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Globalization and Crime: “Feymen” in Cameroon

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Abstract

One of the challenges faced by most countries in Africa today is “high crime wave”, in Cameroon, one of the forms of criminality is known as “feymania”. “feymen” practice “feymania” a name commonly known to all Cameroonians, which refers to criminal economic practice. These “feymen” mostly deal with the sales of non-existing goods, money laundry, and the offering of non-existing contracts and documentations. Their whole form of economic activities is characterised by “deceit”.

The study seeks to provide in-depth knowledge on the phenomenon, how globalization has helped to facilitate this crime “feymania” across national and international borders. This resulted to the success of these “feymen” who now become rich and famous by their criminal economic practices.

This study was carried out for a period of one month, from the 1st to the 30th of April 2011; both secondary and primary sources were used for data collection. The primary sources data were done with the help of in-depth interview with the use of interview guide. Respondents were contacted through the help of a snowball technique; and they were of three groups: the “feymen”, cybercafé owners and security officials. Findings show that globalisation has really facilitated the networks of these criminal entrepreneurs “feymen” across national and international borders. And this enabled them to get in contact with victims who paid them huge amount of money. Without having to come into physical contact with them most of the time. Results also show that half of the population of “feymen” have travelled abroad to meet their business partners as they claim to be.
CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

This sociological study focuses on “feymania”. This is a concept commonly known to all Cameroonians, which refers to criminal economic practices. And this “feymania” is practiced by “feymen”. “Feymen” mostly deal with the sales of non-existing goods, money laundry, and the offering of non-existing contracts and documentations. Their whole form of economic practices is characterised by “deceit”. Not many researchers have made an attempt to the understanding of this phenomenon, which has generated contradictory thoughts amongst the population of the country. Though a good number of Cameroonians view “feymania” as a means to an end other citizens see it as a threat to human lives. “Feymania” has to do with fraudulence practice; an act which serves as an opportunity for many marginalized youths in Cameroon who claims to have access to material and financial resources from which they are excluded. “Feymania”, over the late twentieth and early twenty-first century serves as a means to explore its roots and causes in history, culture and in the present socioeconomic situation in the face of globalisation. Being complex in form and nature, feymen activities have waken the consciousness of social scientists on crime; to theories, perceptions, and strategies on how to curb such activities. The process of globalisation embodies different kinds of community affairs and dealings that can be measured on the bases of its extensity, strength, speed, and
impact which results to transcontinental or interregional flows and different networks of activity and interactions (Alasuutari 2000: 260). And this communal affairs and dealings entail different activities carried out in communities including crime. This aspect of globalisation that deals with networks of activity and interactions also gives advantage to the criminal economic activities like “feymania”, which has a whole network of connectivity both nationally and internationally. Wes (1996) noted that globalisation ushered in international interaction of national economies which includes trade in goods and services; movement of people and direct investment. One important aspect of development in the global economy in the face of globalisation has been in the area of service industries that is on the rise. This is characterised by huge diversity, such like business activities, tourism, insurance, communication, finance, transportation and constructions. As such, there is a larger trade in goods more than what it has ever been nationwide, unlike trade in services (Wes 1996).

For example Katja (2007) noted that the development of illegal and illicit opportunities has been a vital part of globalisation and deregulation of nationwide economies. And this is affirmed by Alasuutari (2000) that amplified cross border capital flows can be achieved by political agreements that have liberalized financial markets and lowered economic protectionism.
And Ndjio’s research on crime is a good example of the impact of globalization which is plaguing the continent of Africa today; for the study reveals that the economic reforms that were forced upon Africa by Western institutions (World Bank and the International Monetary Fund) made a good number of African social actors to re-appropriate to their own benefit on the economic reforms that took place (Ndjio 2008). Notable, this paved the way for the development of their own economic practices which can be categorized judicially and morally as illicit and criminal (Ndjio 2008).

Worthy of note is that criminal activities and networks are one of the biggest problems faced by most countries in Africa. A vivid example is the investigation carried out by Ndjio which portrays that crime, corruption, confidence tricks, business frauds and financial deceptions at present, manipulate business activities in most countries in Africa; and the manner in which economic transactions is being carried out has also been manoeuvred (Ndjio 2008).

For example, Cameroon’s “feymania” has become one of the most visible manifestations of this Africa’s business manipulation activities (Ndjio 2008). As such “feymania” has recently been looked upon as a new form of entrepreneurship that can be termed “criminal entrepreneurship” that is fundamentally based on deceitful practices (Ndjio 2008). This assertion is a confirmation of what Katja (2007) noted, that the challenges to a nation state
control, does not only result from the increasingly interrelated and sovereign global economy, but also from the global illicit economy.

And “Cameroonian “feymen” have since the early and mid 1990s embarked on a global process of crime and fraud” (Ndjio 2008). As Katja pointed out that is the result of the methodical deteriorating of a country’s authoritarian controls that paved the way for drastic struggle over state possessions which are associated with criminal activities (Katja 2007).

