

# Exploring the Impact of Media Awareness on Privacy Concerns and Risk Perception

Ms. Kiran Bhagnani

Research Scholar, Pacific Academy of Higher  
Education and Research University,  
Udaipur, Rajasthan, India  
[bhagnani.kiran26@gmail.com](mailto:bhagnani.kiran26@gmail.com)

Dr. Divya Shekhawat

Assistant Professor, Pacific Academy of  
Higher  
Education and Research University,  
Udaipur, Rajasthan, India  
[divya.shekhawat23@gmail.com](mailto:divya.shekhawat23@gmail.com)

## Abstract:

Cybercrime spans a wide range of activities, from casual internet browsing to complex cyber investigations. The primary aspect which is associated with cybercrime is the level of awareness among both the public and investigative agencies. It is found that the critical issue is the lack of awareness among individuals regarding essential security measures when using internet generated services. Therefore, raising awareness and promoting preventive measures are crucial in combating cybercrime. This study aims to assess the level of awareness among the public regarding cybercrime prevention in daily life, with the goal of empowering individuals to protect themselves. It focuses on gathering insights from various groups involved in or connected to the field of cybercrime and related domains.

**Keywords:** *Cybercrime, internet, surfing, investing, advertisements, awareness, media.*

## Introduction:

Cybercrime includes a broad spectrum of activities, ranging from everyday online browsing to media interaction. The key worries associated with cybercrime are its increasing prevalence and the varying levels of awareness. A significant challenge remains the widespread lack of understanding regarding essential cybersecurity practices when using internet services and social

media. It is observed that people are utilizing and operating internet-related services without adequate guidelines. It is a well-known fact that

training, or access to advanced tools, is necessary for tracing and analyzing cybercrime activity. Therefore, enhancing awareness and encouraging preventive measures are vital to mitigating cyber threats. This study seeks to evaluate the public's awareness of cybercrime prevention in daily life, aiming to empower individuals to protect themselves and support investigative efforts. The research draws on insights from diverse groups involved in cybercrime and its related fields.

## Review of Literature

Cybercrime awareness has emerged as a critical area of concern in the digital era, with multiple studies highlighting the gap between knowledge and safe online behavior.

Begum and Hariharan (2024) found that while individuals demonstrated relatively high awareness of specific cybercrimes such as hacking, they lacked sufficient knowledge about cyber laws and data protection practices. Many respondents were unsure about the safety of their personal information online, and a significant number admitted risky behaviors such as infrequent password changes and downloading pirated content. Similarly, Choudhary (2020) investigated cybercrime awareness among college students in Haryana, revealing that although general awareness levels were moderate, students in professional programs showed greater knowledge

than those in traditional degree courses. The study also found no significant gender differences in cyber awareness.

Curtis and Oxburgh (2022) explored the challenges in reporting and investigating cybercrimes. Their findings revealed that victims often refrain from reporting incidents due to doubts about law enforcement's capacity and expertise. The study highlighted a need for better training and resources for investigative agencies, along with improved public trust in the reporting process.

Sanya Sarah Datt (2024) examined the relationship between cybercrime awareness and life satisfaction among Indian youth. Interestingly, the study found a negative correlation, suggesting that higher awareness of cyber threats may be associated with increased anxiety or reduced life satisfaction, possibly due to heightened concern about personal digital safety.

Cheng et al. (2020) explored how IT self-efficacy affects vulnerability to cybercrime. Surveying 1,018 individuals in Hong Kong, the study revealed that increased use of IT devices was associated with a higher risk of cyber victimization. The findings also showed that cybercrime negatively impacted personal relationships and well-being.

Amankwa (2021) emphasized the need for greater cybersecurity awareness in educational institutions. The research found that overall knowledge of cybercrimes and their consequences was low to moderate, and individuals generally exhibited limited internal control over cybersecurity behaviors.

Dalal (2021) highlighted the lack of awareness regarding cyber laws in India. The study noted that most users, professionals, and organizations were unfamiliar with disputes related to the IT Act, 2000, and its amendments, underlining the need for increased legal literacy.

Ahe (2022) explored the psychological impact of cybercrime on individuals. Using a self-developed

scale, the study found that victims often experienced emotional distress, including anxiety, humiliation, and reduced self-worth. Notably, those who personally knew their attackers faced more severe psychological consequences.

Curtis and Oxburgh (2022) examined rising cybercrime rates and highlighted victims' reluctance to report incidents due to a lack of trust in law enforcement capabilities. The study emphasized the limited cybercrime knowledge within police forces and identified several contributing factors to cybercrime, including social, informational, and environmental influences.

Deutrom, Katos, and Ali (2022) investigated the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on internet use, life satisfaction, and online security. Among 299 remote workers in the UK, the study found a negative correlation between problematic internet use and both cybersecurity practices and life satisfaction. Additionally, loneliness was positively correlated with problematic internet use.

N. Farida Begum and Hariharan G. (2024) conducted a study revealing that while respondents demonstrated relatively high awareness of cybercrime, especially hacking they lacked adequate knowledge of cybercrime laws. Many participants expressed uncertainty regarding the safety of their personal information online, indicating insufficient understanding of data protection practices. A small number reported financial losses during online transactions, and a significant portion rarely updated their passwords, posing security risks. Despite general awareness, many respondents are still engaged in illegal downloads of movies and games. The study also found that while spam messages and calls were common, very few individuals reported these incidents to authorities.

