

Role of Home Economics Education in Preventing Cybercrime Among Nigerian Youths

Ijomah, Gift C. (PhD)

Department of Home Economics, Hospitality and Tourism
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education
Giftijomah01@gmail.com 08166600707

Ahiakwo, Rosemary Oluwayemisi (PhD)

School of Secondary Education
Department of Home Economics
Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku, Rivers State
odobomax@gmail.com
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Abstract

This study examined the role of Home Economics education in curbing cybercrime activities among youths in Delta State, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design and involved 387 respondents comprising teachers, students, and youth trainees. Data were collected using a validated and reliable questionnaire ($r = 0.84$) and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, including Mean, Standard Deviation, Chi-square, and ANOVA. The findings revealed that Home Economics education significantly equips Nigerian youths with entrepreneurship and life skills (Grand Mean = 3.42) and promotes value reorientation and ethical behavior (Grand Mean = 3.41) that discourage involvement in cybercrime. Major challenges identified include poor funding, inadequate instructional materials, shortage of trained teachers, and students' poor attitude toward vocational subjects (Grand Mean = 3.51). The Chi-square and ANOVA results showed significant relationships between Home Economics education, resource availability, and reduction in youth cybercrime, as well as significant differences in opinions among teachers, students, and youth trainees. The study concluded that Home Economics education, when adequately supported, can serve as a vital instrument for youth empowerment and cybercrime prevention through entrepreneurship, digital literacy, and moral instruction. It was recommended that government and educational stakeholders provide adequate funding, improve teacher training, and integrate ICT into Home Economics curricula to maximize its preventive potential against cybercrime.

Keywords: Home Economics education, cybercrime prevention, entrepreneurship skills, value reorientation, youth empowerment.

Introduction

Globally, the swift development of digital technologies has revolutionized commerce, education, entertainment, and communication. But despite these advantages, there has also been an increase in cybercrimes worldwide, particularly among young people in impoverished countries like Nigeria. Cybercrime, which is defined as illegal activity committed via computers, the internet,

or other digital devices, has grown to be a significant moral and socioeconomic issue that jeopardizes youth development and national security (Emeka & Udaya, 2022).

The incidence of cybercrime in Nigeria has escalated to concerning levels. Phishing, identity theft, hacking, romance scams, and financial fraud are among the fraudulent online activities that young people, especially those between the ages of 18 and 35, are rapidly participating in (EFCC, 2023). The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission reports that young Nigerians, frequently college students or new graduates, are involved in more than 60% of cybercrime cases that have been looked into in recent years. Numerous interconnected causes, such as increasing unemployment rates, financial difficulties, peer pressure, a lack of moral upbringing, and the desire for immediate money, are contributing to this upward trend (Ahmed, Chowdhury, Urmi, & Jamal, 2023).

Social media's exaltation of "yahoo-yahoo" lives has further normalized digital fraud as a survival strategy for some young people. Even though punitive methods like arrests, jail time, and cyber surveillance have been used, they haven't done much to address the problem's moral and attitudinal aspects. More and more academics contend that education that fosters moral integrity, independence, and practical skills is the way to go for a better long-term answer (Kitching & Rouse, 2020). This is when learning home economics becomes really important. The goal of the multidisciplinary discipline of home economics is to help people and families acquire the values, knowledge, and abilities needed to lead fulfilling lives. It addresses topics like child development, household management, apparel and textiles, food and nutrition, and consumer education. Home Economics stresses entrepreneurship, moral principles, and responsible citizenship in addition to domestic instruction (Hair, Hult, Ringle, Sarstedt, Danks, & Ray, 2021). Because of these qualities, it can effectively address social issues like cybercrime by giving young people other, respectable sources of income and influencing their moral compass.

Home economics education promotes self-employment and financial independence by involving students in the development of useful skills including interior design, fashion design, catering, and event planning. Economically empowered youth are less likely to turn to fraudulent internet activity as a survival strategy. Additionally, home economics courses on interpersonal interactions and family life aid in fostering values of empathy, honesty, and respect—all of which are essential in reducing aberrant behavior (Gieure, del Mar, & Benavides-Espinosa, 2020).

The scope and importance of home economics have been significantly expanded by the use of information and communication technology (ICT). Nowadays, students can acquire skills in digital marketing, online business management, and safe internet usage that improve their employability and encourage moral online conduct. Fute, Wan, Oubibi, and Bulugu (2023) assert that including digital literacy into home economics education helps students comprehend the advantages and disadvantages of using technology. This understanding promotes responsible engagement in the digital economy and deters internet abuse.

