



Examination of Get-Rich Syndrome (Yahoo) in the Light of Aristotle's Ethics

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ABSTRACT

*The increasing celebration of sudden wealth among Nigerian youths has given rise to a disturbing social trend commonly referred to as “Yahoo” or the get-rich syndrome. In many communities today, success is no longer measured by moral integrity or the dignity of labour, but by the speed and visibility of financial acquisition, regardless of its source. This shift in values raises serious ethical concerns about the kind of society being formed and the future of its younger generation. How can a society continue to function sustainably when wealth is pursued without regard for honesty, justice, or human dignity? Using analytical method, the findings reveal that the get-rich syndrome is fundamentally rooted in greed, impatience, and moral decay, all of which conflict with Aristotle’s conception of virtue. It further shows that the glorification of ill-gotten wealth has contributed to a decline in ethical standards, weakened communal values, and distorted the understanding of true happiness. Rather than leading to fulfilment, such practices result in moral corruption and social instability. The study concludes that genuine human flourishing cannot be achieved through deceit or shortcuts to wealth. Instead, it requires a life guided by reason, virtue, and moral discipline. In line with Aristotelian ethics, it is recommended that society prioritises moral education, value reorientation, economic empowerment, and stronger institutional enforcement to curb the spread of fraudulent practices among youths.*

**Keywords:** *Get-rich syndrome, Yahoo, Aristotle, virtue ethics, eudaimonia, moral decay, Nigerian youth, fraud, Golden Mean*

INTRODUCTION

The desire for wealth is as old as human society itself, yet the means by which wealth is acquired have always distinguished virtue from vice. In contemporary Nigeria, the phenomenon popularly known as “Yahoo” or the get-rich syndrome has emerged as a troubling social reality, particularly among the youth. It represents not merely a method of financial gain through internet fraud, but a deeper moral crisis rooted in the prioritisation of quick wealth over integrity, hard work, and social responsibility. This growing culture has been normalised in some quarters, fuelled by societal pressure, unemployment, peer influence, and the glamorisation of sudden affluence in media and popular discourse. Consequently, success is increasingly measured not by the process through which it is achieved, but by the visible accumulation of wealth, regardless of its moral implications. This development raises critical ethical questions: Can wealth acquired through deceit ever be justified? What does it mean to live a good life in a society where fraudulent success is celebrated? These questions find profound relevance when examined through the ethical framework of Aristotle, whose virtue ethics emphasises character, moral discipline, and the pursuit of the “good life” (eudaimonia) through rational and ethical conduct. Unlike modern tendencies that focus on outcomes, Aristotle’s ethics centres on the moral character of the individual and the habitual practice of virtue as the path to true happiness and human flourishing.

From an Aristotelian perspective, the get-rich syndrome represents a deviation from the golden mean, where the excessive desire for wealth (pleonexia) overrides virtues such as honesty, justice, and temperance. It reflects a failure in moral education and character formation, where individuals are driven by immediate gratification rather than long-term ethical fulfilment. In this sense, Yahoo practices are not only legally condemnable but also philosophically inconsistent with the ideals of a virtuous and meaningful life. This paper, therefore, seeks to critically examine the get-rich syndrome (Yahoo) within the framework

of Aristotle's ethics, with the aim of exposing its moral deficiencies and exploring how a return to virtue-based living can address the ethical decay it represents.

### **Virtue as a Mean: The Doctrine of the Golden Mean**

At the centre of Aristotle's ethical philosophy lies the doctrine of the Golden Mean, a principle which explains virtue as a balanced state between two extremes excess and deficiency. According to Aristotle, moral virtue is not an innate quality but a habit cultivated through consistent practice and rational choice. It is achieved when an individual is able to regulate emotions and actions in accordance with reason, thereby avoiding both excess and deficiency in behaviour. This "mean" is not a rigid mathematical midpoint but a relative standard determined by circumstances, guided by prudence (*phronesis*), and reflective of what a morally mature person would choose. For instance, courage is considered a virtue because it lies between the extremes of recklessness (excess) and cowardice (deficiency). Similarly, generosity exists between wastefulness and stinginess. In each case, virtue represents moderation, self-control, and a disciplined alignment of desire with reason. Thus, the Golden Mean serves as a practical guide for ethical living, urging individuals to act in ways that promote balance, harmony, and moral integrity. When applied to the phenomenon of the get-rich syndrome (Yahoo), the relevance of this doctrine becomes evident. The excessive desire for wealth, especially through fraudulent means, represents a clear departure from the mean. Wealth in itself is not condemned in Aristotelian ethics; rather, it is the uncontrolled pursuit of wealth driven by greed and impatience that constitutes a moral vice. On the other hand, a complete disregard for material well-being may also be considered a deficiency. The virtuous path, therefore, lies in the moderate and honest pursuit of wealth, guided by hard work, integrity, and a sense of social responsibility.

