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Teachers' Awareness and Attitude toward Students' Cybercrime Practices in Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis in Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

This study examined teachers' awareness and attitude toward students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis in Rivers State. Four objectives, four research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of 1877 public senior secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Metropolis, with 1314 teachers in Obio-Akpor L.G.A and 563 teachers in Port Harcourt City L.G.A. The sample size was 330 teachers, using Taro Yamane formula to determine the sample. Multi-stage procedure was adopted, while proportionate sampling technique was used to determine the number of teachers from each of the selected public school in Rivers State for the study. Self-structured instrument titled "Teachers' Awareness and Attitude toward Students' Cybercrime Practices" (TAASCP) was used for data collection. The instrument was validated two experts: one in Measurement and Evaluation and one in Guidance and Counselling, all in Faculty of Education, Rivers State University. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha for a measure of internal consistency, which yielded reliability coefficient of 0.84 for TAASCP, while the sub-scales yielded reliability coefficient of 0.85 for Teachers' Awareness and 0.83 for Teacher' Attitude towards Students Cybercrime Practices. Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer research questions while independent sample t-test was used for test of the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that teachers demonstrated high level of awareness towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools and exhibited a positive attitude toward addressing students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis. The findings also indicated that both male and female teachers, , possess comparable levels of awareness and maintain similar attitudes toward students' cybercrime practices. The study recommended amongst others that schools should implement regular monitoring and evaluation systems to assess teachers' effectiveness in addressing cybercrime practices and to identify areas for improvement in awareness and attitude initiatives. Teachers, in collaboration with school management, should lead awareness campaigns to educate students about the consequences of cybercrime on their academic, moral and social development.

Keywords: Awareness, Attitude, Crime, Internet fraud Cybercrime Practices in Secondary Schools

INTRODUCTION

Crime has long been defined as behaviour that violates legal norms and disrupts social order, causing harm to individuals, institutions and communities alike. Over recent decades, the phenomenon of crime has shifted significantly, as traditional physical offences are now complemented by a wide array of digital enabled transgressions (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 2023). In particular, the proliferation of internet connectivity, mobile devices and social media has created fertile terrain for internet fraud, a subset of cyber offences that has become especially prevalent in contexts with rapidly expanding but under regulated digital ecosystems.

Internet fraud broadly refers to deceptive practices carried out online with the aim of illegally obtaining money, sensitive information or other valuables from individuals and organizations (Adebusuyi & Ogunlade 2023). In countries such as Nigeria, internet fraud (including scams, business email compromise and sextortion schemes) has evolved into a lucrative enterprise. One Nigerian academic estimate places national annual losses due to cyber offences at around US\$500 million (Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), 2023). To deepen the problem, the national anticrime agency Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) continues to report youth involvement in “Yahoo Yahoo” style internet fraud, highlighting the social and economic dimensions of this issue (Zis, Artemiadis & Vemmos, 2024).

More broadly, the umbrella term cybercrime encompasses any criminal activity that involves a computer, a network device or a network. This includes high profile attacks on corporate or governmental infrastructure, but also more deviant behaviours that affect individuals, cyberbullying, online harassment, examination cheat scams and illicit sharing of intimate images are all part of the landscape (Europol, 2023). The ubiquity of the internet means that even younger cohorts such as adolescents in secondary schools are exposed not only as potential victims but also as unwitting participants or perpetrators of cybercrime. Within secondary school environments, the rise of digital technologies has brought both opportunities and risks. On the one hand, e learning, mobile apps and online resources can enhance teaching and learning.

