# From Crime to Culture: A Machine Learning Study of Cybercrime (Yahoo Yahoo) Normalization among Nigerian Youths and Digital Communities

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## Abstract

This study explores the normalisation of "Yahoo Yahoo" (as cybercrime is called in popular parlance among Nigerian youth) and traces its representation in music, on social media, and within operatives' communities. Applying a mixed-method approach that incorporates content analysis of Nigeria's top songs between 2017 and 2024 and sentiment analysis of 8,000 tweets, the study illuminates how dishonorable conduct is beginning to be seen more as aspirational rather than criminal. Celebrities such as ShallisPopi and Naira Marley, were discovered to have played prominent roles in the spreading of Yahoo-related slang and glorifying narratives that fetishize instant wealth, street "rep" and material opulence.

This study relates the perception of Nigerians to the socio-economic issues of high rates of unemployment among the youth, poverty, and the absence of digital opportunities. It also identifies that there is a gap in the current body of literature, especially the absence of factual study on the impact of pop culture/social media on the attitude of the youth towards cyber crimes. Discovery states that Yahoo Yahoo is more than just an issue that requires criminalization but is an indicator or a result of systemic inequality/disappointment.

The study indicates that to address this issue, measures beyond enforcement are needed; there is a need for ethical orientation, digital literacy, proper depiction by the media, as well as empowerment of the youths to provide viable alternatives for cybercrime.

## Chapter One
### 1.0.Introduction

Cybercrime, or Yahoo Yahoo, has now become a cultural phenomenon and socio-economic solution for poverty and unemployment in Nigeria. In this ever-changing digital world, cybercrime, which has been referred to by the nickname "Yahoo Yahoo," has transformed from being an underground illegal act into an almost pervasive socio-cultural trend in Nigeria. Yahoo Yahoo was first a name for those online fraud scams that relied on deceitful emails and imitation business transactions, and it has long transcended that, and it has actually grown to symbolize many more aspects than simply cybercrime – it now stands for fast success, opulence, and living in a nation that has been largely faced with very high levels of unemployment and poverty.

### 1.1.Statement of the Problem

Matters related to fraudulent activities on the internet have also raised some crucial questions among the intellectuals as well as other stakeholders in Nigeria, though this form of criminal exploit continues to persist with very little attempts from the state to unravel the secrets surrounding its prevalence among the teeming youths in Nigeria.

Rising cases of cybercrime and the need to rein in its unbridled growth, therefore, presuppose an understanding of the circumstances underlying this phenomenon in Nigeria. The preeminent role of Lagos in Nigeria's economy and its vital nerve as the social life of the nation has made it imperative to choose it as the research site because of its appeal to the youth population. This research seeks to answer the following questions: What is public opinion on the fraudulent internet activities of the youths? Is poverty/unemployment the prime driver?

### 1.1.1 A Socio-Economic Response

The emergence of Yahoo Yahoo can be attributed to the socio-economic conditions within Nigeria. With rates of youth unemployment alarming and a percentage of graduates with limited opportunities for gainful employment, the act of cybercrime has become a ready shortcut to success for some Nigerian youths. In a society that idolizes success as a measure of intelligence or worth, the choice to engage in fraudulent activities has become increasingly difficult as options dwindle.

### 1.1.2.Cultural Normalization and Media Influence

But what makes the case of Yahoo Yahoo so disturbing is its normalization within, and even elevation by, some segments of youth culture. So in the form of music, or by virtue of social networks, by peer association, the 'Yahoo boy' image morphed from being an outlaw to being an idol; overspending, fashion, exotic autos – these have come to symbolize what success might look like in the world of cyber scamming.

This normalization corrodes societal values as well as online ethics. This can create a society with a mindset where success is more desirable than integrity, which justifies a mean-to-an-end approach. Since some celebrities or influencers may be glorifying a lifestyle supported by some unethical means, society is left with a less clear boundary between morality and immorality.

### 1.1.3.Implications for National Identity and Ethics

This is negative for international reputation and affects the image Nigerian professionals have with the international community regarding their character as professionals. It also creates a dilemma for law enforcers and policymakers on how best to control crimes while pursuing socio-economic reforms. The public perception of 'Yahoo' as a seemingly legitimate means of livelihood poses a greater burden on the moral fabric of the nation. The popularity of the fraudsters and the public acceptance of their opulent lifestyle is an indication that the crime is subconsciously being legitimatized (Ogayi, 2025). Families celebrate successful yahoo-boys and this has also incentivized the recruitment of many youths into the industry instead of genuine entrepreneurship.

According to Ismail and Olonisakin (2021), youth vulnerability, employment exclusion and economic inequality have often been cited as the basis for understanding the proclivity of youth to criminality and fraud in Africa. While poverty induced by unemployment is singled out to account for this vulnerability, the public acceptance of criminality and rationalization of the same instead of entrepreneurship appears to be an incentive to the growth of '*Yahooism*' in Nigeria and elsewhere in Africa yet, this is being undermined or glossed over by literature. The youth seems to prefer quick money through internet fraud than hard work through entrepreneurial engagements (Ismail & Olonisakin, 2021).

Yahoo Yahoo is not merely a crime; it is a symptom of deeper structural issues within Nigerian society. Addressing it requires more than arrests and awareness campaigns. It requires systemic answers, employment generation, digital literacy education, morality redirection, and a shift in culture where the definition of success and morality needs to change. Nigeria needs to face the reality of its problematic youth situation because if the root causes of this hopelessness are left unattended, Yahoo Yahoo activities will continue to flourish as an illicit act, but also as a cultural sellout.

**Problem Statement:** Notwithstanding its illegal nature, Yahoo Yahoo is gradually becoming something to admire within youth culture, with profound implications for our national identity, ethics in digital content creation, and crime prevention efforts.

