


# Necessity of Paradigm Shift in Criminological Theorizing: An Empirical Approach to the Changing Trend in Cyber Crime–Education Nexus

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## INTRODUCTION

The triad of education, human development and socio-economic transformation or otherwise is central to the understanding of the processes involved in the workings of modern society. Inadvertently, the cyclical relationship existing between these three has been documented in research (Virginia, 2005; 27). Of recent, education was described as one of the accelerators of human, social and economic development (Ifenkwe, 2013:007). The importance of education remains unquantifiable across major indices of socio-economic development. Fundamentally, education promotes mastery of some certain procedures to the point where they become unconscious and automatic, it also permits the application of the procedures to structure information into conceptual knowledge that is used consciously and deliberately (Abadzi, 2006). These attributes when put together make education unique in its contributions to relational advancement globally.

Traditionally, education serves as a potent instrument for eliciting conformism to institutional rules and regulations and men in their various classes are socialized with the view of sustaining social stability and progress. However, in modern society, a subset of deliberate educational application tilts towards the retardation of development in the context of actions that are inimical to the overall interest of the generality. Few occurrences in the technological age attest to the fact that educational application is not uni-lineal in its consequences for socio-economic development. Of a truth, there is a dual application of educational inputs and with its negative connotations unabatedly becoming registerable in crime and in

a gamut of other anti-social behaviours globally. The manifest function of education that is commonly ushering and sustaining this turn of event is not farfetched. At inception, the defect of working against the interest of significant individuals and favouring few others has been the bane of education. This was aptly described by Coffey (2001) as differential outcomes of education.

In educational acquisition, the key democratic ideals of liberty and equality have always been in conflict in a nation with acute capitalist acumen (Brantlinger, 2007). Explaining this in a concise manner, Deleuze and Guattari (1983) disclosed that the emergence of monopoly capitalism radically transformed the social world: it swept away traditional social forms, as economic forces bite deeply into the symbolic textures of society itself (cited in Elliot, 2014:255). This symptom of destabilization then became recordable in the negativity attendant to educational skill utilization. Noblit and Pink (1995) argue that whereas the original philosophy for schooling hinges on achieving consensual relationship among diversely attributed populace, recent experiences have clearly shown that schooling is consistently promoting opposition, resistance and conflict in its consequences for societal survival. Apart from the factor located in biasness and inferiority attendant of diverse mode of knowledge dissemination according to Bourdieu, (1984), the unraveling scenario in the information technology age has now shown that school dropout is no longer sufficient reason for youth crime participation in the modern era. More significantly is the continued access of the vast majority of people to e-technology gadgets with its concomitant transformation of a relationship into virtuality.

E-relationship promotes the subtle quest for additional education enlightenment for its operability. Just as it were, more and more techno-elites have been drawn into the manipulation of the arena for both licit and illicit gains. More education now tilts to more crime involvement promoted by the increasing opportunities potentially offered by the virtual technologies and its environment. Consequently, this paper attempts to refocus attention to the changing trend in education and crime nexus. A departure from the hitherto paradigmatic leaning in criminology on less education more crime and substantial education, less or non-crime is gradually stirring one at the face (Miller, 1958; Moffitt, 1990; Farrington. 1992). Paradigm, as explained by Brown, Esbensen and Geis (2013:19) represents a tool that provides a general orientation to explaining and understanding crime as a phenomenon. With more and more of human activities booking their places in the cyberspace, so also is the increased yearnings for functional education to meet the demands of today virtual technological society across all facets of legal, semi-legal and illicit organs of the global community. Hence, the advocacy of this discourse is to cause an arousal on the changing trend in the theoretical fundamentals underpinning education and cyber-crime participation while using the evidentiary data collected from a youth study conducted in Lagos, Nigeria.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There is a gamut of issues propelling people into crime in modern society. Criminologists both in the classical and contemporary times have blamed culture, social structure and the economic system on the prevalence of crime (Conklin, 2007:149). Considering the various existed ideological variables on crime instigators therefore, two theoretical viewpoints become central to the basic argument of this research. First, Merton's social strain theory is appraised as relatively representing contemporary thinking in education-crime affinity while the classical discourse of Quetelet arouses and intensified our knowledge base on the affinal between the acquisition of qualitative education and virtual crime participation in the era of modernity. The concern of the latter remotely captures the hub of the argument of this research. Besides the philosophical leanings of both theory, their adequacy in time and space is basically reinforced by their

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