

Examining the Demographics, Psychological, and Social Profiles of Individuals Convicted of Cybercrime Offenses in the United States

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Research Goal

- **Opportunity**
 - To learn more about the characteristics of individuals convicted of cybercrimes
 - To instruct correctional agencies on how to supervise them according to their risk of reoffending
- **Because**
 - Correctional agencies often focus on special offense types to supervise more effectively
- **Our study provides information on:**
 - Profile of offenders who commit a unique and somewhat, specialized criminal activity
 - Offenders which are drawn from different geographical and political contexts in the United States
 - Demographics, risk and needs of federal cybercrime offenders

Methodology

- Data from the Administrative Office of the United States Courts (AO) & Probation and Pretrial Services Office (PPSO)
- Sample timeframe: 2006 – 2014
- In total, 813 individuals were identified
 - 510 (62.7%) serving a term of probation
 - 303 (37.3%) were on supervised release
- Average time on supervision/supervised release: 749.5 days / 921.3 days

Category in Handbook Offense short title		US Title and Section Number	F	%
Computer Fraud & Abuse Act	Obtaining National Security Information	18 § 1030 § 1030 (a)(1)	736	90.5
	Accessing a Computer and Obtaining Information	§ 1030 (a)(2)		
	Trespassing in a Government Computer	§ 1030 (a)(3)		
	Accessing to Defraud and Obtain Value	§ 1030 (a)(4)		
	Damaging a Computer or Information	§ 1030 (a)(5)		
	Trafficking in Passwords	§ 1030 (a)(6)		
CAN-SPAM Act	Transmission of SPAM; Spoofing Email by using a protected computer with the intent of hiding their origin	18 § 1037	19	2.3
Communication Interference	Interfering w/ government communication systems (DoS Attacks)	18 § 1362	17	2.1
Wiretap Act	Intercepting a (electronic) Communication	18 § 2511 § 2511(1)(a)	26	3.2
Unlawful Access to Stored Communications	Interception of electronic communications	18 § 2701	15	1.9
Total			813	100.0

MEASURES & RESULTS

Measures

– Demographics

- Records of AO contain information on age, gender, race, education level, and marital status
- Information were collected at the time of intake to supervision

– Risk & Needs assessment

- AO and PPSO's risk/needs assessment tool were used to identify risks of reoffending and criminogenic needs
 - Post Conviction Risk Assessment (PCRA) classifies individuals into risk levels, identifies a total risk score and provides scores for criminogenic needs by including domains
- Psychological Inventory of Criminal Thinking Styles (PICTS) is a self-assessment to measure thinking styles related to criminal behavior

Demographics

Demographics	Frequency	Percentage
<u>Gender</u>		
Female	177	21.8
Male	632	77.7
Unknown or missing	4	.5
<u>Race</u>		
Asian	57	7.0
Black	141	17.3
Indian/Eskimo	6	.8
White	591	72.7
Other	9	1.1
Unknown or missing	9	1.1

Demographics	Frequency	Percentage
<u>Marital Status</u>		
Single	267	32.8
Cohabiting	41	5.0
Married	311	38.3
Divorced	96	11.8
Separated	30	3.7
Widowed	3	.4
Unknown or missing	65	8.0
<u>Education</u>		
No HS Diploma or GED	36	4.4
GED	46	5.7
High school Diploma	312	38.3
Vocational school graduate	10	1.2
Associate Degree	25	3.1
Bachelors Degree	212	26.1
Masters Degree	43	5.3
Doctorate	8	1.0
Missing	121	14.9
Total	813	100.0

Risk and Needs Assessment

Risk Assessment Score

Average risk score	3.7	Range: 0 - 14
Risk Level	Frequency	Percentage
• Low risk	255	76.3%
• Low/moderate risk	67	20.0%
• Moderate risk	8	2.4%
• High risk	4	1.2%
Total	334	100.0%

Domain/Criminogenic Needs

Score in Domain on PCRA	Frequency (Number of People with Score)	Percent of Sample with Score
<u>Criminal History Domain</u>		
0	67	20.1
1	98	29.3
2	56	16.8
3	35	10.5
4	28	8.4
5	24	7.2
6	14	4.2
7	7	2.1
8	5	1.4
9	0	0
Total with PCRA score	334	100.0

Score in Domain on PCRA	Frequency (Number of People with Score)	Percent of Sample with Score
<u>Education & Employment</u>		
0	200	59.9
1	87	26.0
2	42	12.6
3	5	1.5
Total with PCRA score	334	100.0
<u>Drugs & Alcohol</u>		
0	303	90.7
1	26	7.8
2	5	1.5
Total with PCRA score	334	58.9
<u>Social Networks</u>		
0	124	37.1
1	166	49.7
2	32	9.6
3	12	3.6
Total with PCRA score	334	100.0
<u>Cognitions</u>		
0	295	88.3
1	39	11.7
Total with PCRA score	334	100.0

Criminal Thinking (PICTS)

- 272 offenders had PICTS information
- Only 24 (8.8%) scored high enough to meet the scoring threshold for above average presence of criminal thinking
- Just 19 offenders had reactive criminal thinking
- Only 11 had proactive criminal thinking

LIMITATIONS & CONCLUSIONS

Limitations

- Limitations to the differentiation between cyber-dependent and -enabled crimes
- Study excludes:
 - Juveniles,
 - Individuals undetected by the criminal justice system,
 - People who had charges dismissed,
 - Individuals charged at state level
- Not all included offenders had PCRA and PICTS records

Conclusions

Unexpected findings:

- Demographics
 - High percentage of female offenders (21.8%)
 - Average age of the offenders (38.2 years)
- Risk level
 - Majority were low risk (76.3%)
 - Most of the sample (96.3%) was low or low/moderate risk
- Criminal history
 - Almost half of the sample has prior records
 - One third had committed at least two different offense types

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