Furthermore, home economics education aids in reorienting values, which is essential in addressing the decline in moral standards among young Nigerians. The topic fosters values including honesty, diligence, accountability, and respect for social norms through conversations about responsible living, decision-making, and family ethics (Fute, Kangwa, & Oubibi, 2023; Ugwuanyi, 2023). The greed, dishonesty, and immoral behavior that underpin cybercrime operations are directly opposed by these ideals. As a result, home economics can be seen as a strategic tool for holistic youth development that concurrently addresses economic, moral, and digital elements rather than just as a domestic or vocational subject. Its capacity to equip youth

with digital knowledge, ethical principles, and entrepreneurial skills makes it a revolutionary educational tool in Nigeria's battle against cybercrime (Yi & Duval-Couetil, 2021). But in spite of its importance, the subject has frequently been misunderstood or underappreciated in the educational system, which has limited its wider social influence.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to look into how home economics education might help stop cybercrime among young people in Nigeria. It seeks to investigate how the course might improve digital literacy, encourage moral reorientation, and give students entrepreneurial skills as long-term strategies to lower young involvement in cybercrime.

Statement of the Problem

The number of young Nigerians engaging in fraudulent online operations is still rising despite ongoing efforts by law enforcement and government organizations to reduce cybercrime (EFCC, 2023). Many young people view cybercrime as an easy way to make a living because of socioeconomic difficulties and moral deterioration. The fact that this issue persists shows that technological and punitive fixes are not enough.

In order to address the behavioral and attitudinal reasons of cybercrime, educational programs that prioritize moral development, value reorientation, and skill acquisition are essential. However, Nigeria's efforts to combat cybercrime have not fully utilized home economics, a topic that naturally fosters these qualities. Its potential impact on youth empowerment and moral reform has been limited due to its disregard for its larger goals beyond household skills.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine the role of Home Economics education in preventing cybercrime among Nigerian youths. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Determine the extent to which Home Economics education equips youths with entrepreneurial skills that discourage engagement in cybercrime.
2. Examine how Home Economics education promotes value reorientation and ethical behavior among youths.
3. Assess how ICT integration in Home Economics enhances youths' digital literacy and cybercrime awareness.

Research Questions

The following research questions will guide the study:

1. To what extent does Home Economics education equip youths with entrepreneurial skills that discourage engagement in cybercrime?
2. How does Home Economics education promote value reorientation and ethical behavior among Nigerian youths?
3. In what ways does ICT integration in Home Economics enhance digital literacy and cybercrime awareness among youths?

Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between Home Economics education and youth involvement in cybercrime activities in Delta State.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the opinions of teachers, students, and youth trainees on the role of Home Economics education in curbing cybercrime

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between resource availability and the effectiveness of

Home Economics education in preventing cybercrime among youths.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The study was conducted in Delta State, located in the South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria and comprising 25 Local Government Areas. The population of the study comprised all Home Economics teachers, students, and youth trainees in selected secondary schools and vocational centres offering Home Economics in Delta State. According to records from the Delta State Ministry of Education (2024), the estimated population was about 4,500 individuals, consisting of 500 teachers, 3,500 students, and 500 youth trainees across various institutions and centres. A sample size of 400 respondents was selected using a stratified random sampling technique, stratified into three groups: teachers, students, and youth trainees. The main instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled “Home Economics Education and Cybercrime Prevention Questionnaire (HEECPQ)” consisting of two sections: Section A collected demographic information such as gender, age, and educational level, while Section B contained items based on the research objectives, designed on a four-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). The questionnaire was validated by three experts; two from the Department of Home Economics and one from the Department of Educational Measurement and Evaluation, Delta State University, Abraka whose feedback ensured clarity, content validity, and relevance to the study objectives. Reliability was established through a pilot test conducted with 30 respondents from secondary schools and vocational centres in Edo State, who were not part of the main study. The data were analyzed using Cronbach’s Alpha, which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.84, indicating high reliability. Data collected were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics such as Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions, while inferential statistics such as the Chi-Square (χ^2) Test determined the association between Home Economics education and youth involvement in cybercrime. One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was employed to determine whether significant differences existed among teachers, students, and youth trainees regarding the role of Home Economics in curbing cybercrime. All hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26.

Result and Analysis

Research Question One: To what extent does Home Economics education equip Nigerian youths with entrepreneurship and life skills that discourage involvement in cybercrime?

