# Profiling Korean Sex crimes: Offender Characteristics and Crime Scene Actions

# Sunghwan Kim,

# Louise Almond\*

# Marie Eyre

# University of Liverpool, UK

\*Correspondence should be addressed to Dr Louise Almond

School of Psychology, University of Liverpool,

Eleanor Rathbone Building, Bedford Street South, Liverpool L69 7ZA, United Kingdom

Phone: +44 (0) 151 794 6708 E-mail: L.E.Almond@liverpool.ac.uk

# Abstract

The present study aimed to examine the demographic information of sex offenders in South Korea and explore whether a UK thematic model of criminal behaviour could be replicated in the Korean context. The 27 variables of crime scene actions derived from 50 Korean sexual offences through a content analysis were analysed with Smallest Space Analysis (SSA). Chi-square was also administered to explore the differences in offender characteristics among behavioural themes. Consequently, three separate action themes, Hostility-Involvement, Theft, and Control, were revealed. Next, each case was assigned to one of the dominant or hybrid themes, with 84% of the total cases being classified to the dominant themes. Moreover, there were significant differences in four offender characteristics between the themes: ‘previous conviction of robbery’, ‘previous conviction of sexual crime’, ‘knowing the victim’ and ‘vehicle use’. These outcomes have implications for the development of the Korean profiling system.

KEYWORDS

profiling, sex offence, crime scene action, offender characteristic, behavioural theme

The occurrence of violent crimes can make citizens experience a high level of fear and tension. As a result, public anxiety may enact a lot of stress on police services, putting pressure on officers to ensure that the perpetrator is caught. Such crimes are likely solved more easily when the victim knows the offender. On the other hand, if the crime is committed by a stranger, the police may investigate relatively more potential suspects and comparable cases to solve it during a short period. Therefore, the need for efficient approaches to reduce the scope of the investigation and to identify a prime suspect rapidly has been emphasized within law enforcement agencies. Offender Profiling (OP) is considered to be one of the tools to support those police investigations. OP was introduced as an investigative strategy for prioritizing suspects and developing new lines of inquiry in serial crime investigations (Woodworth & Porter, 1999). Although various definitions of OP were suggested (e.g., Douglas & Burgess, 1986; Ormerod, 1996), it is generally defined as an investigative tactic to infer the distinct psychological and behavioural traits of a criminal with the interpretations of crime scene actions (Fox & Farrington, 2018). Further, Almond, Alison, and Porter (2007) stated that OP may be a broader concept which is called ‘behavioural investigative advice’ to contain offender profiles as well as interviewing strategies and crime linkage analysis.

Previous review and meta-analysis studies showed that there have been considerable efforts invested in the research and application of OP in academia and practice over four decades (Bennell, Bloomfield, Emeno, & Musolino, 2013; Dowden, Bennell, & Bloomfield, 2007; Fox & Farrington, 2018; Snook, Eastwood, Gendrau, Goggin, & Cullen, 2007). Behavioural scientists (e.g., psychologists, criminologists) have been building such profiles, and profilers working in law enforcement services (e.g., the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation) are frequently called on to provide investigative support. As such, this method can be adopted to establish or reduce the number of potential suspects by analysing associations between the type of offences occurred and the characteristics of criminals who are likely to commit the offences. The profiles usually contain not only offenders’ core demographic variables such as age, gender, employment, and marital status, but also comprise information that alerts police officers to psychological traits deduced from crime scenes (Holmes & Holmes, 2009). Notably, Turvey (2011) stressed that offender profiles should be determined based on considerable analysis of physical evidence at the crime scene; that is, crime scene reconstruction based on the assessment of physical evidence is essential to infer criminal behaviours at the time of the crime which may be associated with their characteristics.