### 1.2.Aim and Objectives
Aim
- To critically examine the cultural normalization and public perception of Yahoo Yahoo in Nigeria, and to explore legitimate alternatives for Nigerian youths.
- To critically examine the cultural normalization and public perception of Yahoo Yahoo in Nigeria, and to explore alternative means of livelihood among Nigerian youths

## Objectives

- To investigate how Yahoo Yahoo is being normalized and promoted in Nigerian pop culture and youth communities.
- To evaluate public perception of Yahoo Yahoo using data from social media, music, forums, and mainstream media.
- To identify and recommend sustainable digital alternatives (e.g., freelancing, startups, tech Education to reduce internet fraud.

## 1.3.Research Questions

- How does Nigerian pop culture, especially music, fashion, and dance represent Yahoo Yahoo?
- What are the dominant public Yahoo Yahoo perceptions among Nigerians?
- What alternatives are available and viable for youth empowerment in Nigeria's digital economy?
- Why do people (especially youths) see Yahoo Yahoo as okay or normal now?
- What is the influence of Yahoo Yahoo on Nigeria economic?
- What drives (psychological and social factor) the participation of Nigerian youths in Yahoo Yahoo, despite the risk poses to their well-being, with the practice being illegal in the country?
- Are tech skills and unemployment helping Yahoo Yahoo to grow?
- What can be done to turn Yahoo Boys into tech entrepreneurs or developers?

## Chapter Two
## 2.0.Literature Review
## 2.1.Brief History Or Context
## 2.1.1 Early Evolution of Cybercrime in Nigeria.

Cybercrime in Nigeria has a history that dates back to the 1980s with the initiation of advance fee scams, known as "419 scams" based on Section 419 of the Nigerian Criminal Code. The scams began as letter and fax machine scams whereby victims were defrauded of money in exchange for payments in return of huge amounts of cash (Wikipedia Contributors, n.d). Many desperate young Nigerians turned to advance-fee scams ("419" fraud) by mail. Con men promised foreign marks a share of illicit riches held by corrupt officials in Nigeria – essentially a modern version of the old "Spanish Prisoner" swindle. When cheap cyber-cafés and email arrived in the late 1990s, these scammers saw new opportunity. They opened Internet cafes nationwide, sending mass "Nigerian prince" emails from Yahoo Mail accounts. Hence the rise of the **"Yahoo Boys"** label: a nickname derived from Yahoo email (Oloworekende, 2019). This term "yahoo yahoo" in local slang became the generic name for online advance-fee fraud in Nigeria (Moga *et al,* 2021).

The Nigerian government eventually moved to counter the menace. In 2002 it created the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) following the notorious $242 million fraud of banker Emmanuel Nwude (Tayo, 2023). The new agency raided cybercafés and arrested hundreds of scammers. This led to scammers being forced out of cybercafes initially decreasing the volume of scams in 2006-2009 (Oloworekende, 2019). This was followed by a technological shift with the 2010s seeing smartphones and Internet access in homes replace cybercafes, ushering in the mobile age of scammers. These **"G boys"** (with iPhones and laptops) no longer relied on advance-fee plots alone but exploited global communications in diverse ways (Egbejule, 2024).

## 2.1.2 The Rise of The "Yahoo Boy" Archetype in Media and Music.

Parallel to its growth, the Yahoo Boy image seeped into Nigerian entertainment. Beginning in the mid-2000s, musicians and filmmakers began depicting or referencing internet scammers and their lavish lifestyles. Nollywood comedian Nkem Owoh, for example, starred in *The Master* (2005) as an internet con man; its catchy theme song *"I Go Chop Your Dollar"* – a satire of 419 scams was so strikingly on point that authorities banned its airplay (Tayo, 2023). Around the same time, pop singer Olu Maintain scored a nationwide hit with *"Yahooze"* (2007), a braggadocious anthem celebrating a Yahoo Boy's flashy wealth (cars, clubs, "hammer" huge cash inflows).

Critics argued that *"Yahooze"* outrightly glorified internet fraud, since it namedrops the $1 million windfall as "hammer" and boasted turning it into naira (Moga *et al*, 2021). By the 2010s, such themes had become commonplace. Nigerian hip-hop and Afrobeats lyrics frequently borrow Yahoo Boys' slang (terms like *"cashout"*, *"client"*, *"aza"*, *"Japa"* and *"hammer"*) as badges of street credibility. Scholars note that many songs discursively **glamorize** cyber scams and normalize the fraudster persona. For instance, Akinrinlola *et al.*, (2023), found that hip-hop artists often frame scammers' cunningness as clever hustle, using metaphor and repetition to *praise* "yahoo boys" in their lyrics (Akinrinlola *et al*, 2023). Similarly, a content analysis of Afro-Pop between 2007–2020 shows that cybercrime-related slangs have "become integral parts of daily communication" among youths (Oyenuga & Ajewole 2023).

In effect, pop culture both reflected and reinforced the Yahoo Boy image. Wealthy scammers themselves became patrons of the music industry. Investigations report that fraud-generated funds financed record labels, videos and concerts. One analyst observes that over the last decade "Yahoo Boys set up record labels and financed music projects," helping some artists break out while laundering their own money through the fame-generating industry. The celebrated global success of Afrobeats today e.g. Burna Boy winning a Grammy in 2021, still carries this echo of ostentatious "gangster" backstory (Tayo, 2023). In short, the Yahoo Boy archetype – flashy, wealthy, tech-savvy became a recurring figure in Nigerian movies and songs, often portrayed ambivalently as part anti-hero, part cautionary tale.