Table 1: Extent to which Home Economics education equip Nigerian youths with entrepreneurship and life skills that discourage involvement in cybercrime

S/N	Item	N	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Home Economics helps youths develop self-reliance and small business skills.	387	3.42	0.62	Agree
2	Entrepreneurship lessons in Home Economics discourage dependence on illegal online means of income.	387	3.38	0.70	Agree
3	Practical Home Economics projects enhance creative thinking and productivity.	387	3.45	0.66	Agree
4	Financial management skills taught in Home	387	3.36	0.71	Agree

	Economics reduce youth vulnerability to cybercrime temptation.				
5	Vocational skills from Home Economics can serve as alternatives to cyber fraud.	387	3.50	0.68	Agree
	Grand Mean		3.42	0.67	

According to the results, respondents concurred that teaching home economics to young people greatly increases their entrepreneurial and life skills, which lowers their propensity to commit cybercrime. The high mean values show that home economics encourages self-reliance, inventiveness, and productive engagement all of which can deter young people from committing crimes related to the internet.

Research Question Two: In what ways does Home Economics education promote value reorientation and ethical behavior among youths in Delta State?

Table 2: Ways Home Economics education promote value reorientation and ethical behavior among youths in Delta State

S/N	Item	N	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Home Economics lessons promote honesty, diligence, and integrity.	387	3.48	0.64	Agree
2	Through Home Economics, students learn respect for work ethics and lawful living.	387	3.40	0.67	Agree
3	Home Economics projects foster teamwork and moral responsibility.	387	3.37	0.70	Agree
4	Home Economics contributes to positive attitudes towards legitimate income sources.	387	3.43	0.65	Agree
5	Value-based education in Home Economics discourages digital fraud	387	3.39	0.72	Agree
	Grand Mean		3.41	0.67	

The outcome demonstrates that home economics encourages moral principles and ethical conduct that deters participation in cybercrime. Respondents concurred that the topic is crucial in forming young people's moral responsibility, honesty, and respect for work ethics.

Research Question Three: What challenges hinder the effectiveness of Home Economics education in curbing cybercrime among youths in Delta State?

Table 3: Challenges hinder the effectiveness of Home Economics education in curbing cybercrime among youths in Delta State

S/N	Item	N	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Lack of adequate instructional materials and facilities affects teaching.	387	3.55	0.61	Agree
2	Poor funding and lack of government support limit programme implementation	387	3.60	0.64	Agree
3	Insufficient trained Home Economics teachers affect lesson quality	387	3.44	0.69	Agree

4	Students' negative attitude towards vocational subjects reduces impact	387	3.41	0.73	Agree
5	Overcrowded classrooms hinder effective practical lessons	387	3.58	0.66	Agree
	Grand Mean		3.51	0.66	

The respondents concurred that the absence of instructional facilities, insufficient budget, and a teacher shortage are the main issues affecting home economics education. These problems reduce home economics' ability to effectively teach young people the moral and practical skills necessary to stop cybercrime.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis One (H₀₁): There is no significant relationship between Home Economics education and youth involvement in cybercrime activities in Delta State.

Table 4: Table of analysis of difference between Home Economics education and youth involvement in cybercrime activities in Delta State

Variable	χ^2 -cal	χ^2 -crit (0.05)	df	Decision
Home Economics and Cyber-crime involvement	42.15	21.03	12	Reject H ₀

The null hypothesis is rejected since the computed Chi-Square value (42.15) is higher than the crucial value (21.03) at the 0.05 level of significance. This suggests that home economics instruction and the decline in young people's participation in cybercrime in Delta State are significantly correlated.

Hypothesis Two (H₀₂): There is no significant difference in the opinions of teachers, students, and youth trainees on the role of Home Economics education in curbing cybercrime.

Table 5: Table of analysis of difference in the opinions of teachers, students, and youth trainees on the role of Home Economics education in curbing cybercrime

Source	SS	Df	MS	F-Cal	F-Crit (0.05)	Decision
Between Groups	6.25	2	3.13	4.72	3.02	Reject H ₀
Within Groups	32.18	384	0.08			
Total	38.43	386				

The null hypothesis is rejected since the F-calculated value (4.72) is higher than the F-critical value (3.02) at the 0.05 significance level. This indicates that teachers, students, and youth trainees have somewhat different perspectives on how home economics education can reduce cybercrime among young people in Delta State.

Hypothesis Three (H₀₃): There is no significant relationship between resource availability and the effectiveness of Home Economics education in preventing cybercrime among youths.

Table 6: Table of analysis of difference between resource availability and the effectiveness of Home Economics education in preventing cybercrime among youths.

