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FACING CRIMINALITY ON FACEBOOK

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Abstract

This paper is titled: “Facing Criminality on Facebook”. Facebook as a social media technology-based interactive platform has no doubt raised the bar of interaction and communication among individuals, businesses, corporate organizations, and even governments and their agencies. This is especially so as it allows people and groups to create and share user-generated content such as individual profiles, texts, photos, audios and videos on a common connectivity. The platform has thus helped a great number of people and groups across the world to get information, inspiration, friends, do business, share ideas, pictures, audios and videos and even games faster than ever before. The fact that more than 1.65 billion people are active users of the Facebook platform emphasizes its relevance and impact in people’s lives globally, even as it stands out as the most popular social media or social network platform worldwide going by the number of users. But despite its relevance, impact and popularity, Facebook as a social networking site which was conceived primarily to enhance communication, promote friendship and businesses is fast becoming a platform for criminality and this has manifested variously in different parts of the world. This paper which is based on research conducted in three major cities in Nigeria – Calabar, Abuja and Lagos, shows that crimes such as scam, fraud, impersonation, hacking of

accounts are fast becoming rampant on the social media platform, a situation which calls for urgent global attention and collaboration in combating these crimes.

Keywords

Facing, Criminality, Facebook, Social, Media

1. Introduction

Since the introduction of Facebook in February 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg the social network site has made tremendous impact globally. This is especially so as close to two billion people across the world are registered users of the social network site thereby making Facebook the most popular network site in the world. According to Zephoria, D. (2017) there was over 1.86 billion monthly active Facebook users (Facebook MAUs) as of February 2017, 1.15 billion mobile daily active users (Mobile DAU), 1.23 billion People log onto Facebook daily active users, and another 1.74 billion mobile active users (Mobile Facebook MAU) as at December 2016. This means Facebook is too big to ignore.

The reasons for this popularity are not far-fetched. This is so because the technology-based interactive platform has undoubtedly raised the bar of interaction and communication among individuals, business and corporate organizations including government establishments and agencies. This is especially made possible as the platform allows people and groups to create and share user-generated content such as individual profiles, posts photos, audios and videos on a common connectivity. This fact was acknowledged by Sinaga, M. (2015) when she posited that social media (especially Facebook) has the capacity to influence friends or relatives especially with their posts or updates on Facebook as some people admitted that their participation on social media started after they saw posts by friends on Facebook.

Undoubtedly, therefore, the platform has helped millions of people and groups globally to access information, be inspired, make friends do businesses and share ideas, pictures, audios and videos and even games more than ever before. The fact that close to two billion people are registered users of Facebook emphasizes its impact and relevance in people's lives world-wide. However, despite the relevance and positive impact of the social media on the socio-economic life of the human race globally, it has become obvious that this social networking site has also become platform for criminal acts. This is probably why, according to the Cable Network News,

CNN, there are about 83 Million fake profiles on the Facebook, most of which are used for criminal tendencies.

2. Theories

This paper is anchored on three theories – uses and gratification theory which says that media audiences make active use of what the media offer even as the audience has a set of needs which the media meet in one form or the other. The second theory adopted for this research is the Symmetry theory which assumes among other things that people attempt to influence one another to bring about symmetry for balance or equilibrium. While the third theory is the Social exchange theory which interprets situations from socio-psychological and sociological perspectives.

3. Understanding Facebook

To successfully operate Facebook page, the account holder would have to understand how Facebook works and that will also entail knowledge of some basic terms used by Facebook including the following common terms

- **Friend** – “friend” or “friends” in Facebook are supposed to be people a user knows personally or has done business with, or who are family members. So the several people a user is connected to in Facebook are called “friends”. These “friends” can see a user’s post, comments, activities or tag the user in photos or posts, add the user to groups and vice versa and even invite the user to events. Users are limited to 5000 friends on Facebook.
- **Like** – the “like” button is found on each post or picture for “friends” or general users to click as an indication that the user or those who click it enjoy the post, link, video or picture or are in agreement with it. It serves as a moral or psychological booster especially when many people click the “like” button on any user’s post, picture, video or link, especially as the number of “likes” is also indicated.
- **Like page/sponsored or fan page** – The “like” page or sponsored or fan pages are sponsored pages for businesses, products, companies, organizations, organized groups including entertainment, bands, artists, religious groups and even communities amongst others.

