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**Legal/Ethical Issues of Social Engineering**

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### Legal/Ethical Issues of Social Engineering

With evolving technology, phishing emails have become a common aspect to online users. Cases have been reported in the past where people ended up losing personal information through the said emails. The following scenario depicts how phishing ends up harming innocent online users;

**Scenario:** While going through unread messages in her email account, Jane realizes a new message from an unknown sender. Upon perusing the link content, she notes that the information given therein concerns a vaccine for the latest strain of Covid-19 that the ministry of health has recently announced. Notably, the message states that the vaccine can provide a person potent immunity against the new strain and has been proven through research and tests. However, if the vaccine is released, it will be costly and therefore pleads with her to take advantage of the opportunity at her disposal by purchasing it online.

Before buying the vaccine, Jane sees it wise first to contact the sender. After making several calls, she realizes that all the customer service providers are busy with other calls. At this point, she decides to carry out the transaction. Surprisingly, after some time, she realizes that her bank account reads a negative balance because all the money in the account has been withdrawn. Upon contacting the bank, they inform her that there is nothing they can do about it since the source was illegitimate. At this point, she realizes she has been conned through phishing.

Several cybersecurity laws have been enacted to support and encourage ethics. The main role of cybersecurity is to keep computer systems, data, and networks safe by protecting concerned institutions' functionality, integrity, and reliability. In the process, such practices uphold ethics as the happiness and lives of individuals are protected. For example, in 2018,

Arizona enacted the cybersecurity law AZ EO 3, centered on online security of information and protection of citizens (Hamburg, 2021). In addition, it focuses on continuous advertising to the governor on the issues concerning cybersecurity and outlining the available resources that can help combat the threats from cybersecurity. As a result, the citizens feel secure knowing that their personal information, such as bank details, cannot be accessible by hackers.

Cybersecurity can arouse ethical conflicts, for example, when cybersecurity professionals utilize similar tactics as hackers in creating safeguards instead of exploits. Secondly, when using security solutions to have administrative access to individuals' devices, ethics tends to be exploited (Macnish & van der Ham, 2020). The pretext given in this case is a good depiction of phishing activities whose aim is to exploit the obtained details to harm someone, the government, and property. For instance, Jane was conned by fraudsters who perpetuated to have the latest vaccine against the new strain of covid-19. They use the information to con, such innocent victims. For that reason, the phishing laws apply to the pretext because it involves collecting and using the information of innocent citizens. One significant challenge in combating phishing activities is that law enforcers cannot identify the person in charge of such activities. Unfortunately, the only traceable information concerning them is the IP address, device and location used during the scam.

## References

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- Macnish, K., & van der Ham, J. (2020). Ethics in cybersecurity research and practice. *Technology in Society*, 63, 101382.

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