Yahoo practices, characterised by deceit, manipulation, and exploitation, reflect an imbalance where the appetite for financial gain overshadows moral reasoning. Individuals engaged in such acts operate within the vice of excess, abandoning virtues such as honesty, justice, and temperance. In Aristotelian terms, they fail to cultivate the moral discipline necessary for achieving *eudaimonia* the ultimate goal of human life, understood as true happiness and flourishing.

### **Aristotle's Concept of Eudaimonia (Human Flourishing)**

A central goal of Aristotle's ethical philosophy is the attainment of *eudaimonia*, often translated as human flourishing or true happiness. However, Aristotle's understanding of happiness goes far beyond mere pleasure, material wealth, or momentary satisfaction. For him, *eudaimonia* is the highest good the ultimate purpose (*telos*) of human life which can only be achieved through a life of virtue, rational activity, and moral excellence. It is not a temporary emotional state but a lifelong condition of well-being that reflects the fulfilment of human potential. Aristotle argues that every human action aims at some good, but all goods ultimately point towards this supreme good *eudaimonia*.<sup>1</sup> Unlike superficial forms of happiness based on external success or possessions, *eudaimonia* is rooted in the proper functioning of the human soul in accordance with reason. Since human beings are rational creatures, their flourishing depends on living in harmony with reason, making virtuous choices, and developing a morally upright character. Thus, a truly happy person is not simply one who possesses wealth or status, but one who lives ethically, acts justly, and cultivates virtues such as courage, temperance, and wisdom.

This conception sharply contrasts with the ideology underlying the get-rich syndrome (Yahoo), where happiness is often equated with sudden wealth, luxury, and social recognition. In such a worldview, the process of acquiring wealth is largely ignored, while the outcome becomes the sole measure of success. From an Aristotelian perspective, this is a fundamental misunderstanding of what it means to live well.<sup>2</sup> Wealth, in itself, is only an instrumental good it is valuable not as an end, but as a means to support a virtuous and meaningful life. When wealth becomes the ultimate goal, especially through immoral means, it distorts the path to genuine happiness.

Engaging in fraudulent activities such as Yahoo undermines the very foundation of *eudaimonia* because it involves actions that are contrary to virtue. Deceit, exploitation, and dishonesty not only harm others but also corrupt the moral character of the individual. According to Aristotle, a person cannot achieve true happiness while living a life of vice, regardless of how much wealth they accumulate.<sup>3</sup> Such a life is internally disordered and ultimately unfulfilling, as it lacks the moral integrity required for genuine human flourishing. Furthermore, *eudaimonia* is not an isolated achievement but is deeply connected to

the well-being of the community. Aristotle emphasises that humans are social beings who attain fulfilment within the context of society. Therefore, actions that harm others or destabilise social trust such as internet fraud are not only individually destructive but also socially detrimental. The get-rich syndrome, in this sense, contributes to moral decay and weakens the ethical fabric of society, making collective flourishing difficult.

