activities (Lutz, 1987). Lastly, exploiting the contrast principle can make even highly detrimental activities appear righteous.

The second set of disengagement practices (displacement and diffusion of responsibility) operates by obscuring or minimizing an individual's agentic role in causing harm. For example, studies have shown that people will behave in ways they would normally repudiate if a legitimate authority accepts responsibility for the effects of their conduct (Milgram, 1974). Thus, the exercise of moral control is weakened when personal agency is obscured by displacing or diffusing responsibility for detrimental behaviour. The third set of moral disengagement (distortion of consequences) focuses on the effect of the action. This principle operates by minimizing, disregarding, ignoring, misconstruing, or even disputing the harmful effects of the individual's actions. This mechanism is used to avoid facing the harm they cause or to minimize it when people pursue activities that harm others (Bandura, 2016).

The fourth set of disengagement (dehumanization and blame) operates on the victims of detrimental practices using dehumanization and attributing blame. Dehumanization involves stripping people of their humanity which makes it easier to treat them cruelly as subhuman objects. This principle is based on the view that the strength of moral self-censure for harmful practices depends on how the perpetrators regard the people they mistreat. This

mechanism has been used in most inhumane forms of crimes like the Nazi's persecution of the Jews and the Rwandan genocide of 1994, where the Tutsis were called "cockroaches" and "snakes" (Haslan & Lughman, 2012). Ironically, the use of ICTs renders the victim anonymous; making it easier for internet fraudsters to 'dehumanize' their victims, and this again constitutes one of the mechanisms of moral disengagement. Lastly, external attribution of blame turns the perpetrator into a victim, perceived as faultless and driven to injurious actions by forcible provocation. This exonerates the perpetrator who claims that the victim or some outside force provoked his or her actions. Recipients are seen as deserving their punishment. Similarly, ascribed culpability on the victims serves as further moral justification for more cruel behaviour on the part of the individual (Bandura, 2016). Thus, the study asks if the individual's socio-demographic characteristics (such as age, gender, education attainment, employment and status) are not strongly related to moral disengagement and cybercrime among the youth in Nigeria.

A study on social organization of internet fraud among university undergraduates in Nigeria revealed among others, that with an alarming unemployment rate in the country, cybercrime becomes a means of survival and a sign of creativity for the youth (Tade & Aliyu, 2011). Thus with such socio-economic justifications offered by internet fraudsters for their actions, a key element of moral disengagement plays out. Justification of internet fraud as being creative and proactive enough to prevent future unemployment caused by the Nigerian government will serve to encourage more of such acts. To further compound this issue, different countries in Africa use different euphemistic labels to describe internet fraud and fraudsters. In Nigeria, it is yahoo boys (Adeniran, 2008; Tade & Aliyu, 2011), and in Ghana the perpetrators are called 'Sakawa' or 'Yahoo yahoo' (Coonsom, 2009). These social labels came from the ways the fraudsters defraud their unsuspecting victims, which involves sending sinister and deceptive e-mails using 'Yahoo mail'. Ironically, euphemistic labelling constitutes one of the mechanisms of moral disengagement which serves as moral deodorant to diffuse the censure which the society should attach to such despicable conducts.

Studies on the influence of education on crime indicated that both years of education as well as the completion of high school, or an equivalent level, reduces crime and crime types in the society (Bennett, 2018). This view was also supported by Gentry, Mokkaapati, and Rampersad

(2016) who argued that most criminal elements in the society are uneducated. However, studies on the composition of the main internet fraudsters in Nigeria revealed that the majority are youth mainly in the universities (Adeniran, 2008; Tade & Aliyu, 2011). This no doubt portends serious crises for the future of the country and the continent if we still hold to the saying that ‘the youth are the future leaders of tomorrow’. Thus, the researcher argues that cybercrime is the symptom of a disease; a growing trend of moral disengagement (influenced by situational inducement) among the youth which needs urgent attention from the society.

