

# Predictors of Cybercrime Victimization: Causal Effects or Biased Associations?

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During the last two decades the prevalence of cybercrime has increased rapidly and cybercrime has become part of everyday life of citizens. Victim surveys show that a large number of citizens become a victim of cybercrime (e.g., hacking, online consumer fraud, malware-infection) each year. Several studies have shown that a low self-control and specific online activities can predict cybercrime victimization. However, these studies are based on cross-sectional, observational data and it remains therefore unknown whether these predictors also *cause* victimization or simply reflect an association.

In the current study, two quasi-experimental research techniques will be applied on longitudinal data (2008–2016) from the LISS panel, a large representative sample of Dutch households.

First, fixed effects panel models will be used to examine whether changes in predictors over time precede changes in cybercrime victimization over time, controlling for all between-individual differences (i.e., all time-constant bias). Second, discordant sibling models will be used to examine the relationship between cybercrime victimization and its predictors, while controlling for genetic confounding and bias caused by shared environmental factors.

Using these quasi-experimental research designs this study will give a better estimate of the true effect of low self-control and online routine activities on cybercrime victimization.