On the other hand, they expose students and schools to cyber risks. In Nigeria, for example, secondary school students have been found to be aware of cyber harassment behaviours. Ojedokun and Eraye (2022) reported that about 53.9% of 653 respondents knew that cyber harassment occurred either to them or peers via mobile phone calls, chat rooms, text messages and websites. The effects of these cyber related behaviours in educational settings are multifaceted. They include negative impacts on students’ psychological wellbeing (anxiety, depression, social isolation), deterioration of academic performance (absenteeism, loss of concentration, academic dishonesty), and erosion of trust within the school community. For instance, in Nigerian higher education institutions, cybercrime involvement has been linked to declining academic performance and a range of social vices (Eze, Okafor & Onyekwelu, 2023). At the institutional level, schools may suffer reputational damage, diminished enrolment or increased administrative burdens when cybercrime incidents occur. Indeed, one Nigerian survey found that many schools lack adequate cybersecurity measures and teacher training in this regard, increasing vulnerability to phishing, hacking and data breaches (Eguonor, Ndidiamaka & Gbaeprekumo, 2024).

Given this challenging context, the role of teachers in the secondary school is pivotal. Teachers are frontline actors in the school’s ecosystem. They monitor student behaviour, detect early warning signs of distress or deviance, deliver educational content (including digital citizenship), enforce rules and model ethical online behaviour. Teacher awareness in this context refers to educators’ understanding of the cyber threat, knowledge of digital risks, awareness of prevention, and familiarity with relevant socio legal frameworks (Chukwuedo & Ogbu, 2022). When educators are well informed, they can proactively guide students, intervene in cyber incidents, integrate digital safety topics into curricula, and collaborate with school management for institutional safeguards. However, James and Musa (2022) revealed that majority of teachers have high awareness of cybercrime manifestations, such as cyberbullying, use fake online identities to deceive people and use social media to impersonate others for criminal intentions. Philips and Uwan (2023) recorded that teachers were generally aware of the growing rate of cybercrime among students and perceived its negative impacts on students’ moral and academic development. The study of Nwiyi and Mushy (2020) found no significant difference in the level of awareness of male and female teachers regarding students’ engagement in cybercrime practices. Abubakar and Mohammed (2023) also corroborated that there is no significant gender difference in awareness of teachers towards students’ cybercrime practices among secondary school students.

Closely allied is the concept of teacher attitude toward cybercrime practices. Teacher attitude encompasses beliefs, feelings and behavioural propensities regarding digital offences and the educator’s role in preventing or responding to them. A positive attitude might manifest as commitment to fostering student digital citizenship and willingness to integrate cyber safety into lessons; a less favourable attitude might reveal as apathy, scepticism or lack of self-efficacy to act. Empirical work suggests that when teachers feel under prepared, lack confidence or view digital offences as outside their remit, their response to cyber incidents may be less proactive. Udochukwu (2021) revealed that teachers exhibited positive and proactive attitude towards combating cybercrime among students. Loveday and Nnamani

(2022) revealed that teachers feel angry when students boast are involved in fraudulent online activities and discouraged when students view cybercriminals as role models. Zuby and Ofoneme (2019) found no significant gender difference in teachers' attitude towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools. The study of Job and Akakuru (2023) also revealed no significant gender difference in teachers' attitudes towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools.

The prevalence of cybercrime has become a significant concern within the secondary school system in Port Harcourt metropolis, with effects that corrode both the educational foundation and the social fabric of the youth. The impact is immediately visible in a shift in student values and academic focus. Many students, enticed by narratives of quick financial wealth flaunted by peers involved in online fraud, demonstrate a declining interest in their studies. This manifest in poor concentration in class, a rise in academic dishonesty such as examination malpractice facilitated by digital devices, and increased absenteeism as students dedicate time to their illicit online activities (Giumetti & Kowalski, 2022). The pursuit of academic excellence is increasingly rivaled by the allure of fast money, undermining the very purpose of schooling.

Psychologically, the environment fostered by cybercrime practices is toxic. Students engaged in these activities often exhibit inflated egos and use ill-gotten wealth to bully or intimidate their peers, creating a social hierarchy based on criminal success rather than merit or character (Ukwayi & Okpa, 2024). Conversely, victims of cybercrimes originating within the school, such as blackmail, suffer from anxiety, shame, and a loss of trust in their fellow students. Furthermore, the school as an institution bears the brunt of this trend. The reputation of schools in Port Harcourt is tarnished when they become known as breeding grounds for cybercriminals, which can affect enrolment and community support. The burden of managing related disputes and potential involvement of law enforcement also diverts valuable administrative resources away from education. Therefore, there is need to investigate teachers' awareness and attitude towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, so as contribute to strengthening preventive strategies and school based digital safety culture.

