**Title: Importance of a Postgraduate Degree in Cyber Security.**

**Introduction**I am currently studying Cyber Security at the Masters degree level. The Oxford English Dictionary online (2024) defines security as “Freedom from danger or threat” and cyber as “Anything of, relating to, or involving (the culture of) computers, virtual reality, or the internet”. There were 2.7 million cyber-related frauds in the 12 months to March 2022 (National Cyber Security Centre, 2022). Cyber security portends great importance as it ensures safety, prevents loss, and increases security awareness of users on and off the internet, and while using devices. This is the crux of my discussion.

**Main Body**

Cyber security is often used by industry experts, IT managers, computer professionals, politicians, and tech enthusiasts (Bay, 2016). There has been a great increase in access to the internet, in addition to the digitization of most processes. The preponderance of smart devices e.g. smartphones, smart watches, smart televisions, and many more have made the need to become safe while using these devices of utmost importance. People are on a daily churning out products and solutions to make processes simpler and more convenient. These developments have come with enormous advantages, in addition to creating avenues that if utilised would be detrimental to the well-being of users.

There has been a transition from the basic traditional capital goods (land, labour, and capital) into a more digitally-driven economy where a high premium is placed on the use of Information, and electronic data processing (Strupczewski, 2021). There are some advanced technological initiatives used in cloud services, e-commerce, internet banking, and many more that require a high standard and safe process of security (Untawale, 2021).

The essence of keeping safe on the internet by all stakeholders involved cannot be downplayed. The cost associated with a successful cyber attack is usually more than the cost of instituting preventive measures. It has become more evident that threats on cyberspace cannot be stopped, but one must be prepared for any eventuality. Stakeholders (Individuals, organisations, and governments) have a responsibility to prevent loss as a result of cyber incidents. These incidents have a way of causing harm, loss of assets, and eroding trust.

Cyber attacks and breaches remain a common threat. This is a good reason why studying cyber security is important not just at an undergraduate degree level, but also in postgraduate studies (Masters to be precise). This will engender mastery of the psycho-social thought pattern of these perpetrators, and map out new strategies to winning the war against cyber-attacks which will complement existing ones.

Having a Masters degree will provide technical expertise in addition to providing an in-depth and critical understanding of cyber security. The degree will inculcate an ability to work independently and as a team. This will range from being able to research, design, implement, execute, and disseminate creative computer science-driven solutions to practical and commercial problems. (University of Essex Online, N.D.).

There are many reasons why the adoption of cyber security practices should be encouraged. A few of these reasons are listed below:

* Prevention of harm: A good cyber security architecture in place would prevent unauthorised access to data and sensitive information, thereby preventing harm. This can include the safe use of passwords, a clean desk policy, downloading only trusted software, verifying call-to-action notices, and many more.
* Detection of threat: A good cyber security process will support the timely detection of threats and proffer solutions to addressing them as they arise.
* Detterance from threat re-occurring: Strict adherence to policy and proper communication of a consequence mechanism will deter people from failing to adhere to safe cyber security procedures. Deterrence most times is fuelled by the certainty of consequences and the severity of sanctions (Ghelani, 2022).

Anyone who is a victim of a cyber attack would normally feel regret and reflect on the activities that led to the incident. This is something I can relate to as I suffered some data loss some years back after I had downloaded software on my computer that wiped out sensitive data on my device. Going back memory lane, it has become more expedient that the need to educating and entrenching the adoption of proper cyber security culture would do us more good than harm. If more research is done in the field, there will be an unearthing of measures, products, initiatives, and ideas to combating the menace of cybercrime and its vices.

**Conclusion**

Completing this course will increase my awareness to detecting, and preventing cyber attacks. It will give the needed skills to understanding what motivates cyber attacks, tools that can be deployed to combating attacks, and build the requisite skill to design a framework that would be beneficial to the body of knowledge; and that can be referred to by different users in setting up their security protocols.

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