## Classifying Sexual Offence

Offender profiles have been produced for various violent crimes. Specifically, after homicide, sexual assault was the second highest type of crime examined in OP (Fox & Farrington, 2018). Some research suggested that the psychological profiles of sex offenders may be built using a variety of aspects such as personality disorders, antisocial orientation, sexual deviance, and intimacy deficiency (see Bumby & Hansen, 1997; Eastman, Craissati, & Shaw, 2019; Henshaw, Ogloff, & Clough, 2018). Furthermore, Canter and Heritage (1990) suggested that profiling in sexual offences is particularly appropriate for empirical study, arguing that sexual offences reveal more information about perpetrators’ actions than other violent crime. Initially, clinicians working with sex criminals argued that the type of sex offenders could be classified. Consequently, OP on sexual offences has its origin in classifications that were often based on the criminal’s intentions or motivations. In other words, the psychological function of the sexual offence was underlined in their approach, rather than the offending behaviour per se. For example, Groth, Burgess, and Holmstrom (1977) suggested *power-assertive* and *power-reassurance,* wherein the act expresses sexual aggression to satisfy the offender’s appetite for power, and *anger-retaliation* and *anger-excitation*, wherein the offender displays anger with sexual aggression. These concepts on motivation, which have to be analysed from the criminal or other sources not observed directly, also reduce the reliability and validity of classification criteria (Hazelwood, Reboussin, & Warren, 1989). In response to these criticisms, Knight began an empirical study at the Massachusetts Treatment Centre (MTC) in 1978. This research sought to improve the existing sex offender classification systems such as MTC: CM3 and MTC: R3 (see Knight, 1989; Knight & Prentky, 1990). These were empirically validated by studies performed within and outside the MTC (Prentky & Burgess, 2000). However, the revised MTC classifications were still based on criminal motivation, which was not immediately discernible from crime scenes.

The critique on the classifications developed in clinical settings caused different methods to evolve for practical use in criminal investigations. Specifically, diverse studies attempted to improve understanding of offender characteristics by differentiating offending behaviours. Especially, Canter and Heritage (1990) focused on behaviours that are reported by the victim. They found the existence of five behavioural themes, Intimacy, Sexuality, Violence, Impersonal, and Criminality by conducting a Smallest Space Analysis (SSA) of crime scene actions in sexual offence cases. Further, Canter, Bennell, Alison, and Reddy (2003) used the same multi-dimensional scaling technique to study whether a scale of differing levels of the violation of the victim by the offender existed within a sample of 112 British rapes. Canter and his colleagues reported that there is a scale of violation that ranges from personal violation to physical violation to sexual violation. They described that, within these levels of the violation, offending behaviours could be differentiated into Hostile, Controlling, Stealing or Involving behavioural themes. The hostility theme indicated aggressive/violent behaviours against the victim (e.g., multiple violence). The controlling theme consisted of offenders’ behaviours to threaten the victim not to report the victimization or to hide their identity (e.g., blindfolding). The theft theme concerned the offender’s theft of the victim’s goods in addition to rape. Lastly, the involvement theme included attempted behaviours to involve with the victim (e.g., sexual comment). From these behavioural themes, Canter et al. (2003) provided further support for earlier research that sexual offences can be classified in terms of the pattern of interactions between an offender and a victim. Interestingly, in Australian research, Kocsis, Cooksey, and Irwin (2002) proposed a five-cluster model of serial rape behaviours employing a similar approach, which consisted of Brutality, Intercourse, Chaotic, and Ritual. Häkkänen, Lindlöf, and Santtila (2004) also revealed three behavioural themes (Hostility, Involvement, and Theft) as well as the four categories of offender characteristics (Conventional, Psychiatric/Elderly, Criminal/Violent, and Criminal/Property) using Finnish stranger rape samples. Recent studies have explored more specific sex offences. Houtepen, Sijtsema, and Bogaerts (2014) showed the characteristics of non-contact sexual offenders (who committed child indecent image crimes) and their offending types. Moreover, Shelton, Eakin, Hoffer, Muirhead, and Owens (2016) found that the majority of contact sex offenders against children do not have a similar criminal history and tend to involve indecent materials before their contact sexual offending. Besides, Ioannou, Hammond, and Machin (2017) explored the characteristics of offenders and victims of sexual abuse between men.