Quoting from Ndjio’s work, the results show that as from the mid 1990s, Cameroonian international swindlers, young marginalized African youths have made efforts not to only use opportunities provided by the current international entrepreneurship, but also to change this form of control over resources; by bringing corruption to the State’s norms and values through this crime “feymania” (Ndjio 2008).

In fact, the striking issue with this new African economic entrepreneurship is that it dissolves the dissimilarity between genuine profit seeking and criminal behaviour, and between unpleasant criminal practices and normal economic activities (Ndjio 2008). Katja (2007) noted that as organised crime and corruption turn out to be factors that perverse a common system of a government, it is very difficult to identify criminal and non-criminal transactions. For instance the offering of contracts to victims by “feymen”
through documentations makes it impossible for victims to tell if it is fake or real.

Moreover, the State’s goal to exercise authority on this autonomous group of nouveaux riches forwarded the emergence of “globalising feymen” who tended to carry out their swindle operations on an international level (Ndjio 2008).

This criminal economic practice was with respect to the fact that there existed a release to a worldwide market in the late nineteenth century which includes a huge transaction of trade, alongside trade in currencies (Giddens 1999, 2002).

Thus with a sociological theoretical study on how people with such deviant behaviour try to face and handle outcomes generated from these activities, the main aim of the study is to generate in-depth knowledge on this form of crime and their network activities facilitated by globalization. Notably, Katja (2007: 9) stated that the network society is a “new society based upon knowledge, organized around networks, and partly made up of flows” and these societal changes have been facilitated by deep scientific information and communication technologies. That gave rise to a worldwide financial system with the ability not only to amass wealth across the globe, but also to occupations as a common aspect in a social environment.

My aim with this study is to investigate the part played by globalization in the facilitation of these criminal entrepreneurs’ activities across national and
international borders. Strategies for success over victims; types of product marketed and also, a demographic investigation for those involved.

1.1. Background of the study

During the process of democratization in the early 1990s in Cameroon, the constant loss of social prestige of the civil servants and educated elites as a whole, lack of employment prospects for youths in the urban settings, marginalization of youths by state power and the disappointment of the people with the process of democratization gave birth to “Feymania” related activities, alongside the ideology of “feymen” as a form of lifestyle (Ndjio 2006). The economic success of “feymen” rely on their enablement not only to be on both sides of legal and illegal merchandise, but also to take advantage of both the payment system promoted by the local ruling CPDM regime, and the global economy that offers opportunities for rapid enrichment (Ndjio 2006).

1.2 Statement of Problem

Crime being a social problem is increasingly violent in nature, even though there is a constant rise in law enforcement personnel to look for answers to this problem of crime (Hester and Eglin 1992). “Feymania” is generally dangerous and up till now is the least understood of any kind of deviant behaviour.
The basic reason is that it is manifested in various forms such as plagiarisms to
frauds, from deception to betrayal, shoplifting to corporate swindle and from
homicide to mass murder (Bunge 2006).

1.3 Research Objective

The interest I have for such a topic can be justified by my field of study in
human resources management with specialty in sociology. As such, I am
encouraged to conduct this study of “feymen in Cameroon” as a challenge to
security in the face of globalization.

This is not that attention is paid only to my field of study, but with respect to the
fact that “crime” is a social issue, which involves human input and output in as
much as human resources management is concerned. My interest to the topic is
motivated by the fact that the phenomenon “feymania” in the face of
globalization is on the rise such that it undermines the efforts of security
officials to combat crime both nationally and internationally. In this respect,
there is the need for a sociological study on the crime; alongside seeking
answers with an intention to properly understand the phenomenon.

Importantly, the objective of my study would be the introduction to
Cameroonian and other countries to serious problems resulting from
globalization. With an increased examination on the question of criminal
networks in the face of globalization can reduce the constant rise of criminal
activities across national and international borders; as such the reinforcement of
security measures to both possessions and humans that will result to steadiness and peace.

My stance to this research is to examine illicit economic transactions across national and international borders.

The study serves as an occasion to search for and to give a general idea and in-depth knowledge on the values of security; the impact to which crimes as a whole could hold on the improvement and execution of security.

Instead of bringing solutions to feynen networks across borders, my position is to raise questions on how these criminal entrepreneurs’ activities are being coordinated across borders.

1.4 Delimitation

“Feymania” is a crime committed by many marginalised youths located in all regions in Cameroon with its main objective as a fast means to accumulate wealth and fame in the social environment. To cover all the regions in the country will be a great task due to limited time frame and the maximum number of pages required. With respect to that the study was limited to the South West Region of Cameroon.

Chapter Two

Literature Review
2. 1. Theoretical Framework

This section of organised crime, “Feymania” entails any type of written and unwritten document of illicit economic transactions across national and international boundaries that are the extension to other countries, with the aim for wealth generation. And this can be understood with the help of theoretical perspectives produced in the academic field.

