



# Development Communication and Eradication of Cyber Crimes among Youths in Yenegoa Metropolis, Bayelsa State

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine development communication strategies and eradication of cyber crimes in Yenegoa metropolis, Bayelsa state. It adopted the following theories; the development communication theory and social learning theory. It also adopted the survey method with the questionnaire as its instrument for data collection. The convenient sampling technique was used. The study population was 35,228 residents of Yenegoa metropolis Bayelsa state. Using the Taro Yamane's formula, a sample size of 400 respondents was drawn from the population. The study had four objectives which are, the perceptions of youths in Yenegoa metropolis on cyber crime, the extent youths in Yenegoa engage in cyber crime, the gratifications youths derive from exposure to cyber crime and how development communication can eradicate cyber crime among youths in Yenegoa. Findings show that youths in Yenegoa understand that cyber crime is a menace to society, and that cyber crime is at a moderate level in Yenegoa. Youths engage in cyber crime in Yenegoa because of certain gratifications, and that development communication messages in traditional media helped to fight against cyber crime in Yenegoa. The study recommended that the government should use the media to aggressively raise public awareness on cyber crime, while individuals must follow simple personal safety regulations such as avoiding exposing personal data or banking information to strangers.

## INTRODUCTION

There has been remarkable development achieved in the cyberspace over the years which is very commendable. Just as the benefits of technology and the internet have greatly enhanced society and life itself by addressing issues, providing solutions, and making things easy for people, cyber crime has skyrocketed all over the world. Criminality and crime have been linked to man since his fall. Crime is illusive, and it will stop at nothing to stifle development. Several communities have used various techniques to combat crime, depending on the nature of the crime. One thing is certain: a society with a high crime rate can not prosper or expand. This is the case since crime is the polar opposite of growth. It has a detrimental effect on society and the economy as a whole.

Communication is an important component of human life. Communication, society, technology, and humans are all intertwined since man is a communicative creature by nature; consequently, communication must be used as a strategic instrument to progress man and society. A communication strategy is a collection of active communication tools designed to elicit specific responses from the target audience. A successful communication strategy takes into account the message to be delivered, the medium to be used, the target audience and feedback. The message must be clear, accurate, and reliable, and it must be presented via a media that can effectively reach the intended audience. Communication methods are critical because they help to prevent and reduce social vices. In instances when people have the opportunity to change their ways of life, communication can be used to persuade and influence individuals through social mobilization, as well as to aid in changing behaviours through education and change management (Servaes, 2008). Bayelsa is a Nigerian state located in the south of the country, at the heart of the Niger Delta. Its population is estimated to be around 1,704,515 people (NPC 2006).

The Yenagoa Metropolis is Bayelsa State's capital and one of the state's eight local government areas. The state, like the rest of the world, is dealing with the social vice of cyber crime, which is spreading like wildfire among young people.

### Statement of Problem

The notion of communication, as well as its tactics, has been sidelined and significantly disregarded in Yenagoa metropolis, Bayelsa state, throughout the years, despite the fact that it is a crucial instrument for development. Despite its capacity to bringing about positive society change, communication is generally undervalued. Despite the fact that communication has been proved to be beneficial and important in change and development, many people still do not recognize or understand its importance in progress. Communication

is usually overlooked as a critical component of social change. This paper looks at development communication strategies and the eradication of cyber crime in Yenagoa, Bayelsa state.

### Objectives of the Study

The following formed the objectives of the study which are to:

- Access the perception of youths in Yenagoa metropolis on cyber crime.
- Analyze the extent to which youths in Yenagoa metropolis engage in cyber crime.
- Examine the gratification youths in Yenagoa metropolis derive from exposure to cyber crime.
- Investigate how development communication can eradicate cyber crime among youths in Yenagoa metropolis.

### Research Questions

- What are the perceptions of youths in Yenagoa metropolis on cyber crime?
- To what extent do youths in Yenagoa metropolis engage in cyber crime?
- What are the gratifications youths in Yenagoa metropolis derive from exposure to cyber crime?
- How can development communication eradicate cyber crime among youths in Yenagoa metropolis?

