



## Parental Pressure and Cybercrime Engagement among Youth in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions

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**Abstract.** This study examined the connection between parental pressure and cybercrime engagement among Nigerian youth in tertiary institutions. The rise in technology has reshaped interactions and activities, leading to increased online engagement in Nigerian tertiary institutions. However, concerns about the negative consequences, specifically cybercrime, have arisen. This study aimed to understand the influence of parental pressure on youth experiences, explore links between parental pressure and cybercrime, and identify mediating factors. Employing a quantitative approach, a questionnaire survey was administered to undergraduate students in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The sample consisted of 400 participants from Lagos State University and Yaba College of Technology, chosen through multistage cluster sampling. Regression analyses revealed negative associations between parental pressure indicators and academic performance, psychological well-being, and decision-making processes among Nigerian youths. Furthermore, the study found that heightened parental pressure increases the likelihood of youth engaging in cybercrime to meet academic and career expectations. Mediation analyses indicated the pivotal roles of personal motivations, socioeconomic backgrounds, and psychological attributes in mediating the relationship between parental pressure and cybercrime involvement. These findings emphasize the need for supportive environments that prioritize academic and psychological well-being. Collaborative efforts among stakeholders are crucial for addressing the negative outcomes arising from parental pressure and fostering positive youth development.

**Keywords:** Cybercrime, motivation, parental pressure, scam, youth

### 1. Introduction

In the modern digital era, the rapid advancement of technology has brought about unprecedented changes in how individuals communicate, interact, and conduct various activities. With the proliferation of digital platforms and the integration of the Internet into nearly every aspect of daily life, the youth population, especially those enrolled in Nigerian tertiary institutions, has become increasingly engaged in online activities (Akinyetun, 2021a). However, alongside the immense benefits offered by the digital age, concerns have arisen about potential negative consequences, particularly concerning cybercrime. One intriguing aspect that warrants exploration is the potential link between parental pressure and the propensity of youths in Nigerian tertiary institutions to engage in cybercriminal activities.

Cybercrime is a multifaceted and complex phenomenon that encompasses a broad spectrum of illicit activities that exploit digital technologies for criminal purposes. These activities range from hacking and identity theft to online fraud and cyberbullying. The interconnectedness of the digital world has provided cybercriminals with new avenues to perpetrate their actions, often leading to significant financial losses, psychological distress, and societal disruption (Chen, 2023). While the scope and impact of cybercrime are well recognized, the factors that contribute to its emergence among youth, particularly in Nigerian tertiary institutions, remain an area of investigation.

Nigeria, with its large population and growing economy, has experienced the rapid integration of technology into various spheres of life. However, along with the numerous advantages of technology, the country also faces challenges related to cybercrime. In Nigeria, cybercrime often takes the form of '419 scams', where individuals engage in fraudulent activities to obtain money under

pretences (Omodunbi et al., 2016). Such criminal activities have led to substantial financial losses and tarnished the nation's reputation globally (Hamisu et al., 2020). The prevalence of cybercrime among Nigerian youth raises questions regarding the underlying factors that contribute to their involvement in such illicit activities.

Parental pressure is a sociocultural phenomenon observed across various societies, including Nigeria. Parents often wield a significant influence over their children's academic pursuits, career choices, and life trajectories. Although parental guidance and support are essential for a child's development, excessive or unrealistic expectations can lead to adverse outcomes. In Nigerian tertiary institutions, where students are often expected to excel academically and secure promising careers, the pressure to meet these expectations can be overwhelming (Nwangwu et al., 2022). Thus, a critical question emerges: Could there be a link between the pressure imposed by parents and the inclination of Nigerian youth in tertiary institutions to engage in cybercrime? This question assumes significance, as the stress and anxiety resulting from parental expectations might drive some students to seek alternative paths to meet these expectations, potentially leading to the adoption of deviant behaviours such as cybercrime. The pressure to succeed in a competitive academic environment, coupled with the allure of the digital world, could foster an environment conducive to cybercriminal activity (Garba, 2023).

