

# Chapter III

## Enhancing Social Security through Appropriate Cybercafé Security Policy in Nigeria

**Samuel Chiedu Avemaria Utulu**  
*Bells University of Technology, Nigeria*

### **ABSTRACT**

*The crucial role cybercafés play in the use of the Internet for business necessitates the development of appropriate cybercafé security policy in Nigeria. This chapter looks at how cybercafé security policy can be used to reduce criminal activities perpetrated in Nigerian cybercafés against individuals and organizations who use the Internet for various business transactions. The chapter proposes that, if Nigeria and Nigerians are to benefit from the highly electronized modern business environment, developing and implementing an all-encompassing cybercafé security policy has become a must. It was therefore concluded that such a policy should be a part of National Information Policy and should cover both technical security needs and social security needs.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Internet has developed to become an all-encompassing tool for communication in the *information age*. It is widely acknowledged that the heart of the information age is the Internet. Without the Internet, major activities that char-

acterize the information age may not have been possible. Activities like e-learning, e-commerce, e-communication, and so forth, and trends in *globalization* would have not been possible. The potentials of the Internet have also made the challenges associated with it very profound. Just as normal manual and natural learning, commerce

and communication need coordination to avoid unwarranted uses, so also is the Internet. It has been found over the years that the Internet is also prone and vulnerable to misuse which reduces its safety and credibility.

At present, about 1,086,250,903 people use the Internet all over the world. This number is made up of about 5 million users from Nigeria, which makes the country one of the highest Internet users in Africa in recent time. Although Africa has an history of low Internet usage, statistics show that Nigerians currently constitute 15.3 % of Internet users in the region, while South Africans constitute about 15.6 % (Internet World Stats, 2006). The over one billion users found across the world are made up of users with very good intentions and malicious users. Commenting on the use of the Internet from Web utilization perspective, Lee (1999) wrote that Web technology is accessible to millions of users that have different characteristics like age, skills and knowledge, and physical and mental capabilities. Omoduni (2007) also pointed out that at the one extreme of Internet use are those “who know all the nasty sites they can access on the Internet to satisfy their nasty desires, while at the other extreme are [the] ignorant...”

The need for a cybercafé security policy which must be integral part of the National Information Policy (NIP) arises because of the central role the Internet plays in national security, economic and social development, globalization, commerce, and the employment of labour. Because of the economic advantages the Internet has over other high-tech communication technologies, it has become the major tool to carry out all forms of information management required for modern business to succeed. Within the context of the global information systems, there arises the need to coordinate trans-boundary activities and to reduce individual and/or group excesses. Therefore, Prifitis and Oppenheim (1999) wrote that information policy is pertinent in every country because of the need to have harmonious implementation and operation of information resources, services, and systems.

This chapter looks at how social security can be enhanced through the enactment of a cybercafé security policy in Nigeria. The following eight themes will be explored in the chapter:

1. Background
2. Modern Business Technique and the Internet
3. Social Security in Internet Business Environment
4. Cybercafé Research in Nigeria
5. Review of National Information Policy in Nigeria
6. Achieving Social Security through Cybercafé Security Policy in Nigeria
7. Conclusion
8. Further Research Direction

## **BACKGROUND**

The *information age* has come to stay and has had strong impact on almost every facet of human existence and operations. The way human activities are carried out has been strongly challenged by the adoption of the Internet. In Nigeria the use of the Internet and other electronic networked connections to transact socio-economic businesses is still very limited. Private organization in the oil and gas sector, telecommunications sector, and the finance and banking sector are at the forefront of using electronic devices for business transactions.

Unlike in the developed countries, Nigerians have not wholly trusted the Internet for electronic business transactions. Its usage is still prone to fraud. The fact that Nigerians top the chart of Internet fraud perpetrators statistics has not helped matters (IC3, 2005). This has limited Nigeria's participation in globalization. Consequently, Nigerian firms and organizations and indeed all Nigerians have not been able to capitalize on the gains and prospects of the Internet to propagate their products and services as being practiced in

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