Moreover, studies on the factors influencing cybercrime among youth in the country, showed that unemployment (Ajaebgu, 2012; Chang & Wu, 2012), corruption in politics, economy, education, and social institutions (Tade & Aliyu, 2011), peer influence, and materialistic value (Eigbadon & Adejuwon, 2015) all contribute to cybercrime among youth. Similarly, other studies have argued that crimes such as homicide, aggravated assault, drunk driving, and fraud peak at a slightly older age (late 20s and early 30s), (De Caroli & Sagone, 2014; Steffensmeier, Zhong, & Lu, 2017; Ulmer & Steffensmeier, 2014). Gender is another factor which studies have indicated influences moral disengagement and crime. It was Adler, Adler, and Levin (1975) who in their seminal work ‘Sister in Crime’ raised the awareness of the decrease in the gender gap in crime. However, Cory and Hernandez (2014) indicated that in a sample of 151 (62 males and 88 females) university students in South-West US (38 in business majors, and 113 in humanities majors), males had higher levels of moral disengagement than the females. This was also replicated by Oluwasoye and Thorne (2015) that male have more moral disengagement attitude than the female. Smith (2014) indicated that men commit significantly more crimes than women. Could these findings be replicated with sample drawn from cybercriminal? This is considered important because findings from such studies could be used to promote pro-social behaviour in the youth in general and behaviour modification for cybercrime prisoners.

Effort to curb cybercrime in Nigeria is currently spearheaded by the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) guided by the Cybercrime Act 2015. This drive, according to the former chairman of EFCC Ibrahim Lamorde, led to the conviction of 288 persons over various internet crimes in 2012, while 234 were still being prosecuted in courts across the

country (EFCC, 2012). Yet, the rate of scammers is on the daily increase as indicated by the arrest of 80 Nigerians in the US by FBI over charges of internet fraud in August 2019. This means we may have been searching for the right answer in the wrong places. That is, to understand the issue of moral disengagement and cybercrime among youth, the individual and environmental variables promoting this behaviour needs to be considered together as a whole.

It has been observed that high moral dis-engagers experience low guilt over their despicable behaviour (Bandura, 2016). The observed effect of moral disengagement on behaviour may equally be true for cybercrime, because cyber space provides anonymity and pseudonymity which may further exacerbate moral disengagement since the victims are not seen by the perpetrators. Thus, it is very important that studies take into consideration the role of the socio-demographic characteristics of the individual in moral disengagement and cybercrime in the effort to promote moral engagement and pro-social behaviours among the youth.

Research Question: What is the influence of socio-demographic characteristics (e.g. age, gender, education attainment, and employment status) on moral disengagement and cybercrime among cybercrime prisoners in Lagos and Edo States of Nigeria?

Methodology

This study was conducted in Lagos and Edo States in Nigeria. Two prisons each from Lagos and Edo States were selected because of the presence of cybercrime prisoners there. This study adopted a correlational survey design (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007). Using this model, quantitative data were collected and analyzed. The target population of this study was estimated to be 250 cybercrime prisoners in four selected prisons in Lagos and Edo States (Prisons Authority, 2019). A sample size of 250 respondents were selected using census sampling technique. Simple random and purposive sampling techniques were used to select 231 participants for the study.

This study used a 32-item Moral Disengagement Scale (Bandura, 1996), with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.962 which indicated a very good reliability. Also a 24-item cybercrime questionnaire was developed by the researcher to measure participants' rate of involvement

in internet fraud, cyberbullying, yahoo plus and internet hacking, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.956.

Data Collection Procedures: The researcher obtained permission from the Controller of Prisons in the Lagos and Edo States Commands where the data collection was done. Next, the researcher employed the services of a male and female research assistants in the process of data collection. Their work during the study was to help the researcher take comprehensive field notes during the interview since the prison laws prohibit audio or visual recording of prisoners. In both states, the researcher went to the Deputy Controllers of Prisons (DCP) of the selected prisons with the research permit from the Controller of Prisons in each State Command. After a briefing on the purpose of the study by the researcher, the DCPs in turn directed the Welfare Officers to assist the researcher and his team in conducting the study in compliance with the laws of Nigerian prisons.

Data Analysis and Presentation: Quantitative data from 195 participants were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to establish the influence of socio-demographic characteristics on moral disengagement and cybercrime among the sample.

Results

Demographic Information

The demographic information of the participants were examined to help define the sample demographic characteristics and to give a better understanding of the population in the study. It was also to provide a basis for comparative analysis by future researchers. Demographic details of the participants are summarize and presented in Table 1.