Statement of the Problem

Crime in the 21st century has taken on new dimensions, with cybercrime emerging as one of the fastest-growing and most pervasive forms of criminal activity. The widespread use of digital technologies, mobile phones, and internet access among young people has introduced new challenges into the educational system. In Rivers State in which Port Harcourt Metropolis is not exempted, cybercrime popularly referred to as "Yahoo Yahoo" has become an alarming social issue, as many adolescents and secondary school students are being exposed to, and in some cases directly involved in, cyber-fraudulent activities (Okafor et al., 2025). This growing trend threatens not only national security and economic stability but also the moral fabric of society.

In the educational context, the incidence of cyber-related deviance such as online scams, impersonation, cyberbullying, digital examination malpractice, and hacking of school database is on the rise. These behaviours have been linked to students' exposure to social media platforms where fraudulent lifestyles are glamorized and normalized. Alarming, secondary school students in urban centres like Port Harcourt where internet connectivity and mobile technology are widespread, appear increasingly vulnerable to the lure of cybercrime. Reports suggest that some students view cybercrime as a shortcut to wealth, while others engage in it under peer pressure or as a response to economic hardship (Yushau & Emmanuel, 2025).

Teachers, as custodians of moral and academic development, play a critical role in detecting, preventing, and correcting such deviant behaviours. However, there are growing concerns that many teachers lack sufficient awareness of the nature, scope and evolving patterns of cybercrime among students. A limited understanding of cybercrime mechanisms may result in teachers' inability to identify early warning signs or to guide students effectively on responsible digital behaviour (Eguonor, et al., 2023). Furthermore, teachers' attitudes toward cybercrime, whether positive, indifferent, or negative can influence the extent to which they engage in preventive and corrective actions. For instance, a teacher who perceives cybercrime as a "minor offence" or "inevitable in the digital age" might not take active steps to address it.

Despite increasing public concern and occasional media coverage, empirical studies examining teachers' awareness and attitude toward students' cybercrime practices in Port Harcourt Metropolis are scarce. Consequently, there is limited data on whether teachers possess the requisite knowledge, vigilance, and moral disposition to combat this rising menace within the secondary school system. This knowledge gap poses a serious problem because if teachers the moral and intellectual guides of young people are uninformed or indifferent toward cybercrime, efforts to curb the practice among students may prove ineffective. Therefore, the study teachers' awareness and attitude toward students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis in Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate teachers' awareness and attitude toward students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis in Rivers State. Specifically, this study sought to achieve the following objectives:

1. examine the level of teachers' awareness towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State.
2. examine teachers' attitude towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State.
3. examine the level of teachers' awareness towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State based on gender
4. determine teachers' attitude towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State based on gender

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

1. What is the level of teachers' awareness towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State?
2. What is the teachers' attitude towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State?
3. What is the level of teachers' awareness towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State based on gender?
4. What is the teachers' attitude towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State based on gender?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guided the study at 0.05 level of significance

1. There is no significant difference in the level of teachers' awareness towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State based on gender
2. There is no significant in the teachers' attitude towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State based on gender

RESEARCH METHOD

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Obilor (2018) noted that descriptive survey is a study where researcher collects data from a large sample drawn from a given population and describes certain features of the sample as they are at the time of the study and which are of the interest to the researcher, however, without manipulating any independent variables of the study. The population of the study consisted of 1877 public senior secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Metropolis, with 1314 teachers in Obio-Akpor L.G.A and 563 teachers in Port Harcourt City L.G.A. The sample size for this study was 330 public senior secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Metropolis. Taro Yamane formula was used to determine the sample size. Multi-stage sampling was used for the distribution of the sample. The two Local Government are as were sampled, thus; Obio-Akpor and Port Harcourt City L.G.As. In the first stage simple random sampling technique was used to draw 8 schools from each L.G.A, making it a

