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CYBERCRIME AND SOCIAL MEDIA RELATIONSHIPS

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ABSTRACT

Social media is now the need of the world. Social media is now the best place for communication to stay connected with the world. In this research paper, we will be looking into how social media is now the best place for cybercriminals for identity theft, cheating, fraud, cyberbullying etc. Cybercrimes in the digital world are now taking all the privacy of the person. In this research paper, we will look into the various fields of cybercrimes, how to be protected online while using social media. We will also look at the laws governing social media rules and regulations. Many researchers in the world are looking into the techniques of how cybercriminals perform these jobs and what are the measures or precautions that can be taken by an individual user to be protected online. As of now the age of digital media is coming. Everything from shopping to communication to financial transactions is done online. In this research paper, we have discussed what are how social media user can protect their accounts, how cybercrimes and social media are related to each other. This research paper will help the readers to know what are the precautions and the relationships between cybercrime and social media.

KEYWORDS

Cybercriminals, Cyber threats, social media, Data Mining, Cyberbullying, Information Technology Act, Hacking, Privacy

INTRODUCTION

Social media is a computer-based software program that enables us to share ideas, information, virtual messages and audio or in other words to stay connected through the virtual community.[2]

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[1] Student at SLS, Nagpur

[2] Maya Dollarhide, *Social Media*, INVESTOPEDIA (MARCH 13, 2022, 09: 07 PM),
    https://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/social-media.asp

It helps us to stay connected with the people in other places either in the same country or in a foreign country. Social media has nowadays become a necessary and day to day life routine. Social media is the best way for communication purposes either for sharing details or for virtual communication. As per a report published in the year 2020, it was stated that active users on social media are more than 3.6 billion people.[3]The active users on social media are increasing day by day. Social media is used by people, companies, marketing agencies etc. Social media is the place where lots of cybercrimes are happening in the present day. The users of the social media platforms are mentioning their details, even their debit card details and many more things which are used by the cybercriminals for Data Mining. Cybercriminals use this data in many ways making fake profiles of theirs and making fraud or selling personal details on the dark web was recently the most highlighted topics in the world of social media regarding security concerns.

Cybercrime is most commonly known for the attacks on individuals incorporating companies, personal data and government databases.[4]Cyber-attacks mostly happenin these areas as the data that the cybercriminals want is present more here and data that will be mined here will be more useful for them. Recently in Russia and Ukraine were wars like the situation is going many several cyberattacks are going on in Ukraine in their banks, government websites and many other places.[5] The blame is put on Russia by the Ukrainians that they are the main cause of cyber-attacks taking place in their country. So as the digital era is coming so is the myth that our data and information related to anything of our life in the world of the internet is going. So, we can say that nowadays privacy is merely a myth. Every person using social media puts their personal information on their websites and the hackers and cybercriminals use that data for digital crimes like cyberbullying, fraud or selling their data illegally online or on the dark web.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND CYBERCRIMES

Social media is the most used app used in today's world be it be used for data sharing, location sharing or finding new jobs and opportunities, everywhere social media comes into the picture.

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[3]STATISTA, https://www.statista.com/statistics/278414/number-of-worldwide-social-network-users/#:~:text=How%20many%20people%20use%20social,almost%204.41%20billion%20in%202025. (Last visited MARCH 14, 2022)

[4] Michael Aaron Dennis, *cybercrime*,BRITANNICA, (MARCH 13,2022, 8:53 PM), https://www.britannica.com/topic/cybercrime

[5]NDTV, https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/potential-cyberattack-risks-rise-as-russia-attacks-ukraine-2788031 (last visited MARCH 13, 2022)

Social media is now a necessary tool in our life. The cybercriminals know these facts and they know how important data can be found on social media as most of the users on social media use original names and personal information that as name, address, phone number or whether it be location. Cybercriminals use this data in making frauds and selling their data to corporate companies. In recent days we can say in our day-to-day internet usage also if we search for any product whether it be on an internet browser or social media, we get to see that product related ads everywhere so that the person is compelled to buy that product. Social media companies are generating maximum revenues from these things only by selling personal information and data to corporate companies. Even the apps that we install on our phone want access to everything present on our phone whether it be location, files, gallery etc. These are the main reasons the cyber-attacks and cyber frauds are increasing daily. Cybercriminals are getting a lot of information from these apps and all the personal data that are present on the phone are mined by the cybercriminals. Social media is the main highlight of the cyberattacks or cybercriminals because they get to know all the personal information from the social media handles like the phone number, address, friends' names, photos etc. after getting these things they either blackmail the user later by asking a ransom of money either their photos or the data will be leaked. Their photos or videos are posted on pornographic websites and are blackmailed and are asked for a heavy amount of money.

