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COURSE TITLE : COMMUNICATION IN ENGLISH II

QUESTION: You were taught that in writing an academic essay, you should start with the perception of a problem. Perceive a problem in your present environment, formulate a researchable topic for it

 CAUSES, EFFECT AND SOLUTION TO INTERNET FRAUD IN NIGERIA

According to Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary, internet is been defined as an international computer network connecting other networks and computers from companies, universities etc. The same dictionary also defined fraud as the crime of cheating somebody in order to get money or goods illegally. Internet provides a lot of commercial, educational and social opportunities. Examples of computer assisted crimes in Nigeria and the world as a whole includes, hacking, impersonation, scams etc. fraud is [intentional](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intent_%28law%29) [deception](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deception) to secure unfair or unlawful gain, or to deprive a victim of a legal right. Fraud is defined as a criminal deception committed by a person who acts in a false and deceitful way. Internet fraud can also be known as cyber crime. Cyber crime is increasing astronomically and one of the reasons for the vast increase of internet fraud in Nigeria is poverty. Most Nigerians lack means of subsistence and they barely have a place to lay, food to eat, cloth(s) to wear etc. and this makes individuals engage in such cyber crimes as listed above for sustenance. This is because life seems to be survival of the fittest and the poor sees internet frauding as a means of making life meaniful to them.

CAUSES OF INTERNET FRAUD

Perceived Pressure: Every fraud perpetrator faces some kind of perceived pressure in terms of financial and non-financial needs. These motivate the action of defrauding people, for instance the need to report better than actual performance, frustration with work, financial loses and poverty and falling of company or sales pressurizes people for such action.

Unemployment: Unemployment is one of the major reasons people get involved in cyber crimes. After all the educational qualifications one seems to have obtained In Nigeria, jobs are still not available for them and this lead to frustration and for them to live an average life, they see frauding as a means of survival. Come to think of it, even the employed are not been paid for months sometimes years and this can also lead to individuals engaging into cyber crimes.

Perceived opportunity: This where due to poor performances or inadequate internal controls by company or individual make them enter into fraud to alleviate sort of embarrassment.

Poverty: Most Nigerians lack means of subsistence and they barely have a place to lay,food to eat, cloth(s) to wear etc. and this makes individuals engage in such cyber crimes as listed above for sustenance. This is because life seems to be survival of the fittest and the poor sees internet frauding as a means of making life meaniful to them.

Greed: Most people actually involve in cyber crimes not because they don’t have what it takes to live a normal life but because they are never contempted with what they have and the desire to have quick and more wealth without having to go through the right process of acquiring wealth. Research has shown that the more reason people involve or engage in cyber crimes is as a result of greed. If individuals see the little they have to be enough for them, there won’t be any need going into cyber crime or scamming others in order to get rich.

EFFECT OF INTERNET FRAUD

Internet fraud causes financial loss to individuals. It involves huge sums of money being stolen from individuals causing them great loss.

Internet fraud brings about economic decline in a country. This is because not just individuals are defrauded in this act but government companies as well. For example in 2006, the United States recorded a loss of 198.4 million dollars due to internet fraud (Rosenberg, 2007) while it was reported in the same year that the United Kingdom lost up to 150 million pounds are lost annually. (BBC News, 2006)

 Internet fraud causes indirect losses to companies whose clients have been have been defrauded. This is because fraud usually causes great money to be taken off an individual or company and once this happens it will in turn affect a client’s ability to meet other monetary duties and obligations.

Internet fraud throws emotional and psychological burdens on individuals. This is because as human being we have the natural tendency to develop fear towards anyone or anything that has previously caused us harm.

Internet fraud has cost some people their lives. Examples are a man from Cambridgeshire who killed himself after realizing he had been tricked and thought he had actually won 1.2 million dollars. (BBC News, 2004) and another student in University of Nottingham who committed suicide after giving thousands of pounds with the expectation of getting millions in return only to realize she had been duped. (BBC News, 2008)

Damaged reputation.