total of 16 schools for the study, while in the second stage, proportionate sampling was used to determine the number of teachers from each school. Self-designed instrument titled "Teachers' Awareness and Attitude toward Students' Cybercrime Practices (TAASCP).), was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by two experts: one in Measurement and Evaluation and in Guidance and Counselling, Faculty of Education, Rivers State University. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha which yielded reliability coefficient of 0.84 for TAASCP, while the sub-scales yielded reliability coefficient of 0.85 for Teachers' Awareness and 0.83 for Teacher' Attitude toward Students' Cybercrime Practices. Three hundred and thirty (330) copies were distributed, while 312 copies were properly filled, representing 96% returned for data analyses. Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer research questions while independent sample t-test was used for test of the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question One: What is the level of teachers' awareness towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Teachers' Awareness towards Students' Cybercrime Practices in Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis

S/N	Item	\bar{X}	Std.	Decision
1	I am aware that students use social media platforms to scam unsuspecting victims.	3.43	1.33	Agree
2	Students use fake online identities to deceive people for financial gain.	3.37	1.22	Agree
3	I am aware that students justify cybercrime as a means of survival	3.40	1.25	Agree
4	I am aware that students use the internet to spread false information for personal benefits.	3.10	0.95	Agree
5	I am aware that students use social media to impersonate others for criminal intentions.	3.46	1.31	Agree
6	I am aware that cybercrime among students affects their academic performance and moral behaviour.	3.49	1.33	Agree
7	Peer influence encourages students to participate in cybercrime.	2.97	0.82	Agree
8	Economic hardship contributes to students' involvement in cybercrime	2.90	0.75	Agree
9	Most teachers are not adequately trained to identify students involved in cybercrime	3.08	0.93	Agree
10	I am aware that some students engage in online fraud activities such as "Yahoo Yahoo."	3.35	1.20	Agree
Grand Mean/Std		3.26	1.09	Accepted

Table 1 reveals level of teachers' awareness towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State. The table shows that items (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10) were accepted because their criterion mean was above 2.5. It also shows that item (6) has the highest mean score of (3.49), while item (8) has the lowest mean score of (2.90). Again, a grand mean of (3.26) was gotten, indicating that teachers' have awareness towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State.

Research Question Two: What is the teachers' attitude towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Teachers' Attitude towards Students' Cybercrime Practices in Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis

11.5	Item	\bar{X}	Std.	Decision
1	I feel disappointed when I discover that a student is involved in cybercrime.	3.41	1.26	Agree
2	I believe students who engage in online fraud should face disciplinary actions.	3.32	1.17	Agree
3	I feel it is the duty of teachers to counsel students against cybercrime.	3.45	1.30	Agree
4	I feel angry when I hear students boasting about their fraudulent online activities.	3.38	1.23	Agree
5	I think students who engage in cybercrime need guidance rather than punishment.	3.35	1.20	Agree
6	I discuss the dangers of cybercrime with my students.	3.37	1.22	Agree
7	I believe poverty is not a good reason for students to engage in online crime.	3.18	1.03	Agree
8	I feel discouraged when students view cybercriminals as role models.	3.30	1.15	Agree
9	I feel that students who commit cybercrime can change with proper counseling.	3.11	0.97	Agree
10	I am willing to report any student suspected of engaging in cybercrime to school authorities.	3.47	1.32	Agree
Grand Mean/Std		3.33	1.18	Accepted

Table 2 reveals level of teachers' attitude towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State. The table shows that items (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10) were accepted because their criterion mean was above 2.5. The table also shows that item (10) has the highest mean score of (3.47), while item (9) has the lowest mean score of (3.11). Again, a grand mean of (3.33) was gotten, indicating that teachers have positive attitude towards addressing cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State.

