

Unemployment, Ritual Killings: A New Dimension of Cyber Criminality among Nigerian Youths

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<p>Received 20-03-2022</p> <p>Accepted 15-04-2022</p> <p>Published 25-04-2022</p>	<p>Abstract: According to sociologists, crime is inevitable in every human community, including the Internet, because humans are not angels, it is mind boggling that the level of this species of crime in Nigeria is in great proportions. There are different dimensions of cyber-criminality in the world today, but the majority of the versions of the crime that originate from Nigeria or by Nigerians elsewhere are economical; hence, this article discusses cyber-criminality in Nigeria, querying the role of the economic realities of the country, especially unemployment situation and economic migration in promoting the electronic-crimes. In Nigeria, the three-pronged advent of the Internet, computers and the mobile phones gave rise to massive outbreak of cybercrimes. It is very glaring that criminals and fraudsters leverage the anonymity provided by the Internet to defraud unsuspecting victims. The fraudsters are fond of impersonating others and stealing their identities to perpetrate their acts, and do take undue advantage of a family member in distress to swindle their victims. This study examines the relationship between unemployment and cyber-criminality among Nigerian youths. The analysis shows that since the chi-square values calculated ($P^2=156,234.88$) in the two hypotheses are greater than the critical value ($P_{(0.05,3)}^2=7.81$) it means that lack of employment is one of the contributory factors for high rates of cyber-crime among the youths. The massive rural-urban migration of youths for greener pastures in cities and the massive graduation of youths by higher institutions in Nigeria with no means of livelihood among others contribute greatly to this social vices. It was recommended that government should develop rural communities with infrastructure like electricity, good roads network, water, schools, hospitals that will reduce migration and also, establish institutions for the acquisition of skills that will create employment rather than conventional institutions. Furthermore, government should provide means of controlling communication network for security reasons</p>	<p>Keywords: Cyber-criminality, Unemployment, Migration, Youths, Nigeria</p>
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INTRODUCTION

We are living in the modern era run by technology. Our daily life depends on it, live with it. So, nowadays the internet is a common name known to everyone. The Internet contains everything we need. So, people are using and depending on it more and more. As internet usage is increasing day by day, it makes the world small; people are coming closer. Rapid technological growth and developments have provided vast areas of new opportunity and efficient sources for organizations of all sizes. It has become now a national asset; the whole national security is also depending on it. But these new technologies have also brought unprecedented threats with them a cybercrime. Cybercriminals use the internet and computer technology to hack user's personal computers, smartphone data, and personal details from social media, business secrets, national secrets etc. Criminals who perform these illegal activities through the internet are called - Hackers. Though law enforcement agencies are trying to tackle this problem, it is growing regularly and many people have become victims of identity theft, hacking and malicious software. To understand the true meaning of cyber-crime, there is the need to understand the slit meaning of cyber and crime. The term "cyber" is a prefix used to

describe an idea as part of the computer and information age and "crime" can be described as any activity that contravenes legal procedure mostly performed by individuals with a criminal motive. Cyber-crimes include offenses committed against individuals or groups of individuals with a criminal motive to do harm to the reputation of the victim or cause physical or mental harm to the victim directly or indirectly, using modern telecommunication networks such as Internet (chat rooms, emails, notice boards and groups) and mobile phones. In other words, cyber-crime simply refers to crimes carried out with the aid of a computer system. Cyber-crimes may threaten a nation's security and financial health. In Nigeria, cyber-crimes are performed by people of all ages ranging from young to old, but in most instances the youths. Several youths engage in cyber-crime with the aim of emerging as the best hacker, or as a profit-making venture since the tools for hacking in our modern world has become affordable by many. Unfortunately, a large number of youths now see cyber-crimes or internet fraud as a source of livelihood. Cyber criminality in Nigeria has taken a new dimension, people are duped, killed and kidnapped via the internet.

Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria today, numerous internet assisted crimes are committed daily in various forms such as identity theft, desktop counterfeiting, internet chat room, cyber harassment, fraudulent electronic mails, Automated Teller Machine (ATM) spoofing, pornography, piracy, hacking, phishing, spamming, cyber plagiarism, cyber stalking, cyber defamation, software piracy. Usually, these crimes are committed in forms of sending of fraudulent and bogus financial proposals from cyber criminals to innocent internet users. The increasing rates of cyber-crime in the society have become a strong threat to Nigeria's e-commerce growth and has led to ill-reputation internationally and consequently denied some innocent Nigerians certain opportunities abroad. The contribution of internet to the development of the nation has been marred by the evolution of new waves of crime. The internet has also become an environment where the most lucrative and safest crime thrives. Cyber-crime has become a global threat from Europe to America, Africa to Asia. Cyber-crime has come as a surprise and a strange phenomenon that for now lives with us in Nigeria. With each passing day, we witness more and more alarming cases of cyber-crimes in Nigeria, with each new case more shocking than the one before. Cyber-crime has taken a new dimension in Nigeria. Innocent people are killed daily through internet crime in the course of transacting business. It is against this background that this study is conducted.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the relationship between unemployment and cybercrime among Nigerian youths. Specific research objectives are:

- To assess the causes, the new form of cybercrime and its effects on socioeconomic development in Nigeria.
- To ascertain the efforts of the Nigerian government in forestalling cybercrime in Nigeria.
- To examine the legal framework against cybercrime in Nigeria
- To proffer measures that will curb/reduce high rates of cybercrime in Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were considered to guide this study.

- What is the relationship between unemployment and cybercrime?

- How does cybercrime affect the socioeconomic development of Nigeria?
- What effort does the government made to forestall high rates of cybercrime in Nigeria?
- How effective is the legal framework against cybercrime in Nigeria?
- How can we curb/reduce the high rates of cyber criminality in Nigeria?

Statement of Hypothesis

- There is no relationship between unemployment and cybercrime.
- Cybercrime has no effect on the socioeconomic development of Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Cybercrime

Nigeria has both the largest economy and population in Africa, and this contribute to the growth and fast expansion of ICT and the use of Internet in Nigeria. Like other technologies, Internet has been used by both good and bad actors. The use of internet and computer to commit crime is costing global economy the loss of billions of dollars. In Nigeria, the majority of the population use the Internet for good but some few are using it to commit criminal activities such as Fraud. Cybercriminals in Nigeria, widely called Yahoo Boys in the country specialize in Internet fraud that target mostly international victims. The Nigeria government is stepping efforts to bring an end the activities of these criminals as their actions tarnishes the image of the country. While the efforts of the government had yielded some positive results, the threat of Cybercrime in Nigeria is still high, as criminals continue to take advantage of flaws in the law enforcement tactical approach in addressing the crime.

The Relationship between Unemployment and Cybercrime

Unemployment has a direct connection with growing crime rates since with deterioration of living standards, the crime rates increase. Since the very beginning of civilization, the one thing that disrupts humanity is the growing crime rates. The magnitude of crime has blown over and there is a need for preventing crimes from happening. Back in 1999, the local government along with federal and state government had to spend more than \$146 billion in order to prevent and control crime. There is a lot of effort put into eliminating crime and yet the crime rates have only increased with time. Unemployment has a direct connection with growing crime rates since with deterioration

of living standards (that come with unemployment), the crime rates increase. People steal; commit various crimes to have money. The emotional structures of the unemployed people crumble down owing to rise of desires and decline of measures to look after the family. Their inability of finding money to fulfil the materialistic desires makes them more prone to committing crimes like burglary and robbery.

There are two kinds of belief regarding unemployment and crime. The first school of thought lays emphasis on the supply of offenders while the other lays emphasis on the supply of victims. The crime-unemployment relationship is studied under the notion that what would happen to the offenders when there is little or no economic supply. With the increase in unemployment, there is a decrease in the production of new items and consumption rate. There is lesser stuff on the market to get stolen. Cantor and Land (1995), noted that in order for a crime to take place, there is need of a motivated offender along with a suitable target. In 1985, Cantor and Land developed a theory-based model which suggested two ways in which economic activity can influence the rate of crimes. The first one focused on increasing the motivation for committing crimes in the people with a decrease in monetary supplies, giving rise to lack of social control. The second way focused on influencing the vulnerability and availability of criminals which gives rise to opportunities of committing crimes. On the basis of expectations with the theory and the research work done, the strongest pattern of crime motivation is for the property crimes like larceny, burglary and theft of motor vehicle.