Fundamentally, criminal economic transactions literatures apply different concepts to show the realities of these activities. Illicit economic practices, false sales of goods and services, online frauds, scam, swindles, hacking, cyber crime, and organised crime are well known concepts denoting transnational crimes in the appearance of criminal entrepreneurial activities. For example,

Hopkins (1975: 608) noted that over the last decade or two, sociological criminologists have come to understand that criminal behaviour is problematic. And in recent years there is a rapid growth in the field of sociology of law with respect to the changes occurring in the area of criminology; which deals with the causes of criminal behaviour, with a rationale for the understanding and prevention of crime (Hopkins 1975).

There is very little research on the crime under investigation. And the main issues raised in the research were: 1.) the superstitious interpretation of the so-called feymen’s “magic money” by socially and economically marginalized Cameroonians. 2.) An understanding of why many Cameroonians tend more and more to associate the novel forms of wealth with witchcraft-related practices. 3.)
Why since the emergence in the mid 1990s of a group of wealthy young confidence tricksters, the idiom of witchcraft and sorcery has become in Cameroon a key concept for explaining the exceptional social promotion of these former underprivileged youths. And 4.) Why the upsurge of this new class of nouveaux riches was followed by an unprecedented proliferation of alarming rumours linking their economic success to the sorcery of wealth (Ndjio 2006).

Results from the existing research shows that young poor marginalized Cameroonians have succeeded in accumulating inexpressible fortunes with the help of occult swindling practices. Ndjio mentioned that most of these “feymen” are youngsters from one of the ethnic groups in Cameroon known as the “Bamileke”; immigrants from the mountains region of the country. Further that the authorities of the Bamileke and Cameroonian officials are trying to tame these feymen by cooperating with them. And that feymen have become role model for the new generation with their expensive cars and flashy clothes.

Worthy of note, is that findings show that feymen as rich sorcerers and their extraordinary riches as occult or magic money do not conform to the social norms and accepted patterns of self-realization and the accumulation of wealth in Cameroon (Ndjio 2006).

Conversely, there is very little theorization on the phenomenon. And one of the areas taken into consideration in the field of social sciences in this modern period is the theoretical debate in cultural and social theory addressing the
phenomenon of risk and the role it plays in subjectivities and contemporary social life (Lupton 1999).

Subsequent to the literature review with respect to globalization and crime: the case of “feymen” in Cameroon, information required to understand the study was retrieved. Some concepts applied to the investigation and which were also used for the analysis of the data was taken into consideration.

**Main Concepts: globalization, crime and “Feymania”.

Globalization according to Katja (2007) is a multifaceted set of developments that entails several modalities. Like international trading, which Giddens (1999, 2002: 18) noted that recently, the intensity of world economic transactions is much more advanced than what it used to be some years back, and this entails a wider range of goods and services. Some scholars argue that globalization produces a world made up of losers and winners, while few people are on the fast track to prosperity, and the larger population destined to a life of unhappiness and anguish (Giddens 1999, 2002: 9). Since globalisation paved the way for international trading, “feymen” also engage themselves into such trading. And Ndjio pointed that as “feymen” celebrate the success of their economic malpractice, they leave their victims (mougou) to a life of anguish and depression (Ndjio 2008).

According to Giddens (1999, 2002) globalization produces modern economic and cultural zones within and across nations. In this modern worldwide
electronic economy, millions of individual investors, corporations, banks, as well as fund managers can transfer large amounts of capital from one end of the world to another just at the click of a mouse (Giddens 1999, 2002). The global market-place is much more advanced in these recent times than the 1960s and 70s, and cuts across national borders. And Giddens (1999, 2002) pointed out that in the later part of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century; there was an existence of an open worldwide economy that included a major deal of trade, alongside trade in currencies.


On the other hand, the concept of crime sociologically portrays that deviant conduct is not equally spread all over the social structure. There are many empirical proofs to the assertion that class position, ethnicity, occupational status and other social variables are efficient indicators for predicting rates of various sorts of deviance (Wolfgang and Ferracuti 2002). This is affirmed by Cote that differential association and social learning perspective on crime stipulates that individual commit crime with respect to learning and experience through socialization with peers (Cote 2002).

Also, Hester and Eglin (1992) advanced that there are certain physiological characteristics (the potential for one to carry out psychological functions) found in the human body which differentiate criminals from the normal. And theories
of sociology on criminal behaviour try to position the difference between the normal person and the criminal to the social environment in which the person is exposed to. Sociologists have adopted a great range of concepts in order to understand crime and delinquency; and different kinds of research methods had been used to illustrate some of these concepts such as social class, social role or social structure (Phillipson 1971). Interestingly, these concepts have different meaning in various theoretical perspectives and these differences are a reflection of the main division existing within sociology over the right perspective to be used in the analysis of the social world. According to Phillipson (1971) the primary challenge to sociologists with intention to understand patterns of crime in a given society is to obtain an exact picture of these patterns as possible, based upon the description of the major parameters of crime and criminality.

Which is in relation to Durkheim’s perspective of “anomie” that is absent of social order, as a result of globalization or social change (Hester and Eglin 1992).