Research Question Three: What is the level of teachers' awareness towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State based on gender?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Teachers' Awareness towards Students' Cybercrime Practices in Secondary Schools based on Gender

S/N	Item-Statements	Male = 115		Female = 197		Mean Set $\frac{\bar{x}_1 + \bar{x}_2}{2}$	Decision
		\bar{x}_1	SD ₁	\bar{x}_2	SD ₂		
1	I am aware that students use social media platforms to scam unsuspecting victims.	3.45	1.30	3.43	1.28	3.44	Agree
2	Students use fake online identities to deceive people for financial gain.	3.41	1.26	3.39	1.24	3.40	Agree

3	I am aware that students justify cybercrime as a means of survival	3.46	1.31	3.40	1.25	3.43	Agree
4	I am aware that students use the internet to spread false information for personal benefits.	3.13	0.98	3.10	0.95	3.12	Agree
5	I am aware that students use social media to impersonate others for criminal intentions.	3.43	1.28	3.40	1.25	3.42	Agree
6	I am aware that cybercrime among students affects their academic performance and moral behavior.	3.50	1.35	3.47	1.32	3.49	Agree
7	Peer influence encourages students to participate in cybercrime.	2.95	0.80	2.98	0.83	2.97	Agree
8	Economic hardship contributes to students' involvement in cybercrime	2.91	0.76	3.00	0.85	2.96	Agree
9	Most teachers are not adequately trained to identify students involved in cybercrime	3.14	0.99	3.09	0.94	3.12	Agree
10	I am aware that some students engage in online fraud activities such as "Yahoo Yahoo."	3.38	1.23	3.30	1.15	3.34	Agree
	Grand Mean	3.28	1.13	3.26	1.09	3.27	Accepted

Table 3 reveals the level of teachers' awareness towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State based on gender. The table shows that items (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10) were accepted because their criterion mean was above 2.5. Again, for male teachers, the table revealed that item (6) has the highest mean score of (3.50) while, item (8) has the lowest mean score of (2.91). For female respondents, the table also revealed that item (6) has the highest mean score of (3.47), while item (7) has the lowest mean score of (2.98). Again, a grand mean of (3.27) was gotten, indicating that male and female teachers' have awareness towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State

Research Question Four: What is the teachers' attitude towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State based on gender?

Table4: Mean and Standard Deviation of Teachers' Attitude towards Students' Cybercrime Practices in Secondary Schools based on Gender

S/N	Item-Statements	Male = 115		Female = 197		Mean Set $\frac{\bar{x}_1 + \bar{x}_2}{2}$	Decision
		\bar{X}_1	SD ₁	\bar{X}_2	SD ₂		
1	I feel disappointed when I discover that a student is involved in cybercrime.	3.42	1.27	3.41	1.26	3.42	Agree
2	I believe students who engage in online fraud should face disciplinary actions.	3.35	1.20	3.32	1.17	3.34	Agree
3	I feel it is the duty of teachers to counsel students against cybercrime.	3.47	1.32	3.45	1.30	3.46	Agree
4	I feel angry when I hear students boasting about their fraudulent online activities.	3.40	1.25	3.38	1.23	3.39	Agree
5	I think students who engage in cybercrime need guidance rather than punishment.	3.34	1.19	3.35	1.20	3.35	Agree

6	I discuss the dangers of cybercrime with my students.	3.39	1.24	3.37	1.22	3.38	Agree
7	I believe poverty is not a good reason for students to engage in online crime.	2.75	0.60	2.70	0.55	2.93	Agree
8	I feel discouraged when students view cybercriminals as role models.	3.32	1.17	3.30	1.15	3.31	Agree
9	I feel that students who commit cybercrime can change with proper counseling.	3.19	1.04	3.11	0.97	3.15	Agree
10	I am willing to report any student suspected of engaging in cybercrime to school authorities.	3.51	1.36	3.47	1.32	3.49	Agree
	Grand Mean	3.31	1.16	3.29	1.14	3.30	Accepted

Table 4 reveals the teachers' attitude towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State based on gender. The table shows that items (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10) were accepted because their criterion mean was above 2.5. Again, for male teachers, the table revealed that item (10) has the highest mean score of (3.51) while, item (7) has the lowest mean score of (2.75). For female respondents, the table also revealed that item (10) has the highest mean score of (3.47), while item (7) has the lowest mean score of (2.70). Again, a grand mean of (3.30) was gotten, indicating that attitude of both male and female teachers' have positive attitude toward addressing students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the level of teachers' awareness towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State based on gender.

