



PAGES: 90-97

ARTICLE TITLE:



Digital Vulnerabilities and Safeguarding Dynamics: A Philosophical and Socio-Ecological Analysis of Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse within the Nigerian Context

Maurice Chukwukere^{1*}  & Judith Nghibi² 

¹Department of Leadership, Middle & Secondary Education, Southeast Missouri State University Missouri, USA.

²Department of Philosophy, Catholic Institute of West Africa, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

ARTICLE HISTORY

RECEIVED

10-10-2026

ACCEPTED

13-10-2026

PUBLISHED

19-10-2026

Corresponding author:

Maurice Chukwukere

Department of Leadership,
Middle & Secondary Education,
Southeast Missouri State
University Missouri, USA.



Abstract

Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (OCSEA) represents a rapidly escalating public health, child protection, human rights, and existential challenge across Sub-Saharan Africa. While digital connectivity expands exponentially in Nigeria—driven by widespread mobile broadband access and social media adoption—child safeguarding infrastructures remain critically lagging. Moving beyond purely empirical and legal perspectives, this article synthesizes conceptual insights from contemporary child safety literature with deep theoretical frameworks, including Bronfenbrenner’s Socio-Ecological Model, Finkelhor’s Precondition Model, Heideggerian philosophy of technology (Gestell), Byung-Chul Han’s digital panopticism, and Agamben’s concept of homo sacer. It evaluates how traditional socio-cultural norms, economic vulnerabilities, digital literacy gaps, and ontological shifts in digital presence intersect to facilitate online grooming, sextortion, non-consensual image creation, and synthetic media abuse (such as AI-generated deepfakes). Furthermore, this paper critically analyzes the statutory efficacy of the Child Rights Act (2003) and the Cybercrimes (Prohibition, Prevention, etc.) Act (2015/2024 Amendment), alongside institutional models such as Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs). Finally, a multi-tiered socio-ecological safeguarding framework grounded in communal ethics (Ubuntu) is proposed to enhance institutional, legislative, and community-based resilience against digital child exploitation in Nigeria.

Keywords: Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (OCSEA), Philosophy of Technology, Socio-Ecological Model, Digital Grooming, Sextortion

1. Introduction: The Technological Re-Ontologization of Youth

The global proliferation of high-speed internet, affordable mobile hardware, and ubiquitous digital platforms has fundamentally transformed adolescent socialization, cognitive development, educational access, and peer interaction (Livingstone & Third, 2017). However, this rapid technological migration does not merely represent a change in communication tools; it constitutes a profound re-ontologization of human existence (Floridi, 2014). For modern youth, the boundary between the physical ("offline") and digital ("online") has dissolved into an integrated "infosphere," where selfhood, social status, and personal agency are continuously negotiated through digital representation.

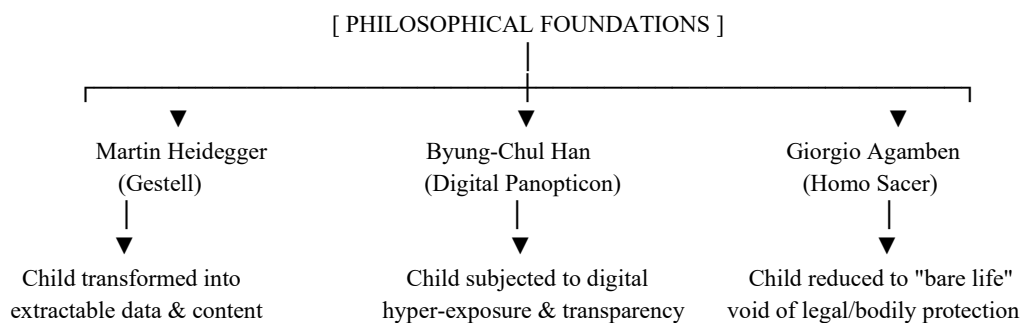
In Sub-Saharan Africa, and Nigeria in particular, this digital transformation has occurred at an unprecedented velocity. Rapid expansion of telecommunications infrastructure, subsea fiber-optic cables, and low-cost mobile devices has outpaced the development of digital literacy education, legislative oversight, and specialized child protection mechanisms (African Child Policy Forum [ACPF], 2020; UNICEF, 2021). Nigeria currently possesses the largest online population in Africa, with mobile internet serving as the primary gateway for children and adolescents engaging with social media platforms (e.g., TikTok, Instagram, WhatsApp) and online gaming ecosystems (Nigerian Communications Commission [NCC], 2023).