## The Need for a Korean-themed Model

Although many studies on OP have dealt with a wide range of sexual crime, they have been mainly conducted in Western countries such as the UK, US, and Canada (see Fox & Farrington, 2018). Therefore, methodologically sophisticated studies should be performed to ensure that profiling approaches can be generalised to sexual offences committed in other nations (Dowden et al., 2007). Landau (cited in Smith, 2000) also pointed out that cross-cultural research should be conducted, not only to accumulate our knowledge of criminal behaviour in different countries but also to test western-based theories in non-western contexts. However, few studies have investigated whether profiling models that appear to be useful in the developed countries can be generalised to solve sexual crime in different cultural settings. That is, the profiling studies conducted from a Western perspective and their results are likely to be generalised without any consideration for cultural factors. However, psychological discrepancies between Western and Eastern individuals have been consistently reported (see Brown, Cai, Oakes, & Deng, 2009; De Vaus, Hornsey, Kuppens, & Bastian, 2018; Kajonius, 2017). In particular South Korea, one of the Asian countries, has a distinct culture, language, and policing system yet empirical research on OP is in its infancy in the country.

In South Korea, the number of sex crimes (23,478) was much higher than that of other violent crimes such as homicide (309) and robbery (821) in 2008 (KNPA, 2018). Also, the number of sex crimes increased by 12% between 2014 and 2018, while homicide and robbery offences decreased by 17% and 48% respectively during the same period. For this reason, the Korean National Police Agency (KNPA) has tried to develop scientific OP techniques that are optimized in the Korean setting. Thus, the KNPA initiated the Scientific Crime Analysis System (SCAS) to manage a computerized OP database in 2005. Furthermore, it has recruited officers who majored in social sciences (e.g., psychology, sociology) to assign them the duties of OP across the country since 2006. The specialized officers were trained to use advanced OP strategies as well as being required to develop the Korean OP system by conducting offender interviewing and criminal behaviour analysis. Moreover, some leading researchers have conducted meaningful studies to establish Korean models of criminal behaviour with utility for OP. For example, Salfati and Park (2007) found that Korean homicides can be classified from two perspectives, ‘expressive/instrumental aggression’, and ‘organized/disorganized violence’. Notably, Sea and Beauregard (2018a) also revealed how Korean homicide offenders deposit victims’ bodies, after committing their crime, in terms of geographical and temporal characteristics. Also, it was found that hebephile sex criminals have characteristics which are similar to the combination of both the paedophile and teleiophile criminals in a Korean sample (Sea & Beauregard, 2018b). Further, several studies recently showed notable results by comparing Korean and Western offending behaviours. Specifically, it was discovered that there were similarities and differences between Korean, Finnish, and Swedish homicide offenders in mutilation behaviours on victim bodies (see Sea & Beauregard, 2016). Also, common and distinct characteristics (e.g., previous convictions, modus operandi) between Korean and Canadian offenders who committed sexual homicide were revealed (see Sea, Beauregard, & Martineau, 2019).

## Current Study

 Although some studies of criminal behaviours and characteristics have been conducted in South Korea, there is still little research to prove whether the Western-based OP models of sex crimes are validated in the country. If differences are identified between behavioural themes in sexual offences between the West and S. Korea, the knowledge may be used as a scientific base to showthe need for developing a suitable thematic model of Korean sexual offences. Further, it is also crucial for the improvement of evidence-based OP techniques to explore whether behavioural themes based on the Western frame can play a role in classifying sexual offences as well as being associated with offender characteristics in the Korean context. Thus, to test the availability of the Western OP models using Korean samples is essential before applying it to real-life investigations. Particularly, the current research adopted the model created by Canter et al. (2003). According to a recent systematic review of OP by Fox and Farrington (2018), Canter et al.’s (2003) British behavioural-themed model of rape is one of the most cited publications since 1976. The model has therefore had significant influence in the field. In addition, the behavioural variables and coding method utilized are concrete and objective and can be readily applied in replication research. It is nonetheless a Western-focused model. Accordingly, this study aims to: (a) explore demographic information of sexual offenders in Korea; (b) investigate if the composite model in Canter et al. (2003) can be replicated in a Korean sample and context; and (c) examine whether behavioural themes are associated with offender characteristics. Subsequently, the following were hypothesized:

*Hypothesis 1:* The occurrence frequency of crime scene actions and the thematic structure of Korean sexual offences would differ from those of British sexual offences due to cultural differences.

*Hypothesis 2:* The proposed thematic model would be able to serve as an effective method of classifying Korean sexual offences.

*Hypothesis 3:* There would be differences between offender characteristics depending on behavioural themes.

# Method

## Data Set

The KNPA database was explored, resulting in a data set of 50 sexual assaults that occurred between 2006 and 2009. Initially, 387 sexual crimes were identified during that period. Cases were then selected using three criteria: rapes, convictions, and the completeness of documented information. The case files typically contained the offenders’ profiles, criminal methods, crime scene information, and offender and victim statements. The database was also investigated for the criminal records of offenders. The investigation documents were initially accumulated by different police officers from various regions and, because there were no standardised criteria for gathering records, the contents contained varying amounts and types of information from case to case. However, the randomly selected cases occurred across the country represented a typical sample of Korean sex offences. Of the total 50 cases, 72% of cases were stranger crimes, and 28% of cases were acquaintance crimes. Of the total 50 victims, 94% of victims were female, and 6% of victims were male. The age of victims ranged between 6 and 50 years, and the mean age was 23.5 years (*SD*=11.7). All of the 50 offenders were male. The age of offenders ranged between 16 and 56 years, and the mean age was 35.2 years (*SD*=10.4). Additional demographic information of the offenders is indicated in Table 1.

‘Insert Table 1 here’

## Procedure

The data for the study were acquired from a content analysis that yielded a list of components common to the sexual offences. The variables of 10 offender characteristics and 27 crime scene actions were coded across the 50 sexual offences in dichotomous form to investigate the associations between them. Specific offender characteristics which may be associated with criminal behaviours were selected based on literature review (e.g., Forry, Kirabira, Ashaba, & Rukundo, 2019; Loeffler, 2013; Mason, Hitch, Kosterman, McCarty, Herrenkohl, & Hawkins, 2010; Yu, 1998) and consultation with an expert detective in sexual crime. In addition, the crime scene action variables included in the coding scheme followed those of Canter et al. (2003; see Table 2). The use of dichotomous coding was found by Canter and Heritage (1990) to analyse the contents reliably. Thus, the variables were coded as either 1 (indicating presence) or 0 (indicating absence). Particularly, crime scene action variables coded produced the data matrix upon which the Smallest Space Analysis (SSA) was performed.

‘Insert Table 2 here’

## Data Analysis

To establish the thematic structure of Korean sexual offences, the crime scene action data was subjected to SSA, a Multi-Dimensional Scaling (MDS) procedure that presents the correlation between variables as distances in statistically derived geometric space. SSA is a process devised to substitute factor analysis and does not require any inference about whether prime dimensions are linear or orthogonal (Guttman, 1954). SSA is performed to analyze the association between all variables. An iterative process is then run to maximize the fit between the rank order of the gaps in space and the rank order of the correlation between the variables. A stress value or coefficient of alienation estimates the degree of fit between primary correlation values and the gaps in a space (Schiffman, Reynolds, & Young, 1981). As a non-metric method, SSA focuses on the analysis of ranking rather than absolute value. Therefore, the results of SSA in space are comparative correlations between variables and should be understood by a perspective of regions rather than dimensions. Moreover, the outcomes of SSA depict the variables as dots in a geometric space. This depiction is investigated on the presupposition that any pattern it shows should summarize and describe diversities in the criminal’s style of reciprocal action with the victim. Namely, the comparative frequency of common instances of offender behaviours is indicated in the relative gap between the dots. Thus, the dimensional model suggests an outline for judging commonalities and distinctions between the actions that distinguish the sexual offences. Additionally, a chi-square test was conducted to examine differences in offender characteristics among the themes of Korean sexual offences.