This study explored the intricate relationship between parental pressure and cybercrime among youth in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The central focus is to ascertain whether parental pressure contributes to students' propensity to engage in cybercriminal activities. By delving into the experiences, perceptions, and motivations of Nigerian youth, this study aims to uncover the underlying dynamics that link parental pressure and cybercrime.

This study is significant for several reasons. First, it addresses a gap in the literature by exploring the nuanced relationship between parental pressure and cybercrime, shedding light on the potential motivations driving Nigerian youth to engage in cybercriminal activities. Second, the study's findings can inform educational institutions, policymakers, and parents about the implications of excessive pressure on students' mental health and behaviour. Third, this research contributes to the broader discourse on cybercrime prevention and intervention strategies, with the potential to shape future policies aimed at addressing this issue.

The existing body of literature on cybercrime in Nigerian tertiary institutions has primarily focused on aspects such as the types, prevalence, and socioeconomic impact of cybercriminal activities (Akinyetun et al., 2021; Garba, 2023; Nwangwu et al., 2022; Omodunbi et al., 2016). While these studies provide valuable insights into the multifaceted nature of cybercrime, a significant research gap remains that necessitates further exploration. Specifically, the potential relationship between parental pressure and youth engagement in cybercrime in Nigerian tertiary institutions has received limited attention.

Although research has acknowledged the role of sociocultural factors and personal motivations in cybercrime engagement (Chen, 2023), the influence of parental pressure on such behaviour remains unclear. While studies have highlighted the prevalence of parental pressure in Nigerian society (Nwangwu et al., 2022), there is a dearth of comprehensive investigations into whether excessive parental expectations and pressure contribute to or shape the propensity of youth to engage in cyber-criminal activities. Consequently, the gap lies in the absence of an in-depth understanding of how parental pressure, as a sociocultural factor, may interact with other determinants to influence youth involvement in cybercrime within a tertiary education setting.

To bridge this gap, there is a need to explore the lived experiences, perceptions, and motivations of Nigerian youth in tertiary institutions regarding parental pressure and its potential impact on their digital behaviours, including engagement in cybercrime. In light of the limited attention paid to the interconnection between parental pressure and cybercrime among Nigerian youth, this research offers valuable insights into the multifaceted dynamics that underlie youth engagement in cybercriminal activities within the context of Nigerian tertiary institutions.

### 1.1 Research Objectives

- To understand the impact of parental pressure on the experiences of Nigerian youth in tertiary institutions.
- To explore the potential association between parental pressure and the likelihood of Nigerian youth engaging in cybercriminal activities.
- To identify potential mediating factors that influence the relationship between parental pressure and youth engagement in cybercrime.

## 1.2 Research Hypotheses

H0<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant relationship between parental pressure and the experiences of Nigerian youth in tertiary institutions, impacting their academic performance, psychological well-being, and decision-making processes.

H0<sub>2</sub>: High levels of parental pressure increase the likelihood of Nigerian youth engaging in cybercriminal activities to meet academic expectations and career aspirations.

H0<sub>3</sub>: The relationship between parental pressure and youth involvement in cybercrime is mediated by personal motivation, socioeconomic background, and psychological attributes.

## 2. Literature review

Akinyetun (2021a) examined the link between poverty, cybercrime, and national security. Poverty in Nigeria has been shown to drive youth towards cybercrime as a means of realizing their aspirations. The connection between cybercrime and national security is highlighted as cybercriminal activities can lead to violence, manipulation, and cyber-espionage. Akinyetun et al. (2021) extended this discussion to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, where youth unemployment has surged, potentially exacerbating cybercrime rates. In another article, Akinyetun (2021b) linked youth unemployment and cybercrime, arguing that the dearth of legitimate opportunities drives young individuals to resort to cybercrime. Access to technology and digital tools further amplifies this vulnerability, fostering a culture of cybercrime among youth.

Aladenusi and Odumuboni (2022) underscore the escalating threat of cybercrime in Nigeria, highlighting its ranking among the countries most affected by Internet crimes. The authors emphasize the adoption of cyber insurance by organizations to manage risks and losses due to cybercrime, as well as the need for enhanced cybersecurity measures to counter increasingly sophisticated cyber-attacks. Meanwhile, Ayub and Akor (2022) delved into the emergence of cybercrime due to advancements in information and communication technology (ICT) in Nigeria. The study discusses various cybercrime categories and examines the government's efforts to combat these crimes through legislation and enforcement agencies. Nzeakor et al. (2022) analyzed the current trend in cybercrime awareness and its relationship with victimization experience among Internet users. The study revealed the prevalence of awareness and the types of cybercrimes most recognized by participants, as well as a positive correlation between awareness and victimization.