One may be wondering why the youth engage or involve in cybercrimes in Nigeria. Interestingly, cybercrimes like other criminal activities are highly motivated by certain conditions, one of which is urbanization. It is emphasized that urbanization without crimes is really impossible. The influx of the youths to urban area where cybercrimes is thriving among urban areas because the elite find it lucrative to invest in cybercrime as it is a business that requires less capital.

The prevalence of a high rate of unemployment, harsh economic conditions and poor educational systems also contribute immensely to the proliferation of cybercrimes in Nigeria. The youths are no longer facing the

realities of canvassing for vocational jobs where they find it difficult to get a white-collar job.

It is a thing of worry therefore that the above notwithstanding, the country is not implementing stringent legislation to dissuade the youth from partaking in cybercrimes. Weak and fragile laws regarding cybercriminals exist in Nigeria. The most unfortunate is that the nation is not adequately equipped with sophisticated hardware to track down the forensic criminals. Our law enforcement agents are inadequately equipped in terms of personnel, intelligence and infrastructure to tackle the menace of cybercrimes that is adversely affecting the image and corporate identity of the country.

Besides, it is saddening to observe that many parents transmit crime values to their children, via socialization as if it is a social and cultural value which ought to be transmitted to the younger generation. The negative role model syndrome is having devastating impacts on the lives of the youth involving in cybercrimes and other sharp practices.

Causes of Cybercrime

Cybercriminals always opt for an easy way to make big money. They target rich people or rich organizations like banks, casinos and financial firms where a huge amount of money flows daily and hack sensitive information. Catching such criminals is difficult. Hence, that increases the number of cyber-crimes across the globe. Computers are vulnerable, so laws are required to protect and safeguard them against cybercriminals. We could list the following reasons for the vulnerability of computers:

- **Easy to Access:** The problem behind safeguarding a computer system from unauthorized access is that there are many possibilities of breach due to the complex technology. Hackers can steal access codes, retina images, advanced voice recorders etc. that can fool biometric systems easily and bypass firewalls can be utilized to get past many security systems.
- **Capacity to Store Data in Comparatively Small Space:** The computer has the unique characteristic of storing data in a very small space. This makes it a lot easier for the people to steal data from any other storage and use it for own profit.
- **Complex:** The computers run on operating systems and these operating systems are

programmed of millions of codes. The human mind is imperfect, so they can do mistakes at any stage. The cybercriminals take advantage of these gaps.

- **Negligence** - Negligence is one of the characteristics of human conduct. So, there may be a possibility that protecting the computer system we may make any negligence which provides a cyber-criminal the access and control over the computer system.
- **Loss of Evidence:** The data related to the crime can be easily destroyed. So, Loss of evidence has become a very common & obvious problem which paralyzes the system behind the investigation of cyber-crime.
- **Unemployment:** Cyber-crime can be linked with the high unemployment rate, harsh economic conditions, and poor educational system. According to available statistics, Nigeria has almost 20 million unemployed people, with about 2 million new entrants into the dispirited realm of the unemployed each year. This shows that many youths are unemployed. As we all know, an idle mind is the devil's workshop; therefore, most Nigerian youths use their time and knowledge as a platform for their criminal activity, in order to earn a living.
- **Urbanization:** The term urbanization refers to the massive movement of people from rural settlement to cities. This phenomenon is a major contributing factor to the rise of Cyber-crime in Nigeria. Urbanization implies massive physical growth of urban areas due to rural migration in search for greener pastures. This result in a heavy competition amongst the growing urban population more especially the elites. Consequently, the elites find it lucrative to invest in the crime of cyber since the business requires less start-up capital. These persons are commonly called "Yahoo Boys". Indeed, urbanization is a major cause of Cyber-crime in Nigeria. Urbanization can be of benefit if and only if decent jobs are created in the cities where population growth is increasing. Urbanization without crime is really impossible; thus, elites amongst them find it lucrative to invest in the cyber-crime because it is a business that requires less capital.
- **Quest for Wealth** - Carnal instinct that quests for wealth is another cause of cybercrimes in Nigeria. For any business to succeed, it is expected that, the rate of returns on the

investment grows at a geometric rate, with minimal risk. Cyber criminals desire to invest minimal capital in a conducive environment that would reap maximum gains as they strive to become rich using the quickest means possible.