### Theoretical Framework.

Abend (2008) as cited by Swanson (2013) retouched that: "theories are formulated to explain, predict, and understand phenomena and, in many cases, to challenge and extend existing knowledge within the limits of critical bounding assumptions". The theoretical framework describes and provides theories that seek to explain the research. The theories used to form the foundation of this research are:

- Development Communication Theory
- Social Learning Theory

### Development Communication Theory

The theory was propounded in 1972 by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw. They posit that, the media should be used to promote society's general growth and should be focused on the society's collective interest rather than the selfish interests of a few individuals. It was proposed that the government intervene and promote economic growth. According to Baran and Davis (2012, p.149), "developmental media theory advocates media support for an existing political regime and its effort to bring about national economic development." The theory emphasized that the media

must play supportive role to government policy and programmes rather than being critical of governments, its programmes and personnel. Several developing countries in South America use this theory (Baran & Davis, 2012).

According to Hasan (2010), development media, also known as development communication, is a set of communication methods, techniques, and ideas used in international development to enhance the living conditions and quality of life of those who are poor or marginalized. The use of communication tools to address development challenges is characterized by conceptual flexibility and diversity, which reflects the field's historical history. Information dissemination and education, behaviour modification, social marketing, social mobilization, media advocacy, communication for social change, and participatory communication are some of the strategies used in the business.

Development communication is for the good of society, and it benefits the entire community even though it comes from a specific group. Ndimele & Innocent (2016), development communication theory in developing countries, the media is used entirely for societal development, notably in the fields of agriculture, health, and social mobilization. They believe media messages can be delivered in a way that aids poor countries in achieving long-term socioeconomic improvement. The idea encourages people to participate in the industrialization process from the ground up; as a result, media material should be development-driven and focused on people's socioeconomic lives.

### **Social Learning Theory**

This theory as propounded by Albert Bandura in 1986 emphasizes the importance of observing, modeling, and imitating the behaviours, attitudes and emotional reactions of others. Social learning theory considers how both environmental and cognitive factors interact to influence human learning and behaviour. Bandura popularized the term "social learning theory," which describes how observations in the social world influence actions and cognitions, also proposed modeling in which an observer sees a person's behaviour and their consequences, in addition to classical and operant conditioning. If that individual is rewarded for their actions, the observer is more inclined to repeat them. If, on the other hand, the conduct is punished, the observer learns to expect bad results. The social learning theory is a learning and social behaviours theory that claims that new behaviours can be learned by watching and imitating others.

In general, the social learning theory argues that those who perceive and experience more rewards and fewer costs are more likely to engage in criminal behaviour. The social learning theory (SLT) is a popular explanation for criminal behaviour that claims that crime is learned and more likely to occur when people associate with criminals, or exposed to delinquent

models, expect or receive more rewards and fewer punishments for crime, and have a larger number of definitions favourable to crime.

Many delinquency prevention and offender treatment programmes are based on social learning theory, which has lately been combined with social structural notions to form a social structure. The social learning theory has been used to a variety of phenomena and studies on a variety of topics, including illicit drug use and prevention, prostitution, theft and so on. These domains reveal a similar factor: involvement, interest, and benefit, as well as consequences. Now, in order to be involved in criminal behaviour, the social learning theory states that such a person has witnessed to some level the advantage of the practice as well as the gain associated with it, and hence has a natural desire to participate in it. Also, in a community where cyber crime or cyber criminals are permitted to roam freely on the streets without facing any penalties or punishment even when caught, the rest of the community is left with the impression that they may be engaged as well.

Thus, socialization, culture, and the media all contribute to the creation of behavioural expectations, and one does not need to personally experience reinforcement or punishment to be affected. Bandura (1977) proposed that after completing a task successfully, one feels a sense of self-efficacy. A cyber criminal's capacity to execute behaviours necessary to produce specific performance attainments, or self efficacy, is required to complete a task successfully without being caught.

### **Conceptual Review**

#### **Development Communication**

Communication is a very vital aspect of human existence and the strategic use of communication brings about positive social change and development. According to Udoakah (1998), communication is the process by which humans convey their needs, feelings, aspirations, ambitions, and sentiments using codes, symbols, and language that is recognized by all parties concerned. Communication is therefore important in the process of development, because it involves the study of people relating to themselves and to one another in groups and societies, influencing and being influenced, informing and being informed, teaching and being taught, loving and being loved, entertaining and being entertained (Adepoju 2000). Communication, based on this may be described as an instructive process that leads to a successful development process. In many aspects, communication is essential to this quest. It enables planners to consult with people while formulating development plans, for example, taking into account their needs, attitudes, and traditional knowledge. Only through communication can project beneficiaries become the primary actors in the success of development programs (UNDP, 1993).