Nowadays if any person who uses the internet or is present on social media thinks that his or her privacy is there on social media is a myth. If a person comes to the internet and uses it then in that place only the person's privacy is gone. As now everything is going digital whether it be studying, transaction of payments, etc. all are going online and the opportunities of getting cyberattacks are increasing. The easement of the persons is increasing that they can be connected to any person in the world or they can send money to any person by sitting on their home and can send money by a single click but the problem that is coming is the cyber-attacks and the cybercriminals which are present on each step of the internet.

IMPROVE THE CYBER SECURITY IN THE SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

Social media in the true sense cannot be said bad as there are many benefits of being there in social media.[6]Social media offers you to stay connected with your families and friends.[7] So, to

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[6]THE DEFENCE WORKS,https://thedefenceworks.com/services/cyber-and-security-awareness/guides/how-social-media-is-used-in-cybercrimes/ (Last visited MARCH 13, 2022)

use it safely and beware of cybercriminals some certain steps or points are too kept in mind while using social media.

Social media also provide some privacy settings that very some people are aware of. Everyone should use that feature to protect their data from cybercriminals as much as possible. Some of the main privacy settings are to keep your account private so that nobody else other than your friends or family members can see your photos videos or the posts that you are making. You can control your data as much as possible, do not overshare any posts or videos on social media, stay away from fraud accounts before accepting any unknown person's request either see that profile or think once that whether you know that person or not. Don't use the hyperlinks that are shared in the social media accounts as they can be shared by cybercriminals for hacking your phone or for other purposes.

Recently in the year 2019, we have seen how Facebook was found guilty of sharing user data without consent. Facebook had to pay a fine of $5 billion (approx. £3.9 billion) for the Cambridge Analytica debacle as they have sold the data of the Facebook users to the companies without the consent of the users.[8] Social media handles generate revenue through these things only by selling personal data or by advertising and soon. The consumers think that they are providing free access to their apps but they are unaware of the dark reality of the companies' policies.

TYPES OF CYBERCRIME THAT OCCUR ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Cybercrimes taking place on social media are increasing day by day. But the main question comes what are how cybercriminals are attacking the social media user and how an individual using the social media is affected. Here are some of the cybercrimes that take place on social media.

1.   Malware attack – The best way for cybercriminals to attack the user on social media is through a malware attack. This is the most common form of attack on social media. Malware is

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[7] THE DEFENCE WORKS, https://thedefenceworks.com/services/cyber-and-security-awareness/guides/how-social-media-is-used-in-cybercrimes/ (Last visited MARCH 13, 2022)
[8] THE DEFENCE WORKS, https://thedefenceworks.com/services/cyber-and-security-awareness/guides/how-social-media-is-used-in-cybercrimes/ (Last visited MARCH 13, 2022)

malicious software designed to cripple or take over your computer system.[9] In essence, it installs a virus onto your machine. It happens when a link is sent to a person and that person opens that link and then the malware attack takes place on that person's device. So, the only way to stay protected from malware attacks is to don't open any links sent by the stranger's accounts on social media. So, the person should verify the source before downloading any file or the link should be sent by a legitimate person.

2.   Social engineering – This is also a very common way used by cybercriminals for cyber-attack. Social engineering is used by cybercriminals to create false accounts to gain the personal information or financial information of the users.[10] In this, they create a false account of any person by taking their personal information and after that, they create personal information and contact by using phishing emails or any other form but they communicate with the person so that they can gain access to the personal information or the financial information of that person.

3.   Hacking and Fraud – Hacking nowadays has become a very common phenomenon on the internet as well as on social media. Both hacking and fraud are commonly seen on social media. As we have seen many times that posting or sending messages to a friend by going on their account is fun but in reality, it is a serious crime.[11] Creating fake accounts with people's personal information to deceive others is a heinous crime. This crime has increased a lot in recent years as lots and lots of new people are coming on social media.