### 2.1.3 The Digital Age and the Shift to Online Financial Scams.

As technology advanced, Nigerian fraud rings morphed into highly organized online operations beyond simple "prince" letters. By the late 2010s and 2020s, digital platforms shaped new scam methods. Scammers moved to social media and dating apps, using romance and sextortion scams to prey on vulnerable foreigners. Reports note that as telecom prices fell and enforcement pressure rose, fraudsters ran operations from safe houses. They targeted wealthy older victims with customized cons on WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, etc. In one recent EFCC raid, investigators found 500 SIM cards and dozens of fake social-media profiles: Nigerian recruits had been trained to pose online (often via WhatsApp chat) as attractive strangers, luring in victims across the USA, Canada and Europe (EFCC, 2024). The same report highlights widespread cryptocurrency investment scams run from Lagos high-rises: fraudsters posed as crypto-traders, promising high returns to gullible investors (Egbejule, 2024). In fact, the EFCC announced in December 2024 that 792 suspects were arrested in a single raid on a criminal syndicate running both crypto "investment" scams and online romance schemes (EFCC, 2024). These scams often involve bitcoins or other digital currencies (hard to trace) to collect the extorted funds.

In short, the analog 419 model has given way to a diverse digital ecosystem. Nigerian cybercriminals still exploit basic advance-fee themes ("send money first, get richer later"), but now via phishing emails, WhatsApp/Instagram chat schemes, fake dating profiles, and even multimedia blackmail. The "Yahoo Boy" slang still hangs on even when newer scams get colloquially folded into the Yahoo/Yahoo Plus lexicon but their operations are more professional and scalable.

Underlying conditions-high youth unemployment, glamorization of quick wealth, and lax cyber-infrastructure-continue to feed the problem throughout. Yet, responses have been ramped up by the authorities: recent years have seen social-media takedowns and international cooperation beyond the 2000s cybercafe raids. In short, all of these changes put together show how Nigeria's cyber-fraud scene has evolved from simple postal 419 schemes in the 1980s into today's sophisticated online fraud rings using dating apps and cryptocurrency (Oloworekende, 2019) (Egbejule, 2024).

## 2.2.Related Works
### 2.2.1 Academic and NGO Studies on Cybercrime and Youth Behavior

In academic as well as NGO communities, there appears a growing acceptance of the fact that cyber fraud, also known as "Yahoo Yahoo," has

evolved beyond a criminal pattern into a cultural phenomenon, especially within the youth of Nigeria. (Ayandele & Popoola, 2019a) refer to it as a "dominant mode of criminality committed by Nigerian youths," citing the fact that Nigeria leads Africa as a whole and occupies the third position worldwide as a victim of cybercrime, with a frightening number of university students and unemployed university graduates allegedly involved. Based on Cressey's Fraud Triangle, they clarify how young people find it hard to resist the temptation of cyber fraud due to pressure, accessibility, as well as moral rationalization.

This is further evidenced by subsequent studies. (Modupe & Adelusi, 2022) point to the "fast-money mindset" which is encouraged by issues such as unemployment and the absence of legal means of earning income as being contributory factors in the rising use of Yahoo Yahoo by young Nigerians. (Adebayo, 2023) In his research in Delta State shows how many of the young people have turned to Yahoo Yahoo as a means of earning income because they have no other alternatives. Also, (Jegede et al., 2016) examine the use of online fraud by young people as an expression of intelligence and success.

Moreover, there also seems to be an ethical aspect involved in this problem which cannot be overlooked. According to Salifu (2023) and Offor & Chukwuma (2023), the reality is that youth today do not find Yahoo Yahoo to be utterly incorrect when it comes to a society in which corruption appears widespread, and success can be measured in terms of material gain.

Institutional organizations, such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC, 2024), have shown concern, encouraging the youth to redirect their technological expertise into more productive endeavors. On the other hand, the United Nations' Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reports that the Nigerian cybercrime menace is worsening due to factors such as poverty, poor governance, and a lack of technological literacy. However, it is evident that a gap exists in the current body of literature. A great deal of the current literature simply points out the big-picture causes of Yahoo Yahoo, such as poverty, corruption, poor institutions, but does not address how the topic of Yahoo Yahoo is presented, rationalized, and even celebrated by the youth. There is very little investigation into how mem culture, music, social media posts, or influencer culture is influencing younger generations regarding online fraud. In this digital age where cultural changes trend on Instagram, TikTok, and Spotify before they make it into mainstream news, it leaves a lot to be desired regarding understanding how Yahoo Yahoo has actually become normalized for younger generations in Nigeria.

## 2.2. Cultural Reflections in Afrobeats and Nollywood

Nigerian popular culture regularly incorporates Yahoo Yahoo narratives, sometimes in a manner that normalizes or celebrates fraud as a means of living. Lazarus (2019) has found that "many popular Afrobeats and hip-hop songs explicitly 'glamorise cybercrime and online offenders (Yahoo Boys)'. A further content analysis of 33 popular songs by Lazarus et al., 2023) has just confirmed this observation, as it has been found that songs frequently justify fraudulent behavior, victim-blame and dehumanize victims, and portray online romantic scams as a glamorous and lucrative activity.

The movie industry in Nigeria has also tackled this issue: for instance, the 2022 crime drama Yahoo+ depicts the lifestyle of the Yahoo Boys. According to the review of the movie by Premium Times, the movie "reorients viewers, particularly youths, on the need to work hard and not depend on Yahoo as a means to succeed," implying that it has an obvious moral lesson that discourages fraud (Shola-Adido, 2023). In sum, these cultural texts both reflect and possibly influence the attitudes of the youths towards Yahoo Yahoo Nevertheless, studies on the impact of media influence remain limited. Other than the works by Lazarus, the relationship between Afrobeats and Nollywood depiction and the impact of such depiction on the beliefs and behaviors of the Nigerian youths has remained an area of inquiry. Much of the literature on the depiction of Yahoo Yahoo in music and films is qualitative in nature. There is no quantitative study, for example, on the relationship between the impact

of pro-fraud lyrics and films and the online behaviors of the Nigerian youths. This is the rationale for the current study.