To achieve any positive social change communication is required as observed by Pratt & Boyden (1985): communication between members of the society; communication among development experts and the target audience with whom they work. Communication is an essential component of every human activity, involving the interchange of knowledge, information, feelings, hopes, and fears.

To Braimoh (1988), Effective communication is a necessary skill for the formation and maintenance of positive social change and interactions. It entails a regular exchange of ideas and interactions among individuals in order to solve issues, and efficient communication is regarded as a necessity for all aspects of group functioning. With all of these realities, good communication cannot be overlooked if development is to be achieved. As a consequence, communication is essential for the success of community development. People are generally resistant to change, but in order to effect change, you must communicate, address the root causes of the problems, and present alternative solution. The intentional use of communication to achieve socially beneficial aims is known as development communication.

In relations to development, communication refers to an interactive process in which community members and information providers communicate information, knowledge, and skills vital to development, either in person or through media such as radio, print, telephones, and cybernetics. The purpose of proper and strategic communication is to give people the information and skills they need to make informed decisions and improve their livelihood, because people are at the core of every development effort, since development does not occur in a vacuum, in this context communication is used for community mobilization, decision-making, and action, as well as confidence development for spreading awareness, sharing information, and changing attitudes, behaviours, and lifestyles (FAO 2006).

Communication for development is the systematic and planned use of channels of communication such as interpersonal channels, ICTs, audio-visuals, and mainstream press for development reasons. Communication will be used to collect and exchange information among all those involved in the development planning process, with the goal of reaching an agreement on the problems facing developmental problems and exploring solutions, mobilize people for development ventures, and trying to assist in the resolution of problems and misconceptions that may arise during the development plan. (Thussu 2000).

Communication development's main purpose is to equip local citizens with the knowledge, ideas, skills, and experience they need to grow. Every social development project requires communication, as observed by Pratt & Boyden (1985): Communication between members of a community and a group; communication between development professionals

and the people they deal with; contact between funders and field workers, and so on.

## Cybercrime

Cybercrime is a large umbrella term that encompasses computer-assisted crime in which computers and technology are used in a supporting role. At the same time, the term cyber crime also includes computer focused crimes that are a direct result of computer technology and would not exist without it, such as unauthorized computer system trespassing (Furnell 2002; McGuire and Dowling 2013)

Cyber crimes can be classified into different categories, it includes; cyber-trespass (e.g., unauthorized system access), cyber-deception/theft (e.g., identity theft, online fraud, digital piracy), cyber-porn/obscenity (e.g., child sexual exploitation materials), and cyber-violence (e.g., cyberstalking; cyber terrorism). (Holt, Bossler, and Seigfried-Spellar 2018).

It is nearly impossible to estimate the amount of cyber crime that occurs in most nations across the world because of a lack of standardized legal definitions for these offenses and few valid, reliable official statistics (Holt and Bossler 2016). Evidence demonstrates, however, that cyber crime rates are increasing as the rates for many forms of traditional street crimes continue to decrease (Tcherni 2016).

The amount of research on cyber crime has grown exponentially over the last few decades, some focused on exploring how the nature of cyber crime and cyberspace differed from traditional crime and terrestrial space (Grabosky 2001).

A significant challenge for cyber crime scholars, both historically and currently, is the lack of official statistics on most forms of cyber crime. In the United States, the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Report's Summary Reporting System, the most commonly used source for crime data, provides no information on cyber crime or whether any form of technology was involved in the commission of a crime. The National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), which the U.S. is fully moving to in 2021, also does not provide a specific cyber crime category, but does allow agencies to indicate whether a computer was involved in the commission of a crime. Since necessity is the mother of invention, scholars studying cyber crime were required to collect primary data in innovative ways, such as by analyzing forum discussions, bulletin boards, and blogs, deploying honeypots, and developing field experiments (Holt and Bossler 2016).

## How Cyber criminals Operate.

Kate Brush (2021) describes extensively how criminals operate as well as explaining in details the types of cyber crime that can be found in the modern era. Kate explains that cyber criminals range from a single user

who engages in cyber bullying to state sponsored actors such as China's intelligence agencies. Cybercrime can start everywhere there is digital data, opportunity, or motivation. Cybercrime does not happen in a vacuum; it is, in many ways, a distributed phenomenon. That is, hackers frequently enlist the help of third parties to accomplish their schemes. Today, fraudsters utilize crypto currency brokers to trade illegal drugs and keep virtual money in escrow for state threat actors, who rely on technology to steal intellectual property. The world of cyber crime is currently in flux, as cyber criminals seek novel ways to carry out their activities and achieve their objectives while evading detection and imprisonment on a daily basis.