 Extra costs to repair fraud damage.

Internet Fraud has caused West Africa to have a bad reputation. West Africa, particularly Nigeria and Ghana are notorious for Internet Fraud across the globe and this has painted a bad image for West Africa all over the world.

Loss of potential foreign investors. Due to Internet Fraud in West Africa, many people who hither to would have set up businesses in West Africa have drawn back for fear of destroying their businesses rather than building them up.

Internet Fraud has led to mistrust in West Africa. People who would have liked to do business with or in West Africa no longer have the confidence or feel safe to do so due to Internet Fraud.

SOLUTION TO INTERNET FRAUD

Check the Web Address (or URL)Communications from popular social websites, online payment processors, or IT administrators are commonly used to lure in the unsuspecting public. The web address for the phishing site may closely resemble the authentic website. It may even contain the address of the authentic website, but also includes code to reroute the traffic to a false website.
 Stay alert and sceptical of people unexpectedly contacting you by email or phone and asking about personal information. Only open emails, links, and attachments from trustworthy sources.
 Know who your providers are for your hosting, email, and internet. Also know how these providers will be contacting you.
 Protect your computer with spam filters, anti-virus software, and firewalls. For optimal protection, make sure to keep these programs up to date.
 Act immediately if you think you have been a victim of an online scam. If you have provided account numbers, PINS, or passwords to an unidentified source, notify the companies that you have accounts with right away.

Spot imposters. Scammers often pretend to be someone you trust, like [a government official](http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0048-government-imposter-scams), [a family member](http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0204-family-emergency-scams), [a charity](https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/features/feature-0011-charity-scams), or a company you do business with. Don’t send money or give out personal information in response to an unexpected request — whether it comes as a text, a phone call, or an email.

Do online searches. Type a company or product name into your favourite search engine with words like “review,” “complaint” or “scam.” Or search for a phrase that describes your situation, like “IRS call.” You can even search for phone numbers to see if other people have reported them as scams.

Don’t believe your caller ID. Technology makes it easy for scammers to fake caller ID information, so the name and number you see aren’t always real. If someone calls asking for money or personal information, hang up. If you think the caller might be telling the truth, call back to a number you know is genuine.

Don’t pay upfront for a promise. Someone might ask you to pay in advance for things like [debt relief](https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/blog/avoiding-debt-relief-scams), credit and [loan](https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0078-advance-fee-loans) offers, [mortgage assistance](https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0100-mortgage-relief-scams), or [a job](https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0243-job-scams). They might even say you’ve won [a prize](http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0199-prize-scams), but first you have to pay taxes or fees. If you do, they will probably take the money and disappear.

Consider how you pay. Credit cards have significant fraud protection built in, but some payment methods don’t. [Wiring money](https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0090-using-money-transfer-services) through services like Western Union or MoneyGram is risky because it’s nearly impossible to get your money back. That’s also true for reloadable cards (like MoneyPak or Reload it) and gift cards (like iTunes or Google Play). Government offices and honest companies won’t require you to use these payment methods.

Talk to someone. Before you give up your money or personal information, talk to someone you trust. Con artists want you to make decisions in a hurry. They might even threaten you. Slow down, check out the story, do [an online search](https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0027-comparing-products-online), consult an expert — or just tell a friend.

Hang up on robocalls. If you answer the phone and hear [a recorded sales pitch](https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0259-robocalls), hang up and report it to the FTC. These calls are illegal, and often the products are bogus. Don’t press 1 to speak to a person or to be taken off the list. That could lead to more calls.

Be skeptical about free trial offers. Some companies use [free trials](https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0101-free-trial-offers) to sign you up for products and bill you every month until you cancel. Before you agree to a free trial, research the company and read the cancellation policy. And always review your monthly statements for charges you don’t recognize.

Don’t deposit a check and wire money back. By law, banks must make funds from deposited checks available within days, but uncovering [a fake check](http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0159-fake-checks) can take weeks. If a check you deposit turns out to be a fake, you’re responsible for repaying the bank.