

10 - 12 July 2026

Helsinki , Finland

The Psychological Profile of Cybercrime Victims: Vulnerability Factors and Implications for Prevention

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Abstract

The increasing prevalence of cybercrime has drawn significant attention to the characteristics of offenders and the technological aspects of cyber attacks. However, comparatively less research has focused on the victims of cybercrime and the psychological factors that may contribute to their vulnerability. Cybercriminals frequently exploit cognitive biases, emotional responses, trust mechanisms, and decision-making processes to deceive individuals and gain unauthorized access to personal information, financial resources, or digital accounts. Understanding the psychological profile of cybercrime victims is therefore essential for developing effective prevention and intervention strategies.

This article examines the psychological characteristics associated with susceptibility to cyber victimization, including trust propensity, impulsivity, risk perception, digital literacy, loneliness, anxiety, and social influence. Drawing upon theories of victimology, cyberpsychology, and criminology, the study explores how individual psychological traits interact with online environments to increase the likelihood of becoming a victim of phishing, identity theft, online fraud, social engineering attacks, and other forms of cybercrime. Particular attention is given to the role of cognitive and emotional factors that cybercriminals deliberately manipulate during the commission of cyber offenses.

The purpose of this article is to identify the main psychological risk factors associated with cybercrime victimization and to assess their implications for crime prevention policies, public awareness campaigns, and victim protection measures. By highlighting the human dimension of cybersecurity, the article contributes to a better understanding of cybercrime victimization and supports the development of multidisciplinary approaches that integrate legal, criminological, and psychological perspectives in combating
cybercrime.

Keywords: Cybercrime Victims; Psychological Profile; Victimization; Cyberpsychology; Phishing;

world conference on research in SOCIAL SCIENCES



Social Engineering; Cybersecurity