Table 1: *Demographic Characteristics of the Participants n = 195*

Categories		Frequency	Percent
Age of Participants	21-25	30	15.38
	26-30	47	24.10
	31-35	118	60.51
Gender	Male	186	95.4
	Female	9	4.6
Educational Attainment	Secondary School	56	28.7

	Undergraduates	40	20.5
	Bachelor's Degree	65	33.3
	Master's Degree		7.69
	Others		9.74
Employment Status	Unemployed	125	64.1
	Employed	39	20
	Others	31	15.9

Demographic Differences in Moral Disengagement

The sample was asked to rate themselves on the 32 constructs measuring moral disengagement by way of agreement or disagreement based on their experiences in the past. The scores were clustered into eight groups according to the eight components of moral disengagement, namely moral justification, euphemistic labeling, advantageous comparison, displacement of responsibility, diffusion of responsibility, distortion of consequences, dehumanization, and attribution of blame. The scores were obtained by computing the mean for each component ranging from 1 to 7. Table 2 shows the distribution of the eight components of moral disengagement in relation to the demographic characteristics of the sample.

Table 2: Demographic Differences in Moral Disengagement

		Justification Response	Euphemistic Response	Comparison Response	Displace Response	Diffusion Response	Distortion Response	Dehumanizing Response	Blame Response
Age	21-25	3.38	3.66	3.89	3.29	3.23	3.39	3.56	3.20
	26-30	4.34	4.36	5.28	4.29	3.71	4.01	4.58	4.11
	31-35	3.62	3.93	4.43	3.90	3.40	3.59	3.80	3.53
Gender	Male	3.79	3.96	4.53	4.00	3.53	3.76	3.95	3.68
	Female	3.13	4.64	4.97	1.92	1.89	1.53	3.89	2.33
Educational Attainment									
	Secondary School	3.41	3.46	3.91	3.76	3.24	3.25	3.69	3.31
	Undergraduate	4.83	4.71	5.01	4.53	4.25	4.47	4.69	4.35
	Bachelor	3.52	4.08	4.96	3.78	3.28	3.52	3.86	3.54
	Master's	3.85	3.85	4.63	4.02	3.55	3.52	3.98	3.47
	Others	3.24	3.86	4.03	3.33	2.92	3.79	3.45	3.41
Employment Status of Participant									
	Employed	4.59	4.38	5.01	4.47	3.90	3.95	4.19	3.85
	Unemployed	3.45	3.88	4.40	3.66	3.19	3.47	3.75	3.45
	Others	3.94	3.97	4.57	4.15	3.92	4.08	4.44	4.01

On the age-moral disengagement interaction, findings showed that the mean score across the eight components of moral disengagement was highest at 26-30 years old (e.g. 5.28 for advantageous) and lowest at age 20-25 years (e.g. 3.20 attribution of blame). This indicated that moral disengagement is highest at the end of emerging adulthood, and reduces at early adulthood stage but is lowest at emerging adulthood stage for the sample in the present study. Gender differences showed the male had higher score in moral disengagement than the female. The education attainment and moral disengagement showed that undergraduates reported highest mean score across all the eight components of moral disengagement. The component with the highest prevalence was advantageous comparison with a mean of 5.01, with the lowest being a mean of 2.92 in diffusion of responsibility for others. The results also indicated that employed participants reported highest mean score across four of the eight components of moral disengagement, while others reported highest prevalence in diffusion, distortion, dehumanization, and attribution of blame. The component with the highest mean score was advantageous comparison with a mean of 5.01, and the lowest mean score of 3.19 for diffusion of responsibility among unemployed.

Demographic Differences in Cybercrime

The participants were asked to rate themselves on the 24 constructs measuring involvement in cybercrime by way of indicating how often they had practiced any of the four types of cybercrime in the past. The scores were clustered into four groups according to the four types of cybercrime measured in this study, namely internet fraud, cyberbullying, internet hacking, and yahoo plus. The scores were obtained by computing the mean for each component ranging from 1 to 4. Table 3 shows the distribution of the demographic differences in relation to the four types of cybercrime.

Table 3: Demographic Differences in Cybercrime

		Internet Fraud Response	Cyberbullying Response	Hacking Response	Yahoo Plus Response
Age	21-25	2.00	1.79	1.66	1.68
	26-30	2.20	1.91	1.86	1.75
	31-35	2.13	1.82	1.61	1.62
Gender	Male	2.17	1.85	1.71	1.69
	Female	1.30	1.43	1.00	1.04
Educational Attainment					
	Secondary School	1.94	1.74	1.51	1.49
	Undergraduate	2.53	2.03	1.98	1.93
	Bachelor's Degree	2.14	1.82	1.68	1.70
	Master's Degree	2.08	1.83	1.74	1.71
	Others	1.87	1.76	1.49	1.40
Employment Status					
	Employed	2.27	2.00	1.95	2.01
	Unemployed	2.03	1.77	1.57	1.54
	Others	2.34	1.88	1.79	1.68

