

A Correlational Study of Cyber Crime Awareness and Human Rights Awareness of Male and Female Students of College Level

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ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to examine the relationship between Cyber Crime Awareness and human rights awareness among male and female students at the college level. In the contemporary digital era, increasing use of technology has led to a rise in cyber-related crimes, making awareness of Cyber Crime and Human Rights essential for students. Cyber Crime Awareness helps individuals protect themselves from digital threats, while human rights awareness promotes responsible and ethical behaviour in society. The study adopted a correlational research design and was conducted on a sample of 160 college-level students, comprising 80 boys and 80 girls, selected through random sampling from colleges located in Meerut district. Standardized tools were used to measure Cyber Crime Awareness and Human Rights Awareness among the students. The data were analysed using Karl Pearson's coefficient of correlation. The findings revealed a positive but low correlation between Cyber Crime Awareness and Human Rights Awareness among boys ($r = 0.31$), indicating a weak relationship. In contrast, the correlation among girls was found to be negligible and negative ($r = -0.02$), showing no significant relationship between the two variables. The results suggest that Cyber Crime Awareness and Human Rights Awareness function independently among college-level students, particularly among girls. The study highlights the need to strengthen awareness programs and educational initiatives related to cyber safety and human rights to enhance students' understanding and responsible digital behaviour.

Keywords: Correlational Study, Cyber Crime Awareness, Human Rights Awareness and College Level.

INTRODUCTION

"The roots of education are bitter, but the fruit is sweet," (**Aristotle**), acknowledging the challenges inherent in the learning process while emphasizing the rewards of wisdom and virtue. Education, thus, is seen not just as the transmission of facts but as an ongoing, transformative journey that empowers individuals to realize their potential and contribute to the betterment of society.

Education is often regarded as one of the most powerful tools for shaping individuals and societies alike. It serves not only as a mechanism for acquiring knowledge but also as a means of fostering critical thinking, creativity, and moral development. Throughout history, education has been recognized by philosophers and thinkers as a central element in human progress.

The views of prominent philosophers have shaped our understanding of education and its role in society. **Plato**, in his work *The Republic*, argued that "education is essential for the cultivation of wisdom and the creation of a just society". He believed that through proper education, individuals could attain knowledge of the "Forms" and lead lives based on truth and justice. Plato's vision of education was not just about intellectual growth but about developing well-rounded individuals capable of contributing to the common good. Similarly, **John Dewey**, a leading figure in progressive education, declared that "Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself." Dewey emphasized that learning should be an active process, deeply rooted in real-world experiences, where students are encouraged to question, engage, and think critically about the world around them. In contrast, Paulo Freire, in his influential work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, argued that education should be a dialogic process, where teachers and students work together to challenge oppressive systems and foster critical awareness. Freire saw education as a path to liberation, empowering individuals to become agents of social change.

Education should extend beyond theoretical boundaries and evolve in accordance with the demands of the modern era. In today's rapidly advancing digital world, awareness of emerging challenges—particularly the rise of **Cyber Crime**—has become an essential component of comprehensive education. Cyber crime is one such crime which is a growing threat with global implications. As societies become increasingly dependent on digital platforms for communication, commerce, education, and government services, malicious actors have found new opportunities to exploit vulnerabilities in cyberspace. Cyber crime includes a wide range of offenses such as hacking, identity theft, online fraud, data breaches, cyberbullying, and ransomware attacks. Unlike conventional crimes, cyber crimes are not limited by geography, making them difficult to trace and prosecute. The anonymity provided by the internet, along with the rapid advancement of technology, enables criminals to carry out complex attacks with minimal risk of detection.

In this context, raising awareness about cyber crime is essential to protecting individuals and organizations from falling victim to such threats. The growing threat of cybercrime not only challenges legal systems and cybersecurity frameworks but also leads to serious human rights violations.

Human rights refer to the inherent freedoms and protections that belong to all people by virtue of being human. These include civil and political rights—such as freedom of expression, the right to privacy, and protection from unlawful surveillance—as well as social and economic rights like access to education, work, and health. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (**UDHR**), adopted by the United Nations in 1948, provides a global foundation for these principles. However, "the existence of formal rights in law does not necessarily translate into protection or implementation on the ground" (**Landman, 2005**). This disconnect becomes especially apparent in digital spaces, where laws often lag behind technological development.

