Cyber Malpractices: Hacking Incidents in Nepal

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Introduction

The era we live in is regarded as a technological era and people depend on technology to do their daily work. Computers are the main used technology in this field. However, many crimes are being done through the use of computers which is known as cyber crime. On this note, hacking is one of the cyber crimes. Williams (2022, April 16) defines that “Hacking is the activity of identifying weaknesses in a computer system or a network to exploit the security to gain access to personal data or business data” (para. 1). Hacking is regarded as a malicious act because it is mostly linked with illegal activity done by cyber criminals and it is not always a bad act. Hacking is done by hackers who are individuals or programmers who hack a computer with good or bad intentions. Hacking is mostly done for personal gains, protest, information gaining or even just for fun.

Types of Hacking

Hacking can be divided into two categories: Ethical hacking and unethical hacking. From the word itself we can say that ethical hacking is far better than unethical hacking. There are laws that punish for unethical hacking. Ethical hacking is an act of penetrating into system or networks to find out threats in the of system and try to protect it from malicious hackers. The purpose of ethical hacking is to fix the problems found during hacking and to improve the security of the system. Hackers who do ethical hacking have the permission of the owner to hack and report all the issues to the owner after finishing their hacking work. These hackers have no legal issues while they do their work. Meanwhile, unethical hacking on the other hand is opposite of ethical hacking. Unethical hacking is illegal and doing so can make a person a cyber criminal. This kind of hacking is done for stealing information, blackmailing and identity thieving. There is financial loss and done without authorization with ill intentions of the hacker.

Reasons for Hacking

Hacking is a serious problem if it is done without authorization. According to Agarwal (2018, March 12) hackers hack in order to steal or leak information, disrupt services, make a point, money or are driven by purpose of hacktivism, idealism or political motives. He says that the most common reason for hackers to hack is to steal or leak information. Agarwal (2018) states “Hackers just love to take something down. And then also leave a statement on the website” (para.8). He also thinks that hackers have successfully taken down many services by creating bots that overwhelm a server with traffic, thus, leading to a crash. According to him, many hackers are motivated with a specific goal in mind to hack. This sometimes only comes out when they are caught. Some want to be idealists who seek to expose injustice, while others have political reasons, while others simply target the government and so on.

According to Raconteur (2009), the motives to hack are as follows: 41% for ransom, 27% for insider threats, 26% for political reasons, 26% due to competition, 24% due to cyberwar, 205 due to anger and 11% is due to unknown motive.

Laws against Hacking in Nepal

Since hacking falls under cybercrime, the Central Investigation Bureau (CIB) works on this issue. The cyber law in Nepal follows the Electronics Transaction Act 2063, National ICT Policy 2072 and Electronics Transaction Rules 2064. However, ETA 2063 determines the penalties against crime of such kind in Nepal.

According to ETA (2063), Chapter 9, Section 44 (Piracy, Destruction and Alteration of Computer Source Code) states, “When computer source code is required to be kept as it is position for the time being the prevailing law, if any person, knowingly or with malafide intention, pirates, destroys, alters computer sources code to be used for any computer, computer programme, computer system or computer network or cause, other to do so, he/she shall be liable to the punishment with imprisonment not exceeding three years or with a fine not exceeding two hundred thousand Rupees or with both."

Section 45 (Unauthorized access of Computer Material) states, "If any person with an intention to have access in any programme, information or data of any computer, uses such a computer without authorization of the owner of or the person responsible for such a computer or even in the case of authorization, performs any act with an intention to have access in any programme, information or data contrary to from such authorization, such a person shall be liable to the punishment with the fine not exceeding Two Hundred Thousand Rupees or with imprisonment not exceeding three years or with both depending on the seriousness of the offence" (ETA 2063). These two sections are mostly linked with hacking issues.

Positive Effects of Hacking

Hacking is not always a bad thing. Hacking sometimes can bring positive results. Hassan (2018, May 21) says, "Hacktivism (a portmanteau of hack and activism) is technically outlined because the use of pcs and computer networks as a way of protest to market political ends. By this definition, hacktivism isn't relegated to questionable acts of security breaches alone. Some hacktivists are creating a positive impact on businesses, their communities and communities abroad" (para.3). The main positive effect of hacking is Data security. As a system gets hacked, we can find the vulnerabilities that the system has and can be strengthened through security updates. We can do penetration tests to even strengthen it more and prevent malicious hackers from causing harm. Another good use of hacking is to recover lost information for which losing password can be a perfect example. We should be thankful that there are ethical hackers who help for the positive of the society. The main role ethical hackers have is to improve security through legal means and also bring a positive impact. Alas, we should think of hacking as a good act too and not just an act that is for harm and ill intent.

Preventive Measures

Hacking is a serious issue even though it has positive aspects to it. Freedman (2022, Jan 15) says, “Hackers have a variety of motivations, ranging from financial gain to political goals. Awareness of these intentions can help you anticipate attacks that could affect your small business” (n.p). According to him, small businesses are often targeted as well because they underestimate the risk of cybercrime and may not have the resources to employ expensive cybersecurity. Freedman (2022) has given many measures to prevent from hacking. He adds up to use a firewall and install antivirus software, installing an anti-spyware software package, using complex passwords, keeping our OS, apps and browser up to date and ignoring spams. We should use two factor authentication and use encryption. Also, we must not use unsecured public Wi-Fi and get security programs.

Conclusion

To conclude, hacking is an act of trespassing a system or person’s information without or with authorization. Hacking can be seen in both good way and bad way. People have both good and ill intentions on hacking. Ethical hacking helps to protect and strengthen cyber security while unethical hacking does the opposite. The cyber laws in Nepal against hacking is not that good. It is because Nepal is not that technologically advanced that hacking has a serious threat in our daily life. However, being alert is also a good thing. As said before, hacking has positive impacts which ethical hackers do. We should always try to be safe from hacks. In my view, if any one is trying to become a hacker; think of being an ethical one rather than unethical one.

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