

Article Review #1 – Psychological Profile of Cybercriminals

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This review focuses on a study done by Duy Thuyen Trinh, Thi Cam Ha Dinh, and Thi Ngoc Kim Tran, out of Vietnam; examining psychological profiles of cybercriminals and discussing prevention strategies. For this study authors used a variety of scholarly articles to conduct their research, using trusted databases and searching keywords such as “cybercrime”, “phishing”, “cyber security crimes” (116). Articles that were included had a publication range of 2010-2023, peer-reviewed, and relevant to cyber security crimes (116). On the other hand, disqualifications include non-English publications, non-peer-reviewed, and irrelevant focus (116). 1,200 of these articles were screened, with only 45 meeting criteria.

Data Extraction, Analysis, and Assessment

Articles selected by the researchers were heavily reviewed, and then a standardized data extraction form was used to collect key information from these studies (117). The programs used to organize the information include EndNote, Excel, and NVivo. Since this is a correlational study rather than experimental, the possible independent variables of this study, while not explicitly included, are understood to be the psychological traits and background of cyber criminals. The dependent variable is engagement in cybercrimes. The data collected was run through PRISMA to ensure the transparency of their process.

Findings and Relations to Class, Social Sciences, and Society

While in the abstract, the authors state that the study is aimed at examining the psychological profiles of cybercriminals, their conclusion only explains prevention strategies for certain cybercrimes. They fail to link the psychological aspect, even though it is expressed as a conclusion within the abstract of the article. Regardless, their findings of possible prevention

strategies for corporate cybercrimes include: investing in cyber security education, continuously updating security protocols, and adopting multi-faced approaches to enhance cybercrime prevention (131). Looking back at the abstract, the authors state that, “Findings indicate that cybercriminals often exhibit narcissism, impulsivity, and high technical proficiency.” This concept would directly relate to the personality theory discussed in Module 5. Specifically, looking at neuroticism, which is characterized by emotional instability; also, conscientiousness, which explains that these criminals tend to be organized and perfectionists. It also directly relates to reinforcement sensitivity theory, which Michael Palmieri’s study found that “impulsive individuals more likely to engage in cybercrime.”

Relating this study back to the social sciences, findings on the psychological aspects of criminals could help to inform fields such as criminology, psychology, and even public policy. This research is not adjacent to one field of study, which allows it to be digested in more ways than one. The article also does a good job of laying out potential solutions to prevent cybercrime for both businesses and individuals. They include preventions as small as using VPNs (127), to ones as large-scale as possible national and international laws (128). This shows that cybercrimes hold some of the greatest variety in possible threats. But by detailing such a diverse list of implications, this article could help many get a jump start on their much-needed security.

Conclusion

While this article is not without its flaws, I believe the core of it to be extremely well thought out and gave some insightful opinions on implementations to better protect against cybercrimes. Touching the psychological aspect would have tied everything together. There are some ideas here that are great takeaways. However, missing the main element of the article leaves a lot to be desired.

References

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