



ABSTRACT

This research examined audience perception of media coverage of cybercrime among residents of Ijebu North Local Government Area. The objective of the study was to examine audience awareness level of cyber crimes, ascertain audience knowledge on media coverage of cyber crimes; to examine the media that is most efficient in the coverage of cyber crimes. Study made use of survey design to probe the research questions. Using online questionnaire as instrument for collection of data through googleform, a sample size of 399 was drawn from an entire population of

AUDIENCE PERCEPTION OF MEDIA COVERAGE OF CYBER CRIME AMONG RESIDENTS OF IJEBU NORTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

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Introduction

Cyber crime has become a serious problem in our world today. One main fact is that no nation can claim innocence of is crime. In other words, cyber crime activities know no bound in the world. Generally speaking, the metamorphosis of the universe into a digital one from the previous analogue society has given birth to this new challenge. That is, globalisation birthed every kind of crimes relating to the internet as the case is today (Karofi & Mwanza, 2006).

The situation of Nigeria is in no way different from what is happening around the world today in relation to cyber crimes. According to Rudai & Slawu (2021), there are various forms of cybercrimes in the world. In fact, this situation has become pronounced in Nigeria than other nations of the world today despite the fact that Nigeria level of globalisation has not reached that of other nations such as Europe and America (Ibikunle & Eweniyi, 2013). As a result of this, cybercrime has become a national problem, and has attracted the attention of government at all levels as a result of the bad name it has given the country in the comity of nations, (Senam, Essien & Ekong, 2018). As a result, this situation has drastically affected the economic and political integrity of Nigeria as most foreigners no longer trust Nigerians in the world.

In whatever nomenclature the world today is called, it can but be summed to mean that the universe as at present is actually a mediatised one thereby increasing crime rate becoming the order of the day in every society. This is so because the rapid development of Information and Communication Technology has advanced over



284, 336 of Ijebu-North Local Government Area, Ogun State. The data collected were analysed and interpreted in a simple frequency and percentage distribution table. Findings revealed that the public is aware of cyber crime issues in Nigeria as a result of the fact that many of the people have been victims of this crime at one point or the other. Research also revealed that the public have a clear knowledge of the various media efforts in cyber crime reportage. It was recommended that since it is not in the jurisdictions or powers of the media to ensure the fight against cyber related crimes. The government, having the powers to instil punishment, though has been doing it, yet efforts should be intensified to allow the effort of media reportage become efficient and meaningful.

Keyword: Crime, Cyber, Cyber crime, Media.

decades to reposition the world into what Marshal McLuhan referred to as global village, Greer (2013). In fact, scholars have argued that the world today has moved from being a global village to being a “global hut”, a situation depicting the fact that the entire world is closer to each other not like a village but rather a hut.

As a result of the negative impacts of cybercrime on the nation, particularly as it affects the image of the country, the traditional media professionals whom are one special stakeholder in the project of nation building help to curb this social menace. Although, Greer (2013) argued that the media and criminal activities today being a globalised one cannot be separated. He further posits that understanding the connection that exists between media and crime is a better way to understanding the place crime and media occupy in our society in relation to the culture of the people.

Communication in the society plays a sacrosanct role in ensuring the kind of relationship that exists which further translates to a peaceful atmosphere. However, in creating a peaceful society, the media roles cannot be jettisoned. In line with this view, Senam et al. (2018:157) assert that:

The print media, especially newspapers have been identified as means of communication because of their unique characteristics of wide readership, exposure and permanence. Obviously, communication is a sure means of curbing crime because it gives ways to understanding and sharing of relevant information that can help both government and the individual.

Therefore, the way mass media communicate such matters like cybercrime is important in the society as this could determine how peaceful or mutually the society will exist and progress in all ramifications.

Statement of the Problem

The issue of cyber crime is becoming a national disgrace considering its negative impacts on the nation. These impacts, however, cannot be overemphasised on the socio-economic and political front which has affected the nation’s growth and most importantly international reputation. As a



result, the media, being a stakeholder in nation building owe allegiance to both government and the people through its social responsibility function by educating and informing both parties on cybercrime activities for the government and public to take necessary actions against the crime in the society.