These pages are different from the “friend” page because while the “friend” page can only accommodate a maximum of five thousand “friends”, the like or sponsored page can have unlimited “likes”. When a Facebook user clicks the “like” button in a sponsored page it shows that the user is showing support for the cause of that page or wants to be part of that community or wants more or frequent information about the organization.

- **Tag** – Tag is meant to identify with someone. To tag either “like” the page or be friends with that person. To successfully tag, the user will adopt the @ symbol, thereafter type the person or page after it, thereby making the name appear and be selected. To tag a photo, the user must again be “friends” with the person, click the tag button by the photo and thereafter use the mouse to select the person in the photo, thereafter type and select the person’s name. After a successful tagging, the person will be notified that he or she has been tagged.
- **Notification(s)** – Everything that is done on Facebook comes back to notifications, such that when someone sends a friend’s request, it prompts a notification. These notifications help the user to know when people make comments or any other form of interaction with the user’s post. Such notifications, could read: “Lawrence likes your post or photo or comment or tagged you in a post or photo, or commented on a post you made or invited you to an event or commented on a page or accepted a friend request etc”.
- **Comment** – Every post or status update made on Facebook could elicit several other comments from other users. Thus comments are responses to what was said in an earlier post or comment. Comments could be positive or negative, but the amount of comments on any particular post or earlier comment shows the popularity or otherwise of the comment.
- **Subscribe/subscription** – The subscribe or subscription item enables people to get information from time to time from particular accounts subscribed to. Safko (2012) says Facebook users who have allowed others to subscribe to them are able to limit information that is shared with Facebook friends and subscribers with the “update status” settings in the bottom right-hand corner of the “what’s on your mind?” box. The subscription feature has been identified as being ideal for public figures, celebrities and journalists.
- **Friend request** –If Facebook users must become friends, there must be accepted and users can search for somebody by name and request to be part of their Facebook network by clicking the “Add friend” button against the person’s name and picture or just the name, in

cases where the users do not have picture. When people send “friend request” it is left for the user to either click “Confirm” or “Not now” as a reply. If the user clicks “Confirm” as a reply, they both automatically become “friends” on Facebook.

- **Wall/Timeline** –The wall or timeline as the case may be is the Facebook User’s or personal profile page where all individual user’s posts or activities generally are seen.
- **News Feed** –News Feed is a continuous stream of comments, pictures, links, events, activities, checks-in and all other activities on Facebook that are constantly being updated by friends. Newsfeed also acts as homepage on Facebook.

4. Facebook Privacy Settings

One way Facebook tries to ensure that users are protected is through Facebook settings. Privacy settings according to Safko (2012), allow Facebook users to protect their personal information such as location, contact information, their personal brand, including pictures, videos, posts etc. This is so because, by default, Facebook makes accounts public. It thus, becomes the responsibility of the Facebook user to change the relevant settings to enable them disclose only the information they want people to have about them. This is why Facebook provides customizable and comprehensive privacy setting for users, as such settings can block certain people from accessing information about the user, his or her wall, friends and also prevent others from tagging him or her in posts or pictures, sharing apps and blocking unsolicited people or those that may want to harass the user in any form.

Apart from Facebook privacy settings, there is also the child safety provision, whereby Facebook has made provision to protect minors by way of implementing safeguards and limiting what children can do on the site for the sake of their protection. For instance on the www/facebook/safety site, Facebook gives information on “introducing the Bullying prevention Hub: Resource for parents, teens and educators”, “How privacy works for Teens”, “Meet the Facebook safety Advisory Board,” “Meet the Facebook safety Team,” “Advanced security” and “New App dashboard,” all aimed at providing safety and security information to Facebook users.

