CYBERBULLYING AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN A NIGERIAN UNIVERSITY: AWARENESS AND INCIDENCE

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Abstract

Globally, there are increasing cases of cyberbullying and studies have demonstrated its deleterious effects on victims. However, not much has been done in the Nigerian context to document the incidence of cyberbullying among Nigerian undergraduates in spite of the fact they are vulnerable to internet misuse. This study determined the incidence of cyberbullying among Nigerian undergraduates. One hundred and forty (140) students made up the sample size. Results showed that over 50% of the students were aware of incidents of cyberbullying within their cycles in and outside the school environment. The commonest forms of cyberbullying they were aware of in the past couple of months were text message, phone calls and chat room bullying. Also, a range of 48%-57% undergraduates have been bullied through the various cyber media listed and 28.6%-40.0% have bullied others through these devices in the past couple of months. Based on the findings, recommendations were made.

Keywords: cyberbullying, cyber crime, internet, undergraduates.

1. INTRODUCTION

With the penetrative advancement of information and communication technologies, the world has witnessed new operational manifestations in diverse facets of life. Human interactions have been greatly influenced by these technologies ushering in new inter-relational dynamics. Twenty-four hours,

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streams of communication flow around the globe; different forms of communication ranging from pictorials, verbal and non-verbal are accessed online with alarming ease. Undergraduate students who are active online users have benefited from this both in academic and non-academic facets of their lives. Noting the prevalence of online usage of online communication, Smith, Rainie and Zuckuhr (2011) reported that virtually 100% of undergraduate students' access internets regularly, 86% are members of social networking sites and 96% own a cell phone. In Nigeria, studies have reported undergraduates' use of internet for diverse forms of communication, for instance, Omotayo (2006) found that 97.1% of undergraduates use internet for e-mail. Jolaoso (2014) also reported that Nigeria undergraduates subscribe to internet bundles for social networking and about 49.1% identified web browsing as what they utilize internet data for.

As access to and usage of online communication increases, Brody and Vangelisti (2016) have noted that prevalence of hurtful online behaviours may also increase. New twists in online interaction have emerged in which what should have been a breakthrough in human interaction seems to be turning sour as access to online technologies present some individuals with opportunities to commit crime, take advantage of people and inflict diverse degrees of emotional and psychological injuries on others. Keith and Martin (2005) stated that the 21st century has witnessed school violence taking an insidious form with the application of new technologies which has made it easier for bullies to gain access to their victims without physical contact.

Cyberbullying is the leading-edge type of offensive organized in online virtual spaces. Faucher, Jackson and Cassidy (2014) referred to cyberbullying as online exchanges where there is an intent to harm recipient. According to Hinduja and Patchin (2010), it is the voluntary and repetitious abuse that is inflicted through computers, cell phones and other electronic devices. The act is basically accomplished through text messages, instant messaging or social networking sites (Beran & Ling, 2005). Stating the difference between traditional and cyberbullying, O'Moore and Minton (2009) remarked that the distinguishing element in cyberbullying is the capacity to use electronic devices and media to attack someone in any location, at any time. Nixon (2014) averred cyberbullying as being more stressful than traditional bullying as cyberbullying victims are less likely to know their perpetrators. In order for the victim to suffer recurrent and continual oppression, Vandebosch and Van-Cleemput (2009) asserted bystanders as playing a vital role in cyber-based exploitation through 'liking', 'viewing', 'sharing' of degrading content as pictures, tweets, texts and videos.

Emphasizing the forms cyberbullying could take, Ortega, Elipe, Mora-Merchan, Calmaestra and Vega (2009) explained that diverse forms of cyberbullying prompts different forms of emotional response, perhaps, being bullied online may induce a different emotional disturbance than being bullied via a cell phone. National Crime Prevention Council (2011) noted that cyberbullying

can take forms of sending rumours online or through texts, posting hurtful or threatening messages on social networking sites or webpages, stealing a person's account information to break into their account and send damaging messages pretending to be someone else online to hurt another person, taking unflattering pictures of a person and spreading them through cell phones or the internet and sexting or circulating sexually suggestive pictures or messages about a person.

The media is a washed with heart-rending stories of how children are bullied online. From the more developed countries of the world down to the developing countries, the story seems to be same. Deschampsand Mcnutt (2016) made reference to the cases of three Canadian children who committed suicide after being taunted by others online. The Nigerian situation has not been different. Several students are harassed online, blackmailed even though the culture here does not necessarily give the females the opportunity to open up on some harassment they receive more especially as their naked pictures are shared online without their consent.