# Results

 Table 2 indicated that, of the 27 variables, the frequency of crime scene actions of this sample was higher than that of Canter et al. (2003) in sixteen variables. Especially, the variables, ‘forces victim participation’ and ‘verbal violation’, showed much higher frequency than those of Britain. On the other hand, the frequency of three variables such as ‘surprise attack’, ‘compliments victim’, and ‘tears clothing’ in the Korean sample was much lower than that of the British results. In addition, following Canter et al. (2003), the current results did not show any extreme sexual behaviours, such as sadism, accompany the sexual offences.

## Crime Scene Actions and Thematic Structures (see Figure 1 & 2)

 SSA was performed on an association matrix of Jaccard coefficients using SSA-I (Lingoes, 1973). The two-dimensional solution gave a Guttman-Lingoes’ coefficient of alienation of 0.23 in 16 iterations, indicating a reasonable fit for these data. Figure 1 and 2 present the resulting two-dimensional configuration. Each point is one of the 27 variables describing criminal conduct. The closer two points are, the higher their inter-correlation and the more likely they are to both occur in a single sexual offence (Shye, Elizur, & Hoffman, 1994).

A central core of variables with a high frequency is located in the centre, and lower frequency actions spread towards the edges of the plot. As indicated, the variables ‘vaginal penetration’ (74%), ‘forces victim participation’ (74%) and ‘verbal violation’ (62%) were discovered to present a core area in SSA configuration. Furthermore, the moderate frequency band (>50%) forms a central region in the SSA plot—in other words, the variables in this region are conceptually central to the conduct in Korean sexual offences. Two crime scene actions found in this moderate frequency band involve ‘fellatio’ and ‘threatens no report’. Within the low-frequency area (20–50%), the variables were spread throughout the region, which represent a wide range of criminal behaviours. The actions include ‘cunnilingus’, ‘single violence’, ‘steals unidentifiable’, ‘demands goods’, ‘kisses victim’, ‘weapon use’, ‘surprise attack’, ‘gags victim’, ‘binds victim’, ‘blindfolds victim’ and ‘identifies victim’. In addition, the majority of the very low-frequency actions (<20%) can be grouped according to their similarities; ‘anal penetration’, ‘offender sexual comment’, ‘forces victim participation’ and ‘tears clothing’ reflect sexual activity, while ‘steals identifiable’ and ‘steals personal’ describe the criminal behaviour of theft. The three variables ‘compliments victim’, ‘implies knowing victim’ and ‘demeans victim’ represent the expression of the offender towards the victim. The last variable, ‘disguise’, means the offender wearing any form of disguise.

‘Insert Figure 1 here’

SSA configuration was also investigated to identify whether the thematic model in Canter et al. (2003) can be presented in a Korean sample and context. In the current SSA configuration, the co-occurrence of crime scene action variables was given three regional analyses: Hostility-Involvement, Theft, and Control. The variables, ‘vaginal penetration’, ‘forces victim participation’ and ‘verbal violation’, in the core were not considered as being part of a theme, as they are common to the majority of sexual offences. A Kuder-Richardson 20 (K-R 20) coefficient was utilized to determine the internal reliability of each theme in SSA. The K-R 20 is equivalent to the Cronbachs’ alpha but can be used with dichotomous data. The coefficient was 0.61 for the Hostility-Involvement theme, 0.73 for the Theft theme, and 0.79 for the Control theme. The coefficients are reasonable considering the data were not originally collected for empirical research.