The results from Table 3 indicated that the mean score across the four types of cybercrime was highest at the middle age and lowest at the lowest age and the highest age alternatively. Internet fraud had the highest mean score of 2.20 for ages 26-30. This showed that the practice of cybercrime was highest at the end of emerging adulthood, and varied at early adulthood stage and at emerging adulthood stage. Also, internet fraud was reported as the most commonly practiced form of cybercrime among the different age categories in the present study while yahoo plus was reported as the latest trend. Gender profile showed that male reported highest mean score across the four types of cybercrime with the highest mean score of 2.17 in internet fraud recorded for male and lowest mean score of 1.00 in internet hacking for female. This means that gender was a strong factor in involvement in cybercrime among the sample in the present study, with male more likely to practice cybercrime compared to female. In the same vein, undergraduates reported highest mean score across all the four types of cybercrime. The highest mean score was 2.53 in internet fraud among undergraduates, while the lowest was a mean score of 1.40 in internet hacking for others. This means that undergraduates were higher in the practice of cybercrime compared to the other levels of education in the sample. The employed participants also reported highest mean score across three out of the four types of cybercrime, while others reported highest prevalence in internet fraud with a mean score of 2.34.

Discussion

On the effect of age on moral disengagement and cybercrime, the findings showed that moral disengagement was highest at the end of emerging adulthood, and it reduced at early adulthood stage but was lowest at emerging adulthood stage for the sample. This is not consistent with De Caroli and Sagone (2014) which showed that adolescents were more likely than university students to use all the mechanisms of moral disengagement. Thus, findings from this study indicated to the contrary that moral disengagement was highest at the end of emerging adulthood among the sample. This finding may be explained with the differences in the behaviour (cybercrime) and the sample used in the current study. Similarly, the findings indicated that the practice of cybercrime was highest at the end of emerging adulthood and varied at early adulthood stage and at emerging adulthood stage for the sample. Also, internet fraud was reported as the most commonly practiced form of cybercrime among the different age categories in the present study while yahoo plus was reported to be the latest trend. Findings from this study were consistent with Ulmer and Steffensmeier (2014), that crimes such as homicide, aggravated assault, drunk driving, and fraud peak at slightly older age (late 20s and early 30s), compared to crimes such as vandalism. Similarly, Steffensmeier, Zhong, and Lu (2017) indicated that the age-crime relationship curves in both US and Taiwan are shaped by period and cohort effects, but period and cohort effects are more prominent in predicting Taiwan's age-period-specific arrest curves than those of the U.S. Moreover, social transformation such as economic development, and ICTs could be used to explain the disproportionate increases in age-cybercrime relationship which in the current study showed its peak at young adulthood as against a shift toward more adolescent-peaked age-crime distributions in industrialized societies.

The findings on the effects of gender on moral disengagement and cybercrime means that male participants compared to their female counterparts were higher in moral disengagement. The same was true for cybercrime with male participants recording the highest mean score across the four types of cybercrime. The findings are related to other studies on gender and moral disengagement with different samples. This means that gender was a strong factor in involvement in cybercrime among the sample, with male more likely to practice cybercrime compared to female. For example, the findings are related to a study by Cory and Hernandez (2014) with a sample of 151 (62 males and 88 females) university students in South-West US (38

in business majors, and 113 in humanities majors), which indicated that in every case, males had higher levels of moral disengagement than the females. This was also replicated by Oluwasoye and Thorne (2015) that males have more moral disengagement attitude than females. On the contrary, this study's findings are not consistent with Adler, Adler, and Levin (1975) who in their seminal work 'Sister in Crime' raised the awareness of the decrease in the gender gap in crime. This behaviour was then explained by the then growing movement for women's emancipation and gender equality. However, findings are consistent with Smith (2014) who indicated that men commit significantly more crimes than women. This alluded to the cross-cultural influence of gender on propensity to crime and criminal behaviour in the society.