### **Get Rich Syndrome as a Moral Vice: Greed, Dishonesty, and Deceit**

The get-rich syndrome (Yahoo), when examined through the ethical framework of Aristotle, clearly manifests as a moral vice rooted in greed, dishonesty, and deceit. In Aristotelian ethics, virtue is defined by the cultivation of good character through habitual right action, while vice represents a deviation from this moral standard. Yahoo practices, by their very nature, are not accidental moral lapses but deliberate patterns of behaviour that contradict the virtues necessary for a good and flourishing life. At the core of this syndrome lies greed an excessive and insatiable desire for wealth. Aristotle associates such excess with the vice of *pleonexia*, a condition in which individuals seek more than their fair share, disregarding justice and fairness. Unlike a moderate desire for material well-being, which can be justified within the bounds of virtue, greed drives individuals beyond ethical limits. It fosters impatience and an obsession with accumulation, ultimately distorting one's sense of purpose and moral judgement. In the context of Yahoo, this greed is evident in the relentless pursuit of financial gain without regard for the means employed or the consequences inflicted on others.

Closely intertwined with greed is dishonesty, which directly opposes the virtue of truthfulness. Aristotle holds that a virtuous person is one who values honesty not merely as a social expectation but as a reflection of inner moral integrity. Yahoo practices, however, depend entirely on deception false identities, fabricated stories, and calculated manipulation of victims. Such actions are not isolated incidents but are often repeated and refined, indicating a deeply ingrained habit of dishonesty. Over time, this habitual deceit erodes the individual's character, making truthfulness increasingly difficult to uphold. Deceit, as an extension of dishonesty, introduces another layer of moral failure by involving the intentional exploitation of others. It reflects a lack of justice, which Aristotle considers one of the highest virtues because it governs our relationships with others. Justice requires fairness, respect, and the recognition of others' rights. Yahoo practices violate these principles by preying on the trust and vulnerability of victims, often causing financial and emotional harm. In this sense, such acts are not only unethical but also socially destructive, as they undermine trust and cooperation within the wider community. Furthermore, Aristotle emphasises that moral character is shaped through habituation repeated actions that gradually form stable dispositions.<sup>4</sup> When individuals consistently engage in fraudulent practices, they reinforce vices such as greed and dishonesty, making these traits part of their character. This habituation leads to moral deterioration, where unethical behaviour becomes normalised and even justified in the mind of the individual. The longer such practices continue, the more difficult it becomes to return to a virtuous path.

Another significant implication of Yahoo as a moral vice is its impact on the individual's ability to achieve true happiness (*eudaimonia*). As Aristotle argues, a life dominated by vice cannot lead to genuine fulfilment, regardless of material success.<sup>5</sup> Wealth obtained through deceit may provide temporary satisfaction, but it lacks the moral foundation necessary for lasting well-being. Instead, it often results in anxiety, fear of exposure, and a fragmented sense of self, all of which are incompatible with a flourishing life. In addition, the normalisation of these vices within certain social contexts further complicates the moral landscape. When society begins to tolerate or even celebrate ill-gotten wealth, it blurs the distinction between right and wrong, making it easier for individuals to rationalise their actions. This collective moral decline reinforces the cycle of vice, where unethical behaviour is not only practised but also socially validated.

### **Yahoo and the Rise of Hedonistic Individualism in Nigerian Youth**

The emergence and rapid spread of Yahoo practices among Nigerian youth cannot be separated from the growing culture of hedonistic individualism that characterises many aspects of contemporary society. Hedonistic individualism, in this context, refers to a worldview in which personal pleasure, material satisfaction, and self-interest are prioritised above moral values, communal responsibility, and long-term well-being. This orientation represents a significant shift from traditional African value systems, which emphasised communal living, moral discipline, and the dignity of labour. From the standpoint of Aristotle,

such a lifestyle reflects a fundamental misunderstanding of the purpose of human life. Aristotle argues that the highest good is not pleasure but *eudaimonia* a deeper, more enduring form of happiness grounded in virtue and rational activity.<sup>6</sup> While he does not entirely reject pleasure, he insists that it must be subordinated to reason and aligned with moral excellence. In contrast, hedonistic individualism elevates pleasure to the highest goal, thereby distorting ethical priorities and encouraging behaviour that is ultimately self-destructive.

Yahoo practices thrive within this cultural framework because they promise quick access to the very things hedonistic individualism values most wealth, luxury, and social recognition. For many young people, success is increasingly defined by outward displays of affluence: expensive cars, designer clothing, and extravagant lifestyles. Social media platforms amplify this phenomenon by showcasing curated images of wealth and glamour, often without transparency regarding their sources. As a result, the pressure to attain similar standards of living intensifies, pushing some individuals toward fraudulent means as a shortcut to achieving these socially constructed ideals.