5. Facebook Communication System

Communication is a key factor in Facebook and this takes place in various forms, but especially through status updates, internal messages and live chats. Status updates asks “What’s

on your mind?” This it informs friends or the public of their activities, or post links, share photos and videos or make general comments about life. Internal messages are private notes or messages that could be sent to any friend that is connected to the user on Facebook. These messages can only be viewed or seen by the person to whom the user has sent it to and cannot be seen by the Facebook public or other friends.

A user can also allow his closest friends to see some of his or her activities, while keeping them hidden from other Facebook friends.

6. Criminality on Facebook

A number of criminal acts have been identified to have taken place on Facebook, including scam, fraud, impersonation, hacking of accounts amongst others and a number of experts attest to this. These experts include Paganin, P. (2012), who though agreed that Facebook had completely revolutionized the way people interact, however admitted to the dark side of this social networking site. According to him, criminals are finding new ways to utilize the Facebook to commit new and disturbing crimes. He listed the seven most common Facebook crimes to include: scams, cyber bullying, stalking, robbery, identity theft, defamation, and harassment.

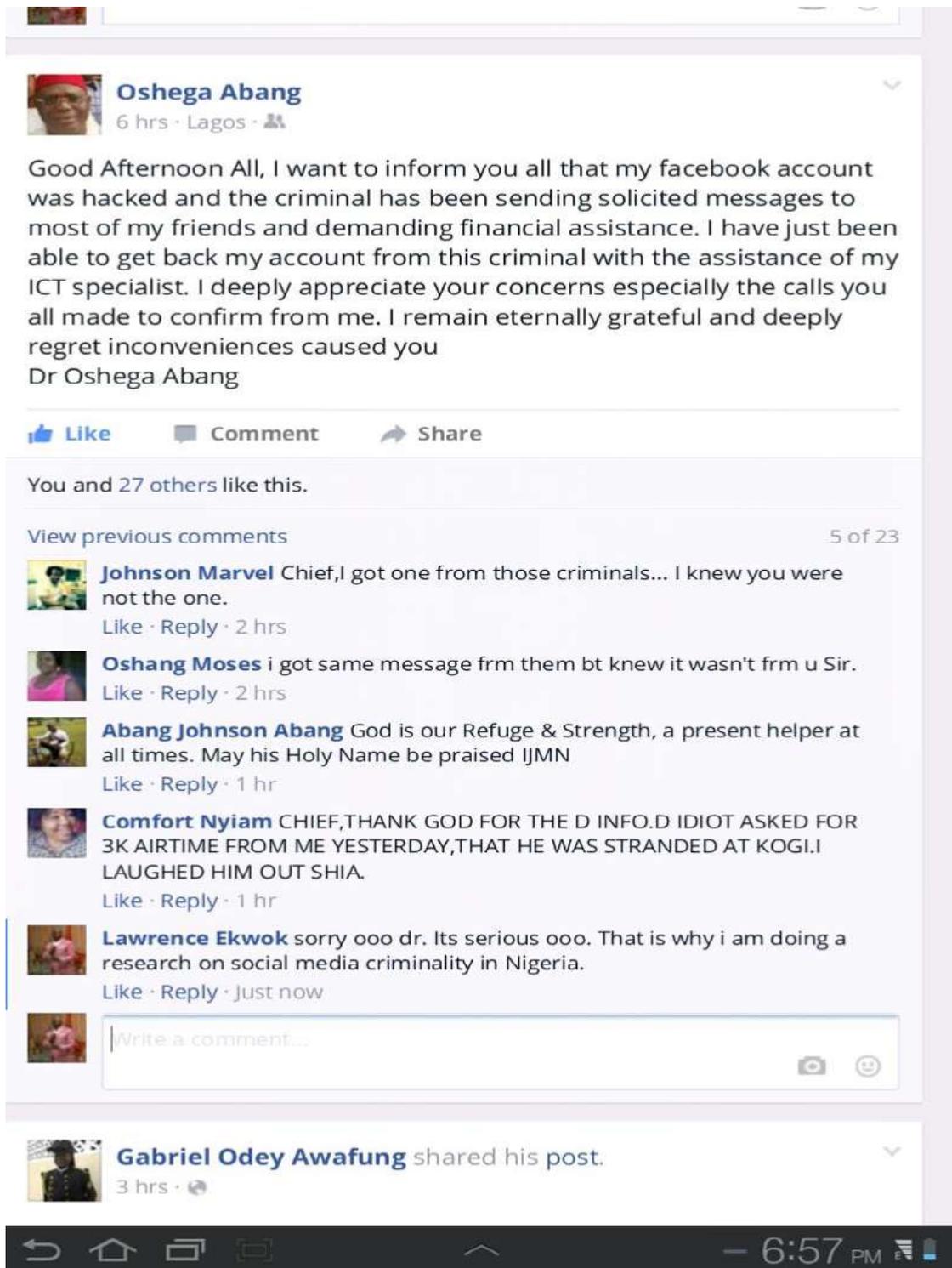


Figure1: Example of impersonation on Facebook with intentions to defraud

Protalinski, E. (2011), also agrees that Facebook crimes are on the increase in various malicious forms. Protalinski who also listed a number of the crimes are getting more sophisticated, adding

that most off the crimes occur because the criminals capitalize on the victims' weaknesses on their usage of the social media.

Josh Halliday reports that fraud on social media in Europe is now a "major issue" even as that has been acknowledged by Allen Richard Lord, who is in charge of public policy. Halliday says Secretary General of Law Enforcement Agency Interpol, Ronald K. Noble had also revealed that his Facebook identity had been targeted for sensitive information on wanted criminals, just as international police had also reported a breach of its information, with some profiles Facebook trying to impersonate the secretary General of Interpol.

The National White Collar Crime Centre, NWC3, also claimed that 8.2 million women and 2 million men in America claimed to have been cyber stalked at some point. David Cohen (2014) reported in All Facebook blog that acting on Facebook Referral, the Federal Trade Commission, FTC got a Federal Court to shut down scam support outfit, Pairsys, an Albany, New-York based company that coerced computer users into paying hundreds of dollars apiece for unnecessary technical support and software that was available free-of charge.