### Types of Cybercrime

Kate brush (2021) enumerated the numerous varieties of cyber crime, and posited that majority of cyber crimes are carried out with the intention of gaining financial advantage for the perpetrators, though the methods through which cyber criminals seek payment can vary. The following are examples of certain types of cyber crime:

□ Cyber extortion: An attack or threat of an attack that is followed by a demand for money to cease the attack. The ransomware assault is one type of cyber extortion. The attacker gains access to an organization's networks and encrypts its documents and files (or anything else of value) until a ransom is paid. This is usually in the form of crypto money, such as bitcoin.

□ Crypto jacking: An exploit that employs scripts to mine crypto currency without the user's permission within browsers. crypto currency mining software may be loaded into the victim's machine as part of a crypto jacking attack. However, if the user's browser has a tab or window open on the rogue site, many assaults rely on JavaScript code that performs in-browser mining. There is no need to install malware because the in-browser mining code is executed when the affected page is loaded.

- Identity theft: An attack in which a person gains access to a computer in order to obtain personal information about a user, which they then use to steal that person's identity or gain access to their valuable accounts, such as banking and credit cards. On dark net markets, cyber criminals buy and sell identity information, including financial accounts and other types of accounts such as video streaming services, web mail, video and audio streaming, online auctions, and more. Identity thieves frequently target personal health information as well.
- Credit card fraud: An attack in which hackers gain access to a retailer's networks in order to steal their customers' credit card and/or banking information. On dark net markets,

stolen payment cards can be bought and sold in bulk, with hacking groups profiting from selling to lower-level cyber criminals who earn from credit card fraud against individual accounts.

- Cyber espionage: A cyber crime in which a cyber criminal hacks into a government's or other organization's systems or networks in order to gain access to confidential information. Profit or ideology may be the driving force behind an attack. Cyber espionage activities can include any type of cyber attack to gather, modify, or destroy data, as well as the use of network connected devices, such as webcams or closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras, to spy on a targeted individual or group and monitoring communications, such as emails, text messages, and instant messages.
- Software piracy: An attack involving the unauthorized copying, dissemination, and usage of software programmes for commercial or personal gain. This sort of cyber crime is frequently related with trademark infringements, copyright infringements, and patent infringements.
- Exit scam: Not surprisingly, the dark web has spawned a digital counterpart of an old swindle known as the exit scam. Dark web administrators shift virtual currency kept in marketplace escrow accounts to their own accounts in today's form, thus stealing from other criminals.
- Ransomware: ransomware is the fastest growing cyber crime, ransomware victims include big companies, small and medium enterprises and individual consumers. Ransomware began years ago with floppy disks sent through the mail, inviting victims to take a survey assessing their risk of contracting AIDS. Ransomware has gone from artisanal exploit to mass-market. Lewis James (2018).

### Development Communication as a Tool for the Eradication of Cybercrime

Communication for development is the systematic and planned use of communication channels for development purposes, such as interpersonal channels, ICTs, audio-visuals, and the mainstream media. According to Ochonogor (2006), a successful multimedia strategy would require project managers to take advantage of the vast capacity available through numerous communication channels such as radio, television, newspapers, and magazines. Posters and traditional media channels, as well as social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Whatsapp when used simultaneously, have the potential to be extraordinarily effective in achieving the stated goal of informing and enlightening members of

the Yenagoa metropolis of the consequences of this social vice.

Cybercrime is a vice that should be eradicated because it poses a significant threat to the socio-economic well-being of the people of Yenagoa, and development communication can be used strategically to eradicate cyber crime. To effectively tackle this menace, development communication would need to utilize a variety of media that is multimedia, which combines old and current communication channels, such as radio, television, newspaper, town hall meetings, magazine, cinema, as well as the internet. This means there is a need to create a functional development communication strategy, and all kinds of media channels should be leveraged on effectively in order to reach out to the population of Yenagoa, Bayelsa state, particularly young adults. Cyber crime is a social ill that is slowly but steadily ravaging Nigerian youngsters across the country. The rapid transition to an electronic society in which everything is done electronically, such as electronic payment, electronic voting, electronic banking, electronic registration, and so on, has left electronic transactions vulnerable to cyber attacks, resulting in negative security consequences. The internet is accessible and used by people from many works of life; it could be for work, education, pleasure, and so on.