This shift also reflects a growing emphasis on individual success at the expense of collective well-being. In traditional Nigerian societies, actions were often evaluated based on their impact on the community. However, hedonistic individualism encourages a more self-centred approach, where personal gain is pursued regardless of its consequences for others. Yahoo practices exemplify this mindset, as they involve exploiting unsuspecting victims often from different parts of the world for personal benefit. Such actions erode the moral fabric of society by undermining trust, empathy, and social responsibility. Moreover, the glorification of wealth without moral scrutiny contributes to the normalisation of this behaviour. In some social spaces, individuals who engage in Yahoo are admired for their financial success, regardless of the means through which it is obtained. This social validation reinforces the belief that outcomes matter more than processes, further entrenching hedonistic values. Over time, this creates a moral environment where ethical considerations are overshadowed by the pursuit of pleasure and status. Another critical dimension of this issue is the role of identity and self-perception among youth. In a society where economic opportunities are limited and social mobility is uncertain, many young people struggle with feelings of inadequacy and marginalisation. Hedonistic individualism offers a seemingly attractive escape by equating self-worth with material success. Yahoo, in this sense, becomes not only a means of acquiring wealth but also a way of constructing identity and gaining social recognition. However, this identity is inherently unstable, as it is built on deception and lacks genuine moral grounding.

From an Aristotelian perspective, this trend represents a departure from the cultivation of virtue and the development of good character. Instead of striving for moral excellence, individuals are drawn toward immediate gratification and superficial markers of success.<sup>7</sup> This imbalance leads to a disordered life, where reason is subordinated to desire, and long-term fulfilment is sacrificed for short-term pleasure.

### **Root Causes/Reasons for the Rise of Yahoo in Nigerian Society**

The increasing prevalence of Yahoo (internet fraud) in Nigerian society is not a random occurrence but the result of multiple interconnected factors. These causes span economic realities, psychological pressures, cultural shifts, and institutional weaknesses. Understanding these root causes is essential for developing a comprehensive and lasting response to the problem.

1. **Economic Hardship and Unemployment** One of the most significant drivers of Yahoo practices is the high rate of unemployment and widespread economic hardship. Many young people, despite being educated, find it difficult to secure stable and meaningful employment. This economic frustration creates a sense of desperation, pushing some individuals to seek alternative means of survival. Yahoo is often perceived as a quick and accessible way to escape poverty and achieve financial stability, even though it involves unethical and illegal activities.
2. **Peer Pressure and Social Influence** The influence of peers plays a crucial role in the spread of Yahoo practices. In environments where fraudulent success is common or admired, individuals may feel compelled to conform in order to gain acceptance or avoid being seen as unsuccessful. The visibility of peers who appear to have “made it” through Yahoo creates a powerful social incentive, especially among youths who are still forming their identities and values.
3. **Get-Rich-Quick Mentality** A growing cultural emphasis on instant success has contributed significantly to the rise of Yahoo. Many individuals are increasingly unwilling to follow the gradual and disciplined path to success, preferring instead immediate financial rewards. This mentality

undermines values such as patience, perseverance, and hard work, replacing them with a desire for shortcuts regardless of moral implications.