### 2.2.2 Prevalence Statistics and Insights from Ncc, Efcc, and Unodc

However, it has been reported that there has been a remarkable increase in cybercrime cases in Nigeria. According to Ogunade (2024), in ENACT Africa, Nigeria saw a 174% increase in cybercrimes in six months of 2022, and it was estimated that Nigeria lost approximately $706 million to cyber fraud in 2023. The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, Nigeria, confirms this, saying that Nigeria lost over $500 million to cybercrime in 2022 (Ogunade, 2024).

Globally, Nigeria is known for its level of cybercrime cases. This is according to the World Cyber Crime Index developed by researchers from the University of Oxford and UNSW Canberra; Nigeria is the fifth country with the highest level of cybercrime cases globally, behind Russia, Ukraine, China, and the US (Nairametrics, 2024)

In Nigeria, the efforts of the law enforcement agencies highlight the magnitude of cybercrime. For example, in September 2023, the Federal High Court in Anambra State convicted 28 persons commonly called "Yahoo Boys" of impersonation scams on the internet and jailed or ordered them to serve community service. In light of the increasing threat of cybercrime, the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) required that every active SIM card be registered with a National Identification Number (NIN) to curb identity theft scams (Biometric Update, 2024).

Nonetheless, there is a lack of comprehensive statistics on the incidence of cybercrime among Nigerian youths or on digital platforms. While the EFCC and police statistics may give the numbers of arrests or convictions made, this is not always with a demographical perspective. On the other hand, although the NCC gives the statistics on the number of telecom subscribers, it does not give the statistics on the incidence of cybercrime.

### 2.2.4 Psychological Motivations and Ethical Drift Related to Yahoo Yahoo

Criminological frameworks have been utilized to comprehend the reasons behind the involvement of Nigerian youths in online fraud. Ayandele and Popoola (2019a) directly reference the Fraud Triangle, asserting that social and psychological factors—namely pressure, opportunity, and rationalization—facilitate fraudulent behavior among students. Specifically, they identify poverty, unemployment, peer influence, greed, and a materialistic youth culture as the main factors that lead to Yahoo Yahoo. Orakpo (2025) also talks about a number of financial and social pressures that can lead young people to commit cybercrime, such as expectations from parents or society. These quantitative results corroborate qualitative evidence, revealing that respondents characterized a widespread "fast-money-making" mentality among unemployed youth, driven by corrupt peers and limited opportunities (Nwokoro et al., 2022). These studies collectively indicate a shared narrative: young Nigerians, confronted with economic difficulties and social incentives, perceive Yahoo Yahoo as a valid avenue for progress.

Cultural analyses elucidate the erosion of moral barriers. (Lazarus et al., 2023) point out that many popular songs make fraud victims look like people and make the Yahoo Boys lifestyle look cool, which gives people moral cover for making money illegally. Interviews referenced by Nwokoro et al. (2022) indicate that certain offenders explicitly rationalize their actions as retribution for the exploitation of Africa during the colonial period. These accounts illustrate processes of *ethical drift*: through peer norms, music and even occult rituals (e.g. "cyber-spiritualism"), youths can gradually shift their moral compass to accept fraud. However, most literature to date is theoretical or anecdotal; few studies have directly traced how ordinary Nigerian youths' values change in day-to-day online interactions. In particular, there is scant empirical work on how exposure to normalizing messages on social media translates into individual moral rationalizations. Understanding this psychological drift in the context of Nigeria's tech-driven youth culture remains an open research frontier – one that the present study seeks to explore in detail.

### 2.3   Policies and Societal Influences
### 2.3.1   Nigerian Cybercrime Laws (E.G., Cybercrimes Act, Efcc Framework).

The Cybercrimes Act of 2015 (CPA 2015) was enacted to unify and strengthen Nigeria's legal framework against internet crimes. Its goals include providing a clear legal, regulatory, and institutional framework to stop and tackle cybercrimes in Nigeria. It also aims to protect critical national information infrastructure and promote cybersecurity (Onadeko & Afolayan, 2016). The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) mainly enforces the law. This agency regularly carries out large-scale raids and prosecutes "Yahoo Boys." For instance, in October 2023, the EFCC's Lagos command successfully prosecuted a cryptocurrency trader under Section 22(2)(b) of the Act. The agency often announces the arrests of many suspected internet fraudsters, such as the 48 arrests in Delta State in October 2023 (Igwe, 2023). Nonetheless, scholars point out that cybercrime is still widespread. Oniye (2022) reports that even after the Act was passed, internet fraud "comfortably enjoys a top position" in Nigeria's crime scene. Academic studies highlight major enforcement problems. For example, the lack of specialized resources and expertise in law enforcement, along with low public awareness of cybercrime, are hurting prosecution efforts. Critics also claim that the EFCC focuses on low-level "Yahoo Boys" while overlooking high-level corruption. This pattern is evident in studies of public sentiment (Lazarus et al, 2022). In summary, Nigeria has a solid legal framework (CPA 2015) and an active anti-fraud agency (EFCC), but its effectiveness is limited by enforcement gaps, resource issues, and inconsistent application of the law (Oniye, 2022).

### 2.3.2   Impact of Unemployment and Underemployment.

Chronic youth joblessness in Nigeria is often pointed out as a major cause of online fraud. Nigeria's National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) reports that in the first quarter of 2024, the unemployment rate among 15 to 24 year-olds was 8.4%. Additionally, 14.4% of young people were neither in education, employment, nor training (NEET) (Nigeria National Bureau of Statistics, 2024). These concerning numbers match academic findings that unemployed and underemployed graduates frequently turn to cybercrime. Ayandele and Popoola (2019a) found that around 60% of Nigeria's unemployed college graduates participate in Yahoo Yahoo. They attribute this trend to poverty, lack of opportunities, and high unemployment levels that push them into fraud schemes (Ayandele & Popoola, 2019a).