Ochonogor (2006) throws light on the use of the entertainment-education approach to efficiently pass across development messages, since people's attention is easily captivated when significant concerns are portrayed as entertainment rather than news reports. This means that in the Yenagoa metropolitan, should inculcate appealing multi-media techniques such as anti-cybercrime campaigns using drama, songs, and jingles, as well as captivating mobile enlightenment campaigns, to educate youths on the need to desist from cyber crime and other societal vices. This is pertinent no note, because when the media is utilized correctly in this millennial era, cyber crime activities will be minimized causing a safer society and development to thrive.

**Table 1: Mean (x) Analysis of how youths perceive cyber crime in Yenagoa metropolis.**

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	X	REMARK
1	I believe cybercrime is legal	5 20	15 45	258 516	122 122	1.7	REJECTED
2	I believe cybercrime is illegal	220 880	172 516	8 16	0	3.5	ACCEPTED
3	I believe cybercrime is acceptable	144 576	4 12	16 32	236 236	2.1	REJECTED
4	I believe cybercrime is unacceptable	180 720	90 270	47 94	83 83	2.9	ACCEPTED

From the above table, item one did not meet up the mean criterion which shows that it was not accepted by the respondents, unlike item two which is almost clearly an opposite of the statement on item one. Both items and responses from respondents clearly show that most youths of Yenagoa metropolis see cyber crime as an

## METHODOLOGY

The survey research design was adopted for this study, the questionnaire was used as the instrument of data collection. This study was conducted in Yenagoa metropolis, Bayelsa state. According to the National Population Commission (NPC, 2006) the Yenagoa metropolis has a population of 352,285. Using the Taro Yamane formula this study has a sample size of 400, therefore 400 copies of the questionnaire were administered to residents of Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. The convenient sampling technique was used for this study.

### Measuring Instrument

The four points likert scale was used to analyse data drawn from items in the questionnaire. Mean criterion was used to determine acceptability or rejection of and item, the mean criterion for this study is 2.5 calculated thus: SA(Strongly agreed) = 4points, A(Agreed) = 3points, D(Disagreed) = 2points, SD(Strongly disagree) = 1point.

$$\frac{4+3+2+1}{4} = 2.5$$

Therefore 2.5 will serve as the mean criterion for this study.

### Presentation, Discussion and Analysis of Findings

This study used a survey method, collecting its data through the questionnaire. A total of 400 copies of questionnaire were administered to the respondents, and 400 copies of the questionnaire were retrieved and used for the study.

illegal venture. Furthermore, items three and four looked into the level of acceptability of cyber crimes among the respondents, and majority of the respondents as shown in item four on the questionnaire attested to the unacceptability of cyber crime in the society.

Cyber crime almost in every clime remains a menace to the society, Nigeria, especially Yenegoa axis has seen a sharp rise in this type of activities among its youth residents in the society. Many of the respondents for this research which are basically youths, agreed to the fact that cyber crime is not a good thing in any society, however a lot of people still engage in these activities.

The illegality of cyber crime cannot be over emphasized as punishments vary from environment to environment, with people getting some number of years in imprisonment in some cases. However some youths still believe in the clout they tend to enjoy from engaging in cyber crime activities.

**Table 2: Mean (x) Analysis of the extent to which youths in the Yenegoa metropolis engage in cyber crime.**

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	X	REMARK
3	There is a high rate of cyber crime in Yenegoa	8 32	196 588	32 64	164 164	2.1	REJECTED
4	There is a moderate rate of cyber crime in Yenegoa	129 516	75 225	96 192	100 100	2.5	ACCEPTED
5	There is low rate of cyber crime in Yenegoa	79 316	126 378	111 222	84 84	2.5	ACCEPTED
6	Youths in Yenegoa engage in cyber extortion	100 400	125 375	64 128	111 111	2.5	ACCEPTED
7	Youths in Yenegoa engage in Identity theft	124 496	216 648	48 96	12 12	3.1	ACCEPTED
8	Youths in Yenegoa engage in Credit card fraud	55 220	121 363	99 198	125 125	2.2	REJECTED
9	Youths in Yenegoa engage in Crypto Jacking.	67 268	136 408	100 200	97 97	2.4	REJECTED

Items three, four, and five was concerned with learning about the rate of cyber crime activities in Yenegoa, it was rejected that Yenegoa was experiencing a high rate of cyber crime activities, however the respondents accepted cyber crime activities are at a moderate level in Yenegoa.

From the above table, it was also discovered that cyber extortion and identity theft were prevalent among youths in Yenegoa who engage themselves in cyber crime activities.