According to the report, Pairsys employees called computer users and posed as representatives of Facebook and the company which was also behind online advertisements that indicated that its phone number was the technical support number for legitimate companies of the industry. The Federal Trade Commission said that once Pairsys employees reached customers, they were subjected to high pressure sales pitches from all overseas call centres in which victims were convinced to surrender remote access to their computers, after which they were led to believe that their PCs were injected with viruses, at which point victims were charged between 149 and 600 dollars for bogus warranty programs and software that was already available free of charge. Pairsys was said to have made nearly 2.5 million dollars from these practices which started in 2012.

In Nigeria, criminality on the social media also seems to be prevalent, except that the methods differ. But some of the common criminal approaches that seem to be most common in Nigeria include impersonation or faking of accounts of well known personalities, hacking of accounts of other people, with intentions to defraud unsuspecting members of the public, amongst others. There are several reported cases to buttress this position. For instance, the Vanguard Newspaper of September 1, 2015 reported the arrest of one Mr. Agubosin Ifeanyi Friday, who was said to have impersonated Mr. Kayode Aderanti, who was the commissioner of

police in Lagos and used the fake account to defraud both members of the public and some policemen who were desperate for favours from the “police boss”.

The social media criminals have also targeted top police officers. This is especially so as The Union online newspaper of January 7, 2015 reported that the then Lagos State Commissioner of Police Cornelius Aderanti had raised alarm to the effect that some fraudsters had opened a Facebook account in his name in order to defraud unsuspecting members of the public. According to the report, a statement by the then command spokesman, Ken Nwosu, said it had discovered a fake Facebook account bearing the name of Mr. Kayode Aderanti. The police spokesman had disclosed that the commissioner of police did not have any Facebook account whether official or private and advised members of the social network platforms and the general public to ignore it (2). The statement added that efforts were being made to apprehend the fraudsters. The suspect allegedly posted a bank account number and encouraged those desiring “juicy” postings to deposit between ₦30,000 (thirty thousand naira only) and N 50,000 (fifty thousand naira only), into the account, others who wanted to be elevated were asked to negotiate payment. Those who had petitions or investigations pending were also asked to pay certain amount. The newspaper report said several people feel victims of the scam. (7).