Aladenusi and Odumuboni (2022) highlighted the increasing sophistication of cyber-attacks and the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) by cybercriminals. The authors stressed the need for organizations to match these techniques to effectively combat cyber threats. Ayub and Akor (2022) discussed the vulnerabilities introduced by the proliferation of mobile phones and other computer devices, emphasizing the need for user education and technical capacity building to mitigate cybercriminal activities. Nzeakor et al. (2022) provided insights into the diverse levels of awareness among Internet users, emphasizing the importance of distinguishing between computer-assisted and computer-focused cybercrime categories. Omodunbi et al. (2016) outline the various forms of cybercrime prevalent in Nigeria, including fraudulent electronic mail, identity theft, hacking, cyber harassment, and more. The study emphasizes the detrimental effects of cybercrime on individuals, the economy, and the nation's international reputation. Nwangwu et al. (2022) extend the analysis by investigating how the COVID-19 lockdown increased internet traffic and consequently heightened cybercrime vulnerability. This article reveals a significant increase in young people's arrests suspected of being involved in cybercrime during the lockdown.

Garba (2023) focuses on a specific region, Dandume Local Government Area of Katsina State, highlighting prevalent cybercrimes such as yahoo attacks, social media hijacking, credit card threats, and more. This study underscores the need for community education and awareness-raising efforts to combat these crimes. Nwangwu et al. (2022) delve into the attitudes of university students toward cybercrime and education during the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings revealed a concern among students that cybercrime is not necessarily evil, which may normalize such activities. Despite this perception, most respondents still value education. However, the lockdown distraction from studies due to increased vulnerability to cybercrime activities indicates the need for both awareness campaigns and academic support. Omodunbi et al. (2016) highlighted the need for detection and prevention techniques to combat cybercrimes in Nigeria, underlining the importance of strategic measures to counteract the alarming growth of these crimes.

Taofik et al. (2021) investigated the levels of cybercrime awareness and involvement among tertiary institution students in Zamfara. The study suggests that, while there is a satisfactory level of awareness, only a small percentage of students exhibit a solid theoretical understanding of the nature and types of cybercrimes outlined in Nigeria's Cybercrime Act 2015. This finding

implies that although students are generally aware of cybercrimes, a comprehensive understanding of the legal framework and various types of cybercrimes is lacking. Afachung (2023) focuses on self-control, materialism, and the need for achievement as predictors of cybercrime behaviour among youths in Ibadan metropolises. The study revealed that a higher need for achievement and materialism corresponds to more positive inclinations towards cybercrime behaviour, while self-control leads to a decrease in such behaviour. This study highlights the complex relationship between personal traits and cybercrime behaviour, emphasizing the role of motivation and self-regulation.

Afachung (2023) further examined the impact of gender and employment status on cybercrime behaviour among youths in the Ibadan Metropolis. The study found that both gender and employment status significantly influence cybercrime behaviour. This result emphasizes the importance of considering contextual factors when understanding and predicting cybercrime behaviour. Moreover, Adekanmbi and Ukpere (2020) explored the influence of materialism on attitudes towards fraudulent behaviours among university finance officers in Southwest Nigeria. Although not directly focused on cybercrime, this study underlines the broader connection between materialism and dishonest behaviour, which could extend to cybercrime.

Two studies, Bello and Griffiths (2021) and Hamisu et al. (2020) adopted criminological frameworks to analyze cybercrime. Bello and Griffiths (2021) utilize Routine Activity Theory (RAT) to understand the motivations of cybercriminals, the characteristics of suitable targets, and the capability of law enforcement agencies to counter cybercrime. Similarly, Hamisu et al. (2020) focused on Nigeria’s cybercrime

landscape, highlighting common types of cybercrime and evaluating the government’s efforts to combat this issue.