Cyberbullying instigates momentous harm to its victim. Cyberbullying harm lays its effect on victim such as suicidal ideation, social isolation and mental illness (Deschamps& McNutt, 2016). Sourander, Brunslein-Klomek, Helenius, Ikonen, Lindroos, Luntamo & Koskelainen (2010) stated low-self, poor self-concept and victim's low efficacy in relationship with their environment. Nixon (2014) reported cyberbully victims had increased suicidal behaviour, somatic symptoms - headaches, stomach aches. Green (2003) posited that victims experience problems of loneliness, school phobia and social anxiety.

In developed countries, studies on the prevalence of cyberbullying among undergraduates have been carried out. In USA, 50% of students have experienced cyberbullying where 61% are female, 39% are male (Muhlhauser, 2013). Turan, Polat, Karapirli, Uysal and Turan (2011); Schenk, Walker, Sockman and Koehn (2011); Molluzo and Lawler (2012) and Zalaquett & Chatters (2014) are researchers who have carried out empirical works on cyberbullying among undergraduates. There have been little of such studies carried out in Nigeria, even though the problem seems to increase day by day.

The Nigerian Situation

Cyber bullying increased as ICT facilities permeated the Nigerian society. Nigeria became an active participant in new technologies in 1999 when the administration of that time gave a nod for mobile telecommunications and this was accompanied with both positive and negative concomitants. Internet usage grew astronomically in Nigeria from 0.1% in 2000 to 46.1% in 2016. This rapid growth in internet restructured ways things are done in Nigeria. The educational, business, industrial, and social aspects of the nation were affected. Considering access to internet, the Nigerian society has made some progress and has been ranked third in affordability among developing nations (Okunonye & Ilori, nd). However, Okunonye et al stated that several barriers such as device and data costs, gender

inequality making women and girls 40% less likely to access the internet low level of literacy, lack of local content, and acute power shortages have been identified as impacting on accessibility of the internet in Nigeria.

In recent times there have been cases of cybercrimes. Gbenga, Babatope and Bankiole (nd) on their report have stated that the rise of the internet in Nigeria has manifested an unintended consequence of global notoriety as a haven of cybercrime. These crimes come in diverse forms ranging from fraudulent financial practices ('yahoo yahoo' businesses, etc), cyber espionage, cyber terrorism to cyber victimization/bullying. Efforts have been made in Nigeria to curb this ugly trend. Certain agencies such as the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) are also in the fight against these crimes and some initiatives include setting up a National Cybercrime Working Group (NCWG) in which stakeholders were drawn from the law enforcement agencies, the financial sector and ICT professionals (Gbenga, et al, nd).

A number of draft bills such as Computer Security and Critical Infrastructure Bill (2005); Electronic Services Provision Bill (2008); Interception and Monitoring Bill (2009); Cyber Security Bill (2011), just to mention but a few, have been drafted to help in fighting these crimes even though that Gbenga et al, on a sad note, stated that none of these bills have made their ways to become a law in Nigeria. This also complicates the fight against cybercrime in Nigeria. The Cybercrimes (Prohibition, Prevention, etc) Act, 2015 took into consideration the issue of cyberstalking. Cyberbullying could be seen in the Act in the cyberstalking section in which it involves intentional transmission of any communication through a computer system in order to bully, threaten, or to harass another person, where such communication places another person in fear of death, violence or bodily harm or to another person. In the Act lofty penalties were proscribed for any offender in which it was stated that the offender upon conviction is liable to imprisonment for a term of 10 years and/or a minimum of N25, 000, 000.00.This is likely to raise the concern of interpretation since most of the time children under eighteen are also involved in cyberbullying. The Nigeria society has no strong legal force/regulations against cyberbullying. Most times it is difficult to report cases of cyberbullying in Nigeria to appropriate quarters.