Despite the efforts of the media in reporting cybercrime in Nigeria which has reflected in government's actions against this crime through its agencies like Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and other law enforcement agencies, one cannot conclude that while the government is taking proactive steps in protecting the country against this crime the public on their part are also taking responsibility by discouraging the category of people who are usually youths to desist from the act of cyber crime. Consequently, one begins to wonder why cyber related crimes amongst the Nigerian youths is prominent despite media efforts in informing and educating the public on the implications of this crime on both perpetrators and the nation. Therefore, it is on this ground that this study is premised to investigate what, and how the public perceive media reportage of cyber related crimes with the intention to determine if these efforts cumulate to curbing cyber related crimes in the Nigerian society.

Objectives of the Study

Consequent upon statement of problem, the following are the objectives of this study:

- i. To examine audience awareness level of cyber crimes.
- ii. To ascertain audience knowledge on media coverage of cyber crimes.
- iii. To examine the media that is most efficient in the coverage of cyber crimes.
- iv. To determine if media coverage of cyber crimes help in curbing the act in the society.

Literature Review

Concept of Cybercrime and Its Evolution

The word- cybercrime is a combination of two words: "cyber" and "crime". However, cyber according to dictionary.cambridge.org involves the using of a computer or relating to computers, especially the internet. More so, "crime" according to this same dictionary is defined as "an action or activities that are against the law or illegal activity generally. From the forgoing therefore, and considering the understanding of a layman, the word cybercrime is one specific crime amongst other form of crimes that involves the use of the internet. To make it more literarily explicit, the *Oxford Advanced Learner Diction* defines cybercrime as "a crime using the internet for stealing somebody's personal or bank details or infecting their computer with a virus". This definition, if examined explains what cybercrime actually entails in detail

On a further and more scholarly manner, Walls (2008:46) describes cybercrime as "widely used today to describe the crime or harms that result from opportunities created by networked technologies". Aghatise (2006:1) defines cybercrime as "crimes committed on the internet using computer as either a tool or a targeted victim". Therefore, it essential to understand that in both scholarly and literary definition of cybercrime, who things are constant: one, is the a crime involving the use of cyberspace which include the computer linked to the internet, and two is the involvement of someone who is or wanting to use the data of other person for illegal purposes basically to obtain money or other material things as the case may be. Today however, cybercrime



has transcended the use of a computer and has moved from using a computer as of when it earlier started to the use of mobile devices such as mobile phones such as iPhone, Pad etc as these gadgets only need to be internet enabled.

According to scholar, there have been consistent perspectives on the genesis of cybercrime in our society. Walls (2008) argues that the emergence of cybercrime is traceable to science fiction forums most of which involved the exposure of people to novels and movies that cyber activities are linked to criminal activities in the society. For instance, he posits that the word “cyberspace” was first mentioned in a science fiction short story called-“Burning Chrome” in 1982 which was said to be published in Omni magazine. Walls further argued the birth of cyberspace and virtual environment was as a result of cyberpunk science short stories known as “snowcrash”, and that the conceptual ideology of cybercrime was a product of cyberpunk as the word “cybercrime” emerged in the late 80s to early 90s.

Furthermore, when cybercrime is talked about, most public assume it only involves the manipulation of someone by the criminals in other to extort material properties such as money and other things. In addition to this however, Hassan, Lass & Makinde (2012) assert that cybercrime, apart from how it is literarily perceived as being fraudulent activities involving finance, it also include terrorism. In their views, they identified three things as cybercrime, this are: (1) cyber terrorism, (2) theft, and (3) spam.