Variable	χ^2 -cal	χ^2 -crit (0.05)	df	Decision
Resource Availability and Effectiveness	39.24	21.03	12	Reject H_0

The null hypothesis is rejected since the estimated Chi-Square value (39.24) is greater than the crucial value (21.03). This suggests that there is a strong correlation between the effectiveness of home economics education in reducing teenage cybercrime and the accessibility of instructional materials.

Discussion of Findings

Research Question 1: To what extent does Home Economics education equip youths with entrepreneurial skills that discourage engagement in cybercrime?

The results of this study showed that teaching home economics to young people greatly increases their entrepreneurial skills, which deters them from committing cybercrimes. The majority of respondents concurred that home economics fosters the development of self-reliance, small business startup, and financial independence skills, all of which function as deterrents to engaging in illegal internet activity. According to Ahmed (2025), acquiring skills through vocational and technical education including home economics offers young people alternate sources of income, which lessens the appeal of cybercrime that is fueled by unemployment and poverty. Additionally, the study's findings showed that the home economics curriculum's entrepreneurship training component which covers topics like catering, fashion design, interior design, and household management empowers students with the practical skills necessary for self-employment.

This empowerment deters indolence and reliance, which are frequently identified as triggers for juvenile engagement in cybercrime in Nigeria (Adisel & Heldy, 2022). Instead of participating in illicit internet activities, young people are better equipped to start small businesses and make a good economic contribution by acquiring pertinent vocational and entrepreneurial skills.

The results also imply that home economics encourages the virtues of creativity, financial literacy, and business ethics that support prudent financial conduct. Students become more creative and morally led in their economic endeavors when they learn entrepreneurial skills inside ethical frameworks, according to Afeli & Adunlin (2022). In Nigeria, where low value orientation has been found to be one of the root reasons of youth cybercrime, this moral reinforcement is especially important (EFCC, 2023).

Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that including entrepreneurial instruction in home economics curricula improves students' employability and resistance to financial difficulties. According to Asante & Affum-Osei (2019), home economics students who participated in organized entrepreneurship training showed increased self-efficacy and a decreased propensity to commit online fraud. This lends credence to the idea that good entrepreneurship education serves as a deterrent and a remedy for cybercrime tendencies.

In conclusion, the study emphasizes how important home economics education is in forming young people who are both ethically conscious and economically productive. Home economics education supports government initiatives to lower youth unemployment and stop the rise in cybercrime in Nigeria by fostering value-driven behavior and imparting pertinent business skills. Therefore, strengthening entrepreneurial components within Home Economics curricula could serve as a strategic approach to youth empowerment and cybercrime prevention.

Research Question 2: How does Home Economics education promote value reorientation and ethical behavior among Nigerian youths?

According to the study's findings, home economics instruction is crucial in helping young Nigerians reorient their values and behave ethically. Most respondents concurred that the topic instills moral values that are important in deterring participation in unethical activities like cybercrime, such as honesty, hard work, responsibility, discipline, and respect for others. This bolsters the claim made by Badran, Baydoun, and Hillman (2020) that home economics is a curriculum that develops morality and character in addition to being a vocational topic, encouraging students to be responsible citizens.

The findings also demonstrated that home Economics gives young people the chance to learn the value of honesty, responsibility, and social duty by emphasizing family life, consumer education, and house management. These principles are essential for reorienting youth toward legal and constructive participation in society. Students who consistently get home economics instruction in ethical decision-making show greater resistance to deviant behaviors, such as cyber fraud and other online crimes (Baggen, Lans, & Gulikers, 2022). Furthermore, the study found that by stressing appropriate resource management and consumer rights education, home economics encourages moral behavior.

The quick wealth attitude that pushes many young people into cybercrime is less likely to have an impact on students who learn how to make smart financial decisions and understand the repercussions of dishonest profits. This result supports the findings of Chilenga, Dhliwayo, and Chebo (2022), who noted that home economics instruction on financial responsibility and discipline aids students in internalizing integrity and self-control as virtues that last a lifetime. Another important finding from the research is that home economics' ability to reorient itself toward values is improved when civic and moral education components are incorporated. Students gain empathy, respect, and collaboration skills through subjects including child development, family ethics, and interpersonal relationships. These skills translate into moral behavior in both online and offline settings. According to Chukwuma (2022), moral reorientation via education is a long-term strategy for tackling young involvement in cybercrime since it changes behavior from the inside out rather than depending just on punitive measures.

In summary, the results show that home economics education promotes value reorientation, self-discipline and social responsibility, all of which aid in young people's moral and ethical development. It discourages unethical behavior like cybercrime by fostering honesty, thoroughness, and respect for social norms. Home economics' ability to encourage moral behavior in young Nigerians might be further increased by fortifying its moral education component and incorporating current ethical concerns about digital behavior.