While digital access offers immense educational and social empowerment, it simultaneously exposes Nigerian youth to novel, asymmetrical vectors of harm. Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (OCSEA) encompasses a broad spectrum of harmful behaviors, including online grooming, coercion into generating explicit content, non-consensual sharing of intimate images, financial or image-based sextortion, and synthetic media abuse facilitated by Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) (Lanning, 2018; Wolak et al., 2018).

To fully comprehend the magnitude of OCSEA in Nigeria, one must look beyond technological mechanics and legal deficits. OCSEA must be conceptualized as an existential crisis where vulnerable human subjectivity meets hyper-efficient digital structures. Addressing this challenge requires examining how global digital dynamics intersect with local sociocultural norms, economic hardship, structural silence, and institutional constraints within the Nigerian socio-political landscape.

2. Philosophical Foundations of Digital Exploitation

Understanding the mechanics of digital exploitation requires robust philosophical tools to examine how digital environments alter human consciousness, agency, and vulnerability.



2.1 Heideggerian Gestell and the Reduction of the Child to a Digital Commodity

In *The Question Concerning Technology*, Martin Heidegger (1977) posited that modern technology is not merely a neutral instrument used by human beings, but a specific mode of "revealing" (Enframing or Gestell). Under the paradigm of Gestell, the universe and everything within it are reordered into a "standing-reserve" (Bestand)—a resource waiting to be extracted, calculated, optimized, and consumed.

When applied to OCSEA, Gestell offers a critical lens for understanding digital predatory dynamics. In digital spaces, the perpetrator does not perceive the child as an inviolable moral subject or a embodied human being. Instead, digital mediation abstracts the child into an assemble of digital data—pixelated representations, metadata, and extractable images. The child becomes part of a standing-reserve of sexual content or financial leverage. The digital screen creates a psychological distance that strips the child of existential human status, transforming bodily integrity into consumable content.

2.2 Byung-Chul Han, Digital Panopticism, and the Illusion of Freedom

Philosopher Byung-Chul Han (2017), in *Psychopolitics: Neoliberalism and New Technologies of Freedom*, extends Foucault's concept of the Panopticon into the digital age. Unlike Bentham's classical Panopticon, which enforced discipline through

overt surveillance and fear, Han argues that the contemporary digital panopticon operates through an illusion of freedom and self-disclosure. Digital subjects voluntarily expose their private lives, emotional vulnerabilities, and physical forms in exchange for social validation, "likes," and digital capital.

In the context of Nigerian adolescents, this digital hyper-exposure creates profound vulnerabilities. Youth voluntarily share intimate details of their personal lives, emotional struggles, and physical appearances on public social media platforms. Perpetrators monitor these digital breadcrumbs, using this self-disclosed intelligence to launch targeted grooming campaigns. The child operates under the illusion that digital participation is an act of personal agency, unaware that total visibility within digital platforms subjects them to predatory exploitation.

2.3 Agamben's Homo Sacer and the Digital State of Exception

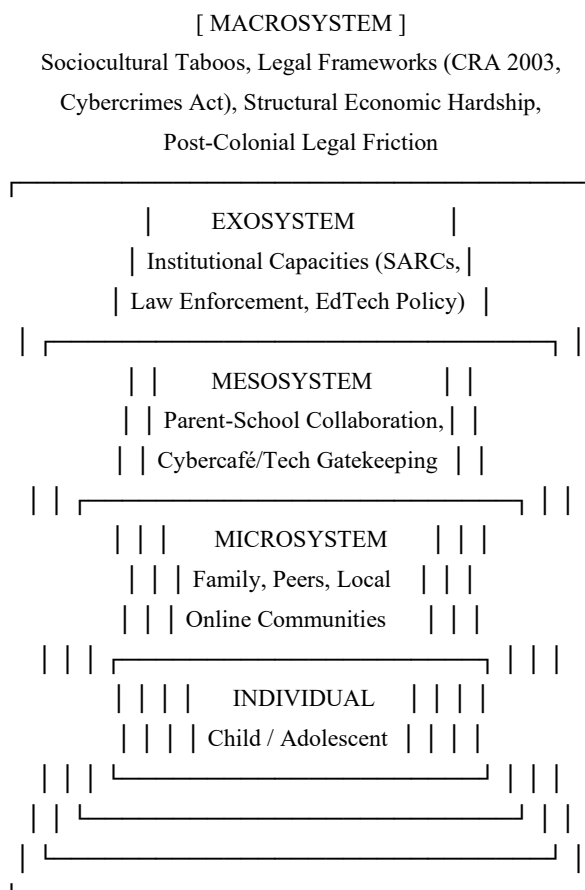
Giorgio Agamben (1998) introduced the concept of homo sacer—an individual who is expelled from the protective legal order and reduced to "bare life" (zoē), where they can be harmed or exploited with impunity because the law no longer effectively covers them.