As such, the concept of “feymania” according to Ndjio (2006) refers not only to wealth acquired through swindling, business frauds, and financial deceptions but also to riches obtained by occult means. According to Bayart et al (1999) the growth of illicit activities south of the Sahara has to be placed in the light of a particular historical context. This implies that the crime “feymania” has a historical base borrowing from the words of Ndjio (2008), a crime committed by
“poor marginalized youths in Cameroon”. According to Ndjio (2008), through the economy of fraud, deception and swindle, these young people who come from underprivileged social backgrounds, try to amass enormous fortunes that enables some of them to put on ostentatious dresses, move on fancy cars, live in extraordinary mansions in gentrified areas in large cities of the state and to even support football clubs and music bands in their home towns (Ndjio 2008).

2.2. Empirical Literatures

In relation to the crime under investigation, “feymania” is also carried out in computers over the internet. Walls’ (2010) empirical findings affirmed that computer aided criminals to use networked computers to commit crimes, with a primary motive to obtain money, goods or services fraudulently. With addition to internet frauds, there are other kinds of socially stimulated crimes such as the 419 advanced-fee frauds, which are other forms of dubious activities and the manoeuvring of recent online sales environments, specifically auction sites; where most companies advertise the sales of their goods.

Subsequently, Sandywell (2010), findings also shows that the advent of digital communication networks, did not only witness the production of ever-present multimedia but also experienced an outburst of online crime, specifically illegal accounting practices and commercial criminal activities made available by the modern information networks (Sandywell 2010).
Also the empirical study of Karstedt and Kai- D (2000) portrays that self-controlled market is specifically a type of social arrangement which fosters economic domination, as such results to extensive anomie. Which in-turn leads to the widespread of crime and more specifically violent in nature because people are encouraged to employ the best technical means made available to hunt their goals. Another study of interest is Quinney (2000) who advanced an argument that cultural frustration puts an individual into a state of intensive emotional stresses which later give birth to criminal behaviour. As such with the eye of a sociologist, this criminal is said to be “maladjusted” into his social environment. This is affirmed by Vujic (2009) study, that the impact of the changing economic conditions on social control and social strain encourages criminal activities, due to the fact that the pressured individual aspire to attain his socially determined goals.

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1. Research Design

The most appropriate research design chosen for the above mentioned purpose and research questions was the qualitative research. This was viewed as suitable for the study in order to bring an understanding of respondents’ perception with respect to the topic of study. For qualitative research usually occur in a real world setting where the researcher is not able to manoeuvre with the
phenomenon of interest (Patton 2002). Also, qualitative researchers organize a broad variety of interconnected interpretive practices, with an intention to generate a better understanding of the subject matter at hand (Denzin and Lincoln 2008: 4).

The investigation took a qualitative approach with the help of in-depth interviewing and participant observation. For this served as an opportunity for respondents to express in their own words their life experiences (Cormack 2000).

The interview guide used for the study was categorized into sections for easy understanding and the analysis of the investigation. In order to have respondents expand their answers, the researcher always probed into the conversation with certain words such as: “yes, please tell me more about that and what else”. This is because probing is regarded as the main skill used in unstructured interviewing, and encourages respondents to give full answers to questions asked according to the plan (Nigel 2008: 251).

Direct participant observation was another tool for inquiry which enabled the researcher to understand the activities of this criminal economic entrepreneurs, that could not be achievable by only using the insights generated during the interviews (Patton 2002: 23). And this observation was done in the cybercafés and the money laundry room where the researcher followed the feymen to observe their activities. The researcher’s intention was to have descriptive data
so that readers of the work can clearly understand how this criminal economic practice is being carried out and networked (Patton 2002).

The period of investigation took one month in the South West Region of Cameroon. Participants for the investigation were of three groups; feymen, security agents (policemen) and cybercafé owners; for a good representation of the sample size, that is the type of respondents whom the researcher planned to interview. Out of this representation, twenty “feymen” were interviewed; four security agents (policemen) and fifteen cybercafé owners were also interviewed. Snow ball technique was used in order to have contact with the feymen. The first “feyman” whom the researcher interviewed was found in the cybercafé where the researcher was trying to browse over the internet about the concept “Feymania” and the online fraud, the “feyman” asked the researcher if she was also a “feywoman”, and she said no, that she was only doing a study about feymen. Then the “feyman” said he was one of them, when the researcher expressed some degree of surprise, the “feyman” asked the researcher to get up from her seat and he showed her on the internet how they make their adverts. Upon that the researcher asked the “feyman” to introduce her to his friends, this he did willingly and by so doing the researcher was able to get in-contact with the other “feymen” she interviewed. The study was conducted without the use of a tape recorder or camera, just a notebook and a pen, this was because the “feymen” said if a tape recorder and a camera is used, their trust for the
researcher will be betrayed. The maximum time spent for each interview was 45 minutes; taking note of the different activities they perform.

Data was analysed after transcribing all the questions, and interpretation of the interview was done thematically. This was to increase understanding of these criminal activities. After the data was honestly systematically itemized and the subcategories related to the main group, it was then coded (Strauss 1987). Thereafter, a few themes were identified which incorporated a good number of these codes. According to Miles and Huberman (1994) universal conceptual themes can exist as the ordering rule. The researcher saw the thematic analysis as essential in the investigation because it helped in the understanding of the “feymen’s” criminal networks at home and abroad as a result of globalization.