Likewise, Ozeh and Ohajionu (2019), identify unmetneedscausedby unemployment/underemployment as "the root of the intimidating level of cyber-criminality" in Nigeria (Ozeh & Ohajionu, 2019). In other words, the socio-economic pressure of joblessness creates a context in which many young people rationalize internet scams as a means of survival or material advancement. Multiple studies corroborate this link: Nigeria's highgraduate unemployment, underemployment, and rising NEET rates provide fertile ground for Yahoo Boys (and "Yahoo Girls") to recruit and operate. Thus, the data from NBS and corroborating research (e.g. Ayandele & Popoola, 2019b; Ozeh & Ohajionu, 2019) underscore that youth economic marginalization is a major factor normalizing cyber-fraud in Nigeria's communities (Ayandele & Popoola 2019b) (Ozeh & Ohajionu, 2019).

### 2.3.3 Role of Media, Music, and Celebrity Influencers in Glamorization.

Nigerian pop culture has frequently depicted the Yahoo Yahoo lifestyle, often glamorizing it in music and film. Content analyses of contemporary Afrobeats and hip-hop lyrics show a clear trend: many charting songs explicitly praise or rationalize cyber-fraud. Lazarus *et al.* (2023) find that popular rap tracks routinely "glamorize online fraud" and justify Yahoo Boy behavior through lyrical narratives. For example, Alake (2018), in Pulse Nigeria, notes that hit songs like Victor AD's "Wetin We Gain" or Chinko Ekun's "Able God" (featuring Zlatan) openly celebrate Yahoo Boys' wealth and activities (Alake, 2018).

High-profile artists have courted controversy for such themes: Augoye (2019), also reports that rapper Naira Marley – famous for songs like "Am I a Yahoo Boy?" has repeatedly praised

internet fraudsters, known as Yahoo boys, in his songs and on social media (Augoye, 2019). Nollywood has also explored this issue. The crime drama Yahoo+ (2022) tells the story of two unemployed friends who take different paths: one resists internet scams while the other dives into cyber-fraud and even violent money rituals out of pressure (Shola-Adido, 2023). These cultural portrayals are significant. By frequently showing successful scammers living extravagant lives or avoiding punishment, the media and celebrities risk making Yahoo Yahoo seem like a valid way to achieve social mobility. Researchers warn that this messaging encourages materialistic goals and detachment from morality among impressionable young people, effectively weaving cyber-fraud into the identity of Nigeria's youth (Lazarus et al, 2023; Alake 2018).

## Chapter Three
### 3.0.Methodology
### 3.1.Research Design
The study employs a mixed methods study approach, marrying the numbers with the voices so as to comprehend how the activities associated with the name "Yahoo Yahoo," commonly referred to as cybercrime, become normalized in the pop culture in Nigeria and the young population in particular by achieving the following objectives:

1) To explore how Yahoo Yahoo culture becomes incorporated into popular Nigerian songs and discussions.
2) To examine the perception of Yahoo Yahoo amongthe general public using sentiment analysis.
3) To identify digital alternatives that might lower youth participation in online fraud.

- The group studied is Nigerian youths, and the data obtained is from music and social platforms, including Twitter, from 2017 through 2024.

## Data Collection
### 3.2.1   Music Data
To assess the promotion and normalization of Yahoo Yahoo in Nigerian music, Apple Music's Nigeria Top 100 charts were used to collect 100 top Nigerian songs 2020-2024. For the years 2017-2019, the data was obtained through radio airplay reports, streaming data, and curated year-end music rankings from reliable websites. This led to an 8-year comprehensive dataset representing the mainstream Nigerian music.

The lyrics of every single song were subjected to an analysis, and the presence and frequency of words, phrases, and slang commonly associated with Yahoo Yahoo were particularly looked at. One of the markers of normalization was the following:

- Wealth obtained through dubious or unexplained means was glorified.
- Justification of cybercrime as a response to poverty or inequality.
- Popular slang and terms used to describe cybercrime.
- Audience reinforcement through social media engagement and fan responses.

### 3.2.2   Social Media Data
For the evaluation of public mood and communication regarding Yahoo Yahoo, Twitter was the main social media platform chosen. By means of the combination of Tweepy (for accessing Twitter API) and snscrape (for retrieving historical tweets), 8,000 tweets (1,000 per year from 2017 to 2024) were collected. The focus was on tweets with keywords like Yahoo Yahoo, G boy, runs, wire wire, and other cybercrime terms relevant to the locale.

### 3.2.3Data Cleaning and Preprocessing
The data collected was subjected to the data cleaning process using Python (pandas,Numpy)and Microsoft Excel in the following aspects:

- Removal of duplicates and retweets.
- Elimination of irrelevant data (e.g., promotional tweets, spam).
- Handling of missing or malformed entries.
- Standardization of text for consistency in analysis.

For the music dataset, lyrics were preprocessed by removing non-alphanumeric characters, converting text to lowercase, and tokenizing by words.

### 3.3.Sentiment Analysis

To determine the prevailing feeling of people, we developed a customized sentiment analysis model by training a Support Vector Machine (SVM) classifier on the IMDB Movie Reviews Dataset. The IMDB dataset provided us a generic sentiment base. But then we fine-tuned the classification model by training it on manually tagged example tweets to fit the context of cybercrime discourse in Nigeria. With such sentiment analysis, we were able to determine whether there was a trend of normalization or rejection of Yahoo Yahoo on social talk online.