In the Nigerian digital context, children targeted by OCSEA frequently enter a digital "state of exception." Due to jurisdictional enforcement gaps, the anonymity of encrypted platforms, and societal silence around sexual abuse, the exploited child is stripped of meaningful legal protection. They exist in an environment where

local statutory laws (such as the Child Rights Act) struggle to monitor or penalize online perpetrators. Reduced to "bare life" within digital networks, the child experiences profound existential isolation, left to navigate hyper-sophisticated exploitation mechanisms without state or community protection.

3. Theoretical Frameworks: Integrating the Socio-Ecological and Precondition Models

To connect these philosophical insights with empirical research and practical safeguarding, this study integrates Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Socio-Ecological Model with Finkelhor's (1984) Precondition Model of Child Sexual Abuse, adapted for digital environments (Whittle et al., 2013).



3.1 Bronfenbrenner's Socio-Ecological Nesting

Vulnerability to OCSEA is mediated across nested structural levels:

Individual Level: Biological age, developmental stage, digital literacy level, psychological distress, identity search, and desire for financial or material independence.

Microsystem: Immediate interpersonal spaces, including familial dynamics, peer networks, school environments, and direct online messaging groups.

Mesosystem: Connections between microsystems, such as communication between parents and educators, or interactions between local community leaders and digital platform providers.

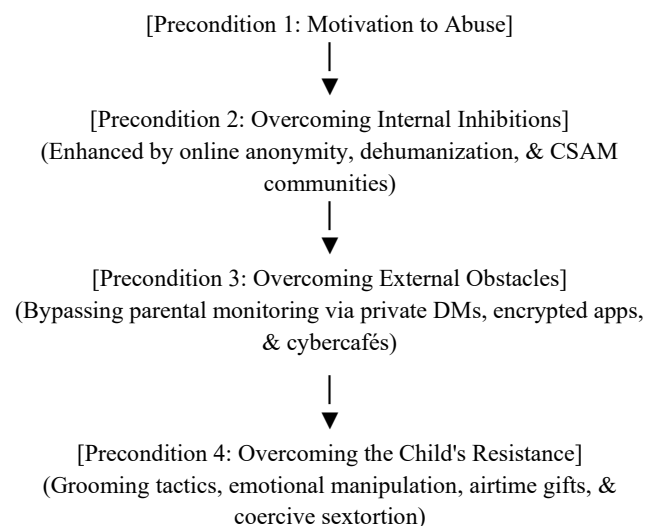
Exosystem: Institutional settings that indirectly affect the child, including law enforcement cybercrime units, judicial efficiency, policy development, and Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs).

Macrosystem: Overarching cultural ideologies, gender hierarchies, religious beliefs, legal codes (e.g., the Child Rights Act), and national economic conditions.

In digital environments, the boundary between the microsystem and macrosystem becomes remarkably porous. An online perpetrator operating anywhere in the world can bypass traditional protective barriers in a child's physical microsystem (such as parental supervision) through encrypted messaging applications and direct digital interaction (O'Connell, 2003).

3.2 Finkelhor's Precondition Model in Cyberspace

Finkelhor's (1984) Precondition Model posits four conditions necessary for child sexual abuse to occur. Modern child safety research adapts these conditions to digital spaces (Whittle et al., 2013):



- Motivation to Abuse:** The perpetrator possesses a sexual attraction toward children or seeks financial extortion opportunities.
- Overcoming Internal Inhibitions:** Digital anonymity, distance, and participation in online CSAM communities lower moral boundaries, normalizing predatory behavior.
- Overcoming External Obstacles:** The perpetrator uses direct digital access (private DMs, end-to-end encryption, unmonitored cybercafés) to bypass parental and societal supervision.
- Overcoming the Child's Resistance:** The perpetrator employs grooming strategies, psychological manipulation, micro-transfers of mobile data or airtime, and threats of exposure to force compliance.