- **Poor Implementation of Cybercrime Laws and Inadequately Equipped Law Enforcement Agencies** - According to Laura (2011), African countries have received intense criticism for inadequately handling of cybercrimes due to inadequate infrastructure and competence of assigned law enforcement agencies. The private sector also lags behind in protecting itself from cyber savvy criminals, Nigeria inclusive. There is no sophisticated hardware to forensically track down cyber criminals. In some instances, the laws regarding cybercrimes are circumvented by criminals. It is worth noting that law enforcement agencies in Nigeria such as the EFCC and ICPC have successfully prosecuted cybercrime offenders over the years. Nevertheless, much improvement can still be made.
- **Negative Role Models:** Youths are mirrors of the society. According to Meke (2012), many parents transmit criminal tendencies to their children via socialization. If this continues unchecked and the values are absorbed by the younger generation, they will see nothing wrong with cybercrime.
- **Corruption:** Nigeria has continued to occupy despicable position in the global ranking for corruption. In 2018, Nigeria was ranked the 144th most corrupt nation in the world out of 176 countries surveyed by the Transparency International. People celebrate wealth without questioning the source of such wealth. It is common to hear of people with questionable character and wealth being celebrated in society. This misguided disposition towards wealth encourages the get-rich-quick mindset that can be pursued through cybercrime.
- **Gullibility/Greed:** Most victims of cybercrime express some degree of gullibility and/or greed. Some people carry out transactions hoping to make profits without thorough investigations. Such people are prey for the cyber criminals.
- **Poverty** - According to Jolaosho (1996), poverty refers to the inability to afford decent food, shelter, clothing and recreational activities. Hence, poverty is the absence of basic life essentials for survival and comfort of

mankind. A poverty-stricken person may unwittingly turn to crime for survival. About 50% of Nigerians live in extreme poverty as at 2020 (Danis, 2020). However, an individual is classified as living in extreme poverty if the person earns below \$1.90 or ₦855 a day.

Dimension of Cyber-Crime

There are many dimensions of cyber-crimes and the most common ones are as follows:

Hacking: It is a simple term that defines sending illegal instruction to any other computer or network. In this case, a person's computer is hacked so that his personal or sensitive information can be accessed. The criminal uses a variety of software to crack a person's computer and the person may not be aware that his computer has been accessed from a remote location. Often, government websites are a hot target for hackers because it helps them gain notoriety which is further fueled by aggressive media coverage. This is different from ethical hacking which is used by many organizations to check their Internet security protection.

Child pornography and Abuse: The internet is being highly used to abuse children sexually worldwide. This is also a type of cyber-crime wherein criminals solicit minors via chat rooms for the purpose of child pornography. The Cybersecurity department of every nation is spending a lot of time monitoring chat rooms frequented by children with the hopes of reducing and preventing child abuse and soliciting.

Piracy or Theft: This crime occurs when a person violates copyrights and downloads music, movies, games, and software. There are even peer sharing websites which encourage software piracy and many of these websites are now being targeted by the FBI. Today, the judicial system is addressing this cybercrime and there are laws that prevent people from illegal downloading. Film producers and directors often become victims of this crime.

Cyber Stalking: This is a kind of online harassment wherein the victim is subjected to a barrage of online messages and emails. Typically, these stalkers know their victims and instead of resorting to offline stalking, they use the Internet to stalk. However, if they notice that cyberstalking is not having the desired effect, they begin offline

stalking along with cyberstalking to make the victims' lives more miserable.

Cyber Terrorism: Cyber terrorism, also known as information wars, can be defined as an act of Internet terrorism which includes deliberate and large-scale attacks and disruptions of computer networks using computer viruses, or physical attacks using malware, to attack individuals, governments and organizations. The goal of terrorism is to create a feeling of terror in the minds of the victims. Keeping this concept in mind, it becomes easier to differentiate cyber-attacks for a financial, or egotistical, gain from acts of cyber terrorism. Cyber terrorists operate with the goal of damage and destruction at the forefront of their activities.