4. **Weak Moral and Value Systems** There has been a noticeable decline in the emphasis on moral education within families, schools, and religious institutions. Traditional values such as honesty, integrity, and dignity of labour are gradually being eroded. In their place, material success is often prioritised, sometimes without regard for how it is achieved. From the perspective of Aristotle, this reflects a failure in the cultivation of virtue, which is essential for ethical behaviour.
5. **Glorification of Wealth in Society** Nigerian society, like many others, increasingly celebrates wealth and outward success. Individuals who display affluence luxury cars, expensive clothing, and lavish lifestyles are often admired and respected, even when the source of their wealth is questionable. This societal validation sends a message that success is defined by material accumulation rather than moral integrity, thereby encouraging Yahoo practices.
6. **Influence of Social Media and Popular Culture** Social media platforms and entertainment industries have amplified the desire for wealth and luxury. Music, movies, and online content often portray extravagant lifestyles as the ultimate goal, sometimes subtly endorsing illicit means of achieving them. Constant exposure to such content can distort young people's perception of reality, making fraudulent success appear normal and desirable.
7. **Lack of Effective Law Enforcement** Although laws exist to combat cybercrime, weak enforcement and corruption within institutions can reduce their effectiveness. When individuals perceive that the chances of being caught or punished are low, they are more likely to engage in fraudulent activities. This lack of accountability creates an enabling environment for Yahoo to thrive.
8. **Technological Accessibility and Anonymity** The rapid expansion of internet access and digital technology has made it easier for individuals to engage in online fraud. The anonymity provided by the internet reduces the psychological barrier to committing such crimes, as perpetrators often feel detached from their victims. This technological advantage lowers the risk and increases the appeal of Yahoo practices.
9. **Family and Societal Expectations** In some cases, pressure from family members to succeed financially can push individuals toward Yahoo. Expectations to provide for relatives or to uplift one's family status may become overwhelming, especially in the absence of legitimate opportunities. This pressure can lead individuals to justify unethical actions as necessary for fulfilling social obligations.
10. **Poor Governance and Inequality** Widespread corruption, poor governance, and unequal distribution of resources contribute to a sense of injustice and disillusionment among the youth. When individuals perceive the system as unfair or rigged, they may feel less morally obligated to adhere to its rules. Yahoo, in this context, is sometimes rationalised as a form of survival or even resistance, though it remains ethically indefensible.

Thus, the rise of Yahoo in Nigerian society is the result of a complex interplay of economic, social, and moral factors. While these conditions may explain why individuals are drawn to such practices, they do not justify them.

### **Consequences of Yahoo in Nigerian Society**

The rise of Yahoo (internet fraud) in Nigerian society has far-reaching consequences that extend beyond individual perpetrators to affect the moral, economic, and social fabric of the nation. While some may view it as a quick means of financial gain, its long-term implications reveal a pattern of harm that undermines both personal integrity and collective well-being. Examining these consequences through the ethical lens of Aristotle further exposes its incompatibility with a virtuous and flourishing society.

1. **Moral Decay and Erosion of Values** One of the most significant consequences of Yahoo is the gradual erosion of moral values. Practices rooted in deceit, manipulation, and exploitation weaken societal commitment to virtues such as honesty, integrity, and justice. As these unethical behaviours become normalised, the distinction between right and wrong becomes blurred, leading to a broader culture of moral indifference.
2. **Damage to National Reputation** Nigeria's global image has been negatively affected by the widespread association with internet fraud. This has led to increased suspicion and distrust toward Nigerians in international transactions, travel, and communication. Legitimate citizens and

businesses often face undue scrutiny and discrimination because of the actions of a few, thereby limiting opportunities on the global stage.<sup>8</sup>

3. **Loss of Trust in Social and Economic Relationships** Yahoo practices undermine trust, which is essential for any functional society. Both locally and internationally, individuals and organisations become more cautious and sceptical in their dealings. This erosion of trust affects business transactions, partnerships, and even interpersonal relationships, making cooperation more difficult and less efficient.
4. **Legal Consequences and Criminalisation of Youth** Many young people involved in Yahoo face arrest, prosecution, and imprisonment. This not only disrupts their lives but also limits their future opportunities, as criminal records can hinder employment and social reintegration. The involvement of youth in such activities contributes to a growing population of offenders rather than productive members of society.
5. **Psychological and Emotional Effects** Engaging in fraudulent activities often leads to internal psychological conflict. Individuals may experience anxiety, fear of being caught, and a constant need to maintain false identities. Over time, this can result in stress, insecurity, and a fragmented sense of self. Such a lifestyle is incompatible with the inner peace and fulfilment associated with true human flourishing.
6. **Encouragement of Laziness and Decline in Work Ethic** The get-rich-quick mentality associated with Yahoo discourages hard work, patience, and perseverance. When individuals see others acquiring wealth without effort, they may become less motivated to pursue legitimate means of livelihood. This weakens the overall productivity of society and undermines the dignity of labour.
7. **Financial and Emotional Harm to Victims** Victims of Yahoo scams often suffer significant financial losses, which can lead to emotional distress, loss of confidence, and in some cases, severe personal hardship. These harms extend beyond monetary loss, affecting the well-being and stability of individuals and families across the world.
8. **Promotion of Other Forms of Crime** Yahoo practices can serve as a gateway to more serious criminal activities. In some cases, individuals involved in internet fraud may engage in related crimes such as identity theft, money laundering, or even violent acts linked to “Yahoo Plus” rituals.<sup>9</sup> This progression deepens the level of criminality and poses greater risks to society.
9. **Breakdown of Social Order and Community Values** As Yahoo becomes more widespread, it contributes to a breakdown of communal values and social cohesion. The emphasis on individual gain over collective well-being weakens traditional systems of accountability and mutual respect. This creates a society where self-interest dominates and social harmony is compromised.
10. **Obstacle to Genuine Development** Finally, the prevalence of Yahoo hinders national development. Resources that could be invested in productive ventures are diverted into illicit activities. Moreover, the negative reputation and lack of trust discourage foreign investment and international collaboration, limiting economic growth and progress.

