

Article Review #2: Exploring the Psychological Profile of Cybercriminals

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Introduction/BLUF

This review examines Trinh's (2025) systematic review of psychological traits of cybercriminals, titled "Exploring the Psychological Profile of Cybercriminals: A Comprehensive Review for Improved Cybercrime Prevention." The article's purpose is to inform people about cybercriminal personality, motivations, and behavior; knowing this is important for prevention and enforcement. The article uses a collection of research from other sources to investigate the psychological characteristics of individuals who commit cybercrimes.

Relation/Connection to Social Science Principles

Trinh's article connects cybercrime research directly to the seven social science principles introduced in module two. The study demonstrates relativism by linking individual behavior to broader social and technological systems, emphasizing that changes in technology reshape human actions online. It maintains objectivity and ethical neutrality by presenting unbiased evidence without crossing any boundaries and applies parsimony by simplifying cybercriminal behavior down to key factors such as motivation and their targets (Cohen & Felson, 1979). Through empiricism, the review relies on observable data from prior studies rather than speculation. Trinh utilizes skepticism by questioning the limits of existing research. Together, these principles illustrate how social-science reasoning deepens our understanding of human behavior in cybersecurity contexts.

Research Question / Hypothesis / Independent Variable / Dependent Variable

- Research Question: What psychological traits are characteristic of cybercriminals, and how can this knowledge improve cybercrime prevention?
- Hypothesis: Certain psychological traits are more common among cybercriminals and can inform prevention strategies
- Independent Variable: Psychological traits

- Dependent Variable: Engagement in or likelihood of committing cybercrime

Types of Research Methods used

The study employs a qualitative method of collecting research. Trinh analyzed and combined empirical studies on psychological and personality traits associated with cybercriminal behavior (Trinh et al). This qualitative approach gathers secondary data rather than collecting primary data from participants, allowing for broad insights across multiple research contexts.

Types of Data Analysis used

The article uses qualitative thematic analysis, consistent with interdisciplinary social science research approaches outlined in Module 3. Trinh identifies recurring traits and psychological patterns by sourcing findings from other empirical studies examining psychological traits of cybercriminals. This aligns with the “archival research” strategy discussed in module 3.

Connections to other Course Concepts

The article directly connects with the key concepts outlined in Module 5, “Applying Psychological Principles of Cyber Offending, Victimization, and Professionals.” Trinh’s review reflects and reinforces several psychological and criminological theories presented in the module such as psychodynamic theory, cognitive theories, neutralization theory, behavioral theories and personality theories. The article also parallels Module 5’s focus on cyber victimization, where traits such as low self-control and optimism bias increase risk, and on cybersecurity professionals’ psychology, where understanding offender motives helps defenders anticipate and mitigate threats.

Connections to the Concerns or Contributions of Marginalized Groups

Although Trinh’s article does not explicitly focus on marginalized populations, it indirectly raises questions about fairness and bias in psychological profiling. Social scientists must be

cautious to avoid stigmatizing individuals based on personality traits or socioeconomic background. Future research could expand on how marginalized communities experience cybercrime, both as offenders and as victims, and ensure unprejudiced prevention and intervention efforts.

Overall Societal Contributions of the Study/Conclusion

Trinh's (2025) review contributes significantly to understanding the psychological aspects of cybercrime and enhances interdisciplinary approaches to cybersecurity. By emphasizing human behavior alongside technical defenses, it encourages the design of prevention strategies contributed by social science. This integration supports policies that address both individual and systemic contributors to cybercrime, advancing our understanding of human behavior in the digital age.

Reference

Thuyen, Duy, et al. "A Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) License Exploring the Psychological Profile of Cybercriminals: A Comprehensive Review for Improved Cybercrime Prevention." *International Journal of Cyber Criminology*, vol. 19, no. 1, 2025, pp. 114–137, <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.47661906>. Accessed 10 Nov. 2025.

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