### 3.4.Limitations

While this research provides valuable insights, the study has certain limitations. Music data for the previous years (2017–2019) were accrued from publicly available rankings instead of streaming APIs. Apart from that, though the sentiment model was adapted, its original training on a non-Nigerian dataset may affect how well it could predict cultural nuances. shapes public perception on Internet fraud.

### Chapter Four
### 4.0.Findings and Analysis
### 4.1.Yahoo-Related Slang Usage by Nigerian Music Artists

Music and language interplay and reflect the world around us, and Nigerian music is one such reflection. The relationship between music and language and how it reflects the world will be explored in this study as it looks at the influence of Yahoo-related slangs in Nigerian music and the trends associated with it. The study will measure the occurrence and distribution of slangs in Nigerian music in order to establish how popular Nigerian music reflects and/or shapes public perception on Internet fraud.
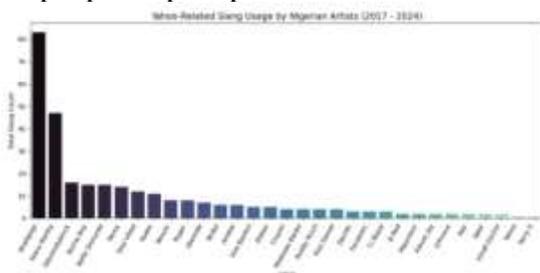


**Figure 1:** A Bar Chart of Yahoo-Related Slang Usage by Nigerian Artists (2017–2024)

'yahoo

Figure 1 results indicate which artists are punctuating the Yahoo boys slang trends on Yahoo and where this slang is circulating in the music industry of Nigeria.

1) Shallipopi has a clear leadership in the number of mentions, exceeding 80 mentions, while no other artist is close to that amount. This immediately identifies that either there is widespread usage or promotion of Yahoo talk in lyrics or conversations in his case.

2) Naira Marley comes a close second with about 47 mentions of slang terms, which reflects his level of influence in regularizing or glorifying the culture associated with Yahoo boys in the music industry.

3) Odumodublvck, Burna Boy, and Bella Shmurda are in the mid-teens, showing consistent, yet moderate usage of Yahoo terminology.

4) The first two artists on their own represent more than half of all slack usage, which indicates a definitive focus of such a speech form on a selected group of key individuals.

5) A long-tail artist of: Zlatan, Reekado Banks, Kizz Daniel, Crayon: reflects less usage, implying that many artists use Yahoo slang terms or inscriptions very casually

6) Veteran accounts such as Davido, Olamide, and Falz also feature in the chart, though with fewer instances that may be a result of occasional posting or dynamic content posting strategies.

7) The fact that there are newer names like Ruger, Rema, and Seyi Vibez indicates that younger artistes are also defining the ever-changing Yahoo lexicon. 8) From the above map, there appears to be a disturbing trend that indicates Yahoo-related slang terms are not only found in the culture but are also ingrained in Nigerian pop culture, especially among artists of the street-pop genre.
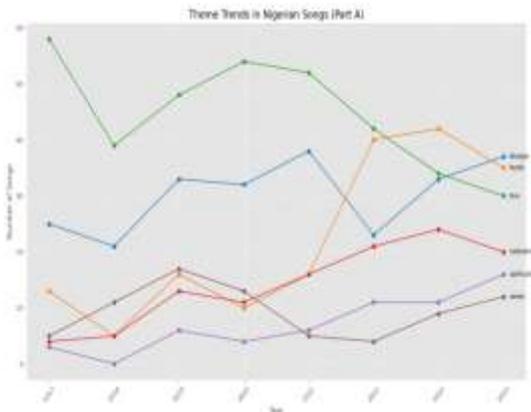
### 4.2.Theme trends in Nigerian songs



Figure 2a: Chart showing trends in the theme of Nigerian songs

Figure 2a above illustrates a free form of theme movement through the songs of 2017 to 2024 for Nigeria. Six prominent themes undergo changes, which form a musical landscape that changes over time.

- Love retains the number one spot but weakens: Love songs remain the unifying element in the data with a peak of around 54 songs in 2020 but then drop to around 30 songs by 2024. This could indicate a willingness to listen to a different set of themes.
- A sharp jump in hustle songs: The most noticeable pattern here is that of hustle songs. The number of hustle songs shot up from a very low number of 2017 to 2020 to become the second most popular genre of 2022 to 2023 with approximately 42 songs.
- Lifestyle themes wobble: Lifestyle tunes are highly erratic, falling from 25 in 2017 to 21 in 2018, peaking at a whopping 38 in 2021, relaxing somewhat before rebounding again to 37 in 2024.
- Motivations strengthen their position in the chart: The motivational segment increases in popularity, with motivational tracks escalating from 4 in 2017 to 20 in 2024.
- Spiritual and street songs keep relative consistency: Spiritual and street songs keep relative consistency with minimal fluctuations, staying between 4 and 16 songs per year.

In any case, the evidence shows that contemporary Nigerian music is reflecting the economic situation and desired goals, and that romantic themes are yielding to more practical concerns for success, motivation, and lifestyle.
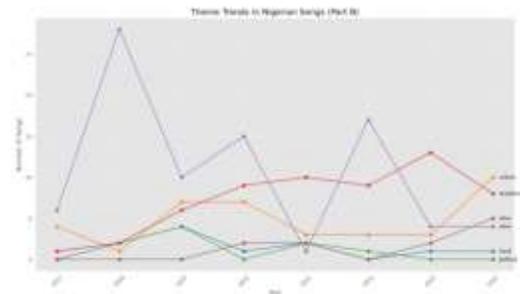


**Figure 2b:** Chart showing trends in the theme of Nigerian songs

This graph plots six more Nigerian music themes from 2017 through 2024, as several major swings and new directions catch attention.