Thus, the consequences of Yahoo in Nigerian society are profound and multifaceted. Far from being a harmless or victimless activity, it generates a chain reaction of moral, social, and economic problems.

### **Solutions to the Problem of Yahoo among Nigerian Youth**

The persistence of Yahoo (internet fraud) among Nigerian youth calls for a multidimensional response that addresses not only the symptoms but also the underlying causes. Since the problem is rooted in economic, moral, educational, and sociocultural factors, its solutions must be equally comprehensive. From the ethical perspective of Aristotle, any meaningful solution must aim at restoring virtue, promoting rational conduct, and reorienting individuals toward a life of moral excellence and true flourishing.

1. **Strengthening Moral and Value Education** A foundational solution is the reinforcement of moral education in schools, families, and religious institutions. Young people must be consistently taught values such as honesty, discipline, patience, and integrity. Moral instruction should go beyond theory and be reflected in lived examples from parents, teachers, and community leaders. Aristotle emphasises that virtue is developed through habituation; therefore, consistent moral practice is essential in shaping character.

2. **Creation of Employment Opportunities** Reducing unemployment is critical in addressing the economic frustration that drives many youths into Yahoo activities. Government and private sector initiatives should focus on job creation, skill development, and support for entrepreneurship.<sup>10</sup> When young people have access to legitimate means of livelihood, the temptation to engage in fraudulent activities is significantly reduced.
3. **Youth Empowerment and Skills Acquisition Programmes** Technical and vocational training programmes should be expanded to equip youths with practical skills that can make them economically self-reliant. Skills in technology, agriculture, craftsmanship, and digital innovation can provide sustainable alternatives to internet fraud. Empowerment reduces dependency and builds confidence in legitimate forms of success.
4. **Regulation of Social Media and Cultural Reorientation** The portrayal of wealth and success on social media and in popular culture should be critically addressed. There is a need for campaigns that promote responsible content creation and highlight the importance of legitimate success. Society must shift from glorifying unexplained wealth to celebrating hard work and integrity.
5. **Stronger Law Enforcement and Cybersecurity Measures** Effective enforcement of cybercrime laws is essential to deter potential offenders. Security agencies such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) must be adequately equipped and supported to investigate and prosecute internet fraud cases. A consistent legal response creates accountability and discourages participation in such activities.
6. **Family Responsibility and Proper Upbringing** Families play a crucial role in shaping the moral character of young people. Parents and guardians must provide guidance, supervision, and emotional support. Early moral instruction at home helps children develop strong ethical foundations that resist negative peer and societal influences.
7. **Educational System Reform** The educational curriculum should integrate ethics, civic responsibility, and practical life skills. Education should not only focus on academic achievement but also on character formation. Schools should serve as environments where discipline, integrity, and respect for work are actively cultivated.
8. **Economic Reorientation and Reduction of Inequality** Addressing structural inequalities and ensuring fair distribution of resources can reduce feelings of marginalisation among youth. When individuals perceive that society offers fair opportunities for advancement, they are less likely to resort to unethical shortcuts. Good governance and transparency are essential in this regard.
9. **Community Engagement and Youth Mentorship** Community leaders, NGOs, and successful professionals should engage in mentoring programmes that guide young people toward positive life choices. Exposure to role models who achieved success through legitimate means can reshape perceptions of what is possible.
10. **Philosophical and Ethical Reawakening** Finally, there is a need for a broader ethical reawakening grounded in philosophical reflection. Drawing from Aristotelian ethics, society must re-emphasise that true happiness (*eudaimonia*) is achieved through virtue, not wealth acquired by deceit. Youth must be encouraged to understand that a meaningful life is built on character, not shortcuts to material success.