Identity Theft: This has become a major problem with people using the Internet for cash transactions and banking services. In this cyber-crime, a criminal accesses data about a person's bank account, credit cards, Social Security, debit card and other sensitive information to siphon money or to buy things online in the victim's name. It can result in major financial losses for the victim and even spoil the victim's credit history.

Computer Vandalism: Computer vandalism is a type of malicious behavior that involves damages computers and data in various ways and potentially disrupting businesses. Typical computer vandalism involves the creation of malicious programs designed to perform harmful tasks such as erasing hard drive data or extracting login credentials. Computer vandalism differs from viruses, which attach themselves to existing programs.

Malicious Software: These are Internet-based software or programs that are used to disrupt a network. The software is used to gain access to a system to steal sensitive information or data or causing damage to software present in the system.

Cyber-crime the Way Forward

To tackle cybercrime effectively, establish multidimensional public-private collaborations between law enforcement agencies, the information technology industry, information security organizations, internet companies, and financial institutions. Unlike the real world, Cybercriminals do not fight one another for supremacy or control. Instead, they work together to improve their skills and even help out each

other with new opportunities. Hence, the usual methods of fighting crime cannot be used against cybercriminals. The best way to go about is by using the solutions provided by:

- **Cross-Domain Solutions:** This allows organizations to use a unified system comprising of software and hardware that authenticates both manual and automatic transfer and access to information when it takes places between different security classification levels. This allows seamless sharing and access of information within a specific security classification, but cannot be intercepted by or advertently revealed to the user who is not part of the security classification. This helps to keep the network and the systems using the network safe.
- **Be social media savvy:** Be sure to keep your social networking profiles (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.) are set to private. Be sure to check your security settings. Be careful of what information you post online. Once it is on the Internet it is there forever.
- **Secure your Mobile Devices:** Many people are not aware that their mobile devices are also vulnerable to malicious software, such as computer viruses and hackers. Be sure to download applications only from trusted sources. It is also crucial that you keep your operating system up-to-date. Be sure to install anti-virus software and to use a secure lock screen as well. Otherwise, anyone can access all your personal information on your phone if you misplace it or even set it down for a few moments. Someone could even install malicious software that could track your every movement through your GPS.
- **Protect your data:** Protect your data by using encryption for your most sensitive files such as financial records and tax returns.
- **Protect your identity online:** When it comes to protecting your identity online it is better to be too cautious than not cautious enough. It is critical that you be cautious when giving out personal ID such as your name, address, phone number and/or financial information on the Internet. Be certain to make sure websites are secure when making online purchases, etc. This includes enabling your privacy settings when using/accessing social networking sites.
- **Keep your computer current with the latest patches and updates:** One of the best ways to keep attackers away from your computer is to apply patches and other software fixes when

they become available. By regularly updating your computer, you block attackers from being able to take advantage of software flaws (vulnerabilities) that they could otherwise use to break into your system.

- **Protect your computer with security software:** Several types of security software are necessary for basic online security. Security software essentials include firewall and antivirus programs. A firewall is usually your computer's first line of defense. It controls who and what can communicate with your computer online. You could think of a firewall as a sort of "policeman" that watches all the data attempting to flow in and out of your computer on the Internet, allowing communications that it knows are safe and blocking "bad" traffic such as attacks from ever reaching your computer.
- **Call the right person for help:** Try not to panic if you are a victim. If you encounter illegal online content, such as child exploitation, or if you suspect a cybercrime, identity theft or a commercial scam, just like any other crime report this to your local police. There are many websites to get help on cybercrime. To name a few.

METHODOLOGY

Study Design

The research designs are often referred to as the structuring of investigation aimed at identifying variables and their relationships to one another. In this study, questionnaire serves as useful guide to the effort of generating data for this study. The survey research design through the administration of questionnaires was used for the study.

Sampling Technique

Sampling was done through the use of simple random sampling using the hat and draw method. There were similarities in various parts of the city in terms of culture, music, mode of dressing and worship. Two hundred (200) subjects were used for this study. Both male and female respondents were considered for the research.

Test of Hypotheses

The Chi-Square Test was used to test the validity of the hypothesis.