- The vibes dominate, with wild volatility: The vibe-focused songs jump from 6 in 2017 to a peak of 28 in 2018, then slump to about 10 in 2019. It climbs again to 15 in 2020, nearly vanishes by 2021, briefly rebounds to 17 in 2022, and then collapses to 4 or fewer by 2023–2024.
- Heartbreak themes rise steadily: Songs of heartbreak increase from just 1 in 2017 to a high of 13 in 2023, easing off to 9 in 2024-a sure signal of increased openness to emotional expression in the music of Nigeria.
- Culture as an increasing force: Cultural themes remain scarce until 2017–2021 but rise to a high of 10 songs in 2024, reflecting a resurging interest in identity and heritage.
- Politics leave only a light footprint: Political songs stick low but steady, peaking at 4 in 2019 and being steady up or down.
- Manipulation/Fraud and "Other" themes remain at the fringes: Fraud related and "other" themes routinely stay low and never reach more than 2–3 songs a year.

On the whole, these data suggest that Nigerian music is very responsive to great social and cultural moments. These saw-tooth "vibes" may reflect changing party culture or economic fortunes, while upticks in heartbreak and cultural

themes signal a growing emotional and cultural awareness.

## Most Dominant Theme Across the past 8 years
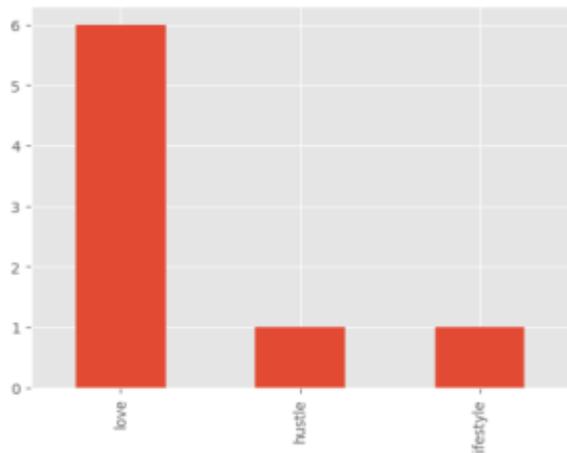


**Figure 4:** Bar-chart showing the most dominant theme in Nigerian songs across the past 8 years.
Love was the most dominant theme in 6 out of the 8 years. Hustle and Lifestyle each dominated 1 year.
Note: All other themes (e.g., fraud, culture, spirituality) were never the most dominant in any year.

## Chart Summary: Yahoo Words in Nigerian Music (2017–2024)
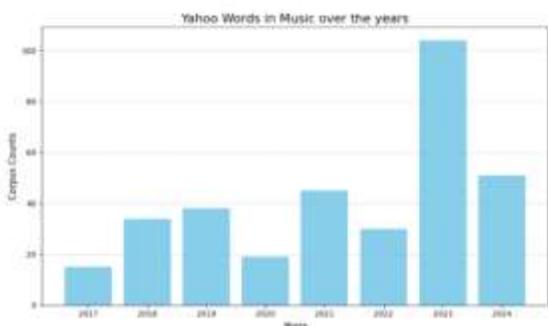


**Figure 5:** Yahoo Words in Nigerian Music (2017–2024).
The chart (Figure 5) shows the **number of times Yahoo-related words** appeared in the lyrics of the **Top 100 Nigerian songs** from 2017 to 2024. The vertical axis ("Corpus Counts") reflects

frequency, while the horizontal axis shows each year.
Table 1: Year-by-Year Analysis.

| Year | Mentions (Approximate from chart) |
|------|-----------------------------------|
| 2017 | ~15 |
| 2018 | ~34 |
| 2019 | ~38 |
| 2020 | ~19 |
| 2021 | ~45 |
| 2022 | ~30 |
| 2023 | ~105 |
| 2024 | ~51 |

Key Observations from the year by year analysis approximate by chart (table 1):

1. **2017–2019: Gradual Rise**
o Mentions increased steadily from 15 in 2017 to nearly 38 in 2019.
o This suggests a **growing presence** of Yahoo-related slang or themes in Nigerian pop culture during this period.

2. **2020: Noticeable Dip**
o In 2020, there was a **sharp drop** to around 19 mentions almost **half of 2019**.
o This dip may reflect changes in music themes or reduced output during the **COVID-19 lockdown**, though the reason isn't explicit in the chart.

3. **2021: Strong Rebound**
o Mentions climbed to **around 45**, surpassing the 2019 level. A possible return to trend post-pandemic disruption.

4. **2022: Small Decline**
o There is a slight_LOW mention hovering around 30, indicating it does not go down to the levels of 2020. Some volatility in its popularity is witnessed.

5. **2023: Sharp Spike**
o Mentions skyrocket over 100, an all-time high – more than twice the number during the last peak in 2021.

6. **2024: Decline, But Still High**
o         The number decreases slightly to about 51, and this becomes the second-highest number

overall, withYahoo-related words remaining very common.

## 4.3. Interpretation

Data illustrates Yahoo jargon weaving itself into Nigerian popular music starting from 2017, peaking in 2023, but with a trough in 2024, indicating a shift or focus change, though remaining much higher than previous years. Through the period from 2017 to 2024, Yahoo jargon increases in usage, particularly after 2021. The peak in 2023 is a clear anomaly, indicating that there has been a clear impact on the lyrics that year. Despite the trough in 2024, statistics show that Yahoo talk is now an integral part of Nigerian popular music lyrics. The striking thing about these statistics is that Yahoo jargon has entered Nigerian popular music lyrics so much that an anomaly happened in 2023, which obviously impacted lyrics in that year. Despite that anomaly, statistics show that Yahoo talk is now mainstream in Nigerian popular music.