Before conducting the investigation, there was a measure of ethical considerations applied in the field of study. Respondents were been informed on the purpose of the study and their willingness to participate in the study and withdrawal when ever deem necessary. Method of data collection and duration of the interview was made known to them; confidentiality and anonymity were held in high esteem, because respondents were told their names will not be mentioned in the final publication and no secret pictures were taken. There was proper handling for public and academic properties.

Chapter Four

4.0 Results and Analysis
Three groups of people were interviewed, that is feymen, cybercafé owners and the security agents.

4.1. Feymen Demographic Information

Findings show that out of the twenty “feymen” interviewed, 80% of them are men from poverty stricken homes. While 20% are women also from poverty stricken homes. And 70% of the “feymen” are between the ages 26 and above, while the rest 30% fall between the ages 20 and 25. Also, results show that half of the population of “feymen” interviewed (50%) are cohabiting, while 20% of them are married and 30% are single. And lastly, 75% of the “feymen” are from the secondary schools, while 20% are from the high schools, and 5% attained the university level. The high percentage of those who attended secondary school was with respect to the fact that some told me “our parents did not have money to further our studies to the high school and the university levels so we have to stop schooling”. The integration of quantitative data analysis expressed in percentages and figures was to avoid making the data to be mere narrative, which I think is a good procedure in the social sciences, though it is mentioned passively, it was a qualitative study but there was a sample size deemed necessary to be expressed in figures and percentages.

4.2. Reason for involvement

During the interview the researcher asked the “feymen” “why were they involved in “feymania”? And majority of the “feymen” said their reason for
participating into “Feymania” was to generate fast cash and fame, while others said it was a means for them to earn a living. And a few of them said they saw “feymania” as a way to save their families out of poverty. One “feyman” told me “soeur (French word for sister), I was not able to bear the pain of seeing my parents living in a mud house and my siblings staying at home while our neighbours’ children went to school”.

4.2.1 Other Activity of fey men

The researcher asked the “feymen” “which other activity they perform beside “feymania”? A good number of the “feymen” said they trade on cosmetics beside “feymania”, and also operate drinking bars and the sale of household items. Interestingly, many of these businesses which “feymen” do back at home do not have their names on the business documents; such like the patent, which is a tax document, but the names of their family members. The reason they gave for doing so was to hide their identities.

4.2.2 Preferred Method

With respect to “feymen” criminal economic practice method, 60% of the “feymen” prefer to advertise and market their products over the internet; such like the award of large contracts to foreign investors, sales of companies and houses, developmental projects, and fast fabrication of passport and visas for easy access to victims. And 20% of them prefer the use of phone calls, while the other 20% of the “feymen” prefer physical contact with the business partner,
where they use it as an opportunity to show the victim coated papers pretending to be raw cash that needs to be cleaned with a particular chemical to prove the transparency of the economic transaction. For example, one scene I witnessed in one of the towns (Tiko) where this study was conducted in the South West Region, was that a victim was asked to give one million francs CFA (2000 dollars) to buy a particular chemical to clean some coated money which they claimed was forty-five million francs CFA (90,000 dollars); as an advanced payment for the chemical which costs four million francs CFA (8000 dollars). As talented as these feymen are, the victim was convinced and he rushed to the bank and brought the money. Furthermore, this victim was asked to come back the next day because the “feymen” told him the chemical was to be bought from the economic capital of Cameroon (Douala). Also the researcher sought permission from the “feymen” to be present where the money was to be cleaned; and they granted her request. Interestingly, the victim came the next day to one of the drinking spot where the arrangement was made and they all went to the room including the researcher where the money was kept. Thereafter, the leader of the group brought in a bowl of water and extracted the chemical which they claimed was bought from a tiny bottle like the penicillin bottle with a syringe and pour it in the bowl, then he took one of the cartons containing the coated money, and opened it and selected some notes which he dropped into the diluted chemical in the bowl, he shook them, and after a few minutes, the notes were removed; some were very clean, some had pink colour, and some had blue. The
explanation that he gave for the coloured notes was that the chemical was small, so it could not clean all of the notes which he dropped inside the bowl. Interestingly, the cleaned notes amounted up to 50,000 francs CFA, (100 dollars) and were given to the victim to go and check for its authenticity in the bank; and to come back with the rest of the money to buy the remaining chemicals, so that they can clean the remaining coated money. Worthy of note was that the researcher was also convinced of the authenticity of the money; because the notes were exact as compared with the original bank notes; but the researcher was also scared of the environment because the practice was carried out in one isolated building close to the banana plantation, and with reason that she was the only woman among those feymen. So the researcher could not go back there again.

One “feyman” in Tiko, said “the advert of huge contracts to foreign investors fetches me large amount of money, so I prefer the method”. Another said “I prefer physical contact because it gives me the opportunity to judge if the victim will be able to pay me well through our discussions after showing him the coated papers of raw cash”.