The Guardian Newspaper on Sunday of September 16, 2012 and The Nation Newspaper on another occasion, published full page heavily paid advertisements raising alarm over the hacking into Pastor W.F. Kumuyi’s Facebook Account. Pastor Kumuyi is the General Superintendent of Deeper Life Bible Church with a large followership in Nigeria. The statement which was signed by the church secretary, U.J.J Asemota reads thus:

Recently, certain faceless people compromised the Facebook account dedicated by the church for the use of its General Superintendent, Pastor W.F. Kumuyi.

Through messages purportedly sent by the General Superintendent the criminal elements solicited for funds from unwary citizens to be sent to a designated account for reasons that simply wrinkle the mind.

Although hacking into people’s emails or Facebook accounts is fast becoming a common criminal act, no one, not even by the stretch of imagination, could have thought that respected servants of God such as

Pastor Kumuyi would be made victim to this disturbing act. It is a fact repeatedly documented, as a matter of principle that Pastor Kumuyi neither canvasses, nor solicits for funds for personal or ministerial use. Deeper Life Bible Church has never accepted a grant from any source since inception, almost 40 years ago. Monies generated in the church are raised on account of individual members' consecration and sacred spiritual duties towards God.

Those who might have received the spurious messages asking for monies to be sent to a dedicated account, purportedly by Pastor Kumuyi, are therefore, advised to please, disregard such pleas. This is nothing but an evil scheme to fleece innocent people of their hard-earned resources and neither pastor Kumuyi nor the church subscribes to such an unrighteous practice. Meanwhile, the matter is being reported to the authorities with a view to launching full investigations to unravel the sources of the scam, while tighter arrangements are being made to forestall a re-occurrence, as much as possible.

On another date, Sunday, December 15, 2013, to be specific, another prominent pastor, E. A. Adeboye, of Redeemed Christian Church of God, had had course to raise an alarm in a number of Newspapers including Sunday Vanguard online of December 15, 2013, to the effect that:

Some people have been impersonating me on Facebook and other social media asking people to donate monies for unidentified orphanages or some sick persons who require urgent medical treatment abroad. Please do not believe them and do not answer them. As you can see I am not sick. I am hale and hearty. They are liars.

Some even went to the ridiculous extent of saying that I needed money to go to India for the treatment of an undisclosed ailment. Please do not answer them.

He added that other people are also impersonating the wife and advised members of the public to ignore the fraudsters. To establish Pastor E.A. Adeboye's claim that he was being impersonated on Facebook, one could find over 60 Facebook accounts on his name, while the wife has over ten in her name. Apart from prominent clergy men, top politicians, military top brass, business men and public office holders, several others are also being impersonated on the social media. The governor of Ekiti State, Dr Ayodele Fayose on October 27, 2014 raised an alarm on several print and electronic media, including the Union online and alerted the public about fraudsters faking him on Facebook. The governor issued a press release through Mr. Olayinka Lere, who is his special adviser on public communications and media, dated October 26, 2014, the governor warning people not to patronize such fake Facebook accounts.

The governor of Cross River state, Prof Ben Ayade has also had cause to raise alarm regarding social media fraudsters. On July 22, 2015, the governor's aide Mr. Ita Christian released a press statement to several online news organizations, including CrossRiverWatch.com, disowning several cloned Facebook accounts purporting to be that of Governor Ben Ayade. The press statement published on July 23, 2015, dissociated Governor Ayade from the cloned Facebook accounts which he said are currently being used by tricksters to swindle unsuspecting members of the public of their hard-earned money for expected job placements.

While warning the general public to be wary of the criminal elements, It urged the general public to discontinue any monetary solicitation from anybody purporting to be acting on behalf of the governor with a promise of a job, adding that it is not in the character of senator Ayade to seek gratification for favors. The media Assistant also assured that security agents were on the trail of the fraudsters who are operating those fake Facebook accounts and will soon get them arrested and brought to book (1).