4.   Cyberbullying and stalking – Nowadays on social media there are many threats given to people which is known as cyberbullying. This is a serious crime and many social media users should report these crimes.[12] Both cyberbullying and stalking are cybercrimes that should be reported to the police as many people leave this or are unaware of this. If these crimes will be reported then these cybercriminals can be punished.

PRECAUTIONS TO BE TAKEN WHILE USING SOCIAL MEDIA

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[9]STUDY.COM, https://study.com/academy/lesson/how-social-networks-are-used-in-cybercrime.html#:~:text=Cybercrime%20has%20breached%20social%20media,through%20suspicious%20links%20or%20downloads (Last visited MARCH 13,2022)

[10] STUDY.COM, https://study.com/academy/lesson/how-social-networks-are-used-in-cybercrime.html#:~:text=Cybercrime%20has%20breached%20social%20media,through%20suspicious%20links%20or%20downloads (Last visited MARCH 13,2022)

[11] FINANCIAL EXPRESS, https://www.financialexpress.com/lifestyle/the-inside-out-of-social-media-crimes-explained-by-ajeet-gunwant-parse/2373858/ (Last visited MARCH 13,2022)

[12]FINANCIAL EXPRESS, https://www.financialexpress.com/lifestyle/the-inside-out-of-social-media-crimes-explained-by-ajeet-gunwant-parse/2373858/ (Last visited MARCH 13,2022)

Social media nowadays is a necessary part of our life. We all know the fact that using the internet and social media can lead us to cyber-attacks but the problem is now the whole world is on the internet and social media. Now even if people don't want to use the internet and social media, they will have to make at least one account on the social media handle if they want to stay connected or for the financial transactions that they have to make. These precautions may not be 100% effective but we can at least try to keep our accounts safe from cyberattacks as many people don't even know these precautions as well. As every day new people are joining social media and creating new accounts so it's necessary for them to know these things. So, here are some of the precautions which we as social media user has to keep in mind while using social media.

1.   Whenever you create a new account on social media always try to keep the social media settings at an advanced stage means trying to keep the account private, keeping your passwords stronger etc.[13]

2.   Try to close the access of our location in the camera.[14]

3.   Try to avoid posting personal photographs and information on social media accounts.[15]

4.   Don't allow strangers to see your profiles and stay away from strangers on socialmedia.[16]

5.   Don't ever try to open any link or software that is sent to you in a private message in thesocial media accounts as the easiest way to hack your account is through the links.[17]

6.   Try to change the passwords of your social media accounts very often.[18]

INDIAN LAWS REGARDING SOCIAL MEDIA CRIMES

In recent times we have seen that with the coming up of the digital revolution most of our work, communication etc. are done online. With the increasing number of digital users and social media users crime in the digital world is also increasing. So there was a need for rules and regulations as many cybercrimes were being done and there was no law to govern them. So the Indian government has now made laws for cybercrimes and laws to govern all the digital frauds,

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[13]SALAL, https://www.salalcu.org/tips-to-avoid-social-media-cyber-crime/ (Last visited MARCH 13,2022)
[14] SALAL, https://www.salalcu.org/tips-to-avoid-social-media-cyber-crime/ (Last visited MARCH 13,2022)
[15] SALAL, https://www.salalcu.org/tips-to-avoid-social-media-cyber-crime/ (Last visited MARCH 13,2022)
[16] SALAL, https://www.salalcu.org/tips-to-avoid-social-media-cyber-crime/ (Last visited MARCH 13,2022)
[17] SALAL, https://www.salalcu.org/tips-to-avoid-social-media-cyber-crime/ (Last visited MARCH 13,2022)
[18] SALAL, https://www.salalcu.org/tips-to-avoid-social-media-cyber-crime/ (Last visited MARCH 13,2022)

cyberattacks, etc. that are taking place. The famously known law is the IT Act which came in the year 2000. The IT law was mainly made for the crimes that were made on the internet. Some of the specific laws regarding social media are discussed below.

1.   Constitution of India – As we can see in the Article 19 of the Constitution of India which talks about the freedom of speech and expression which is guaranteed to all the citizens of India and the state cannot remove them but there are certain restrictions as they are mentioned in the Article 16(2).[19] From this, we can conclude that any person can write read or comment on any issue.