4.3. Travel to Foreign Countries

Concerning travel to foreign countries, ten out of the twenty “feymen” who were been interviewed have travelled abroad with respect to “feymania” and seven of them have been to Dubai and Saudi Arabia. And they always come back home
with huge amount of money and goods. A good number of them have had twenty to thirty victims abroad. One respondent from the group of “feymen” interviewed said “I like to travel to Saudi Arabia because most of the people there practice the Muslim religion, and because of that they have trust for anyone who comes with a business proposal and they are usually in possession of cash, so we use this as an opportunity to deceive them”.

4.4. Number of hours spent

With respect to the number of hours spent on “feymen” related activities, fifteen out of the group of “feymen” interviewed put in 1-16 hours on the internet, while five of them put in 17 and above hours in order to get a victim “business partner”. As such, this helps them to explore the world of internet users in order to have access to victims.

4.5. Feymen Economics

In as much as “feymen” economics is concerned, from the population of the number of “feymen” interviewed, three of them said the largest amount of money which they have ever received from a victim ranges from 100,000 to 150,000 dollars, and all of them said this large amount of money was received from foreign investors who wanted the award of a contract in a non-existing company. While thirteen of the “feymen” said the largest amount they had received from a victim ranges from 40,000 to 80,000 dollars, and lastly, four of
the “feymen” said the largest amount ever received from a victim falls between 30,000 to 38,000 dollars.

Furthermore, most of these “feymen” invest this money in their home base businesses, while few of them sponsor siblings to schools, a good number of them buy flashy cars, and already built houses and renovate them. And also invest on family members and personal needs, while others spend the money extravagantly on women and friends.

4.6. Feymen Organization

Results on “feymen’s” organisation show that “feymen” work in groups and they also have informants both at home and abroad who reveal to them new strategies for success and links to victims. They have a whole network of interconnectedness, where telephone is their basic tool for communication. And also, body language is mostly used when they are in physical contact with victims, more specifically the eye to eye contact. They always keep contact with one another, whether in joy or pain. They also use “talisman” which is a traditional medicine believe to contain strong magical powers, to manipulate a victim so that he or she can listen to their fake business proposals. These “feymen” said most of their economic transaction is carried out over the internet and false documentations, little on phone calls and physical contacts. They usually throw big parties when they achieve success over victims, and their rule is that they never eat their money alone, they buy drinks and share with other
people who are not “feymen” and they make sure that the victim also eat part of the money with a motive that he or she cannot perform any harm through occult means, that is the casting of evil missiles on them and it affects them.

4.6.1 Method of Payment

With respect to payment method, findings show that 85% of the “feymen” prefer that victims should pay them cash through western union; for example, one of the respondents told me this method was the fastest and safest means to receive huge amounts of money, they call it “Westo” in their language. While 10% prefer payment through money gram and 5% prefer money transfer method.

4.6.2 Biggest Problem Faced

With this, a good number of “feymen” said they do not face any major problem. While a small number of the group interviewed said the biggest problem which they face was that some victims take long to response to their adverts, and this compels them to spend more time on the internet to get these victims.

4.6.3 Means of Escape

Particularly, with respect to means of escape, study shows that all “feymen” change their identities and this makes it difficult for security agents to track them down. And most of them also give bribes to security agents for their release if caught. Some also said they do what they call “wash”, that is if they attain success over a victim, these “feymen” give some good amount of money
to the security agents in the area where they live, so that these security agents could back them up in the face of their victims, or pretend to catch and release them after their victim is gone.

4.7. Security Agents

The general opinion received from security agents (policemen) was that most of them are aware of the crime “Feymania”. And they said the sex group which are involved are mostly males, with ages ranging from 26 years and above. Most of these security agents have caught more than five “feymen” and many of the “feymen” claim to be innocent of the crime. And findings also show that majority of these security agents have handled more than four cases of “Feymania”, with many reports from victims. And in most cases these feymen are being traced and after questioning, they are being detained. Furthermore, findings show that there is a team which monitors “feymen” in Cameroon known as the “anti-gang” and also these security agents have a set up directorate base in Camtel (the Cameroon telecommunication centre) which assists them in monitoring feymen. Conversely, results from the study portray that security agents most often, try to get information on the social gatherings of these “feymen”; so that they can track them down. For example, there was a scenario which I witnessed; where a renowned “feyman” in one of the towns where the study was conducted, was celebrating the birth of his new born baby, surprisingly, at about 10 pm some anti-gangs (the anti crime monitoring team)
from the economic capital of Cameroon came and shot some bullets in the air in order to scare the population away; as everyone got on his or her heels, these anti-gangs went into the house and caught the feyman. Surprisingly, they were not able to take this “feyman” along, because his friends opened up a fight with these anti-gangs. The whole scene was characterised by the throwing of stones on the wheel screen of the car which these anti-gangs brought, breaking of bottles and removing of knives. Since these anti-gangs were only three in number, and the feymen were many; they had to get into their car and ran for their lives. Interestingly, these anti-gangs did not surrender; they came back the following day only to find out that this “feyman” checked out from his house where the celebration took place; so they were unable to trace him.