The wife of the Cross River State governor Dr. Mrs. Linda Ayade on Monday August 17, 2015 in an online publication, CrossRiverWatch.com also disowned some fake Facebook accounts said to belong to her. A statement by her Special Assistant on media and communication, Fred Abua said Mrs. Ayade has dissociated herself from some Facebook identities purportedly belonging to her which have been used to ask unsuspecting job seekers to pay sums of money for prospective employment in some federal agencies. It adds "this notice is to dissociate Her Excellency's office from this scam" and it sympathized with those who may

have fallen victims to these “unscrupulous elements and advised Cross Riverians to be vigilant and to report any phone numbers or email addresses used by the criminals purporting to be recruitment officers or relatives of the governor’s wife”

The Punch online of April 17, 2014 also reported the activities of social media fraudsters about some top military officers. According to the report, investigations showed that fraudsters are feasting on the identities of the then three military service chiefs, to bait unsuspecting Nigerians with promises of enlisting them into the armed forces.

The report said the scammer who is impersonating Gen. Minimah is using many of General Minimah’s pictures as well as images of other men and women in uniform to build online relationships with the intention of exploiting other Nigerians. To make it look as if the fake account is really being operated by Gen Minimah, the scammer stated on the fake Facebook account that he decided to sign up for the Facebook with a view to giving hundreds of civilians the opportunity to enlist in the armed forces. The invitation on the fake Facebook account is reproduced below:

If you want to join the Nigerian Army or any of the armed forces and you want information on how to secure employment into any of the forces, contact me, Major General M.T. Kenneth, on my mobile 08148675480 for details or add me on Facebook. Because I am trying to use this medium to help Nigerian civilians who are willing to join the Nigerian Army force. Email me on Kennethtobiah@gmail.com.

Apart from the then Chief of Army Staff, the former, Chief of Defence Staff, Air Vice-Marshal Alex Badeh has also been a victim of social media criminality. The Punchonline reported that on April 14, Air-vice Marshal Badeh raised an alarm over the activities of two scammers impersonating him on Facebook which some Nigerians have been patronizing. A published statement by the then officer in charge of information at the Defence headquarters, General Olukolade, Christopher lamented that the pervasive Facebook accounts have been misleading members of the public. The statement reads thus:

The attention of the Defence Headquarters has been drawn to the existence of fake Facebook accounts being operated in the name of the

chief of Defence Staff, Air Marshal Alex Badeh. The popular Facebook accounts created by some cyber fraudsters go by different fake identities and official photographs of the chief of Defence staff. The Defence Headquarters, DHQ, views this as a criminal act and effort is being made to track and bring the perpetrators to book. This is for the awareness of the general public, please.

The statement added that the military top brass did not stop at raising alarm, but he also directed that investigations be carried out over the fake account, just as some arrests had been made in the past. This is especially so because, on Thursday, July 18, 2013, Thisdayonline newspaper reported that men of the Nigerian Air Force had picked up Ukaagbu Israel who was said to have impersonated Air Marshal Badeh, Alex on Facebook. According to the report, the suspect was said to have connived with one Mr. Wisdom Raphael Onyebuenyi, to open a Facebook account with the name A.S. Badeh. The Director, Public Relations, of the NAF, Air Commodore Anas Yusuf, paraded the suspect, Mr. Ukaagbu before Journalists in Abuja on Wednesday, July 17, 2013. According to him, Mr. Ukaagbu was arrested along. 3 Azikiwe Road, Aba, in Abia State while interacting with unsuspecting members of the public on the Facebook accounts that displayed the portrait photograph of Air-Marshal Badeh and claiming to be the Chief of Air Staff.

The then Nigerian Air Force, NAF Director of Public Relations and Information added that the suspect admitted to have opened the Facebook account after falling victim to another fake Nigerian Air Force, NAF recruitment agent who defrauded him of thirty thousand naira, with a promise to assist him enlist into the force. The social media criminal claimed that his loss of 30,000 naira to another fraudster led him to enlist the services of the information and communication technology expert, Wisdom Onyebuenyi, to set up the fake Facebook account to enable him recover his money and also defraud other unsuspecting Nigerians. The impostor was said related with very many people using the name of the Air force senior officer, during which time, he deceived and defrauded several people. In another report in the Guardianonline newspaper of Thursday, July 18, 2013, said it was the third time the Nigerian Air force has had such social media criminal cases.