Godara, Samiksha (2011) conducted a study on "Prevention and control of cyber crimes in India: problems, issues and strategies." **Anand, Rasita** (2015) conducted a study "Cyber security policy in India Examining the issues and challenges and framework." **Kumar, Naresh** (2016) conducted a study "Legal control of cyber crimes a study of cyber legislations in India." **Ritu** (2017) studied "Cyber-crimes National and International perspective." **Febin, Baby** (2017) conducted a study "High internet propensity and cyber deviance among children A study with reference to Kerala." **Suman** (2018) studied "A Comparative Study of internet and Cyber Crime Awareness among Government and Private colleges students." **Sayankar, Swati Nitin** (2018) studied "Study of factors affecting effective investigation of cyber crimes in Pune region." **Rabon, Mebandabha** (2018) conducted a study on "Awareness about cyber-crimes through social networking sites a comparative study of master degree students of North Eastern Hill University and Assam university." **Das, Sonalisa** (2021) studied "Effect of emotional intelligence on attitude towards using cyber resources and cyber crime awareness among the pupil teachers of Raipur district of Chhattisgarh." **Swu, Abigail** (2021) studied "A study on awareness of cyber crime and human rights among B.Ed students in Nagaland." **Garg, Shalini** (2021) studied "A study of cyber crime awareness in relation to gender and area among government and private college students of Haryana state." **Singh, Narinder Pal** (2021) conducted a study on "Human rights awareness among woman teachers in relation to their family environment and value conflict." **Dongare, Amit Aba** (2022) studied "Analysis of awareness about cyber crimes among beneficiaries of Maharashtra Labour Welfare Board in Mumbai." **Thakker, Janki** (2022) conducted a study on "Critical Study on Cybercrime in Ahmedabad City." **Kumar, Muthu. M** (2022) studied "A comparative study on awareness about cyber laws and cybercrimes between male and female social media users in Tamil Nadu." **Singh, Rajat** (2024) conducted a study on "Cybercrime Awareness Online Privacy Concern and Cyber Security Behaviour As Predictors of Cybercrime Victimisation Among University Students." **Mondal, Khuku** (2024) studied "A study of human rights awareness in higher secondary level language teachers in West Bengal."

Objectives Of The Study

- i. To study the relationship between the awareness of Cyber Crime and Human Rights of college level students among boys.
- ii. To study the relationship between the awareness of Cyber Crime and Human Rights of college level students among girls.

Hypothesis Of the Study

- There is significance correlation between the Cyber Crime Awareness and Human Rights Awareness of college level students among boys.
- There is significance correlation between Cyber Crime Awareness and Human Rights Awareness of college level students among Girls.

Delimitations Of the Study

- This study was delimited to the students studying at college level.
- This study was confined to the Government aided colleges which are affiliated to CCSU in Meerut.

Population And Sample Size For The Study

All the students of college level (all colleges which are affiliated to CCSU in Meerut) have been considered as the population of this study. Total 10 colleges which are affiliated to CCSU in Meerut were selected by random sampling method. 8 boys and 8 girls were selected from each college by random sampling method. Hence, a total of 160 students is the sample size for the study.

Table No. 1: Sample Table

| Gender | Sample from each college | Number of total colleges selected randomly | Total sample |
|--------|--------------------------|--|--------------|
| Boys | 8 | 10 | 80 |
| Girls | 8 | | 80 |
| Total | 16 | | 160 |

Research Tools

Following standardized tools were used for data collection:

1. Cyber Crime Awareness:

Data for the Cyber crime awareness was collected by the 'Cyber Crime Awareness Scale' which is prepared and standardized by Dr. S.Rajasekar, 2011. The scale consists of both positive and negative statements. Positive statements are to be scored on the basis of weightage of 5,4,3,2,1 and negative statements are to be scored as 1,2,3,4,5 for Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree responses (table-02). After scoring each item the scores are added and thus total score of an individual is computed.

Table-02: Scoring Weightage

| Nature of the Statements | Strongly Agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|--------------------------|----------------|-------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Positive | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Negative | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Therefore, the range of minimum to maximum score is 36 to 180

2. Human Rights Awareness:

Data for the Human rights awareness was collected by the 'Human Rights Awareness Test' which is prepared and standardized by Dr. Vishal Sood and Dr. Arti Anand, 2012. HRAT is a self-administering and self-reporting test. Questions of the scale require response on one of the three alternatives i.e. True, Undecided or False. The statements are scored in such a manner that if the answer to a positive question is true, a score of 2 is given, for

undecided, a score of 1 and for false option, a score of zero is awarded.