Cybercrime in Nigeria and Its Effects

Cybercrime is believed to a global phenomenon which has affected and still affecting the developed nations costing them billions of dollars in its fight. Despite the world’s efforts in the fight against cybercrime many of these nations are still battling cybercrime till date. Just like the developed world today, many developing nations such as India, and most nation states in Africa like Nigeria is in no exception of cybercrime. In fact, global record on fight against cybercrime put Nigeria as the 57th country in the world fighting against cybercriminals out of 175 countries, and ranked the country 5th in African out of the entire 55 countries in the continent. What this simply translates to is that the country is really bedevilled by cybercrimes based on the background that the country is 57th and 5th in the world and Africa respectively fighting the surge of cybercrimes. For instance in 2019, *deloitte.com* reported that in 2018, Nigeria and other part of the world experienced a great security breach on *facebook* data scandal, and about 87million people were affected throughout the world. More so, in the same year, many online financial institutions such were seriously affected. This however, does not exclude many Nigeria companies and financial institutions that lost data and money to hackers in that year.

Due to the increase in cybercrime activities in Nigeria, it is now a statement of fact that the Nigerian government have scaled up cyber security if a closer look is accorded to the recent ranking of 2018 compared with 2015 when the country was ranked as the 3rd in global internet crime, (Nigerian Communication Commission, 2017). Even as the government scale upon cyber security, the negative impact of this crime cannot be overemphasised when it comes economic, political and most importantly international reputation. On the political stage, though Nigeria is still behind the United States and the United Kingdom in cybercrime activities, and the fight to curbing the menace, yet the level of corruption in the country amongst our political and even private elites



have greatly increased the political attention the world give to cybercrime in Nigeria. Politically speaking, the rate at which cybercrime is perceived by Nigerians have however increased the rate at which youths involve in this crime. This is because some are of the view that the youths who are involved in this activities are intelligent enough to defraud the white as they are retrieving the money that the white have been getting from Africa. In other words, most Nigerians have a positive view towards cybercrime. In line with this perspectives, Hassan et. al. (2012) explains that there are many factors encouraging cybercrime in Nigeria, these factors include unemployment, quest for wealth, urbanisation, negative role models, weak implication of cybercrime laws and inadequate equipped law agencies.

Media and Crime Reportage

The media over the time have been a stakeholder in the development of our society. The industry is saddled with the responsibility of setting agenda for the society through the dissemination of information so that other major stakeholders such as government, opinion and religious leaders, and the society at large can take certain responsibility in the interest of development. In the fight against cybercrimes in Nigeria, apart from the effort taken by government the efforts of Nigeria media industry cannot be overemphasised in all sphere of criminality in the country. The efforts of the media be it traditional or even the new media have played a very serious impact in the shaping the perspectives of the society on cybercrime. Although, Wall (2008) argues that while the media present cybercrime issues, this is so because the manner at which cybercrime is reported does not in the actual sense clarify what exactly the nature of the word “cyber” is. This condition however defines what the society is exposed to through the media in relation to cybercrime which in turn determines how deep the society understands the nature of cybercrime. Wall (2008) further argues that this situation however, explains the reason why many fall victim of this crime in the society. However, though Wall’s view can be said to true understanding that the society is evolving at the period. Today, the world has become more informed of the various cybercrime and its various techniques as used by these criminals.

The traditional media which include newspaper, magazine, television and radio are a very good medium that have contributed to informing and educating the public on cybercrime. Although the Nigerian print media is observed to be covering cybercrime but not to the extent at which matters like politics and entertainment are given concentration, this however explains the fact that the traditional media generally are not actually giving the needed concentration to cybercrime to its depth as the condition deepen in our society today. This is why one can argue in support of Wall on his argument on term clarification of cybercrime which thus lead to better understanding by the society. According to Usaini & Akinsunlola (2012) it was stated that Nigerian print media does not give serious attention to reporting internet related crimes which is thus referred to as cybercrime. This assertion explains how less important the print media takes the reportage of cybercrime, and on another hand may reflect how the broadcast media will give concentration on this crime too since both media are traditionally interwoven except for the kind of audience they appeal to. This position was further established in Senam, et al. (2018) as their study reveals that the Nigeria print media give little or no attention to the coverage of cybercrime stories.



