

ABSTRACT

The rapid development of digital technology provides various conveniences in daily life but also presents serious challenges, one of which is the threat of phishing attacks. Phishing is a type of cybercrime that exploits human vulnerabilities to obtain sensitive information through deception or manipulation. Generation Z, as digital natives who are highly active on social media, is considered to have a high susceptibility to phishing attacks due to a lack of awareness and understanding regarding self-protection measures.

This study aims to analyze the influence of Generation Z's lack of awareness on phishing attacks using the Protection Motivation Theory (PMT) framework. PMT is employed to examine how threat appraisal, which consists of Perceived Severity and Perceived Vulnerability, and coping appraisal, which includes Response Efficacy, Self-Efficacy, and Response Costs, affect the motivation of social media users to protect themselves. This research adopts a quantitative method by distributing online questionnaires to Generation Z respondents in Indonesia. The data were analyzed using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method with the help of SmartPLS software.

The results of this study are expected to contribute theoretically to the development of research on cybersecurity behavior among Generation Z and to provide practical recommendations for educational institutions, policymakers, and information security practitioners in designing more effective and applicable digital literacy programs. Through increased awareness, confidence, and Self-Efficacy, Generation Z is expected to be better prepared to protect themselves from phishing threats in the digital era.

Keywords: Protection Motivation Theory, phishing, Generation Z, digital literacy, PLS-SEM