4. Mechanisms of Online Exploitation in the Nigerian Digital Landscape

4.1 Digital Grooming Mechanics

Online grooming is a strategic, multi-phase process designed to lower a minor's psychological defenses, build emotional dependence, establish secrecy, and normalize sexual interactions (Craven et al., 2006). In Nigeria, perpetrators adapt grooming techniques to exploit local economic realities, social structures, and communication habits (Aderinto, 2018).

[Target Identification] —> [Trust & Affinity Building] —> [Isolation & Secrecy] —> [Boundary Erasure] —> [Sexual Coercion / Abuse]

Phase 1: Target Identification and Intelligence Gathering

Perpetrators scan social media platforms (e.g., Instagram, TikTok, Facebook) for adolescents displaying indicators of loneliness, family conflict, financial need, or a strong desire for peer recognition.

Phase 2: Trust and Affinity Building

The predator approaches the child adopting a false persona—such as a peer, modeling agent, music producer, or supportive mentor. They offer constant emotional validation, compliments, and material incentives tailored to the Nigerian context, such as mobile airtime transfers, data bundles, or digital gaming credits (Osoba & Akpan, 2020).

Phase 3: Systematic Isolation and Secrecy

The perpetrator gradually moves communication from public comments to private, encrypted messaging platforms (e.g., WhatsApp, Telegram). They encourage the child to hide conversations from parents, framing the relationship as a "special secret" that adults would unfairly judge (Lorenz, 2021).

Phase 4: Boundary Erasure and Sexualization

Conversations shift toward intimate topics, sexual jokes, and boundary-testing requests. The perpetrator normalizes inappropriate content before requesting the child send explicit photos or videos.

Phase 5: Coercion and Exploitation

Once explicit content is obtained, the relationship rapidly shifts from supportive to coercive. The perpetrator uses the media as blackmail to demand additional explicit content, financial payment, or physical meetings.

4.2 Financial Sextortion and Cybercrime Intersections

Sextortion—threatening to publish intimate images or videos unless the victim complies with financial demands or further explicit requests—has grown significantly across West Africa (UNODC, 2022). In Nigeria, this phenomenon manifests in two primary ways:

[SEXTORTION PATHWAYS]

[Financial Sextortion]

- Organized cybercrime groups
- Financial extortion focus
- Targets local & global youth

[Interpersonal Sextortion]

- Peer-to-peer / intimate partners
- Social humiliation & revenge focus
- Exploits cultural fear of shame

- Organized Financial Sextortion: Transnational and local cybercrime groups target adolescents locally and internationally. Operatives build fast online intimacy, persuade victims to share explicit material, and immediately demand financial transfers under threat of distributing the content to the child's family, school, and social network (Ibrahim, 2019).
- Interpersonal Coercion: Classmates, acquaintances, or intimate partners share or threaten to share private explicit media as revenge, social enforcement, or peer humiliation (Eke, 2022).

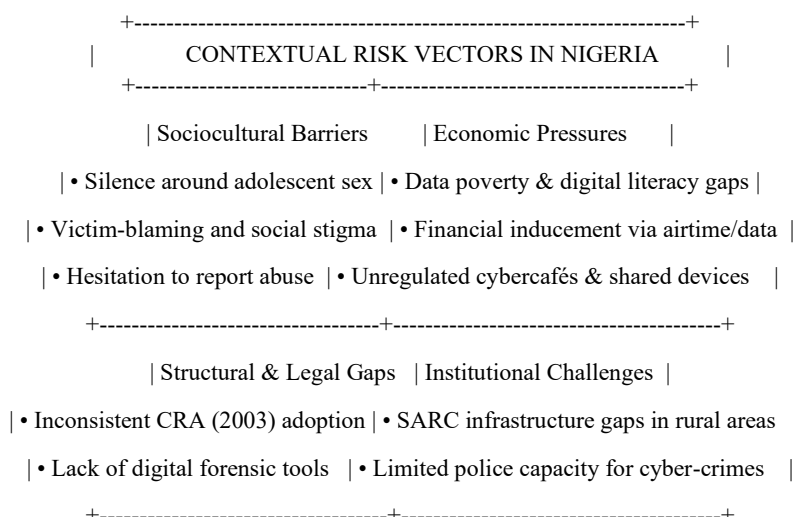
4.3 Generative AI and Synthetic Media Risks

The rapid development of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools introduces unprecedented risks to child safety. Deepfake platforms allow users to generate explicit photos or videos using non-explicit images taken from public social media profiles or school websites (Livingstone et al., 2023).