Consequently, it is understandable that Nigeria is faced with a lot of political activities which might be taking much attention of the traditional media thereby making them not to devote much attention to cybercrime events. That notwithstanding, if the media consider the damage cybercrime is doing to the nation in term of economy and international reputations then one would say that the media do not have a reason not to give as much of the attention they accord to politics and other type of crimes to cyber related crimes. Meanwhile, because of the elitist nature of the print media, it is believed that this medium can better educate the government in the area of policy making where consistent reports are done for the society to have a better understanding of this menace.

Theoretical Framework

Social Responsibility Media Theory

According to Anaeto, Onabajo, & Osifeso (2008), the social responsibility theory was propounded by Siebert, Peterson and Schramm in 1963 and called the social responsibility media theory. As the social responsibility theory is concerned, it is of the principle that the media is responsible to the government and the public at the same time by being a point of connection between the duo.

Davis (2005) also posits that “the press in order to perform its functions must firstly provide truthful accounts in a context that gives the accounts meaning to the people. Secondly, serve as a public forum for comments and criticism. Thirdly, provide a representative picture of society’s various cultures and groups. Fourthly, clarify a society’s goals and values, and lastly to give people full access to the day’s intelligence.

Baran and Davis (2012:115) while discussing on the social responsibility theory cites Siebert, et al. (1956) stating that this theory happens to be a child of synthesized ideas which is been put forward in the Hutchins Commission report which is today known as social responsibility theory of the press. This theory according to Baran and Davis, (2012:115) “emphasized the need for an independent press that scrutinizes other social institutions and provides objectives, accurate news reports. The most innovative feature of the social responsibility theory was its call for media to be responsible for fostering productive and creative great communication. It said that media should do this by patronizing cultural pluralism by becoming the voice of all the people and not just the elite groups or groups that had dominated national, regional, or local culture in the past.”

Therefore, this theory is practically in line with this study considering the fact that the media, being the purveyor of information with the duty of monitoring the society report criminal activities (of which cybercrime is one) happening in the society. In doing this, the media helps to inform the public on the dangers associated to cyber crime, thereby setting agenda thereby leading the government in making policies against this crime, and the public on the need to educate them on its negative implications on individuals and the nation as whole.

Methodology

Research Design

The design adopted for this it is survey. This is because the research is examining peoples’ perception on cybercrimes as reported in the media. According to Ifeagwu (2012:14), a survey



research method is “one in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analysing data from only a few people or items considered to be representative of the entire group.

Population, Sample Size and Technique

The population for the study is residents of Ijebu-North Local Government Area which comprises of Ijebu-Igbo, Oru-Ijebu, Awa Ilaporu and Ago-Iwoye. The population of which amount to 284, 336 according to the 2006 census. The sample size for this research is total 399 as derived from the population of the study using the Taro Yamane formula. Judgmental Sampling Technique is used in selecting the sample size. A judgmental sampling technique, according to Ifeagwu (2012:94) is “a common non-probability sample method where the researcher selects samples based on judgment”. Therefore, the justification for adopting this technique is because of the proximity of the researcher to Ago-Iwoye, and most importantly the existence of Olabisi Onabanjo University.

Presentation of Data

Out of 399 copies of online questionnaire that was administered online, 384 were filled appropriately thereby leaving 15 not well attended to. As a result, 384 online questionnaires were treated for this research.

Table 1, SECTION A: Demographic Characteristics

Characteristics	Frequency (n-384)	Percentage (100%)
Sex:		
Male	161	41.9%
Female	223	58.1%
Age:		
18-23 years	126	32.8%
24-29 years	136	35.4%
30 years & Above	122	31.8%
Marital Status:		
Single	267	69.5%
Married	116	30.2%
Employment Status:		
Employed	121	31.5%
Self-employed	136	35.4%
Unemployed	127	33.1%

Source: Researcher's field survey, 2022

This table 1 as shown above depicts that majority of respondents are female (223, 58.1%), majority of which are between the ages of 24-29 years (136, 35.4%). It is also reveals that 267 (69.5%) the respondents are majorly single, while 136 (35.4%) of them are self-employed.