## CONCLUSION

The examination of the get-rich syndrome (Yahoo) through the lens of Aristotle's ethics reveals a deep moral crisis rooted in the distortion of values within contemporary Nigerian society. What appears at first as a socio-economic coping mechanism is, on closer ethical reflection, a manifestation of vice characterised by greed, dishonesty, and a misplaced understanding of success. Aristotle's virtue ethics provides a critical standard for evaluating this phenomenon, especially through its emphasis on moral character, moderation, and the pursuit of *eudaimonia* as the true end of human life. From an Aristotelian standpoint, Yahoo practices represent a clear deviation from the doctrine of the Golden Mean, where excessive desire for wealth overrides reason and moral restraint. Instead of cultivating virtues such as honesty, temperance, and justice, individuals engaged in such activities reinforce habits of deceit and exploitation. This not only corrupts individual character but also undermines the moral integrity required for genuine human flourishing. Wealth obtained through unethical means therefore cannot contribute to true happiness, as it lacks the virtuous foundation necessary for lasting fulfilment.

Furthermore, the rise of Yahoo reflects broader psychological, economic, and sociocultural conditions that shape youth behaviour. While factors such as unemployment, peer pressure, and cultural glorification of wealth help explain its prevalence, they do not morally justify it. Rather, they highlight the urgency of addressing both structural inequalities and value systems that prioritise material success over ethical conduct. A society that celebrates wealth without interrogating its source risks normalising vice and weakening its moral foundations. In general, the persistence of the get-rich syndrome calls for a reorientation of values at both individual and societal levels. Aristotle's ethical framework reminds us that true success is not measured by material accumulation but by the quality of one's character and the virtuous life lived in accordance with reason. Therefore, overcoming Yahoo requires more than legal enforcement or economic reform; it demands a renewed commitment to moral education, personal discipline, and the cultivation of virtue as the foundation of human flourishing and societal well-being.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

In response to the growing challenge of Yahoo (internet fraud) among Nigerian youth, it is necessary to adopt practical and value-based solutions that address both the moral and structural causes of the problem. Since the issue is deeply rooted in economic hardship, weak moral formation, and cultural pressures, the response must be comprehensive and collaborative. Guided by the ethical insights of Aristotle, particularly his emphasis on virtue, character formation, and the pursuit of *eudaimonia*, the following recommendations are proposed.

1. **Strengthening Moral and Ethical Education:** Educational institutions should place greater emphasis on moral instruction and character development. Students must be consistently taught the importance of honesty, discipline, patience, and integrity as essential virtues for a meaningful life.
2. **Job Creation and Economic Opportunities:** Government and private organisations should prioritise the creation of sustainable employment opportunities. Reducing unemployment will help address one of the major factors pushing youths into fraudulent activities.
3. **Skills Acquisition and Youth Empowerment:** Vocational training and digital skills programmes should be expanded to empower young people with practical abilities that can provide legitimate sources of income and self-reliance.
4. **Family Upbringing and Parental Guidance:** Parents and guardians should take active responsibility in shaping the moral behaviour of their children through proper guidance, supervision, and value-based upbringing.
5. **Effective Law Enforcement:** Security agencies should strengthen their capacity to detect, prevent, and prosecute cybercrime. A consistent legal response will serve as a deterrent to potential offenders.
6. **Cultural and Value Reorientation:** Society should discourage the glorification of ill-gotten wealth and instead promote hard work, transparency, and integrity as the true indicators of success.

### Endnotes

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