Within Nigerian secondary school environments, peer-led synthetic image creation has emerged as an accessible form of cyberbullying and harassment (Eke, 2022). Adolescents can create convincing explicit media featuring their peers using simple smartphone applications. The synthetic nature of the media does not reduce the psychological impact on victims; targets suffer real damage to their mental health, social standing, and dignity. Furthermore, synthetic media complicates law enforcement investigations, making it difficult to distinguish between authentic and generated CSAM.

Given the deep societal stigma attached to sexual exposure in Nigeria, victims experience intense panic and shame. Fear of severe family punishment or public disgrace frequently drives victims to extreme distress, complete isolation, or self-harm before reaching out to protective adults.

5. Contextual Risk Vectors and Vulnerabilities in Nigeria



5.1 Sociocultural Norms, Taboos, and Disclosure Impediments

In Nigeria, cultural attitudes toward youth sexuality significantly influence how OCSEA is perceived and handled. Conservative social norms surrounding sex, body awareness, and adolescent relationships frequently limit open dialogue between parents and children (Olley, 2006; Audu et al., 2018).

When children encounter inappropriate content or predatory behavior online, cultural taboos create strong barriers to disclosure:

Fear of Punitive Sanctions: Children often fear that revealing online harassment will lead to device confiscation, loss of internet access, or physical punishment from guardians (Owoaje & Chimndindu, 2011).

Pervasive Victim-Blaming: Societal norms frequently attribute moral fault to the victim, framing explicit exposure as personal misconduct rather than child abuse.

Family Honor Concerns: Families may suppress reports of exploitation to protect their social standing within religious or local communities.

This environment of silence allows predators to operate with minimal fear of exposure, exploiting cultural taboos to keep victims quiet.

5.2 Economic Hardship and the Digital Divide

Economic instability across Nigeria directly increases youth vulnerability to OCSEA. While affluent urban youth often access the internet on personal devices within monitored home environments, lower-income adolescents face distinct risk factors:

Data Poverty and Unmonitored Access: Adolescents without reliable home internet frequently rely on unmonitored commercial cybercafés, public Wi-Fi hotspots, or shared community devices where content filters are absent (Aisien & Omuemu, 2010).

Material Inducements: In households facing economic strain, micro-transfers of mobile data, airtime, clothing, or small cash sums carry disproportionate influence. Predators exploit these economic pressures, using small gifts to build dependency and demand explicit content in return (Isiugo-Abanihe & Erulkar, 2007).

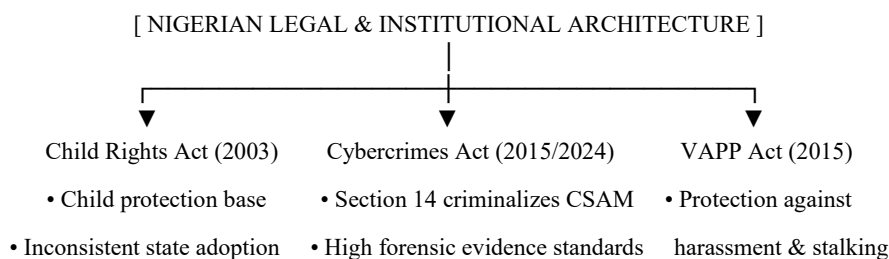
5.3 Context-Specific Behavioral Indicators

Recognizing potential OCSEA victimization requires identifying behavioral changes that account for the Nigerian context:

Domain	Behavioral indicator	Contextual Manifestation in Nigeria
Device Usage	Extreme secrecy around digital activities	Hiding phones under cushions, rapid screen clearing, maintaining secret secondary devices or using hidden vault applications.
Financial/Material	Unexplained acquisition of funds or gifts.	Possessing high-end smartphones, expensive wigs, designer clothes, or large airtime balances without visible parental support
Psychological	Acute anxiety or depressive symptoms.	Withdrawal from family activities, sudden drop in academic performance, unexplained school absenteeism, or panic after receiving phone notifications.
Social/Interpersonal	Unclear relationships with older adults.	Referring to distant, old “benefactors,” “mentors,” or sponsors who provide gifts while demanding private communication.

6. Legislative Frameworks and Institutional Constraints in Nigeria

Nigeria’s legal response to OCSEA depends on several national statutes, state laws, and institutional networks.



6.1 The Child Rights Act (CRA, 2003)

Enacted to incorporate the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into national law, the CRA (2003) establishes foundational legal protections for children in Nigeria. Sections 30 through 32 prohibit child sexual exploitation, abuse, trafficking, and exposure to harmful materials.