Conclusively, results from the security agents also show that even though there is the existence of a monitoring team on feymen related activities, it is very difficult to track down “feymen” because they constantly change their identities.

4.8. Cybercafé Owners

Concerning cybercafé owners, results from the study portray that majority of the cybercafé owners are aware of the existence of “feymen” and the visit to their cybercafés. Most of them said they identified “feymen” through observation as they were working on the internet in their cybercafés. And several of the cybercafé owners said they offer all-night browsing; because most of their targets (victims) live in countries where their day is night in Cameroon
according to differences in time, especially Canada and America. And that they also give discount to these “feymen” on the number of hours bought per day to browse, to encourage them to keep visiting their cybercafés. Surprisingly, most of the cybercafé owners said they are aware that “Feymania” is a crime but they have never been arrested as promoters of the crime. And most of these cybercafé owners have special rooms where these “feymen” do their all-night browsing; and they even go as far as to alert them when the security agents are around, through body language, such like the eye to eye contact and the striking of the fingers, so that they could escape their grip. They also establish friendship ties with these feymen because they promote their businesses. This is done through celebrations of the “feymen’s” successes, offering of birthday parties and death celebrations. Cybercafé owners always create resistance when it comes to exposing “feymen” they pretend not to know them. One of the cybercafé owners told me “I do not know these guys thoughtless of their activities”. Most of these cybercafé owners do not sleep in their homes during weekend days especially Saturdays and Sundays because there is a lot of influx of “feymen” into their cybercafés to do all-night browsing.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 Concluding Discussion

Since the aim of the study was to show how globalization has helped to facilitate this crime “feymania” across borders, other crimes, local citizen’s views, and
structures were not taken into consideration in the interview, but just the “feymen”, cybercafé owners, and the security agents as seen above. The reason was that the researcher saw some connections among these three variables chosen, (that is feymen commit the crime and they operate in cybercafés and the security men are those fighting the crime). As such the objective was not to explore the crime in detail because Njio’s investigation of 2006 and that of 2008, really explored the crime. But the researcher’s position was to examine how globalization has helped the crime under study across national and international borders.

And so findings show that globalisation paved the way for international interaction of national economies which entails trade and services; direct investment and movement of people across borders. As such “feymen” also use this as an opportunity to travel abroad to carry out their criminal economic practices. The study of “crime” and the types of “criminal activities” and the unfolding sociopolitical conditions where by criminal activities are carried on dates back to the concepts and theories of sociology.

As such the sociological understanding of the circulation of violations of official norms in society and the corresponding delivery of reactions to such violations can only be derived from awareness of the norms which familiarize people’s behaviour (Phillipson 1971).
Moreover, as globalization and technological advancement have made the internet to have its way into the commercial and private sectors of countries around the world, feymen have taken this as a means to also market their products over the internet nationwide.

Also, as the population of internet users is on the rise, so is the potential threats and vulnerabilities associated with it. The internet which provides a wealth of information to users is also seen as a breeding ground for online fraud.

“Feymen” target tremendously large audience online without most often ever having to come into physical contact with those whom they plan to deceive. As such globalisation has really helped to facilitate “feymen” network activities across the globe. And these feymen don’t spend much money to reach their intended audience.

Likewise, it is easy for feymen to cover their tracks, with the use of aliases, which enables them to hide their identities and locations. And also, since majority of the victims neglect to file in complaints, it is very difficult for these feymen to be caught.

Additionally, the primary objective of these “feymen” in the spread of their network activities internationally is to have victims who they perceive will pay them large amount of money. As such, “feymen” who were chosen for the study expressed some degree of satisfaction with their illegal economic transactions over the internet across borders. One of the “feymen” told me that:
He just sits on the computer for some few hours over the internet without struggle and gets a victim who is ready to invest into his non-existing contract that fetches him millions.

What I observed with these “feymen” was that they are very entrepreneurial, convincing and eloquent. Despite the surveillance of security agents, they could still excel with their illicit economic transactions.

 Compared to the previous study that investigated “feymania” as a form of nouveaux riches, the current study examined a particular area which has not been sufficiently examined, that is globalisation and crime: “feymen” in Cameroon. Not focusing only on the opportunities offered by globalisation to this type of crime, but also the individual feelings of “feymen” with respect to their involvement into illicit economic practices, if they could be held accountable for their current state or not.

On the other hand, results from findings show that half of the group of “feymen” interviewed, have travelled abroad to meet their so called “business partners” and most of them have been to Saudi Arabia and Dubai. And in most occasions, these “feymen” usually come back home with fabulous amount of money and goods in containers for non-existing projects. Furthermore, upon arrival they cease communication with their target victim and change their identities and phone numbers.
As such, these criminal entrepreneurs usually extract huge amount of money from their victims which they spend on personal and family needs and also in private businesses. Furthermore, “feymen” always work in groups and most of their economic transactions are done over the internet. The study also shows that most of them prefer victims to carry out monetary transactions through the western union bank, because it is safer for them “they said”. The study reveals that these “feymen” give bribe to the security men to escape their grip.

