

Behind the Screens: Mental Health Challenges and Resilience Strategies Among Digital Crime Fighters

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Abstract:

As digital crime grows in scale and complexity, digital forensics analysts and cybersecurity professionals work behind the screens to protect individuals, organizations, and national security. Yet, the psychological cost of this critical role often remains overlooked. This study explores the mental health challenges faced by these professionals, including burnout, secondary trauma, and emotional fatigue, resulting from constant exposure to harmful digital content and high-pressure investigations. Drawing from professional insights, current literature, and global trends, the paper identifies individual and organizational risk factors such as heavy workloads, on-call duties, and cultural stigma surrounding mental health in cybersecurity teams.

In response, it highlights protective strategies and resilience-building practices: structured peer support, mental health awareness programs, role rotation, and policy-level changes to foster a healthier work environment. By bringing these hidden challenges to light, the paper aims to raise public awareness, advocate for institutional support, and encourage dialogue on the human side of digital defence. The findings offer practical recommendations to reduce burnout, improve well-being, and ensure sustainable performance in cybersecurity and digital forensic teams. Ultimately, this work invites the broader community to see digital defenders not only as technical experts but also as people who need empathy, care, and systemic support.

Keywords:

Burnout, digital forensics, mental health, cybersecurity, resilience.