Hamisu et al. (2020) identify government initiatives to combat cybercrime and highlight areas of success and weakness. The study acknowledges positive outcomes but underscores the need for more effective enforcement and collaboration among stakeholders. Bello and Griffiths (2021) examined the capabilities of law enforcement officers and members of the Cybercrime Advisory Council (CAC) as ‘capable guardians’ to mitigate cybercrime activities. These findings suggest that a lack of proper education and awareness, along with inadequate training for law enforcement officers, contributes to the prevalence of cybercrime in Nigeria.

Anteyi (2023) introduces the concept of transforming cybercrime gangs into cybersecurity specialists through workforce development. The study highlights the role of economic circumstances in driving individuals towards cybercrime and emphasizes the untapped technical talent in Nigeria. By providing legitimate opportunities for technical skills and fostering a robust cybersecurity workforce pipeline, Nigeria could potentially redirect the talent of cybercriminals towards legitimate purposes.

The reviewed studies shed light on the broader context of cybercrime and its associations, they do not delve into the role of parental pressure as a contributing factor. The studies underscore the multifaceted consequences of cybercrime proliferation, however, the focus remains on socioeconomic, sociopolitical and sociocultural drivers. The studies do not explore the potential influence of parental pressure on cybercrime proliferation among Nigerian youth.

**Table 1:** Themes in the Literature

Theme	Description	Sources
Types and Forms of Cybercrime in Nigeria	The literature discusses various forms of cybercrime prevalent in Nigeria, such as fraudulent electronic mail, identity theft, hacking, cyber harassment, spamming, phishing, online fraud, and digital piracy. These activities exploit the Internet’s growth and acceptance and pose threats to individuals, institutions, and the economy.	Omodunbi et al. (2016), Nwangwu et al. (2022), Garba (2023), Hamisu et al. (2020)
Impact of Cybercrime on the Economy and Society	The impact of cybercrime on Nigeria’s economy and society is highlighted. Financial losses, disruption of sectors such as telecommunications, and damage to the nation’s international reputation are discussed as the consequences of cybercrime.	Omodunbi et al. (2016), Nwangwu et al. (2022), Bello & Griffiths (2021), Hamisu et al. (2020)
COVID-19 Lockdown and Cybercrime	The COVID-19 pandemic lockdown measures have led to increased Internet usage and vulnerability to cybercrime attacks. The literature underscores the surge in cybercrime activities during this period and the need for increased awareness and prevention measures.	Nwangwu et al. (2022)
Cybercrime Awareness and Education	The literature emphasizes the importance of cybercrime awareness and education among students, law enforcement agencies, and the general population. This suggests that adequate education is crucial for effectively combating cybercrime.	Tafa Taofik et al. (2021), Nwangwu et al. (2022)
Role of Law Enforcement and Preventive Measures	The role of law enforcement agencies and preventive measures in addressing cybercrime is also discussed. Collaborative efforts, capacity building, and the enforcement of relevant laws and policies have been identified as crucial	Bello & Griffiths (2021), Anteyi (2023)

	strategies.	
Factors Driving Cybercrime	Human and social factors such as materialism, the need for achievement, and the lack of opportunities for legitimate economic activities have been explored as drivers of cybercrime. These factors influence offenders' motivations and victimization.	Akinyetun (2021a), Akinyetun (2021b), Akinyetun et al., (2021), Afachung (2023), Anteyi (2023)
Challenges in Cybercrime Mitigation	Challenges in mitigating cybercrime are addressed, including a lack of awareness, inadequate training for law enforcement officers, and gaps in cybersecurity workforce development. These challenges have contributed to the persistence of cybercrime in Nigeria.	Bello & Griffiths (2021), Anteyi (2023)
International and Global Perspectives on Cybercrime	The literature discusses cybercrime in an international context, acknowledging its global nature. The convergence of technology, the Internet's role, and the complexities of tackling cybercrime on a global scale have been highlighted.	Chen (2023), Anteyi (2023), Hamisu et al. (2020)

### 3. Research Methodology

#### 3.1 Design

A quantitative method research design was adopted to examine the relationship between parental pressure and cyber-crime engagement among youth in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The study employed a questionnaire survey to gather data from undergraduate students in Nigerian tertiary institution. This approach allowed for the collection of quantitative data on participants' perceptions of parental pressure and their engagement in cybercrime.

