Utrecht University
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

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Utrecht University
The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Cybercrime Colloquium 2024

Forum on Cyber Crime/Delinquency and Cyber Victimization in the Digital Age: A Comparative Perspective

June 14, 2024 | 9am to 2pm GMT+2, CEST | Mode: Hybrid |
Venue: Bestuursgebouw - 0.33C Adminstration Building 0.33C,
Utrecht University (Science Park)

Agenda

Time	Session	Speaker
9:00 - 9:30	Welcome Coffee and Tea	
9:30 - 9:40	Welcoming Remarks	
9:40 - 10:40	Keynote Speech	Dr. Asier Moneva (NSCR)
10:40 -10:50	Coffee Break	
10:50 -12:20	Panel 1: Cybercrime and cyber security	Dr. David Buil-Gil (University of Manchester) Dr. Christina Del Real (Leiden University) Dr. Aikins Amoako Asiama (Lingnan University)
12:20 -12:30	Coffee Break	
12:30 -13:30	Panel 2: Cyberbullying and cyber delinquency	Dr. Heng Choon (Oliver) Chan (University of Birmingham) Dr. Hua (Sara) Zhong (Chinese University of Hong Kong)
13:30 -14:30	Lunch	

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Program

9:00-9:30	Welcome Coffee and Tea
9:30-9:40	Welcoming Remarks

9:40-10:40

> Keynote Speech: "Influencing potential cybercriminals with online ads: empirical findings, lessons learned, and future research directions"
> -Dr. Asier Moneva, PhD
> *Netherlands Institute for the Studies of Crime and Law Enforcement (NSCR)*
> Abstract: The barrier to entry into cybercrime is lower than ever. Thanks to cybercrime as a service and cybercrime tutorials, (generally young) internet users are finding a pathway into cybercrime with little to no requirements in terms of skills and resources. Aware of this worrying trend, law enforcement agencies around the world are increasingly using online ad campaigns to influence the behavior of these users. Specifically, these campaigns aim to dissuade users from becoming potential cybercriminals and divert them towards pro-social alternatives in cyber security in order to reduce crime and harness wasted IT talent. One of the most proactive law enforcement actives in this field is the Netherlands Police, through its specialized Cyber Offender Prevention Squad (COPS). In this keynote, I present the findings of a series of studies conducted in collaboration with COPS from 2020 to the present and reflect on the lessons learned at the theoretical and practical level, as well as the next lines of research that are already under development.

10:40 -10:50   Coffee Break

10:50 -12:20

> Panel 1: Plenary Session
> Plenary Presentation 1: "Measuring Cybercrime Victimization across Countries"
> -Dr. David Buil-Gil, PhD
> *University of Manchester*
> Abstract: Crime records consistently show a steady increase in cybercrime. Cybercrime is characterized by its transnational and global nature. Beyond estimating cybercrime in a certain country at a given point in time, crime researchers and policymakers necessitate reliable estimates to enable cross-national and temporal comparisons. This presentation will describe three projects aimed at enhancing the measurement of cybercrime victimization across countries. First, I will summarize the results of a scoping review of the measures of cybercrime included in national victimization surveys and self-report delinquency studies. While most national surveys include at least one item aimed at capturing cyber-criminal activity, the measures included do not capture the diversity of criminal behavior that takes place online, and the measurement of cybercrime varies extensively across countries. Second, I will present early findings of a measurement invariance analysis of cybercrime victimization items included in the 2019 Eurobarometer, which surveyed 27,607 participants in 28 European countries. Measurement invariance analysis explores whether survey tools are interpreted and responded to consistently across different groups, allowing us to determine if multi-item measurements are perceived and interacted with similarly across the studied groups. Finally, I will briefly describe current efforts to embed cybercrime victimization items in ongoing cross-national European surveys.

10:50 -12:20

Panel 1: Plenary Session
Plenary Presentation 2: "The other side of the coin: governing cybersecurity in an era of constant change"
-Dr. Christina Del Real, PhD
Leiden University
Abstract: Cybercrimes present significant challenges for security institutions due to their complexity, the global nature of criminal activities, difficulties in attribution in cyberspace, and the constant evolution of criminal methods. Consequently, the cybersecurity governance ecosystem has evolved differently from its counterpart in the physical world. This presentation explores the challenges faced by cybersecurity institutions through their historical development. A historical analysis helps identify both organizational and narrative challenges. This presentation discusses these challenges with examples of how European countries have adapted.