SECTION B: Research Questions

Table 2: Are you aware of cyber crime related matters in Nigeria?

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	370	96.4%



No	12	3.1%
Undecided	2	0.5%
TOTAL	384	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Sequel to the question 2 above, the table show respondents' view on cyber crime awareness. To this end, 370 (96.4%) say they are aware of cyber crimes related matters in Nigeria. However, 12 (3.1%) of them say they are not aware, as 2(0.5%) say they cannot decided to know about it. Therefore, the table tells that majority of the respondents are aware of cyber crime related matters in Nigeria.

Table 3: Do you know someone who is into cyber crime?

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	125	32.6%
No	231	60.2%
Undecided	28	7.3%
TOTAL	384	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 3 shows response to know if respondents know someone who is into cyber crimes. Therefore, table depicts that 125 (32.6%) or respondents know someone who is into cyber crime, 231 (60.2%) of them claim they do not know anyone while 28 (7.3%) claim undecided. To this end, the table states that majority of the respondents do not know someone who is into cyber crime.

Table 4: Do you have someone who has fallen victim of cybercrime before?

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	252	65.6%
No	120	31.3%
Undecided	12	3.1%
TOTAL	384	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 4 above shows response to know if respondents have someone who has fallen victim of cyber crime before. Therefore, 252 (65.6%) claim to have someone, 120 (31.3%) say they do not have. Meanwhile, 12 (3.1%) of the respondents couldn't decide whether they have or not. Hence, table 6 explains that majority of the respondents have had someone who had been a victim of cyber crime before.

Table 5: Have you been a victim of cyber crime before?

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	88	22.9%
No	294	76.6%



Undecided	2	0.5%
TOTAL	384	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 5 represents the views of respondents on if they have fallen victim of cyber crime before. On this ground, 88 (22.9%) say Yes, 294 (76.6%) say No, as 2 (0.5%) say Undecided. Therefore, the table shows that majority of our respondents have not fallen victim of cyber crime before.

Table 6: Do you think cyber crime is rampant in our society today?

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	358	93.2%
No	14	3.6%
Undecided	12	3.1%
TOTAL	384	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Sequel to table 6, it shows the response of respondents on if they think cyber crime is rampant in our society today. Consequently, 358 (93.2%) say cyber crime is rampant in our society, 14 (3.6%) say it is not, while 12 (3.1%) of them could not decide. Therefore, the table depicts that majority of the respondents are of the notion that cyber crime is rampant in our society today.

Table 7: Are you aware that Nigeria media report stories on cyber crime?

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	327	85.2%
No	39	10.2%
Undecided	18	4.7%
TOTAL	384	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 7 was used to examine if respondents are aware of the fact that Nigerian media report stories on cyber crimes. As a result, 327 of the respondent with a percentage of 85.2 claims to be aware while 39 (10.2%) say they are not aware. More so, 18 (4.7%) say they cannot decided. Therefore, the table shows that most of the respondents are aware that Nigerian media report cyber crime related stories.

Table 8: To what extent do you think the Nigeria media report cyber crime stories?

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Often	200	52.1%
Seldom	133	34.6%
Undecided	51	13.3%
TOTAL	384	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022



Table 8 above show responses to know the view of respondents on the extent the Nigerian media report cyber crime stories. To this end, 200 (52.1%) of respondents say that Nigerian media often report cyber crime related stories. 133 (34.6%) say Nigerian media seldom report cyber crime stories, and 51 (13.3%) of them say they cannot decide. Therefore, table 12 explains that respondents are of the notion that Nigerian media often report cyber related crime stories.

Table 9: Which of the media do you often have access to?