2.   IT Act 2000 – The IT Act was made only to control the increase in cybercrimes and to control the action of the people present on the internet. In section 66A of the Information Technology Act 2000, the main focus of the section is completely on the social media content and regulating it.[20] The main focus of this section is to prohibit offensive videos, audio, images or text messages to be transmitted.[21] The section also helps to control the false messages which are widely spread on social media handles. As false messages can sometimes mislead the person or can create hatred in the person. But in one landmark judgement given by the Supreme Court in Shreya Singal V Union of India, it structured down the section 66A of the IT Act and uphold the right to free speech.[22]

3.   Indian Penal Code – This code says that any person who is anyhow related to the cybercrimes or cyberthefts shall be liable for punishment under this act. Some of the main sections are like Section 295A which deals with the problem of insulting intentionally religion or religious beliefs.[23]There is one more section that also looks into this matter is Section 153A.[24]

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[19]LEGAL DESIRE, https://legaldesire.com/social-media-and-indian-laws/#:~:text=Section-506%3A%20criminal%20intimidation%20and,is%20punishable%20with%20these%20laws (Last visited MARCH 13, 2022)

[20] LEGAL DESIRE, https://legaldesire.com/social-media-and-indian-laws/#:~:text=Section-506%3A%20criminal%20intimidation%20and,is%20punishable%20with%20these%20laws (Last visited MARCH 13, 2022)

[21]LEGAL DESIRE, https://legaldesire.com/social-media-and-indian-laws/#:~:text=Section-506%3A%20criminal%20intimidation%20and,is%20punishable%20with%20these%20laws (Last visited MARCH 13, 2022)

[22]LEGAL DESIRE, https://legaldesire.com/social-media-and-indian-laws/#:~:text=Section-506%3A%20criminal%20intimidation%20and,is%20punishable%20with%20these%20laws (Last visited MARCH 13, 2022)

[23]LEGAL DESIRE, https://legaldesire.com/social-media-and-indian-laws/#:~:text=Section-506%3A%20criminal%20intimidation%20and,is%20punishable%20with%20these%20laws (Last visited MARCH 13, 2022)

This section deals with promoting enmity between groups on the ground of religion, race etc. There is some more section in the Indian Penal Code that can be applied to the cybercriminals such as Section 499, 505, 506, 509 and 124A.[25] The main laws which are widely used for the protection of social media users are 499 and 500 sections of IPC. These sections state that if any person publishes any defamatory statement in the form or oral or writing format with having and intention of harming the person's character then he or she is liable for the punishment under the Indian Penal Code.

CONCLUSION

As per recent reports, there are 3.725 billion active social media users on the internet.[26] They spent an average of 142 minutes a day on this platform.[27] There is also a drastic growth of 328 million users between 2018-2019.[28] Social media is the new communication tool of the world as people can communicate with the people in any part of the country can send any files like audio, video etcwith a single click. But with these easy opportunities comes the problem of cybercrime. Cybercrime came in hand with the creation of the internet and social media. Now in every part of the internet and social media cybercrimes are available. Cybercrimes are involved in many parts like cybertheft, data mining, hacking, cyberstalking, viruses attack and many more. With the increase in the number of cybercrimes, there is a demand for the law-making agencies to either make strict laws in the IT act so that these cybercriminals should be afraid and the cases of cybercrimes should decrease. So, at last, we can say that social media can be both boon and a bane in our life.

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[24]LEGAL DESIRE, https://legaldesire.com/social-media-and-indian-laws/#:~:text=Section-506%3A%20criminal%20intimidation%20and,is%20punishable%20with%20these%20laws (Last visited MARCH 13, 2022)

[25]LEGAL DESIRE, https://legaldesire.com/social-media-and-indian-laws/#:~:text=Section-506%3A%20criminal%20intimidation%20and,is%20punishable%20with%20these%20laws (Last visited MARCH 13, 2022)

[26] LEGAL DESIRE, https://legaldesire.com/social-media-and-indian-laws/#:~:text=Section-506%3A%20criminal%20intimidation%20and,is%20punishable%20with%20these%20laws (Last visited MARCH 13, 2022)

[27]LEGAL DESIRE, https://legaldesire.com/social-media-and-indian-laws/#:~:text=Section-506%3A%20criminal%20intimidation%20and,is%20punishable%20with%20these%20laws (Last visited MARCH 13, 2022)

[28]LEGAL DESIRE, https://legaldesire.com/social-media-and-indian-laws/#:~:text=Section-506%3A%20criminal%20intimidation%20and,is%20punishable%20with%20these%20laws (Last visited MARCH 13, 2022)