Statutory Limitations:

Jurisdictional Fragmentation: Under Nigeria’s federal system, child rights fall within residual state legislative authority. While most of Nigeria’s 36 states have domesticated the CRA, implementation, funding, and enforcement vary widely between northern and southern states due to differing religious and customary legal interpretations.

Pre-Digital Design: Drafted in 2003, the original statute lacks specific provisions addressing digital-native offenses like deepfake creation, online grooming, or image-based sextortion.

6.2 The Cybercrimes (Prohibition, Prevention, etc.) Act (2015 / 2024 Amendment)

The Cybercrimes Act serves as Nigeria’s primary legislative framework for combating digital offenses. Section 14 specifically targets child pornography and online abuse, criminalizing the production, distribution, procurement, or possession of CSAM, as well as digital solicitation and grooming. Penalties include terms of imprisonment ranging from 5 to 20 years.

Enforcement Constraints:

Evidentiary Hurdles: Successfully prosecuting cases under Section 14 requires clear digital forensic evidence, maintained chains of custody, and verified server logs. Law enforcement agencies often lack the technical resources needed to gather and process this data.

Platform Jurisdiction: Many digital offenses occur on global tech platforms operating outside Nigeria’s immediate legal jurisdiction,

complicating efforts to retrieve data or secure international legal assistance.

6.3 Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs)

Established through partnerships between state governments, civil society organizations, and international development agencies (such as UNICEF and the British Council), Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) provide free medical care, forensic examinations, psychological counseling, and legal support to survivors of sexual violence. Over 50 SARCs operate across various Nigerian states (UNICEF, 2021).

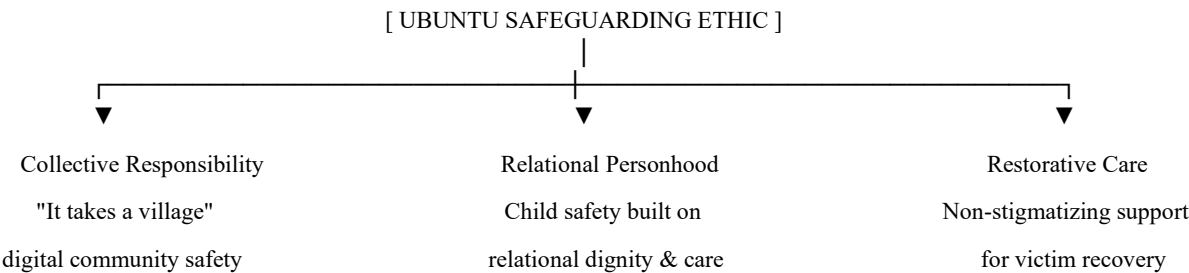
Operational Challenges in the Digital Age:

Physical vs. Digital Focus: Most SARCs were designed primarily to respond to physical sexual assaults. Staff often receive limited training in handling digital abuse, preserving online evidence, or managing the trauma associated with ongoing image-based blackmail.

Geographic Disparities: SARCs are concentrated mainly in urban state capitals, leaving rural and semi-urban adolescents with limited access to specialized support.

7. Indigenous Philosophical Frameworks: Ubuntu Ethics as a Safeguarding Imperative

While Western child protection models focus heavily on individual rights, legal sanctions, and state-level regulation, African philosophy offers complementary frameworks for child safeguarding. The principle of Ubuntu—expressed across Sub-Saharan Africa as "I am because we are; and since we are, therefore I am" (Mbiti, 1969; Wiredu, 1996)—provides an ethical basis for community-led digital protection.



7.1 Reclaiming the Collective Safeguarding Ethic

In traditional African societies, child upbringing and protection were collective duties rather than isolated parental tasks. Ubuntu asserts that a child's safety and moral development are shared community responsibilities.

Translating Ubuntu into the digital age challenges the idea that online safety is strictly an individual or family matter. Under an Ubuntu framework:

Cybercafé operators, school staff, religious leaders, and telecommunications providers serve as active digital guardians within the community.

Community networks take collective responsibility for identifying predatory behavior, reducing stigma around reporting, and supporting victimized children.