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Television	35	9.1%
Radio	13	3.4%
Newspaper	8	2.1%
Magazine	0	0%
Internet	322	83.9%
None	6	1.6%
TOTAL	384	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 9 shows responses to know the media most respondents have access to. As a result, 35 (9.1%) of the respondents say they have access to television, 13 (3.4%) say radio, 8 (2.1%) say newspaper, 0(0%) say magazine as 6 (1.6%) claim to have access to none of media. To this end, the table shows that most of the respondents have access to the internet than any other media.

Table 10: Have you ever listened, watched or read cyber crime stories through any media?

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	355	92.4%
No	25	6.5%
Undecided	4	1%
TOTAL	384	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

To seek response to question 10, the table above shows that 355 (92.4%) of respondents say they have read, watched and listened to cyber crime related stories on one media or the other. 25 (6.5%) claim not to have, while 4 (1%) of the respondents say they cannot decide whether they have or not. Therefore, this table states that most respondents have listened, watched or read about cyber crime stories on any media.

Table 11: How often do you read, watch or listen to cyber crime stories in the media?

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Frequently	175	45.6%
Seldom	166	43.2%
Undecided	43	11.2%
TOTAL	384	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022



Table 11 shows the response on how often respondents watch, listen or read cyber crime stories in the media. To this end, 175 (45.6%) say frequently, 166 (43.2%) say seldom, while 43 of them amounting to 11.2% couldn't decide. Consequently, this table depicts that majority of the respondents frequently listen, watch, or read cyber crime related stories.

Table 12: Which particular medium is most efficient in reporting cyber crime related stories?

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Television	52	13.5%
Radio	22	5.7%
Newspaper	16	4.2%
Magazine	2	0.5%
Internet	274	71.4%
Undecided	18	4.7%
TOTAL	384	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 12 was used to know the particular medium that best reported cyber crime stories. According to respondents, 52 (13.5%) say television has been efficient, 22 (5.7%) say the radio has been efficient, 16 (4.2%) claim the newspaper has been, 2 (0.5%) say its magazine, 274 (71.4%) say the internet, and 18 (4.7%) couldn't decide. To this end, it shows that respondents are of the view that the internet is the most efficient medium for cyber crime stories.

Table 13: Do you think media coverage of cyber crime activities have been helping to curb the crime in our society?

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	140	36.5%
No	198	51.6%
Undecided	46	12%
TOTAL	384	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 13 shows response to know if media coverage of cyber crime activities have been helpful in curbing this crime. As a result, 140 (36.5%) claim that the media coverage has been helpful, 198 (51.6%) say it has not been, while 46 (12%) of them say they cannot decide a response. In a nutshell, table 17 above shows that respondents are of the view that media coverage of cyber crime issues have not been helping in reducing the crime in the society.

Table 14: As a result of what the information and education you may have got concerning cyber crime through the media, have you ever been motivated to play your part in curbing cyber crime in the society?

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	237	61.6%
No	106	27.7%
Undecided	41	10.7%



TOTAL	384	100%
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Source: Field Survey, 2022

The above table 14 shows the view of respondents to know if they have ever been motivated to play their part in curbing cyber crime in the society as a result of the education and information they get through the media report on cyber crime. Here, 237 (61.6%) replied yes, 106 (27.7%) replied no, and 41 (10.7%) undecided. This means that most respondents were motivated to taking actions in curbing cyber crimes in the society due to the reports they read or listen to through the media.

Table 15: Do you accept the fact that the media is playing serious role in reporting cyber crime in their quest to curbing the crime in our society?

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	247	64.3%
No	94	24.5%
Undecided	43	11.2%
TOTAL	384	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

To know the view of respondents on if the media is playing serious role in curbing cyber crime through its coverage. Table 15 explains that 247 (64.3%) respondents are of the notion that the media is playing a serious role in curbing cyber crime through reportage, 94 (24.5%) are of the view that the media is not playing a serious role, and 43 (11.2%) say undecided. This then mean that most respondents are of the view that the media is playing a serious role by reporting cyber crime stories to curb the crime in the society.

Table 16: Do you believe that cyber crime is increasing in our society today rather than decreasing?