#### 3.2 Population

The study population comprised undergraduate students enrolled in diverse courses and across different levels in selected tertiary institutions. This population was particularly relevant because of the prevalence of cybercrime among Nigerian youth and the potential influence of parental pressure on their digital behaviours. The inclusion of a broad range of courses and levels was to ensure a representative sample that offers insights into the experiences of youth from various academic backgrounds and socioeconomic contexts in the selected institutions.

#### 3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

A sample size of 400 undergraduate students was chosen from selected tertiary institutions in Lagos State. To determine the sample size, a multistage cluster sampling procedure was employed to select the participants for this study. In the first stage, two tertiary institutions – one University and one Polytechnic – Lagos State University and Yaba College of Technology were randomly chosen from Lagos State, Nigeria. In the second stage, five faculties were randomly selected from each institution. Within the selected faculties, participants were recruited using a combination of convenience sampling and systematic sampling to give a total of 400 participants. To ensure a diverse representation of participants, efforts were made to include students from different academic years. The sample included a mix of 100, 200, 300 and 400-level students (ND 1, ND 2, HND 1 and HND 2 in the case of the polytechnic. For each selected department, students were informed of the study's purpose and procedures. Participation was voluntary, and students were assured of confidentiality and anonymity.

**Table 2:** Sampling Procedure

Stage	Sampling Method	Number of Units Selected
1	Random sampling	2 tertiary institutions (Lagos State University, Ojo and Yaba College of Technology, Yaba)
2	Random sampling	5 faculties and 10 departments per institution (for a total of 10 faculties and 20 departments)
3	Convenience sampling and systematic sampling	20 participants per department (for a total of 400 participants)

#### 3.4 Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection in the quantitative phase involved the administration of a Likert-scale questionnaire to participants. The questionnaire comprised 18 items that captured participants' perceptions of parental pressure and their engagement in cybercrime activities. The Likert-scale response options ranged from 'Strongly Disagree' to 'Strongly Agree', allowing participants to express their views on a continuum. The data collected was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS v.22).

4. Results

**Table 3:** Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Demographic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Age Range</b>		
- 18-22 years	64	66%
- 23-27 years	80	20%
- 28-32 years	56	14%
<b>Gender</b>		
- Male	180	45%
- Female	220	55%
<b>Faculties</b>		
- Arts	80	20%
- Science	100	25%
- Engineering	60	15%
- Social Sciences	70	17.5%
- Management Sciences	90	22.5%
<b>Institutions</b>		
- University	200	50%
- Polytechnic	200	50%
<b>Academic Level</b>		
- 100 Level	34	8.5%
- 200 Level	56	14%
- 300 Level	64	16%
- 400 Level	46	11.5%
- ND 1 (Polytechnic)	58	14.5%
- ND 2 (Polytechnic)	62	15.5%
- HND 1 (Polytechnic)	44	11%
- HND 2 (Polytechnic)	36	9%

The analysis of participants’ demographics revealed that 66% of participants fell within the age range of 18-22 years, while 20% were aged 23-27 years and 14% were aged 28-32 years. Thus, the majority of respondents were between 18-22 years old. The gender distribution showed that 45% of the participants were male and 55% were female, indicating that the majority of the respondents were female. Among the selected faculties, 20% were arts, 25% were science, 15% were engineering, 17.5% were social sciences, and 22.5% were management sciences. Hence, students from the management sciences were more represented in this study. The study involved two institutions, Lagos State University and Yaba College of Technology, each of which contributed 50% of the total participants. Regarding academic levels at the university, the distribution is as follows: 100 Level (8.5%), 200 Level (14%), 300 Level (16%), and 400 Level (11.5%). The distribution of polytechnic levels was ND 1 (14.5%), ND 2 (15.5%), HND 1 (11%), and HND 2 (9%). This indicates that a majority of the respondents are from 300 level and ND 2, respectively.

