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Article Review #1

Basic password knowledge: Are children getting
the education they need?

How does this topic relate to the Social Sciences?

With children being online every day, they need to be secure on the internet. One of the most secure things they can do is create a password. To protect them from cybercrimes and other offensive actions, it's important to make sure they are learning about the importance of passwords and having ample practice with them to help them ward off cybercrimes.

What are the research questions, hypothesis, and other variables?

Choong et al. (2019) categorize their research questions into three categories: how the children use their devices and passwords, how much they know about passwords, and their behaviors when creating a password. The author hypothesizes that children need to be taught more about how to manage passwords and create behaviors that will be more beneficial.

The independent variable in their survey is the grades and schools used; for the grade range, they separated it into 3rd to 5th grade and 6th to 8th grade. As for the schools, they chose an elementary and a middle school for their data. The dependent variable was the answers the kids gave, which varied depending on the questions they were asked.

What were the research methods used?

Using a survey, Choong et al. (2019) asked them a series of questions based on their research questions. For their first question, they asked students about what type of computer they used, how active they are on it, and their usage of passwords. The second question went further into their password use and how often they change, share, write down, or use the same password. The survey also asked them their opinions on passwords. The final question focused on how self-

reliant they were with their passwords, and to give an example of a password they may make in the scenario, they had to make one.

How did they portray their data? What were the results?

For their results, they created tables for each main question, for the dates and activeness on them, and they constructed bar graphs to detail how much time they are allowed on their devices and when they are allowed to use them throughout the day. In some cases, they asked them to provide reasons as to why they believed passwords are important. Choong et al. (2019) then categorized them into different reasons, for example, Safety was a category mentioning cyberbullying, stalking, and online harm from others online.

From their first research question, they found that the most frequently used computer by the 3rd to 5th graders was a gaming console, followed by a laptop, and then finally a tablet. On the other hand, for 6th to 8th graders, it was a phone, then a laptop, then a gaming console. From their second question, they concluded that both 3rd to 5th graders and 6th to 8th graders had equal password knowledge, with around a 70% rate of them knowing good password etiquette. The third question showed that most of the children memorized their passwords, with both grade ranges being above 90%

How does this article relate to the class?

A method to prevent cybercrime is to have kids learn at an early age how to protect themselves against it. In module 5, we learnt about Sigmund Freud and his Psychodynamic theory, which stated that early experiences can influence future behavior. Choong et al (2019) state that “It is important to promote positive user attitudes early on.” Having these kids learn

positive behaviors about how to keep themselves safe online may help them develop more positive online behaviors in their adult lives.

How does this topic relate to concerns about children online?

In modern times, children are on the internet more than ever. Many children are not taught proper methods and behaviors that will keep them safe, and they may be susceptible to cyberattacks from individuals who want to take advantage of them. As time goes on, more and more kids will be affected by cyber offenders, and to prevent this, it should be a priority to teach the youth how to protect themselves online.

Conclusion / What is gained from this article?

Choong et al. (2019) concluded that, based on their research, they believe kids are getting appropriate training for creating passwords, and that they understand the importance of them. From this journal article, we find that we have the required resources needed to provide kids with a proper understanding of positive passwords and basic internet safety. Although the children tested are getting a good education, there are still other kids who may need these teachings to stay safe on the internet.

References

Yee-Yin Choong, Mary F Theofanos, Karen Renaud, Suzanne Prior, “Passwords protect my stuff”—a study of children’s password practices, *Journal of Cybersecurity*, Volume 5, Issue 1, 2019, tyz015, <https://doi.org/10.1093/cybsec/tyz015>.