In fact, security agents are aware of the existence of “feymen”, but results from the interview show that “feymen” constantly change their identities, so it is very difficult for security agents to track them down; even though they have set up a directorate base in Camtel and the anti-gangs to monitor online fraudsters such like the “feymen”. Findings reveal that some victims file in complaints and some security agents have handled cases of victimization by “feymen” and even caught some who were detained after questioning, but the “feymen” illegal economic transaction is still on a rise.

Also, cybercafé owners, who were interviewed, have knowledge of the crime “feymania”, but none have been caught as a promoter of the crime. And results also show that all of these cybercafé owners do practice all night browsing and they give discount to these “feymen” on the number of hours bought to work on the internet. They even have friendship ties with these “feymen” as promoters of
their business, and also alert them when the security agents (policemen) are around so that they could escape their grip.

5.1. Limitations

The investigation had some limitations; the sample size was small because the population was drawn from one region of the country and in just three towns, due to the limited time frame. And also the researcher faced difficulties in locating the subjects under study. Further, many of the “feymen” refused to be interviewed, because some saw the researcher as a security agent’s investigator who was to betray them, and others said they were busy. Notably, there were no pictures taken, because the researcher was not allowed to do so by the “feymen”, so there was no tape recorder or camera usage.

Moreover, though the present study will serve as a contribution to future research in the same area; which will be conducted in a wider perspective, with a motive to replicate, to prove and generate theories. There is the need to continue this study for the better understanding of the process of globalization that has helped to facilitate “feymen” illicit economic practice across the globe.
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Appendix

Interview Guide

Dear Respondents,

I am a master’s student at the Mid Sweden University Sweden in Europe. As a partial fulfilment to the achievement of my masters’ degree in Human Resources Management/ Sociology; I am doing a master’s thesis titled: Globalization and Crime: Feymen in Cameroon. The interview I am about to conduct is purely academic; hence the information to be gathered is highly confidential.

Instruction: Place a tick to the first four answers that suits you most.

Feymen

A) Demographic Information

1) Sex? A) Male       B) Female

2) Which age range do you belong? A) 20- 25, B) 26- 35, C) 36- 45, D) 46 and above.


4) What level of education do you have?  A) Primary,  B) Secondary,  C) High School,  D) University.

5) Why are you involved in “feymania”? …...........................................

6) Which other activity do you carry out beside “feymania”?

7) What is your preferred method of “feymania”?

.................................................................................................................................
8) How many hours do you put in on “feymania” per day?

9) Have you ever travelled abroad with respect to “feymania”?
A) Yes, B) No
i) If yes; to which countries? .................................................................

10) Do you return home with something?
A) Yes, B) No
i) If yes; what? ......................................................................................

11) How many victims have you had abroad? ........................................

B) “Feymania” Economics

12) What was the largest amount of money you had received from a victim?
..................................................................................................................

13) How did you use the money? ..............................................................

14) What method of payment by victim do you prefer and why?
..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................

C) Feymen Organization

15) How do you carry out your economic transactions both nationally and internationally? .................................................................

16) What is the biggest problem you face as a feyman?
..................................................................................................................

17) How do you escape the grip of security agents? ..............................
Dear Respondents,

I am a master’s student at the Mid Sweden University Sweden in Europe. As a partial fulfilment to the achievement of my masters’ degree in Human Resources Management/ Sociology; I am doing a master’s thesis titled: Globalization and Crime: Feymen in Cameroon. The interview I am about to conduct is purely academic; hence the information to be gathered is highly confidential.

**Instruction:** Place a tick to the first four answers that suits you most.

**Security Agents**

1) Are you aware of this crime “”Feymania””?  
A) Yes  B) No

2) i) Which sex are mostly involved in “feymania”?  
A) Males  B) Females  
ii) Which age range do they belong?  
A) 20- 25,  B) 26- 35,  C) 36- 45,  D) 46 and above.

3) i) Have you ever caught a feyman?  
A) Yes  B) No  
ii) If yes; how many? .................................................................

4) How was his or her reaction? .....................................................

5) How many feymen cases have you handled? .................................

6) i) Have you had reports from victims?  
A) Yes  B) No  
ii) If yes; how many? .................................................................
7) Did you succeed in tracing their opponents? ..............................................

8) What were the measures taken? ...............................................................  

9) Do you have a team monitoring feymen in Cameroon? .........................  

------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Cybercafé Owners

1) Are you aware of the existence of feymen?  
A) Yes       B) No

2) i) Do they visit your cybercafé?  
A) Yes      B) No       C) No idea  
ii) If yes; how often? .................................................................

3) How did you identify them? ...............................................................  

4) Do you do all night browsing?  
A) Yes     B) No

5) Do you give discount to these feymen on the number of hours bought a day?  
A) Yes       B) No

6) Are you aware that ”Feymania” is a crime?  
A) Yes      B) No

7) i) have you ever been arrested as a promoter of ”Feymania”?  
A) Yes       B) No ii) If yes; how many times? ........................................
Acta Sociologica.

Social Science Data Base.