**Testing of Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis 1:** There is a significant relationship between parental pressure and the experiences of Nigerian youth in tertiary institutions, impacting their academic performance, psychological well-being, and decision-making processes.

**Table 4:** Regression Results for Hypothesis 1

Dependent Variables	$\beta$ (Coefficient)	p-value
Academic Performance	-0.25	<0.001
Psychological Well-being	-0.18	0.003
Decision-making Processes	-0.12	0.032

The regression analyses revealed statistically significant negative relationships between parental pressure indicators (academic expectations, pressure to meet expectations, career aspirations, and influence on online activities) and the three specified outcomes: academic performance, psychological well-being, and decision-making processes. As parental pressure increased, participants reported lower academic performance ( $\beta = -0.25$ ), poorer psychological well-being ( $\beta = -0.18$ ), and more challenging decision-making processes ( $\beta = -0.12$ ). These results support Hypothesis 1, indicating that parental pressure impacts the experiences of Nigerian youth in tertiary institutions.

**Hypothesis 2:** High levels of parental pressure increase the likelihood of Nigerian youth engaging in cybercriminal activities to meet academic expectations and career aspirations.

**Table 5:** Logistic Regression Results for Hypothesis 2

Independent Variables	Odds Ratio	p-value
Academic Expectations	1.32	0.013
Pressure to Meet Expectations	1.49	0.002
Career Aspirations	1.28	0.029
Influence on Online Activities	1.18	0.127

The second hypothesis posits that high levels of parental pressure increase the likelihood of Nigerian youth engaging in cybercriminal activities as a means of meeting academic expectations and career aspirations. To test this hypothesis, a logistic regression analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between parental pressure indicators and the likelihood of engaging in cybercrime. Logistic regression analysis revealed that academic expectations, pressure to meet expectations, and career aspirations were statistically significant predictors of the likelihood of engaging in cybercrime. As these parental pressure indicators increased, the odds of youths engaging in cybercriminal activities also increased. However, the influence of online activities is not statistically significant. These findings support Hypothesis 2, suggesting that youth may turn to cybercrime to cope with the high parental pressure related to academic and career expectations.

**Hypothesis 3:** The relationship between parental pressure and youth involvement in cybercrime is mediated by personal motivation, socioeconomic background, and psychological attributes.

**Table 6:** Mediation Analysis Results for Hypothesis 3

Mediating Factors	Indirect Effect	p-value
Personal Motivations	0.08	0.006
Socioeconomic Background	0.05	0.038
Psychological Attributes	0.06	0.021

The third hypothesis proposed that the relationship between parental pressure and youth involvement in cybercrime is mediated by personal motivations, socioeconomic background, and psychological attributes. Mediation analyses were performed to examine whether these factors played a mediating role in the relationship between parental pressure and cybercrime engagement. The results of the mediation analyses indicated that all three mediating factors—personal motivation, socioeconomic background, and psychological attributes—played a significant mediating role in the relationship between parental pressure and youth engagement in cybercrime. These factors collectively accounted for a substantial proportion of the variance in the relationship. This finding supports Hypothesis 3, suggesting that personal motivation, socioeconomic factors, and psychological attributes act as mediators in the pathway between parental pressure and cybercrime engagement.

### 5. Discussion on the Findings

The first hypothesis posited a significant relationship between parental pressure and the experiences of Nigerian youth in tertiary institutions, impacting academic performance, psychological well-being, and decision-making processes. The findings from the regression analyses confirmed this hypothesis, demonstrating that higher levels of parental pressure were associated with lower academic performance, poorer psychological well-being, and more challenging decision-making processes among youth. These results echo the findings of previous

studies that have highlighted the detrimental effects of excessive parental pressure on various aspects of youth development (Kulakow et al, 2021). The influence of parental pressure on academic performance may stem from parents’ elevated expectations of their children’s educational achievements. The pressure to meet these expectations could potentially contribute to heightened stress levels among students, negatively affecting their ability to excel academically (Curran, 2022). Moreover, the psychological toll of such pressure could manifest as decreased well-being, potentially leading to adverse mental health outcomes. The observed influence on decision-making processes implies that youth facing intense parental pressure might struggle to make autonomous choices, potentially hampering their personal growth and development.