It has been reported that in many Nigerian universities, there is no regulation guiding the use of ICT even in the university libraries, and this could lead to widespread fraudulent practices in the universities (Tiemo, Bribena & Nwosu, 2011). By implication, Undergraduate students could employ university ICT facilities in the libraries as tools for threats. But with the increasing cases of sexual abuse, depression among our youths, suicide/ suicidal attempts associated with cyberbullying, there is that urgent need to ascertain the incidence of cyberbullying in Nigeria. Little empirical evidence is on ground to ascertain the extent of the prevalence/incidence of cyber bully among undergraduates in Nigeria so as to

facilitate intervention programmes in this area. Empirically, only two studies in this area were found in the website of the Cyber Bullying Research Centre. The first was titled *prevalence and correlates of the perpetration of cyberbullying among in-school adolescents in Oyo State, Nigeria by Olumide,* Adams and Amodu (2015); the other was titled *moderating effect of cyberbullying on the psychological well-being of in-school adolescents in Benin Edo State Nigeria* by Okoiye, Anayochi and Onah (2015) (cyberbullying.org/research/map/Nigeria). The population of the two studies was secondary school students and little has been done using undergraduates in Nigeria who are more likely to be victims of cyberbullying considering their access to internet and technological facilities. Therefore the purpose of this preliminary investigation is to ascertain the following objectives.

2. OBJECTIVE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS
a. To ascertain the percentage of undergraduates who are aware of cyberbullying through cyber devices.
b. To ascertain how often undergraduates are bullied through text messages, mobile phone pictures/video clips, phone calls, email, chat rooms, instant messaging, and websites.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS
a. What is the percentage of undergraduate students who are aware of the incidence of cyber bulling through cyber devices?
b. What is the percentage response of how often undergraduates are bullied through text messages, mobile phone pictures/video clips, phone calls, email, chat rooms, instant messaging, and websites?

4. METHOD
4.1 Research Design and Participants
The research design for the study was a descriptive survey since the intention of the researchers was to systematically collect quantitative information from a relatively large sample from a population. One hundred and forty undergraduate students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University in the 2016/2017 academic session were sampled using a non-random convenience sampling technique given the fact that those who were used in the study were undergraduate students who consented to filling in the questionnaire after they were convinced of the need for the study. They were informed of the need for the study and information concerning the effects of cyberbullying was given. Also they were given the assurance of confidentiality of the information given by them.

4.2 Instrument
The instrument used for collection of data was an adaptation of the questionnaire titled Cyberbullying Questionnaire constructed and used by Smith,

Mahdavi, Carvalho, &Tippett, (nd). The original questionnaire as developed by Smith et al has 88 multiple-choice questions and some other general questions that lend themselves to qualitative analysis. Because Smith et al reported that the attention span of the respondents waned as a result of the length of the questionnaire, only the quantitative aspect of the questionnaire was used and the sections that actually depicted incidence of cyberbullying in past couple of months were used in this study. A total of thirty (30) items were used in the adapted questionnaire. The items were in the multiple-choice format and the yes/no format. The clusters of the questionnaire covered the seven sub-categories of cyberbullying (text message bullying, mobile phone bullying, picture/video-clip bullying, email bullying, chat-room bullying, instant messaging bullying and the website bullying) and the awareness section. The time frame of reference for this study was in the "past couple of months" so responses only reflected incidence which took place within few months before the questionnaire was administered to them. The instrument was face validated by an expert in the Faculty of Education and suggestions were taken into consideration in the final draft of the questionnaire. The expert was requested to validate the instrument in terms of the appropriateness and clarity of language, ease of administration, and adequacy of content. The reliability for the seven categories was ascertained using Cronbach Alpha which yielded the following reliability coefficient: 0.65 (text message bullying); 0.67 (mobile phone bullying); 0.82(picture/video-clip bullying); 0.84 (email bullying); 0.85(chat-room bullying); 0.81(instant messaging bullying) and 0.76 (website bullying). The instrument was distributed face-to-face to 140 students who completed the questionnaire and the responses were analyzed using percentages given the nature of the data collected.