Table no 3: Score Awarded

| Statement | True | Undecided | False |
|-----------|------|-----------|-------|
| Positive | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Negative | 0 | 1 | 2 |

The total possible score ranges from **0 to 100**, where a higher score indicates a greater level of awareness.

Analysis And Interpretation Of Data Hypothesis 1:

There is significance correlation between the Cyber Crime Awareness and Human Rights Awareness of college level students among boys.

The first objective of the present study is to study the relationship between the Cyber Crime Awareness and Human Rights Awareness of college level students among boys. To fulfil this objective, correlation coefficient was calculated through Karl Pearson correlation method, which has been presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Correlation between the Cyber Crime Awareness and Human Rights Awareness of college Level Students among Boys

| Variable | Correlation coefficient (r) | df | Significance level | Value of significance level | Result |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|----|--------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Cyber Crime Awareness | 0.31 | 78 | 0.05 | 0.217 | Significant |
| Human Rights Awareness | | | | | |

In the above table 4, to examine the correlation between the Cyber Crime Awareness and Human Rights Awareness of college level students among boys, the Pearson correlation coefficient technique was used. The obtained correlation value is 0.31 which is greater than the critical value 0.217 at 0.05 significance level. Hence, hypothesis 1 is accepted.

Thus, it is clear that there is significant positive correlation between Cyber Crime Awareness and Human Rights Awareness of college level students among boys.

Hypothesis 2:

There is significance correlation between Cyber Crime Awareness and Human Rights Awareness of college level students among Girls.

The second objective of the present study is to study the relationship between the Cyber Crime Awareness and Human Rights Awareness of college level students among girls. To fulfil this objective, correlation coefficient was calculated through Karl Pearson correlation method, which has been presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Correlation between Cyber Crime Awareness and Human Rights Awareness of college Level Students among Girls

| Variable | Correlation coefficient (r) | Df | Significance level | Value of significance level | Result |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|----|--------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Cyber Crime Awareness | -0.02 | 78 | 0.05 | 0.217 | Not Significant |
| Human Rights Awareness | | | | | |

In the above table 5, to examine the correlation between Cyber Crime Awareness and Human Rights Awareness of college level students among girls, the Pearson correlation coefficient technique was used. The obtained correlation value is -0.02 which is less than the critical value 0.217 at 0.05 significance level. Hence, hypothesis 2 is rejected.

Thus, it is clear that there is no significant correlation between Cyber Crime Awareness and Human Rights Awareness of college level students among girls.

CONCLUSION

The present study explored the relationship between Cyber Crime Awareness and Human Rights Awareness among college level students, with special reference to gender differences among boys and girls. The findings of the study indicate that the correlation between Cyber Crime Awareness and Human Rights Awareness varies across gender groups. The study revealed that among boys, there exists a statistically significant positive relationship between Cyber Crime Awareness and Human Rights Awareness. This suggests that boys who possess greater awareness about cyber crime issues also tend to demonstrate higher awareness regarding human rights. It may be inferred that increased understanding of online risks, digital safety, and cyber offences may contribute to a broader recognition of rights, responsibilities, and ethical concerns in the digital environment. On the other hand, the results showed that among girls, the relationship between Cyber Crime Awareness and Human Rights Awareness is not statistically significant. This indicates that awareness of cyber crime among girls does not necessarily correspond with their awareness of human rights. It is possible that girls may develop knowledge about cyber crime and human rights through different sources such as social experiences, educational exposure, or external influences, rather than these two aspects growing together. Thus, it can be concluded that Cyber Crime Awareness and Human Rights Awareness do not show a uniform relationship among all college level students, and gender plays an important role in shaping this association. The findings highlight the need for educational programs that integrate cyber crime awareness with human rights education, ensuring that both boys and girls develop a balanced understanding of safety, justice, and rights in the digital world. Despite the growing importance of cyber security and human rights in modern society, limited research has focused on their interrelationship at the college level. The present study contributes to the existing body of knowledge and emphasizes the necessity of further research and targeted awareness initiatives in this area.

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