10:50 -12:20

Panel 1: Plenary Session
Plenary Presentation 3: "An Integrative Analysis of Cyberfraudsters' Motivations: A Comprehensive Examination of Conventional Criminological Theories"
-Dr. ASIAMA, Aikins Amoako Asiama, PhD
Lingnan University
Abstract: Criminal behavior is complex and multifaceted, making it challenging to understand fully. Cultural variations and evolutionary changes over time add further complexity. As a result, questions about what constitutes crime and what factors drive criminal behavior lack simple answers. Scholars recognize the need to integrate cybercrime into theoretical frameworks to understand modern criminal motivations comprehensively. Hence, this study takes an integrative approach, merging rational choice, anomie, social bonds, learning theories, and space transition thesis to comprehensively analyze the motivations of cyberfraudsters. The researchers recruited 515 cyberfraudsters from three hotspots in Ghana using a chain referral sampling technique. Analyzing the data with ordinal logistic regression, the findings show that higher formal costs and stronger social bonds decrease the likelihood of continued involvement in cyberfraud. Alternatively, perceptions of financial rewards and reduction of inequality-related strain tend to increase engagement in such activities. The research also supports the idea that the use of neutralization techniques and the perception of de-individualization in the virtual world moderate the relationship between perceived costs and engagement in cyberfraud, while strengthening the impact of perceived benefits. By integrating mainstream criminological theories and cyber-specific theories, this study contributes to our understanding of cybercrime and provides insights for combating this modern form of criminal behavior.

12:20 – 12:30   Coffee Break

12:30 – 13:30

Panel 2: Plenary Session
Plenary Presentation 1: "Cyberbullying in the Greater China Region: A Psycho-Criminological Perspective"
-Dr. Heng Choon (Oliver) Chan, PhD
University of Birmingham

Abstract: Cyberbullying in Chinese societies has been a growing concern, particularly in the education sector. Unlike traditional school bullying, cyberbullying potentially poses a greater threat in terms of range and lasting effect, given the broader scope of psychosocial damage that could be done once the media materials that are intended to humiliate or shame the victims are being posted online. A growing body of research has been devoted to understanding the etiology of cyberbullying behaviors in recent decades, particularly in the Chinese context. In this presentation, a conceptual overview and my recent findings on cyberbullying perpetration and victimization in the Greater China Region are discussed. Cyberbullying in Chinese societies has been a growing concern, particularly in the education sector. Unlike traditional school bullying, cyberbullying potentially poses a greater threat in terms of range and lasting effect, given the broader scope of psychosocial damage that could be done once the media materials that are intended to humiliate or shame the victims are being posted online. A growing body of research has been devoted to understanding the etiology of cyberbullying behaviors in recent decades, particularly in the Chinese context. In this presentation, a conceptual overview and my recent findings on cyberbullying perpetration and victimization in the Greater China Region are discussed.

12:30 – 13:30

Panel 2: Plenary Session
Plenary Presentation 2: "Pandemic-Related Strain and Internet Use/Misuse among students in China: A brief introduction and Preliminary Results of ISRD4-China"
-Dr. Hua (Sara) Zhong, PhD
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic led to strains on daily life, particularly affecting vulnerable groups like migrant students and rural-to-urban young migrant workers. Based on General Strain Theory (GST), these pandemic-related strains may lead to delinquent copings. However, the association between the challenges faced by these migrant youth during the pandemic and their delinquent or non-delinquent copings has not been examined. Derived from social control theory, resilience approach and positive psychology, their conventional beliefs, internal resilience and life satisfaction might serve as protective factors, which can help them alleviate the disruptive consequences of the pandemic-related strains. Utilizing the fourth sweep of International Self-Report Delinquency Survey in China (ISRD4-China) comprising 769 working migrant adolescents aged 16 to 19, who, unlike their more affluent peers, did not attend high school, in two cities of China, the present study examined variations in pandemic-related strains, cyber delinquent/non-delinquent copings, and their associations. Additionally, we investigated the moderating effect of several potential protective factors: conventional beliefs, internal resilience and life satisfaction. The preliminary results indicated that the economic-related strain, information strain and health-related strain significantly influenced the digital coping strategies of these young migrant workers, with notable gender differences. Moderation analysis revealed that conventional belief was a significant moderator for males, while life satisfaction played a more significant moderating role for females. We also briefly compared these migrant working youth with the other two groups at the same age—urban native students (N=746) and migrant students (N=929) at high schools. Relevant policy implications are then discussed.

13:30 – 14:30   Lunch

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