5. RESULTS
Table 1 - Percentage responses of awareness of cyberbullying through cyber devices

Response	Frequency/percentage (%)													
	Text message		Mobile phone pictures/video clips		Phone calls		Email		Chat rooms		Instant messaging		Websites	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Yes	94	67.1	83	59.3	87	62.1	64	45.7	91	65.0	62	44.3	75	53.6
No	46	32.9	57	59.3	51	6.4	75	53.6	47	33.6	78	55.7	65	46.4
Total	140	100	140	100	138	98.6	139	99.3	138	98.0	140	100	140	100

Table 1 shows that majority of the respondents 94 (67.1%) have heard of bullying through text messages in their school or circle of friends in past couple of months; 46 (32.9%) said that they have not heard of bullying through text messages; 83(59.3%) have heard of bullying through mobile phone pictures and/video-clips in their school or circle of friends in past couple of months; 57 (40.7%) said that they have not heard of bullying through mobile phone pictures and/video-clips; 87 (62.1%) have heard of bullying through phone calls in their school or circle of friends in past couple of months; 51 (36.4%) said that they have not heard of bullying through mobile phone pictures and/video-clips; 64 (45.7%) have heard of bullying through email in their school or circle of friends in past couple of months; 75 (53.6%) said that they have not heard of bullying through email and 1 (.7%) did not respond to the question; 91(65.0%) have heard of bullying through chat rooms in their school or circle of friends in past couple of months; 47 (33.6%) said that they have not heard of bullying through chat rooms and 2(1.4%) did not respond to the question; 62(44.3%) have heard of bullying through instant messaging in their school or circle of friends in past couple of months , 78 (55.7%) said that they have not heard of bullying through instant messaging; 75(53.6%) have heard of bullying through website in their school or circle of friends in past couple of months , 65 (46.4%) said that they have not heard of bullying through website. Overall, over 50% of undergraduate students responded that they are aware of cyberbullying through the listed devices in their school or circle of friends in the past couple of months.

Table 2 - Percentage response of how often undergraduates are bullied through text messages

S/N	Item	1(%)	2(%)	3(%)	4(%)	5(%)	6(%)
1	How often have you been bullied through text messages in the past couple of months in school?	52.1	31.4	7.1	3.6	4.3	1.4
2	How often have you been bullied through text messages in the past couple of months outside school?	42.9	23.6	10.0	4.3	17.9	1.4
3	Have you cyber bullied others through text messages in the past couple of months in school?	73.6	18.6	.7	1.4	2.1	1.4
4	Have you bullied others through text messages in the past couple of months outside school?	62.1	14.3	5.0	5.7	10.0	2.1

1=haven't been bullied at school in the past couple of months; 2=only once or twice; 3=two to three times a month; 4=about once a week; 5=several times a week; 6=others

The result from table 2 showed that the percentage of students who have not been bullied through text message in the past couple of months in school and out of school are 52.1% , 42.9% respectively, and 73.6 and 62.1% have not bullied others in school and outside school respectively. The percentage of those who have been victims for once or twice within and outside the university environment are 31.4%,

23.6%, respectively; 18.6% and 14.3% have bullied others once or twice within and outside school respectively. 7.1%, 10.0%, .7% and 5.0% responded 2 or 3 times a month for the four items respectively. 3.6%, 4.3%, 1.4% and 5.7% responded about once a week, 4.3%, 17.9, 2.1% 10.0% said several times a week while 1.4%, 1.4%, 1.4% and 2.1% for other items not included in the options. Overall, over 40% of the undergraduates have been bullied or have bullied others at least once in/out of school through text messages in the past couple of months.

Table 3 - Percentage response of how often they are cyber bullied through mobile phones/pictures and video-clips

S/N	Item	1(%)	2(%)	3(%)	4(%)	5(%)	6(%)
1.	How often have you been bullied through pictures or video-clips in the past couple of months in school?	66.4	24.3	2.1	1.4	3.6	2.1
2.	How often have you been bullied through pictures or video-clip in the past couple of months outside school?	67.9	13.6	2.1	5.0	9.3	2.1
3.	Have you bullied others through pictures or video-clips in the past couple of months in school?	80.7	12.1	1.4	2.1	1.4	2.1
4.	Have you bullied others through pictures or video-clips in the past couple of month outside school?	73.6	15.0	2.9	1.4	3.6	2.9

*1=haven't been bullied at school in the past couple of months; 2=only once or twice; 3=two to three times a month; 4=about once a week; 5=several times a week; 6=others

The result from table 3 showed that students who have not been bullied through mobile phones/pictures and video-clips in the past couple of months within and outside the school are 66.4%, 67.9%, respectively and 80.7% and 73.6% have not bullied others through mobile phones/pictures and video-clips within and outside the school in the past couple of months before the present study. For those it has happened once or twice are 24.3%, 13.4%, 12.1% and 15.0% for the four items. 2.1%, 2.1%, 1.4% and 2.9% responded 2 or 3 times a month for the four items respectively. 1.4%, 5.0%, 2.1% and 1.4% responded about once a week, 3.6%, 9.3, 1.4% 3.6% said several times a week while 2.1%, 2.1%, 2.1% and 2.9% for other items not included in the options. Overall, no fewer than 35% of the undergraduates have been bullied or have bullied others at least once in/out of school through mobile phones/pictures and video-clips in the past couple of months.