The second hypothesis suggests that high levels of parental pressure increase the likelihood of Nigerian youth engaging in cybercriminal activities to meet academic expectations and career aspirations. The logistic regression results corroborated this hypothesis, revealing a significant positive relationship between parental pressure indicators and the likelihood of youth engaging in cybercrime. Specifically, the pressure to meet expectations, academic expectations, and career aspirations was linked to a higher likelihood of engaging in cybercriminal activities.

The allure of cybercrime as a means of coping with academic pressure and striving for career success could stem from the appeal of quick monetary gains and the perception of a lower risk of

detection compared with traditional criminal activities (Segbenu, 2023). As parents' expectations increase, youth might perceive cybercrime as a way to achieve success, in line with these expectations (Ayodele et al, 2022). This finding underscores the need for a multifaceted approach to address youth involvement in cybercrime, including not only legal consequences but also targeted interventions to mitigate parental pressure and promote healthier coping mechanisms.

The third hypothesis proposed that the relationship between parental pressure and youth involvement in cybercrime is mediated by personal motivations, socioeconomic background, and psychological attributes. The mediation analyses supported this hypothesis, revealing that these factors play a significant role in shaping the link between parental pressure and engagement in cybercriminal activities. The influence of personal motivations such as financial gain or peer recognition could amplify the effect of parental pressure on cybercrime engagement. Similarly, the socioeconomic background may further influence the attractiveness of cybercrime as a means of achieving financial stability (Ibrahim, 2016; Zhu et al, 2021). Furthermore, psychological attributes, including stress-coping mechanisms and psychological well-being, might moderate how youths respond to parental pressure and whether they resort to cybercrime as a coping strategy.

This study indicated a relationship between exposure to cybercrime and adverse effects on academic performance, psychological well-being, and decision-making processes. This negative impact can be attributed to stress, anxiety, and fear stemming from cybercrime experiences, which hinder effective functioning in various spheres of life. Additionally, individuals with high academic expectations, a sense of pressure to meet these expectations, ambitious career aspirations, and susceptibility to online influences are more inclined to engage in cybercrime. These factors contribute to heightened stress, anxiety, and frustration, and increase vulnerability to cybercrime participation. Likewise, those motivated to succeed may take unlawful risks to attain their goals, especially when facing unrealistic expectations. Furthermore, socioeconomic background plays a role in cybercrime engagement. Individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds might resort to cybercrime because of limited legitimate economic opportunities, using it as an avenue for financial gain. Limited access to education and resources in lower socioeconomic strata also increases the susceptibility to cybercrime involvement. Psychological attributes such as low self-control and impulsivity significantly influence cyber-crime

participation. These traits increase the likelihood of engaging in risky and illegal behaviours. Additionally, attributes such as a lack of empathy and a tendency to externalize blame are linked to victimizing others through cybercrime.

This study underscores that exposure to cybercrime correlates with negative consequences in academic, psychological, and decision-making aspects. Factors such as high academic expectations, career aspirations, online influences, socioeconomic backgrounds, and psychological attributes collectively shape individuals' inclination towards cybercrime.

## 6. Conclusion

This study examined the intricate interplay between parental pressure and the involvement of Nigerian youth in cybercrime. The results of this study show that the ramifications of parental pressure unfold across various dimensions. The psychological toll it exerts might manifest as compromised well-being, potentially engendering unfavourable mental health conditions. Additionally, the study suggests that youth contending with intense parental pressure might face challenges in navigating autonomous choices, potentially impeding their personal growth. It appears that the allure of cybercrime as a coping mechanism and conduit to career success is propelled by the promise of swift financial gains and a perception of lower risk compared to conventional criminal activities. With rising parental expectations, youth perceive cybercrime as an avenue to align themselves with burgeoning expectations and achieve anticipated success. Furthermore, the study revealed that the interplay of personal motivations, socioeconomic factors, and psychological attributes collectively to youth engagement in cybercrime as a result of parental pressure. This study necessitates a collaborative endeavour, uniting parents, educators, policymakers, and mental health professionals to not only mitigate the adverse repercussions of parental pressure but also to shepherd the youth towards a positive and holistic development.

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