Sanya Sarah Datt (2024) assessed cybercrime awareness among Indian young adults and its relationship to life satisfaction. Contrary to existing literature, the study found a negative correlation between cybercrime awareness and life

satisfaction, suggesting that higher awareness may contribute to reduced well-being. The findings imply that this relationship may be weak or unstable beyond the study's sample.

### Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study is to find out the grade of consciousness about cybercrime in media. This study tests the hypothesis of a significant link between unwanted media advertisements and criminal activities. It investigates the relationship among three key variables: unwanted media exposure, advertising activities, and crimes committed against individuals.

### Research Methodology

This study adopts a diagnostic descriptive research design aimed at assessing awareness of cybercrime among individuals residing in rural, semi-urban, and urban areas of Rajasthan.

### Primary Data

Primary data for this research was collected firsthand through field surveys and personal observation. A structured questionnaire, comprising both open-ended and close-ended questions, served as the main instrument for data collection. Interviews and questionnaires were used to ensure the originality and exclusivity of the data until publication.

### Sampling Structure

The sample size consists of 416 respondents drawn from the various regions of Rajasthan state.

### Statistical Analysis Tools

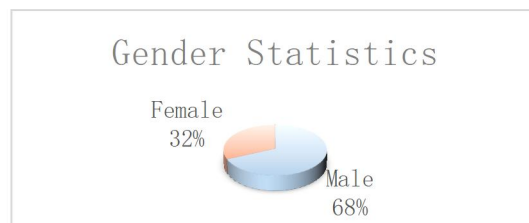
Based on the nature and objectives of the study, the following statistical tools were employed for analysis:

- Percentage test
- ANOVA

### Demographic Analysis

The gender distribution of respondents provides meaningful insights into perceptions of cybercrime as well as its investigation and implementation. The study recorded an uneven

participation rate, with 284 male and 132 female respondents. Out of the total 416 participants, males accounted for 68%, while females represented 32%.



Figure—1: Gender wise respondents

### Hypothesis:

The hypothesis for the study is based on the awareness of cybercrime in the people. Thus, the hypothesis made as:

**Null Hypothesis:**  $H_0$ : There is notable linkage between unwanted media, advertisements and crooks' activities.

**Alternate Hypothesis:**  $H_1$ : There is notable linkage between unwanted media, advertisement and crooks' activities.

### Analysis:

To evaluate the hypothesis, we collected respondents' opinions regarding three interconnected variables: unwanted media access, advertising on digital platforms, and criminal (crook) activities. The data was gathered through responses to three key characteristic questions, each representing one of the variables under investigation. The aim is to determine whether a significant association exists among these variables.

To analyze the relationship, a One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test is applied, allowing us to assess the statistical significance of differences in responses across the variables. The three characteristic questions used to examine the hypothesis are as follows:

1. Have you observed that unwanted media or social media access is prone to criminal activities?
2. Do you believe that advertisements on social media or internet-based platforms support criminal activities?
3. Have you noticed that criminal activities are often carried out through the use of the internet and media?

These questions serve as measurable variables in our hypothesis testing. The consistency and pattern of responses to these questions indicate the possible linkage among them. Hence, each characteristic question is treated as a variable in the analysis.

#### SUMMARY

Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance
Unwanted Media	416	1549	3.7236	0.76436
Advertisements	416	1565	3.762	0.57696
Crook's Activity	416	1551	3.7284	0.59833

#### ANOVA

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	0.3653846	2	0.1827	3.002	0.754	9
Within Groups	804.954	5	0.6465			
Total	805.3195	7				

**Table-1:** ANOVA : linkage between unwanted media, advertisements and crooks' activities

#### Result:

To examine the proposed hypothesis, we structured three characteristic questions, each representing a variable related to unwanted media access, digital advertisements, and criminal activities. These variables were analyzed using a one-way ANOVA test to determine whether a significant variance exists among them.

The total number of respondents was 416, and each participant provided responses to all three variables. This resulted in a total of 1,248 data points (416 respondents × 3 variables). Given the nature of the data and the number of variables, the one-way ANOVA test was selected as the most appropriate statistical tool. It is particularly well-suited for identifying variances and similarities among three or more variables.

Based on the ANOVA results, the calculated F-value was 0.283, which is lower than the critical (tabulated) F-value. This indicates that there is no statistically significant variance among the variables, suggesting a weak or non-existent association between unwanted media access, advertisements, and criminal activities based on the responses analyzed. Thus, we can say that there is linkage between unwanted media, advertisements and crooks' activities.

#### Conclusion:

The findings of the study indicate that there is linkage between unwanted media, advertisements and crooks' activities. The primary objective of the study was to assess the level of awareness regarding cybercrime in the media. To achieve this, the opinions of 416 respondents were gathered and analyzed using statistical methods. The sample comprised 68% male and 32% female participants. The results support the study's hypothesis; therefore, it is found that there is linkage between unwanted media, advertisements and crooks' activities. Thus, we must be aware of the causes and risks associated with cybercrime along with media and advertisements.

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