Table 4 - Percentage response of how often they have been bullied through phone calls

S/N	Item	1(%)	2(%)	3(%)	4(%)	5(%)	6(%)
1	How often have you been bullied through phone calls in the past couple of months	51.4	31.4	13.6	1.4	.7	1.4

S/N	Item	1(%)	2(%)	3(%)	4(%)	5(%)	6(%)
	in school?						
2	How often have you been bullied through Phone calls in the past couple of months outside school?	50.0	32.9	12.1	1.4	.7	2.1
3	Have you bullied others through phone calls in the past couple of months in school?	71.4	17.9	5.0	3.9	-	2.9
4	Have you bullied others through phone calls in the past couple of months outside school?	60.0	30.7	4.3	1.4	-	2.9

1=haven't been bullied at school in the past couple of months; 2=only once or twice; 3=two to three times a month; 4=about once a week; 5=several times a week; 6=others

The result from table 4 showed that students who have not been bullied through phone calls in the past couple of months in school are 51.4% , 50.0%, 71.4 and 60.0% for the respective items, for those it has happened once or twice are 31.4%, 32.9%, 17.9% and 30.7% for the four items. 13.6%, 12.1%, 5.0% and 4.3% responded 2 or 3 times a month for the four items respectively. 1.4%, 1.4%, 3.9% and 1.4% responded about once a week, .7%, .7%, 0% and 0% said they are bullied several times a week while 1.4%, 2.1%, 2.9% and 2.9% for other items not included in the options. Overall, no fewer than 40% of the undergraduates have been bullied or have bullied others at least once in/out of school through phone calls in the past couple of months.

Table 5 - Percentage response of how often they have been bullied through email

S/N	Item	1(%)	2(%)	3(%)	4(%)	5(%)	6(%)
1	How often have ou been bullied through emails in the past couple of months in school?	76.4	18.6	2.1	-	.7	2.1
2	How often have you been bullied through emails in the past couple of months outside school?	77.1	16.4	2.1	-	1.4	2.9
3	Have you bullied others through emails in the past couple of months in school?	82.9	12.1	2.1	-	-	2.9
4	Have you bullied others through emails in the past couple of months outside school?	81.4	12.9	2.1	7	-	2.9

1=haven't been bullied at school in the past couple of months; 2=only once or twice; 3=two to three times a month; 4=about once a week; 5=several times a week; 6=others

The result from table 5 showed that students who have not been bullied through email in the past couple of months in school are 76.4% , 77.1%, 82.9 and 81.4% for the respective items, for those it has happened once or twice are 18.6%, 16.4%, 12.1% and 12.9% for the four items. 2.1%, 2.1%, 2.1% and 2.1% responded 2 or 3 times a month for the four items respectively. 0%, 0%, 0% and .7% responded about once a week, .7%, 1.4%, 0% , 0% said several times a week

while 2.1%, 2.9%, 2.9% and 2.9% for other items not included in the options. Overall, not less than 20% of the undergraduates have been bullied or have bullied others at least once in/out of school through email in the past couple of months.

Table 6 - Percentage Response of Bullying Through Mobile Chat Rooms

/N	Item	(%)	(%)	2 (%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
.	How often have you been bullied through chat rooms in the past couple of months in school?	9.3	5.01	2 .4	.9	.6	.4
.	How often have you been bullied through chat rooms in the past couple of months outside school?	0.7	0.0	2 5.0	.6	.9	.1
.	Have you others bullied through chart rooms in the past couple of months in school	9.3	2.1	3 1.4	.4	.1	.1
.	Have you bullied others through chart rooms in the past couple of months outside school?	8.6	2.9	3 1.4	.1	.4	.1

*1=haven't been bullied at school in the past couple of months; 2=only once or twice; 3=two to three times a month; 4=about once a week; 5=several times a week; 6=others

The result from table 6 showed that students who have not been bullied through mobile chat rooms in the past couple of months in school are 52.1% , 42.9%, 73.6 and 62.1% for the respective items, for those it has happened once or twice are 31.4%, 23.6%, 18.6% and 14.3% for the four items. 7.1%, 10.0%, .7% and 5.0% responded 2 or 3 times a month for the four items respectively. 3.6%, 4.3%, 1.4% and 5.7% responded about once a week, 4.3%, 17.9, 2.1% 10.0% said several times a week while 1.4%, 1.4%, 1.4% and 2.1% for other items not included in the options. Overall, no fewer than 50% of the undergraduates have been bullied or have bullied others at least once in/out of school through mobile chat rooms in the past couple of months.