There have also been several reported cases of hacking of social media accounts for criminal intentions in Nigeria. One of them was reported by Vanguard online on November 27, 2015 at 12.00 PM where a cosmetics dealer, Obasi Daniel who had claimed to be Deputy governor at two different occasions, Mr. Daniel who lives in PortHarcourt, Rivers but comes from Imo State had broken into the Facebook account of the Deputy governor of two States – Lagos and Ondo Adebale Oluranti and Oluboyo Lasis; and fraudulently obtained large sums of money from their associates and acquaintances.

Mr. Daniel was arrested by the police and paraded alongside other criminals in Lagos confessed during an interview with Vanguard newspaper that he specialized in hacking into Facebook accounts of well-known Nigerians with the aim of defrauding their friends or associates. Another such case is that of a top level public servant, Dr. Oshega Abang, the Director of News and Current Affairs in the Cross River Broadcasting Corporation, CRBC, Calabar, who had cause to disclaim appeals for financial support posted on his Facebook account page by hackers. According to a post on his timeline, Dr Oshega Abang said his Facebook account was hacked into and the criminal has been sending solicited messages to most of his friends and demanding financial assistance from them.

But the most pathetic case of social media criminality in Nigeria is perhaps that of Cynthia Osokogu who was tricked and murdered by her Facebook “friends” in 2012, as reported by several newspapers including *The Sun* newspaper of September 2, 2012.

According to the report, Cythia, 24, who was undertaking undergraduate studies at a university in Nasarawa State, was lured and killed in a hotel in Lagos by “friends” she met on Facebook. Osokogu was said to have left Keffi, her base, for Lagos to transact business with her Facebook friends who had tricked her into believing that they were authentic importers of quality fabrics and wears. They arranged for a meeting in Lagos to seal the deal and the young woman honoured the meeting in good faith, but was murdered in the hotel after her assailants, Echezona Nwabufor 33, and Ezekiel Nnechukwu Olisa Eloka, 23, confessed that they assaulted her physically before killing her. The two criminals were given away by the call log of their mobile phones and the footage from the close circuit television CCTV at the hotel where the crime was committed.

The Sunday Sun of September 2, 2012 also reported that shortly after the arrest of Nwabufor and Eloka by the police, three other women told the Police that they have also been

victims of the criminal activities of Nwabufor and Eloka, the same men that killed Osokogu, claiming that they had been drugged, raped and robbed by the duo in a hotel after becoming friends with them on the Facebook. The claims of the three women that reported their cases to Area “E”, FESTAC police Command, Lagos, actually corroborated Nwabufor’s confession that they had drugged and raped four other young women apart from Miss Osokogu whom they killed. Investigations by SundaySun newspaper of September 2, 2012 indicated that apart from the few reported cases, more people have had terrible experiences in the hands of individuals they met on social networking platforms such as Facebook.

Ishmael Kamoruden recounted his own ugly story to Sunday Sun thus:

I met a girl on Facebook only once and she told me her mother was sick in the hospital and that they needed 100,000 (one hundred thousand naira only) for the operation. Out of sympathy I sent her the money and since then she refused to pick my calls and she also closed down her Facebook account. So I think some people have found in the internet and other social media [Platforms] like Facebook, Twitter, Myspace and others, efficient tools through which they trap their victims who have been deceived by their avowals of need for true friendship. It was a sad encounter for me.

Some young Nigerians desiring careers in acting on the popular Nollywood have also been victims as the criminals fake Facebook accounts in the names of popular Nigerian Nollywood stars and encouraging and promising to help the unsuspecting Nigerians fulfill their dreams in acting. A popular Nollywood actress, Ini Edo has been a victim of these criminals as several Facebook account names had been opened in her name and a lot of fraudulent activities carried out in her name. On January 28, 2015, one Alphonsus Udoma Idongesit who had apparently been defrauded by the fake Ini Edo had to post a warning on his Facebook page saying: “Please disregard any message(s) sent by any username called Ini Edo and unfriend them if they are on your friend list. The same impersonator also uses the account name Orejor Marvellous Osaspawan with Bank account number 2902208703 with EcoBank”. The real Ini Edo had publicly warned that “I have said this countless times. For the love of God, I am not on Facebook. Please impersonators enough is enough. Please beware and be warned!”.