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	346	90.1%
No	15	3.9%
Undecided	23	6%
TOTAL	384	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 16 above is used to know the view of respondents on if cyber crime is increasing in our society rather than decreasing. To this end, the table shows that 346 (90.1%) of respondents are of the view that cyber crime is increasing rather than decreasing. 15 (3.9%) of them think that is decreasing rather than increasing, and 23 (6%) of them could not decide their views. As a result of this table, it shows that majority of respondents are of the opinion that cyber crime is increasing rather than decreasing in our society.

Discussion of Findings

Drawing our discussion from findings into the awareness level of the audience on cyber crimes, investigations into this research question reveals that the public is aware of cyber crime issues in



Nigeria as a result of the fact that many of the people have been victim of this crime at one point or the other. Consequently, it is generally believed that this crime is rampant in our society today to the extent that there is likelihood for families, relatives and friends of those involved in the crime to be shielding them. The reason for this observation is down to the fact that most respondents claimed though that the crime is rampant in Nigeria, yet majority claimed that they do not know anyone involved in this crime, and yet many have fallen victim.

More so, on research question two (2) which sought to know if the audience have knowledge on media coverage of cyber crime, investigation into this revealed that the public have a clear knowledge of the various media efforts in cyber crime reportage. Therefore, the public are aware of coverage of cyber crime stories. Furthermore, study shows in relation to the media that is most efficient in the coverage of cyber crimes that the internet- the social media has been effective in the coverage of cyber crime. This is because the study reveals that the public have more access to the internet than any other media. Therefore, it has been the reason why most people frequently listen, watch, and even read cyber crime related stories.

In conclusion, on if media coverage of cyber crime has been helpful in curbing the crime, study shows that though the media is really trying its best in reporting cyber crime activities in the nation such that it often motivates the public to taking action against cyber crime related activities in the society. Nonetheless, the efforts of the media have not translated to help in curbing cyber crime in Nigeria. Owing to these findings, one can conclude, as the study revealed that the media is actually playing a critical role to curbing cyber crime through its coverage, yet, despite these efforts, cyber crime seem to be increasing in the society rather than decreasing.

Conclusion

It is a known fact today that crime exists in different forms, at different levels, and with different categories of people across the globe. One critical crime that is often found with youths of today is cyber crime, though it doesn't exclude adults. This menace has grown to the extent that it is fast becoming a norm in the society. People have agreed to the fact that cyber crime is increasing by the day, even despite the efforts from stakeholders. Nigeria is experiencing a great challenge in cyber crime issues. As a result of this, on one hand, the government is doing its best to ensure this crime is fought to a standstill while on the other hand the Nigeria media is playing a critical role as a stakeholder by reporting this menace to the society in the interest of national security.

The media effort in reporting cyber crime for the purpose of curbing the menace in the society is felt by the public, and even the government. However, it is sad enough to understand that despite these efforts by the media cyber crime is in no way subsiding. In fact, the public are of the notion that it is increasing by the day. In the final analysis, this study has show that the perception of the public on media coverage of cyber crime issue is not yielding a positive result whatsoever. Though the media is trying its best through coverage to expose this crime and those involved in it. Nonetheless, one begins to wonder why the media efforts in reporting to curb cyber crime are not yielding a positive result despite media attention.

Recommendation

At this juncture, it will be good to establish the fact that audience perception of media coverage of cyber crime is positive. This notwithstanding does not translate to mean that the crime is



reducing in the society despite the efforts by the media. As a result, the following are thus recommended on this ground:

1. Since it is not in the jurisdictions or powers of the media to ensure the fight against cyber related crimes. The government, having the powers to instil punishment, though has been doing it, yet efforts should be intensified to allow the effort of media reportage become efficient and meaningful. In other words, the fight against cyber crime is a collective responsibility which does not also exclude relatives and friends of those engaged in the act.
2. More so, in other to draw more attention to cyber crime reportage which may eventually turn to a cultural fight against the menace, the need for government agencies such as National Orientation Agencies, traditional rulers and opinion leaders will also go a long way in complimenting the media effort.

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