Table 7 - Percentage response of being bullied through instant messaging

SN	Item	1(%)	2(%)	3(%)	4(%)	5(%)	6(%)	7(%)
1	How often have you been bullied through instant messaging in the past	57.1	25.0	13.6	-	1.4	2.1	0.7
2	How often have you been bullied through instant messaging in the past couple of months outside school	58.6	25.0	14.3	0.7	-	-	0.7
3	Have you others bullied through instant messaging in the past couple of months in school	55.7	28.6	9.3	4.3	1.4	-	0.7
4	Have you bullied others through instant Messaging rooms in the past couple of months outside school	57.1	28.6	9.3	2.9	0.7	0.7	0.7

*1=haven't been bullied at school in the past couple of months; 2=only once or twice; 3=two to three times a month; 4=about once a week; 5=several times a week; 6=others

The result from table 7 showed that students who have not been bullied through instant messaging in the past couple of months in school are 57.1%,58.6%,55.7% and 51.7% for the respective items, for those who responded that it has happened once or twice are 25.0%, 25.0%, 28.6 and 28.6 %; 13.6%, 14.3%, 9.3% and 9.3% responded 2 or 3 times a month for the four items respectively. 0%, .7%, 4.3% and 2.9% responded about once a week , 1.4%, 0%, 1.4% and .7% said several times a week, 2.1%, 0%, 0% and .7%said several times a week while .7%, .7%, .7% and .7% are for other items not included in the options. Overall, no fewer than 40% of the undergraduates have been bullied or have bullied others at least once in/out of school through instant message in the past couple of months.

Table 8 - Percentage response of bullying through websites

SN	Item	1(%)	2(%)	3(%)	4(%)	5(%)	6(%)
1	How often have you been bullied through websitein the past couple of months in school	79.3	15.0	-	3.6	0.7	1.4
2	How often have you been bullied through website in the past couple of months outside school	73.6	17.9	1.4	5.0	3.6	2.1
3	Have you bullied others through website in the past couple of months in school	77.9	10.0	5.0	2.1	0.7	4.3
4	Have you bullied others through website in the past couple of months outside school	76.4	13.6	5.7	2.1	-	2.9

1=haven't been bullied at school in the past couple of months; 2=only once or twice; 3=two to three times a month; 4=about once a week; 5=several times a week; 6=others

The result from table 8 showed that students who have not been bullied through website in the past couple of months in school are 79.3%, 73.6%, 77.9% and 76.4% for the respective items, for those it has happened once or twice are 15.0%, 17.9%, 10.0% and 13.6% for the four items 0%, 1.4%, 5.0% and 5.7% responded 2 or 3 times a month for the four items respectively. 3.6%, 5.0%, 2.1% and 2.1% responded about once a week, .7%, 3.6%, .7% and 0% said several times a week while 1.4%, 2.1%, 4.3% and 2.9% for other items not included in the options. Overall, no fewer than 20% of the undergraduates have been bullied or have bullied others at least once in/out of school through website in the past couple of months.

6. DISCUSSION

This study investigated students' awareness and incidence of cyberbullying among undergraduate students in a Nigerian university. Findings revealed that the majority of the respondents (67.1%, 59.3%, 62.1%, 44.7%, 65.0%, 44.3% and 53.6%)have heard of cyberbullying occurring through the listed seven cyber devises respectively. This finding is a clear indication that the majority of the respondents are aware of diverse forms of cyberbullying within and outside the school community. What this implies is that a good number of the students are