Table 5: T-test Results of Level of Teachers' Awareness towards Students' Cybercrime Practices in Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis based on Gender

Group	N	\bar{x}	Std	df	α - level	t-value	P-value	Decision
Male	115	3.28	1.13	310	0.05	2.835	0.762	Not Significant
Female	197	3.26	1.09					

Table 5 of independent sample t-test result reveals that the response mean score for male teachers as 3.28 with a standard deviation of 1.13, while that of female teachers was 3.26 with a standard deviation of 1.09. This indicates no difference in the mean responses of male and female teachers towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State. The table also shows calculated (t 2.835, P= 0.762 > 0.05) which is greater than the chosen level of significance was gotten at 310degree of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected. Since (P> 0.05), it there indicates that there is no significant difference in the level of teachers' awareness towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State based on gender.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the teachers' attitude towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State based on gender.

Table 6: T-test Results of Teachers' Attitude towards Students' Cybercrime Practices in Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis based on Gender

Group	N	\bar{X}	Std	df	α - level	t-value	P-value	Decision
Male	115	3.31	1.16					

				310	0.05	2.910	0.824	Not Significant
Female	197	3.29	1.14					

Table 6 of independent sample t-test result reveals that the response mean score for male teachers' on attitude towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis was 3.31 with a standard deviation of 1.16, while that of female teachers was 3.29 with a standard deviation of 1.14. This indicates no difference in the mean responses of male and female teachers towards students' cybercrime practices. The table also shows calculated (t 2.910, P= 0.824 > 0.05) which is greater than the chosen level of significance was gotten at 310 degree of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected. Since (P > 0.05), it there indicates that there is no significant difference in the teachers' attitude towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State based on gender

Discussion of Findings

Table 1 revealed that teachers are aware that students use social media platforms to scam unsuspecting victims, use fake online identities to deceive people for financial gain, students justify cybercrime as a means of survival, use the internet to spread false information for personal benefits, use social media to impersonate others for criminal intentions. The study also revealed that cybercrime affects academic performance and moral behaviour of secondary school students, peer influence encourages students to participate in cybercrime, economic hardship contributes to students' involvement in cybercrime and also students engage in online fraud activities such as "Yahoo Yahoo." This study also revealed teachers have a high level of awareness towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State.

This finding is agreement with the study of James and Musa (2022) who revealed that majority of teachers have high awareness of cybercrime manifestations, such as cyberbullying, use fake online identities to deceive people and use social media to impersonate others for criminal intentions. This result could be probably because teachers have been exposed to professional development programmes and workshops on digital ethics, which equip them to identify various cybercrime activities among students. Philips and Uwan (2023) confirmed that teachers were generally aware of the growing rate of cybercrime among students and perceived its negative impacts on students' moral and academic development. This might be because teachers interact daily with students in digital environments and observe the influence of cybercrime on academic performance, moral behavior and psychological well-being, enhancing their recognition of these practices.

Table 2 revealed that teaches feel disappointed when a student is involved in cybercrime, believe students who engage in online fraud should face disciplinary actions, counsel students against cybercrime, feel angry when students boast about fraudulent act, discuss the dangers of cybercrime with students, believe poverty is not a good reason for students to engage in online crime, feel discouraged when students view cybercriminals as role models, believed that students who commit cybercrime can change with proper counseling and willing to report any student suspected of engaging in cybercrime to school authorities.

This is in harmony with the study of Udochukwu (2021) who found that teachers exhibited positive and proactive attitude towards combating cybercrime among students, which is consistent with the present study. This result could be probably because professional ethics and training emphasize guiding and correcting students rather than punishing them harshly, fostering responsible intervention in cybercrime cases. Loveday and Nnamani (2022) revealed that teachers feel angry when students boast are involved in fraudulent online activities and discouraged when students view cybercriminals as role models. This might be because teachers recognize the moral and academic harm of such behaviors and are motivated to protect students from negative influences.