Hypothesis one

The model

Chi-square is a measure of the discrepancy between the observed frequencies (unemployment) and the expected frequencies (cybercrime). Its statistic can be written in the form; [Miller & Freund's (2000)]

$$P^2 = \sum_{i=1}^4 \sum_{j=1}^1 \left(\frac{U_{ij} - C_{ij}}{E_{ij}} \right)^2 \quad \text{where } i = 1,2,3,4 \text{ and } j =$$

1.(1)

Where

$P^2 = \text{Chi - Square Test}$

$U_F = \text{Observed frequency (unemployment)}$

$C_F = \text{Expected frequency (cybercrime)}$

$\Sigma = \text{Summation}$

The workings of the hypothesis are presented thus:

Ho: There is no relationship between unemployment and cybercrime.

Hi: There is a relationship between unemployment and cybercrime.

Table 1. Test of Independence

	U_F	C_F	$U_F - C_F$	$(U_F - C_F)^2$	$\left(\frac{U_F - C_F}{E_F} \right)^2$
Culture	80	25	55	3,025	121
Music	40	25	15	225	9
Mode of Dressing	50	25	25	625	25
Worship	30	25	5	25	1
Total	200	100			156

To establish the validity of the hypothesis, the model in equation one (1) was applied to determine the degree of association.

Decision Rule:

$H_0: P_1 = P_2 = P_3 = P_4$

$H_1: P_i \neq P_j$ at least one.

Level of significance: $\alpha = 0.05$

Criterion: Reject the null hypothesis if $P^2 > 156$, the value of $P_{0.05}^2$ for $4 - 1 = 3$ degree of freedom (7.81).

Decision: Since 156 greatly exceed 7.81, we reject the null hypothesis of equal proportions at the 5% level of significance and conclude that unemployment can lead to cybercrime in Nigeria.

Hypothesis Two

Modifying equation one (1), we have

$$P^2 = \sum_{i=1}^4 \sum_{j=1}^1 \left(\frac{C_{ij} - S_{ij}}{E_{ij}} \right)^2 \quad \text{where } i = 1,2,3,4 \text{ and } j =$$

1.(2)

Where

$P^2 = \text{Chi - Square Test}$

$C_F = \text{Observed frequency (cybercrime)}$

$S_F =$

$\text{Expected frequency (socio - economic development)}$

$\Sigma = \text{Summation}$

Hypothesis

Ho: Cybercrime has no effect on the socioeconomic development of Nigeria.

Hi: Cybercrime has serious effect on the socioeconomic development of Nigeria.

Table 2. Test of independence

	C_F	S_F	$C_F - S_F$	$(C_F - S_F)^2$	$\left(\frac{C_F - S_F}{S_F} \right)^2$
Culture	95	25	70	4,900	196
Music	35	25	30	900	36
Mode of dressing	19	25	-6	36	1.44
Worship	31	25	6	36	1.44
Total	200	100			234.88

To establish the validity of the hypothesis, the model in equation two (2) was applied to determine the degree of association.

Decision Rule:

$H_0: P_1 = P_2 = P_3 = P_4$

$H_1: P_i \neq P_j$ at least one.

Level of significance: $\alpha = 0.05$

Criterion: Reject the null hypothesis if $P^2 > 234.88$, the value of $P_{0.05,3}^2$ for $4 - 1 = 3$ degree of freedom (7.81).

Decision: Since 234.88 greatly exceed 7.81, we reject the null hypothesis of equal proportions at the 5% level of significance and conclude that cybercrime has damaging effect on the socioeconomic development of Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

The study access that social vices such as cybercrime is being mitigated by high level of unemployment and economic migration through the advent of the internet, computers and mobile phones. However, the analysis show that since the chi-square values calculated ($P^2 = 156,234.88$) in the two hypotheses are greater than the critical value ($P_{0.05,3}^2 = 7.81$) its reveals that unemployment is one of the contributing factor for high rates of cybercrime among the youths and also has a damaging effects on the socioeconomic development of Nigeria. The findings of this hypothesis are in line with the position of Jolaosho et al (1996) who postulated that, "poverty is the inability to afford decent food, shelter, clothing and recreational activities. That is, poverty is the absence of basic life essentials for survival and comfort of mankind. Hence, a poverty-stricken person may unwittingly turn to crime for survival".

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