

## **How Personality Impacts the Incidence of Identity Theft and the Psychological Wellbeing of Victims**

**Ethics approval number: (S/15/820)**

### **Project Title**

Investigating the relationship between an individual's personality traits and the psychological symptoms experienced by individuals responding to online identity theft.

### **Investigators**

- Professor Doug Mahar (Head of School, School of Social Sciences, Honours supervisor, University of the Sunshine Coast)
- Miss Daisy Yuk Yan Chung (Honours Student, University of the Sunshine Coast)
- Dr David Lacey (Senior Research Fellow, Honours supervisor, University of the Sunshine Coast; Director/Board member of iDcare)

### **Purpose**

The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between an individual's personality traits and the psychological symptoms experienced by individuals responding to online identity theft. Demographic information, Big Five inventory and Depression Anxiety and Stress Scale will be used.

### **Requirements**

To be eligible to participate in the study, participants must:

- Be aged above 18 years old
- Experienced complex identity theft

### **Participant Experience**

You have been invited to take part in this project because you have experienced identity theft before. If you agree to take part in this review, you will be asked to complete a phone survey which will take approximately 15 minutes of your time. The survey will ask about your experiences in identity theft, personality traits and psychological wellbeing. Participating in this research project also involves giving consent about the de-identified use of age and gender from iDcare records.

### **Risks and benefits**

There are some risks to you when taking this survey. You may experience emotional discomfort answering questions. There is also a 15 minute time commitment. You should report any uncomfortable symptoms to your Case Manager, and can take a break at any time. There are no known direct benefits to you. If thinking about the identity theft that has

occurred could make you feel uncomfortable, iDcare support service can help you, but also other services, such as Relationships Australia (tel. 1300 364 277) can offer face to face support. However, we expect benefits for the identity theft victimisation community during this research project, because new understanding on identity theft victimisation will help to address this important issue.

### **Participation and consent**

If you agree to participate and you accessed this information sheet via iDcare's website, you will need to contact iDcare to arrange a time that is convenient for you to participate. iDcare may be contacted on telephone 1300 432 273 (Aus) or 0800 201 415 (NZ) and by pressing option "4" (Research and Student Placement Option).

As your survey responses will be non-identifiable, it will not be possible to withdraw your responses after you provided these as part of the phone survey. You will give verbal consent via a verbal consent script. This will be obtained by iDcare Case Managers prior to the commencement of the interview. You may withdraw at any stage, without explanation and there will be no consequences as a result. The participation is completely voluntary and you can continue to access the full range of support from iDcare.

### **Results**

The results of the research will be presented as Miss Yuk Yan Chung's Honour (Psychology) dissertation, published in conference, peer reviewed journals and iDcare reports. Due to the anonymous nature of this survey it is not possible to provide results to participants. A public version of the study results will be published on the iDcare website on 28 February 2016.

### **Confidentiality**

iDcare will keep a record of who has been contacted in relation to the project so that they don't ring you twice, but no record about whether you have participated in the research. Data gathered throughout the study will be coded so that no participants will be personally identifiable (i.e. it will not be possible to find out which data belongs to any specific participant). All data collected throughout the course of this study will be kept on password-protected computers. The published findings will not reveal the identity of any participant. De-identified data may also be used in future associated research projects and may also be made available to other researchers in the future.

### **Complaints**

If you have any complaints about the way this research project is being conducted you can raise them with the Chief Investigator (Professor Doug Mahar) or Investigator (Ms Yuk Yan Chung or Dr David Lacey) or, if you prefer an independent person, contact the Chairperson of the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of the Sunshine Coast: (c/- the Research Ethics Officer, Office of Research, University of the Sunshine Coast, Maroochydore DC 4558; telephone (07) 5459 4574; email [humanethics@usc.edu.au](mailto:humanethics@usc.edu.au)).

## Contact

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*The Researchers and the University would like to thank you for your interest in this project and appreciate the effort involved.*