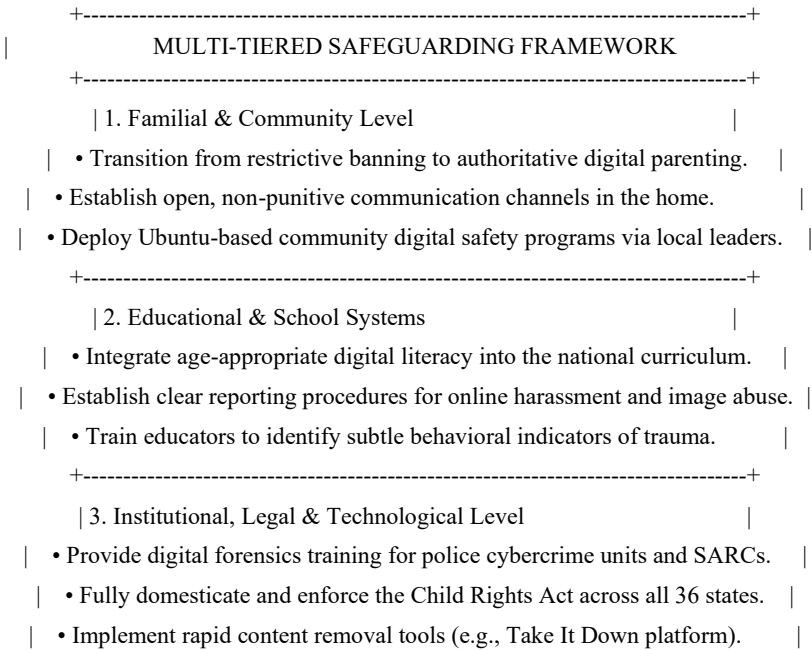
7.2 Relational Personhood versus Digital Dehumanization

Ubuntu defines human personhood through relational care, respect, and community belonging. This stands in contrast to the objectifying logic of Gestell, which reduces individuals to extractable data.

Promoting an Ubuntu-based digital ethic helps teach youth to respect their own bodily integrity and that of their peers in digital spaces. It frames non-consensual image sharing, cyberbullying, and synthetic media abuse not merely as school infractions, but as breaches of communal trust that harm the entire social fabric.

8. Multi-Tiered Strategic Safeguarding Framework

To address OCSEA effectively in Nigeria, interventions must coordinate actions across all levels of the socio-ecological hierarchy.



8.1 Familial and Community Interventions

Parental strategies must move away from purely restrictive bans—which often drive risky online behavior underground—toward authoritative digital mediation (Eastin et al., 2006).

Open Communication: Parents and guardians should establish clear, non-punitive channels for dialogue, reassuring children that reporting online harassment will not result in device loss or physical punishment.

Community Advocacy: Local religious organizations, traditional leaders, and youth groups should incorporate digital safety workshops into existing programs, working to reduce societal taboos surrounding reporting.

8.2 Educational Integration

Schools serve as vital environments for early prevention and support.

Curriculum Modernization: The Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) should integrate digital safety and media literacy modules into the core secondary school curriculum. Lessons should address digital privacy, critical media evaluation, consent, and the legal consequences of sharing non-consensual explicit content.

Staff Capacity Building: Educators and school counselors require training to recognize early behavioral indicators of trauma and digital victimization, ensuring safe handling of disclosures.

8.3 Legal, Institutional, and Technical Enhancements

Strengthening the systemic response requires focused policy and technical updates:

Legal Harmonization: Federal and state legislative bodies must work to complete full domestication of the Child Rights Act across all states, while updating national cybercrime statutes to address emerging AI threats.

Institutional Investment: Funding should focus on equipping law enforcement cybercrime units with digital forensic infrastructure and training SARC personnel to handle online abuse evidence and recovery.

Technical Integration: Civil society and government agencies should expand access to rapid content removal services, such as the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children's (NCMEC) Take It Down platform, enabling swift removal of explicit material from public networks.

5. Conclusion

Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse represents a critical intersection of modern technology, cultural dynamics, and child protection challenges in Nigeria. Addressing these risks requires looking beyond pure technical or legislative fixes to examine the underlying philosophical shifts in how young people interact, build identity, and face vulnerability within digital environments. By combining rigorous legal enforcement, updated educational curricula, enhanced institutional capacity within networks like SARCs, and the community-centered ethics of Ubuntu, Nigeria can build a resilient safeguarding system. Ensuring that digital spaces remain secure empowers young people to learn, connect, and thrive online while safeguarding their dignity, wellbeing, and rights.