aware of the occurrences of cyberbullying through the devices listed. It may not be a strange phenomenon to them in and outside the school environment they operate and this awareness to a greater extent would help in curbing cyberbullying when the right intervention strategy is provided (Pereira, Ghezzi & Chaudron, 2013). Though the percentage responses varied across variety of cyber devices as in the report of Smith, Mahdavi, Carvalho, and Tippett (nd), the percentage of the number of students who were aware of cyberbullying in this study is a bit higher than the percentage response in their study. This may equally indicate that cyberbullying may be more prevalent among the subjects of the present study than among the subjects reported in the other studies. It also contradicts the report of Asanan, Hussain, and Laidey (2017) in which they stated that there is little awareness of cyberbullying among their subjects. This finding also shows that cyberbullying occurs across a variety of venues and mediums in cyberspace (Hinduja & Patchin, 2014). The population and area of the study and even the extent to which individuals who engage in this are convicted in the court of law might lead to differences in awareness of cyberbullying across the globe.

The commonest forms of cyberbullying they were aware of in the past couple of months were text message bullying, phone calls and chat room bullying. Also, bullying by phones calls, text message and email were the most experienced by students and it was also found that some have also bullied others through these devices in past couple of months. There is the tendency for undergraduate students to bully and be bullied by even the commonest cyber devices. The three devices used most are likely to be the ones that are most available to undergraduate students.

Overall, findings on the incidence of cyberbullying among undergraduate students in this study showed that a range of 48%-57% of the respondents have been bullied in and outside the school respectively. On the other hand a range of 28.6%-40.0% of the respondents have bullied others in and outside the school in a couple of months before the study. This is a very large number. It could be deduced that at least approximately 50% of these students have undergone cybervictimization and approximately 30% of them have participated in victimizing others in the cyberspace. This percentage is actually greater than other similar studies conducted in other countries (MacDonald & Roberts-Pittman, 2010; Cotter& McGilloway, 2011; O'Neill & Dinh, 2015) except that of Safaria (2016) who reported that over 80% of the subjects had experienced cyberbullying. The fact that the percentage response of the subjects in the present study is greater than even some more developed nations may be explained in terms of the fact that online behaviour and an increase in aggressive tendencies among adolescents are more related to cyberbullying (Safaria, 2016; Livingstone, Stoilova, & Kelly, 2016). Safaria had noted that those who engage in academic activities online are less likely to be cyberbullied than those who are mostly engaged on social networking, and findings have shown that Nigerian students spend more time in

social activities online than using the cyberspace for their studies (Ejechi, 2016).The fact that students who engage in academic activities online are less likely to be cyberbullied could be explained based on the fact they are likely to interact with like minds. Also research has shown that cyberbullying behaviour is related to level of education in that the higher the level education, the less likely the individual will exhibit cyberbullying tendencies (Demir & Seferoglu, 2016). However, engagement in social networking without proper information literacy is likely to predispose undergraduate students to cyberbullying since communication etiquette may not be observed by them.

Also important is the fact that cyberbullying is more predominant outside school than in school. This could be explained given the fact that students are less busy with academic activities outside the school and since cyberbullying has been linked to the nature of social activity one engages in online, there is the tendency that these students spend most of their time in online social interactions which may lead to cybervictimization. Respondents also reported that they bullied others more outside school than in school. One may begin to think also that there is the likelihood that in-school cyberbullying may be easily exposed than when it occurs outside school. The school authorities may easily fish out the student who engages in this. This may be the reason why most of them are involved in cyberbullying outside school.

7. Conclusion

The study sought to find the percentage of awareness and incidence of cyberbullying among Nigerian undergraduate students. The findings demonstrated that undergraduates are aware of cyberbullying, and have bullied and are bullied in and outside their school environment. This has occurred through the listed mediums and has shown that it is a phenomenon that needs urgent attention to address. Even though that the study made use of only quantitative data, the study has contributed to knowledge by bringing to the academic community the picture of the awareness and incidence of cyberbullying among undergraduate students in Nigeria. The percentage of cyberbullies and the victims is actually alarming that available literature shows that some other research works have lower percentages. It could be concluded that a large number of the younger generations are affected and also are involved in cyberbullying in Nigeria. It becomes imperative for there to be intervention programmes to nip cyberbullying in the bud and provide a kind of rehabilitation for those who are affected emotionally; government should enforce laws/edicts on cyberbullying; both parents, non-governmental, school counsellors and university administration should educate the masses on the dangers of cyberbullying among students; and there should be counselling services (both face to face and online) provided to rehabilitate victims of cyberbullying.

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