Another Nollywood star, Odunlade Akekola has also had cause to cry out openly, including in an interview granted Punchonline on May 16, 2015, in a story titled “Fraudsters have been impersonating me on Facebook, Adekola”. The actor was quoted to have made the following announcement:

“About four years ago, I deactivated my account on Facebook for personal reasons. Fraudsters seized the opportunity to scam my fans. They opened different accounts in my name and whenever an unsuspecting fan sends a message to those accounts, they tell the person that I am doing a promo. They ask the person questions about me and when the person gets the questions, they would then say that the person should pay between ₦ 7500 and ₦ 8500 into a certain account number for them to redeem their prizes. They say that the money is for them to bring the gift to the person. Sometimes they ask the persons to call a certain number and they impersonate me. Some go to the extent of disguising their voices to sound like mine. They have been doing it for over four years and I have been receiving a lot of calls over this matter. It is quite embarrassing... they [fans] should please beware of scammers using my name”.

On Tuesday, June 16, 2015, Thisdaylive, the ThisdayOnline Newspaper reported an anti-craft commission in Nigeria, a few days earlier had arraigned Obiechina Chukeluba,(Alias Lisa T. Jackson) a 21-year-old- student in Lagos in a court presided over by a high court judge, Justice Ipaye, for crimes that border on criminal acts. A statement by the agency’s spokesman, Wilson Uwujaren said Obiechina had and claimed to be an American citizen and had asked for money several times under false identities. According to the statement, “in one such instances in March 2013, he obtained the total sum of 54,324.59 pounds from one K. Oaks through Western Union on the pretext that he was an American woman dealing in gold in Nigeria and needed money to increase her capital. The unsuspecting victim paid the money, having already agreed to marry the woman” the statement said.

Vanguardonline on July 2, 2015 @ 6.40 pm also published a story titled “Nigeria returns 10,000 Euros to French Love scam victim”. According to Nigerian’s anti-corruption agency,

“Kate Williams” had planned to move to be joined to her husband to be in Paris to enjoy their marriage. However “Williams” claimed she executed some contracts in Nigeria with a certain firm and had not been paid by the company for the “jobs” she had done. This, the supposed “wife-to-be” therefore told the “husband-to-be” to arrange some funds for her to enable her hire a legal practitioner that will help get the company to pay her for the jobs she executed and to eventually process her papers such as international passports and visa amongst others. This prompted the husband to immediately transfer twenty five thousand Euros (the equivalent of twenty-eight thousand United States dollars) to the “beloved” wife-to-be to join him as soon as possible.

But it was not long thereafter that officials of the anti-corruption commission realized shortly after the payment that the so-called “Kate Williams” was a male student in a tertiary institution in South Western part of the Country. The Commission was only able to get back part of the money (Ten Thousand Euros) in all which was returned to the duped foreigner.

7. Conclusion

It is against the background of these reports and several others that this paper calls for global and concerted efforts towards Hacking criminality on the Facebook. This is particularly so because an unpublished research conducted in Nigeria indicates that about 34.8 percent of the Nigerian population is registered in Facebook as users and out of this number, close to 30 percent admitted that they have been victims of criminality at Facebook. The crime acts include impersonation, hacking of accounts, scam and frauds amongst others. It is clear therefore that there should be concerted effort globally by the various countries of the world working together to confront and contain this global malaise. Such efforts may include security collaboration among the different nations of the world, including have common laws or having common treaties, getting different nations of the world to enact or strengthen existing laws that are related to social networking, such as Facebook, as to check criminality on the social media and punish offenders promptly. The world should be encouraged to set up bodies to be in charge of and closely monitor the activities of social networking groups, including Facebook. It is no doubt that when this global collaboration is carried out will drastically reduce or check criminality on Facebook and other social networks globally. This makes it imperative for the various nations of

the world to collaborate with a view to checking and possibly combating the social menace of criminality on Facebook.

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