The extent of cyber crime in Yenegoa is seen to be at a moderate level based on findings gotten from the respondents, however some different levels of cyber crime can be experienced at different levels in Yenegoa. Respondents claim that youths engage in cyber extortion and identity theft, but do not accept that youths engage in crypto jacking and credit card fraud, although we know that it is only a matter of time before these new formats of cyber crime become rampant among youths of Yenegoa.

**Table 3: Mean (x) Analysis of the gratification youths derive from their involvement in cyber crime activities.**

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	X	REMARK
10	Youths engage in cyber crime because they gain quick wealth	106 416	240 720	44 88	12 12	3.0	ACCEPTED
11	Youths in Yenegoa engage in cyber crime because the gain financial freedom	132 528	208 624	40 80	20 20	3.1	ACCEPTED
12	Youths in Yenegoa engage in cyber crime to experience rich lifestyle.	80 320	137 411	136 272	47 47	2.6	ACCEPTED

In the above table three, items ten, eleven, and twelve showed that certain types of gratifications were also responsible for making youths engage themselves in cyber crime activities. Gratifications such as quick wealth, the need to experience rich lifestyle, and

financial freedom were all accepted by the respondents as motivating factors responsible for youth engagement in cyber crime activities.

Gratifications and quick gains gotten from engagement in cyber crime activities are sometimes

factors responsible for youth engagement in related activities. Various gratifications could come from quick wealth, the need to be among the big boys, the need to spend big and hang around the opposite gender, etc.

However, there can be other legitimate means of getting all these gratifications satisfied from engaging in profitable activities.

**Table 4: Mean (x) Analysis of how development communication can be used to eradicate cyber crime in Yenagoa metropolis.**

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	X	REMARK
13	Town hall meetings have been effective in eradicating cyber crimes	25 100	80 240	122 244	173 173	1.8	REJECTED
14	Town criers talk about cyber crime while sending messages out in the society	10 40	84 252	156 312	150 150	1.8	REJECTED
15	Traditional media help publish messages against cyber crime.	160 640	160 480	48 96	32 32	3.1	ACCEPTED

Table four shows that generally apart from traditional forms of media such as radio, television and news papers, not enough is being done in terms of employing development communication channels such as town hall meetings and town criers in eradicating cyber crimes among youths in Yenegoa. Town criers and town hall meetings did not get enough acceptability by the respondents, in the sense that they have being properly employed in eradicating cyber crime as they believe that information about cyber crimes are not captured in discussions held in town hall meetings.

For communication to be effective, it has to pass through the right channel, traditional means of communication have not helped a lot in fighting against cyber crime in society as messages about cyber crime hardly pass through those medium such as town hall meetings and town criers. Television, radio, and newspaper media have done a lot in helping in the war against cyber crime, however more is needed to be done if more youths should be brought out of the shackles of cyber crime engagement.

## CONCLUSION

Cybercrime is a threat that should be stopped and reduced to the barest minimum in the city of Yenagoa, through the variety of development communication strategies discussed in this study. The findings show that young adults commit bulk of the cyber crimes, and that the development communication strategies can be used to combat cyber crime in Yenegoa if properly employed.

The study concluded that youths of Yenegoa agree that cyber crime is bad, however there is a certain level of cyber crime activities prevalent in the city, based on certain motivating factors like the need to feel among, financial freedom among others. Communicating through town criers and town hall meetings have not been effective in fighting against

cyber crimes in Yenegoa, however there has been some level of progress made with traditional media.

Although various solutions have been proposed to prevent future incidences of this crime, the government and individuals can still do a lot to lessen it. It is proposed that our government place a higher priority on the welfare and well-being of its citizens in order to reduce the burden on individuals by providing good-paying jobs and other basic necessities. This will have a big positive impact on the quality of life. Cyber crime is expected to reduce and eventually be eradicated if development communication is effectively utilized.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the findings:

1. The government should use the media to aggressively raise public awareness on cyber crime, and personal cyber space security should be incorporated into the primary, secondary, and university education curricula.
2. Individuals must follow simple personal safety regulations such as avoiding exposing personal data or banking information to strangers, such as credit card pins, bank account numbers, e-mail codes, and using antivirus software to protect their systems from infection, among other things.
3. Both the government and the private sector should provide jobs for young graduates, and where jobs are scarce, vocational skills and entrepreneurial programmes should be established to keep the youth fully engaged.
4. Development communication strategies should be employed to reach the youths and influence their perception on cyber crime.

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