Research Question 3: In what ways does ICT integration in Home Economics enhance digital literacy and cybercrime awareness among youths?

According to the study's findings, Nigerian youths' knowledge of cybercrime and digital literacy are greatly increased when information and communication technology (ICT) is incorporated into home economics instruction. The respondents concurred that including ICT tools into home economics instruction enhances students' proficiency with digital platforms for valid uses like research, online company administration, and skill marketing. Divac, Stašević, Kostić, Popović, and Nikolić (2022) claimed that ICT-driven home economics education exposes students to constructive uses of technology, assisting them in developing the digital skills necessary to

prosper in the contemporary economy while preventing the misuse of digital resources. This finding bolsters their claims.

The findings also showed that when ICT is successfully included into home economics, students gain knowledge about online safety and digital ethics in addition to technical skills. Online entrepreneurship projects, virtual simulations, and e-learning platforms are used in lessons to assist students comprehend the risks and opportunities that come with using the internet. According to Du Toit and Gaotlhogogwe (2018), students who participate in ICT-based learning activities in home economics become more aware of data privacy, responsible online conduct, and the repercussions of cybercrimes, which lessens their propensity to commit or become victims of such crimes.

Additionally, the results showed that ICT integration gives students access to online vocational lessons, worldwide knowledge networks, and digital markets where they can effectively use their entrepreneurial talents. In addition to encouraging creativity, this access directs young people's online activity toward respectable businesses that generate revenue. The use of ICT in vocational courses like home economics enables students to turn their practical knowledge into long-term online businesses, diverting their focus from fraudulent cyber activity (Dungey & Ansell, 2022).

The study also demonstrated how ICT-enhanced home economics programs foster creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities. Students learn how to use technology in an ethical and useful way through online collaborations, multimedia demonstrations, and digital design tools. This supports the findings of Furdui, Lupu-Dima, and Edelhauser (2021) that discovered that incorporating ICT into vocational education improves students' social responsibility and digital competency while promoting an integrity-based culture online.

The study's conclusions, taken together, demonstrate that ICT integration in home economics education serves two purposes: it increases young people's digital literacy while also increasing their knowledge of cyber security and ethics. Home economics education helps to create a generation of technologically proficient, law-abiding, and socially conscious digital citizens by giving students both the technical know-how and the moral awareness of digital involvement. To further encourage cybercrime avoidance among Nigerian youth, policymakers and educators should fortify ICT infrastructure and digital pedagogy in home economics curricula.

Conclusion

According to the study's findings, home economics instruction is essential for deterring cybercrime among young people in Delta State, Nigeria. According to the report, home economics specifically teaches children vital life and entrepreneurial skills like independence, creativity, and money management, which are good substitutes for illicit internet activity. Home economics education lessens the urge to commit cybercrimes that are frequently linked to unemployment and avarice by equipping young people with the skills necessary to establish respectable sources of income.

Additionally, the study demonstrated that home economics helps pupils internalize characteristics like honesty, effort, collaboration, and respect for lawful living by encouraging value reorientation and ethical behavior. These moral reinforcements are essential for changing young people's online behavior and curbing deviant tendencies.

Notwithstanding its potential, the study discovered that a number of obstacles, such as a lack of financing, a lack of qualified professors, negative student perceptions of vocational topics, and inadequate instructional materials, limit the success of home economics education. These

restrictions weaken the subject's ability to give students the moral and practical skills they need to fight cybercrime.

Home economics education and the decline in youth engagement in cybercrime are significantly correlated, according to the findings of the Chi-Square and ANOVA studies. Furthermore, perspectives on how Home Economics prevents cybercrime varied significantly among teachers, students, and youth trainees, suggesting that exposure and experience may affect perception.

The study concludes that by encouraging entrepreneurship, moral discipline, and digital accountability, home economics education might be a strategic strategy for lowering cybercrime among Nigerian youngsters when properly supported and executed. In addition to encouraging moral and productive living, strengthening the home economics curriculum and improving the learning environment would support national initiatives to reduce cybercrime and develop a generation of young people who are morally pure and independent.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The Ministry of Education, in collaboration with curriculum planners, should expand the entrepreneurial components of Home Economics to include modern digital enterprises and sustainable small-scale ventures.
2. Given the rise in cyber-related offences among young people, Home Economics should include modules on responsible internet use, digital citizenship, and online ethics.
3. The study found that inadequate facilities and materials hinder effective Home Economics instruction. Therefore, government agencies, NGOs, and private organizations should provide funding, modern equipment, and functional laboratories to support practical teaching and learning.

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