The findings on the effects of education attainment on moral disengagement and cybercrime indicated that undergraduates were higher in moral disengagement compared to the other levels of education. Also, advantageous comparison came out as the most commonly used component of moral disengagement. Although the reviewed literature had no specific study exploring education attainment on moral disengagement, the findings from the current study could be used to examine moral disengagement among a larger sample of undergraduates in Nigeria and beyond. Similarly, undergraduates were higher in the practice of cybercrime compared to the other levels of education. Internet fraud also emerged as the most commonly practiced form of cybercrime. These findings are not consistent with most of the studies on the relationship between education attainment and crime. For example, Bennett (2018) indicated that both years of education as well as the completion of high school, or an equivalent level, reduces crime and crime types in the society. This view was also supported by Gentry, Mokkaapati, and Rampersad (2016) who claimed that most criminal elements in the society are uneducated. That the more educated a city population, the lower the crime rates. However, findings from the current study are corroborated by Tade and Aliyu (2011) which indicated that, with the unemployment and poverty in the country, internet fraud among youth has become a means of survival among undergraduate students.

The findings on the effects of employment status on moral disengagement and cybercrime indicate that firstly, both the employed and unemployed will disengage morally depending on situational and personal factors. Secondly, the employed participants were higher in cyberbullying, internet hacking and yahoo plus compared to the other groups in the sample. Also,

internet fraud came out as the most commonly practiced form of cybercrime by the sample. Though the reviewed literature did not examine moral disengagement and employment, this could be used to draw the conclusion that the individual personal factors more than their employment status influences moral disengagement. Findings on employment cybercrime interaction are consistent with Ajaebgu (2012) that unemployment among the youth was a strong predictor of violent crime such as murder, armed robbery, kidnapping for ransom and terrorism in Nigeria. Most significantly, the findings are consistent with Chang and Wu (2012) that based on the various origins of crime; employed workers and unemployed workers have different incentives for entering a life of crime. This appeared to be the case with cybercrime among the youth as both the employed and unemployed were found to be involved in cybercrime in the current study. Thus, findings from this study again are consistent with the tenets of social cognitive theory that while environmental determinants (unemployment) are strong predictors of cybercrime, individual personal determinants and the behavioural incentives also contribute to cybercrime behaviour among the youth.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that demographic characteristics such as age, gender, education attainment, employment status, and recidivism have strong influence on moral disengagement and involvement in cybercrime among the sample. This again indicated the dynamics of cybercrime as the employed and unemployed, as well as the educated and uneducated are involved. Internet fraud appears as the dominant form of cybercrime among the sample while advantageous comparison was the most used mechanism of moral disengagement. The study also concluded that social cognitive theory offered a good theoretical framework for understanding and explaining cybercrime and the intervention that can be applied.

The study made recommendations in three broad areas of theory, practice, and policy formulations. On the aspect of theory, findings from this study on influence of demographic characteristics on moral disengagement and cybercrime could be used to enrich the present school curricular to promote moral engagement among pupils and students at various levels of education in the country. The government could use the findings of this study to initiate youth-oriented policies in the form of social welfare scheme for different categories of unemployed youth. This will help cushion the effect of the current economic hardship which the study found

to influence cybercrime practices among the youth. This could also include the creation of employment opportunities to the teaming unemployed graduates in the country as the majority of the participants were unemployed youths.

The government should strengthen its anti-corruption agents in the fight against corruption. The government should therefore be seen not only to be fighting corruption but above all, it should eschew corruption from its rank and files. This implies that the fight against corruption should necessarily begin from the government itself without favoritism. This will again promote moral engagement and prevent cybercrime among the youth. Moreover, the government could come up with a national orientation programme to help redirect the value system from pro-moral disengagement orientation (corruption across the social strata, wealth without work, and culture of short horizons) to pro-moral engagement orientation in the country.

Lastly, mitigating the environmental determinant, the government's anti-corruption agents could put in place a special arm to monitor the chain of sources of income to property acquisition in the country as another way of curbing the wave of corruption and cybercrime. If well implemented, these approaches would strongly promote moral engagement thereby preventing and/or reducing despicable behaviours (cybercrime included) among the citizenry.

To address cybercrime which is the behavioural determinants in this study, government could through legislation impose stiffer penalties in the law for corrupt practices and cybercrime-related offenses. This would make the punishment strong enough to serve as a deterrent to the behaviour thereby ensuring extinction or reduction of cybercrime among the youth.

Psychologists especially those working with the youth and in correctional facilities could use the findings of this study to come up with treatment plans for adolescents and youth in order to mitigate the individual determinants of moral disengagement and cybercrime. This will both promote and enhance capacity for moral engagement of the youth when faced with situational factors which can encourage moral disengagement and involvement in cybercrime as well as other crimes.

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