## 4.4. The Normalization of Yahoo Culture Through Nigerian Popular Music
### 4.4.1 The Concentration of Influence

The data reveal a striking trend: Yahoo-related slang isn't just cropping up here and there; it is quite concentrated among a small coterie of very influential artists. Shallipopi leads the pack, racking up more than 80 mentions, which signals more than a casual nod to yahoo-yahoo lingo. It looks like a deliberate artistic identity is being built around this cultural moment. Add Naira Marley's 47 mentions, and these two artists alone account for more than half of all recorded usage. That suggests Yahoo culture in Nigerian music isn't as yet a broad industry trend but rather a tight-core influencer-driven phenomenon. And that matters for the heft that these artists have over Nigerian youths. Shallipopi and Naira Marley sit on opposite sides of Afro-beats and hip hop-different generations and sub-genres-but Yahoo slang has become central to how they present themselves. Together, they push a powerful cultural signal that reaches beyond entertainment into shaping social norms.

### 4.4.2 Generational and Genre Patterns

The appearance of established artists such as Davido, Olamide, and Falz, along with some newer artists in the fray such as Ruger, Rema, and Seyi Vibez, indicates that different generations have their way with this trend. Mainstream artists always seem to incorporate moderate levels in their top songs, yet their appearance indicates that even successful artists have an interest in including some Yahoo terms to stay relevant or to maintain their street cred. The balance entertainers Odumodublvck, Burna Boy, and Bella Shmurda exhibit in using some levels of Yahoo terms in their songs indicates a good balance to showcase their awareness of this trend without overindulging in it to make it their identity in this competitive musical landscape in Nigeria.

### 4.4.3 Cultural Normalization Mechanisms

The proliferation of Yahoo-speak in the musical space is indicative of the entrenchment of Yahoo culture in society at large. High-profile individuals such as Shalippopi/Shallipopi and Naira Marley, frequent users of these words, are the chief culture drivers in this phenomenon to normalize and even glamorize these words of the criminal lexicon in the cyber world. On the other end of the trough are musicians with relatively low usage but known names within the music space like Zlatan, Reekado Banks, Kizz Daniel, to name but a few.

All of this consolidates a cultural space where Yahoo tos comes to be ever more normalized in popular culture as it becomes ever more ubiquitously represented across various artists, genre, and contexts. In fact, even where it assumes figurative or casual contexts, it aids in the consolidation of this sort of language as an embodiment of Nigerian-ness.

### 4.4.4 Implications for Youth Culture and Social Values

The most worrisome aspect of this problem is its influence on the way young people think about themselves and what they pursue. When artists and famous influencers continually reference cybercrime culture in their songs, it puts them right up there as the face of this crime, thus crafting this alluring narrative about crime itself. The street pop genre and its artists have been

closely associated with this phenomenon, encouraging young people to look upon Yahoo crime as valid ways to achieve success and fame. Statistics have revealed that the usage of yahoo slang is no longer confined to its original setting as a manifestation of cybercrime groups and is instead a symbol of this particular level of cultural status and wealth.

### 4.4.5 Industry Responsibility and Cultural Leadership
The pattern of usage among artists poses an enormous question of who truly controls the industry. Artists who feature normal use of language associated with crime also contribute to the cultural narrative that emerges from it. That artists of stature feel compelled to remove these elements from their songs highlights industry pressure that makes it difficult to resist these elements. There might be an element of rebellion in artists associating themselves with these elements despite pressure from industry change.

However, this expansion is not even. Some artists are obviously trying to base their entire brand on YaBoi culture, while others are trying to_detach from these references in their branding, using them sparingly or as a symbol of something else. It just goes to show how you can tap into a trend in a different way and still be successful.

### Chapter Five
### 5.0.Conclusion and Recommendation
### 5.1.Conclusion
From the findings of this study, it has been observed that Cybercrime (Yahoo Yahoo) has transcended from being a criminal act to a cultural phenomenon that has been driven into the minds of the Nigerian youth. The study has been conducted by a combination of machine learning techniques, music content analysis, and public opinion analysis. It is evident that cybercrime has transcended from being a form of deviant behavior to a point where it has been intertwined with the identity of the youth. In a world where cybercrime has been normalized by music, slang, and social media platforms by popular artists, a dangerous form of social

orientation has been developed where money is of greater importance than integrity.

At the heart of this shift is a mix of systematic problems such as youth unemployment, poverty, computer illiteracy, and discontent in society. These have resulted in a void that is now filled by fraudulent criminal activities that are increasingly celebrated in public spaces and easily accessible. The study further points out the generation and genre trend in the cultural representation of cybercrime as there are particular artists who play critical roles in the promotion of the Yahoo culture. Although public sentiment remains rather polarized, there appears to be a rather disturbing trend in terms of moral ambivalence or even acceptance.

### 5.2 Recommendation
However, if the trend of "Yahoo Yahoo," or the glamorization of cybercrime in Nigeria, is to be reduced amongst the country's youths, the following must be done: The media must be reformed; quality education must be provided; and the economy must be made to provide viable opportunities for these young individuals. The various arms of the government, as well as various non-governmental organizations and tech firms, must work together to provide digital training for these youths in areas of legitimate digital work such as coding, digital marketing, and freelancing. The various arms of the government must also work to reduce the alluring depiction of a life of fraud in films and songs, while also creating alternative storylines of success on social media.

The strategy also addresses underlying economic pressures by providing youth employment initiatives such as startup investment, networking, and innovation hubs that direct youthful enthusiasm into positive entrepreneurship. The police force must integrate enforcement with rehabilitation, providing first-time offenders with an opportunity to develop appropriate digital skills instead of merely punishing them. Schools must integrate digital ethics, media literacy, and citizenship into their programs in order to bring about cultural shift. By providing positive alternatives and raising a generation of digitally savvy, responsible Nigerians, this strategy aims

at reducing the appeal of cybercrime while building a strong digital economy in Nigeria.

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