Table 3 of independent sample t-test result reveals calculated (t 2.835, P= 0.762 > 0.05) which is greater than the chosen level of significance was gotten at 310 degree of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected. Since (P > 0.05), it there indicates that there is no significant difference in the level of teachers' awareness towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State based on gender. This result could be probably because teachers, regardless of gender, operate within the same institutional environment and interact daily with students who use

technology for both learning and social activities. Both male and female teachers have developed comparable levels of awareness through shared experiences, observation and training.

This finding is in accordance with the study of Nwiyi and Mushy (2020) who found no significant difference in the level of awareness of male and female teachers regarding students' engagement in cybercrime practices. This result could be probably because both male and female teachers today are exposed to similar sources of information about students' online activities, particularly through staff meetings, social media, and professional development seminars. The shared exposure to technological tools and student behaviours in classrooms makes their understanding of cybercrime practices similar, regardless of gender. Nkita and Benson (2021) revealed no statistical difference in the awareness of teachers towards students cybercrime practices based on gender, which is consistent with the present study. This could be attributed to equal level of professional engagement with digital tools which enhances equal awareness of cyber-related issues among teachers. Hence, both genders demonstrate comparable understanding of how students engage in cybercrime. Abubakar and Mohammed (2023) also corroborated that there is no significant gender difference in awareness of teachers towards students' cybercrime practices among secondary school students. This result is not surprising because both male and female teachers receive comparable information about emerging cyber issues affecting students.

Table 4 of independent sample t-test result reveals calculated ($t = 2.910, P = 0.824 > 0.05$) which is greater than the chosen level of significance was gotten at 310 degree of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected. Since ($P > 0.05$), it there indicates that there is no significant difference in the teachers' attitude towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State based on gender. This result could be probably because both teachers demonstrate uniform attitudes toward maintaining discipline and promoting ethical digital behavior among students within the same school environment.

This finding is in accordance with the study of Zuby and Ofoneme (2019) who revealed no significant gender difference in teachers' attitude towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools. This result could be because both male and female teachers share similar professional ethics and value systems that shape their attitudes toward students' involvement in cybercrime. Bello and Musa (2021) revealed no significant gender difference in teachers' attitude towards students' cybercrime practices in senior secondary schools. This result might be attributed to the fact that teachers, irrespective of gender, undergo the same training and adhere to uniform school regulations that influence their responses toward cybercrime practices among students. Job and Akakuru (2023) found no significant gender difference in teachers' attitudes towards students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools. This result might be because male and female teachers demonstrate similar levels of moral disapproval and concern about cybercrime, reflecting shared professional and ethical responsibilities in guiding students' behavior.

CONCLUSION

This study examined teachers' awareness and attitude toward students' cybercrime practices in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State. The findings revealed that teachers in secondary schools within Port Harcourt Metropolis demonstrate high level of awareness regarding students' engagement in cybercrime practices. This awareness reflects teachers' understanding of the negative consequences of cybercrime on students' academic performance, moral behaviour, and psychological well-being. Additionally, teachers exhibited a positive and proactive attitude toward addressing students' cybercrime practices. The findings also indicated that both male and female teachers. However, the study concludes that teachers' professional experience, ethical standards, and exposure to continuous training equip them to effectively recognize and respond to cybercrime among students. Their proactive and interventionist attitudes, coupled with high awareness, are critical in curbing students' involvement in online deviant behaviors and promoting responsible digital citizenship within secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. School authorities should organize continuous professional development programmes and workshops to enhance teachers' awareness of emerging cybercrime trends and techniques used by students.

2. Schools should encourage positive and interventionist attitudes by providing teachers with clear guidelines and supportive frameworks for counseling and reporting students involved in cybercrime.
3. Teachers should be encouraged to adopt proactive approaches, including counseling, mentoring, and reporting students involved in cybercrime, to reduce online deviant behaviors.
4. School management should promote equitable participation of all teachers, regardless of gender in seminars and policy discussions on cybercrime, reinforcing consistent and uniform attitudes for all staff.

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