References

1. Aderinto, A. A. (2018). *Child abuse and neglect in Nigeria: Sociological perspectives*. University of Ibadan Press.

2. African Child Policy Forum [ACPF]. (2020). *The online safety of children in Africa: Scope, nature and response*. ACPF.
3. Agamben, G. (1998). *Homo sacer: Sovereign power and bare life*. Stanford University Press.
4. Aisien, A. O., & Omuemu, V. O. (2010). Knowledge, attitude and practice of internet usage among secondary school students in Benin City, Nigeria. *Journal of Community Health and Primary Health Care*, 22(1), 34–42.
5. Audu, A., Obono, O., & Hassan, A. (2018). Sociocultural determinants of child sexual abuse reporting in Northern Nigeria. *African Journal of Criminology and Justice Studies*, 11(1), 45–62.
6. Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Harvard University Press.
7. Craven, S., Brown, S., & Gilchrist, E. (2006). Sexual grooming of children: Review of literature and theoretical considerations. *Journal of Sexual Aggression*, 12(3), 287–299.
8. Eastin, M. S., Greenberg, B. S., & Hofschire, L. (2006). Parenting the internet in urban households: Exploring the relationship between internet connectivity and adolescent risk. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 50(2), 211–231.
9. Eke, H. N. (2022). Cyberbullying and digital harassment among Nigerian undergraduates: Implications for policy and counseling. *Nigerian Journal of Social Sciences*, 18(2), 112–128.
10. Finkelhor, D. (1984). *Child sexual abuse: New theory and research*. The Free Press.
11. Finkelhor, D., Turner, H., & Colburn, D. (2021). The prevalence of child sexual abuse with online sexual abuse added. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 118, Article 105141. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2021.105141>
12. Floridi, L. (2014). *The 4th revolution: How the infosphere is reshaping human reality*. Oxford University Press.
13. Han, B.-C. (2017). *Psychopolitics: Neoliberalism and new technologies of power*. Verso Books.
14. Heidegger, M. (1977). *The question concerning technology, and other essays*. Harper & Row.
15. Ibrahim, B. (2019). Cybercrime dynamics in Nigeria: A study of youth involvement in fraud and extortion. *International Journal of Cyber Criminology*, 13(2), 340–357.
16. Isiugo-Abanihe, U. C., & Erulkar, A. S. (2007). Adolescent reproductive health in Nigeria: Determinants and vulnerability. *African Journal of Reproductive Health*, 11(1), 73–85.
17. Lanning, K. V. (2018). *Child molesters: A behavioral analysis for law enforcement officers investigating cases of child sexual exploitation* (5th ed.). National Center for Missing & Exploited Children.
18. Livingstone, S., & Third, A. (2017). Children and young people's rights in the digital age: An emerging agenda. *New Media & Society*, 19(5), 657–670. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444816686318>
19. Livingstone, S., Stoilova, M., & Nandagiri, R. (2023). Children's data and privacy online: Theoretical and empirical insights. *Journal of Children and Media*, 17(1), 15–33.

20. Lorenz, K. (2021). Digital grooming and technology-facilitated sexual violence against minors. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 22(4), 890–904.
21. Mbiti, J. S. (1969). *African religions and philosophy*. Heinemann.
22. Nigerian Communications Commission [NCC]. (2023). *Industry statistics: Subscriber and internet data*. Federal Republic of Nigeria.
23. O'Connell, R. (2003). *A typology of child cyber-grooming*. Cyberspace Research Unit, University of Central Lancashire.
24. Olley, B. O. (2006). Psychological consequences of child sexual abuse among Nigerian adolescents. *Journal of Child & Adolescent Mental Health*, 18(1), 19–25.
25. Osoba, A. M., & Akpan, E. (2020). Socio-economic vulnerabilities and child protection in urban Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies*, 62(3), 205–228.
26. Owoaje, E. T., & Chimndindu, C. (2011). Sexual abuse among secondary school students in Southwestern Nigeria. *African Journal of Medicine and Medical Sciences*, 40(3), 245–252.
27. UNICEF. (2021). *Assessment of Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) and child protection systems in Nigeria*. UNICEF Nigeria Country Office.
28. UNODC. (2022). *Global report on trafficking in persons: Focus on technology-facilitated exploitation*. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.
29. Whittle, H., Hamilton-Giachritsis, C., Beech, A., & Collings, S. (2013). A review of online child sexual exploitation: The cyber-grooming continuum. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 18(1), 62–70.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2012.10.003>
30. Wiredu, K. (1996). *Cultural universals and particulars: An African perspective*. Indiana University Press.
31. Wolak, J., Finkelhor, D., Walsh, W., & Mitchell, K. J. (2018). Child sexual abuse material and technology-facilitated abuse: Trends and prevention strategies. *Child Maltreatment*, 23(3), 267–279.