Insert Figure 2 here’

## Assigning Cases to Behavioural Themes (see Table 3)

To analyse whether the thematic model presented can serve as a practical method of classifying all sexual offences, each of the 50 cases was tested to establish whether they could be assigned to dominant behavioural themes (Salfati & Canter, 1999). Each case was given a score for all of the three themes. A case was classified as belonging to one of the three themes if the frequency score of the occurrence of variables for that theme was greater than or equal to the sum of the frequency scores for the other two themes. If no theme was great enough to supersede the other two, the case was classified as a hybrid, indicating similar frequency scores on more than one theme. Using this method, of the 50 sexual offences, 84% were assigned to a dominant theme, 14% were classified as a hybrid and 2% were classified as neither of a dominant theme or a hybrid. Of the 84% of the sexual offences that could be assigned to a dominant theme, 44% were classified as falling under the Hostility-Involvement theme, 20% were classified as falling under the Control theme, and 20% were classified as falling under the Theft theme. Moreover, out of the 14% of the sexual offences classified as a hybrid, 6% were classified as falling under a hybrid of the Hostility-Involvement and Theft theme. 6% were also classified as falling under a hybrid of the Control and Theft theme. Of the hybrid, 2% were classified as falling under the Hostility-Involvement and Control theme.

‘Insert Table 3 here’

## Relating Offender Characteristics to Behavioural Themes (see Table 4)

Having established that 84% of sexual offence cases could be assigned to a dominant theme, the analysis was conducted to examine whether these behavioural themes can suggest differences in offender characteristics. Chi-square analysis revealed four significant differences among the offender characteristics. Of the 42 cases, offenders in the Hostility-Involvement theme knew victims before conducting the offence in 59.1% of cases, while those in the Theft and Control theme were acquainted with victims in 20.0% and 10.0% of cases each ($χ^{2}$=8.85, p<.05). Offenders in the Theft and Control theme used a vehicle for criminal conduct in 80.0% of cases respectively, while those in the Hostility-Involvement theme arrived at the crime scene by use of a vehicle in 40.9% of cases ($χ^{2}$=6.65, p<.05). Concerning previous convictions, offenders in the Control theme had a history of robbery in 40.0% of cases, whereas those in the Theft and Hostility-Involvement theme had a prior criminal record for robbery in 20.0% and 4.5% of cases respectively ($χ^{2}$=6.33, p<.05). Further, offenders in the Hostility-Involvement theme had a previous conviction of sexual crime in 54.5% of cases; on the other hand, those in the Theft and Control theme had a criminal record of sexual crime in 20.0% and 10.0% of cases each ($χ^{2}$=7.35, p<.05). There were no significant differences in other offender characteristics among the three themes of sexual offences.

‘Insert Table 4 here’

# Discussion

 The current study investigated demographic characteristics of sexual offenders in South Korea, and whether the behavioural thematic model by Canter et al. (2003), based on the British offenders, could be replicated in the Korean context. Adopting identical criminal behaviour variables to Canter et al. (2003) produced a thematic model of sexual offences. The current model makes a significant contribution to our theoretical understanding of sexual crime and methods of criminal investigations. In support of hypothesis one, it was found that the two countries were dissimilar in the frequency of criminal behaviour; that is, there was no identical frequency (%) on 27 crime scene actions between Korean and British offenders.

 SSA revealed three separate action themes with emphases on Hostility-Involvement, Theft or Control. In support of hypothesis one, this did not correspond with the thematic groupings in Canter et al. (2003). First of all, it was thought that the crime scene actions, ‘vaginal penetration’, ‘forces victim participation’ and ‘verbal violation’, shown in the core area, represented the key characteristics of Korean sexual crime. On the other hand, in the British model, ‘vaginal penetration’ and ‘surprise attack’ were indicated in the corresponding area.

Furthermore, there was no significant regional disparity between the Hostility and Involvement theme in the Korean sample where not only most variables within both themes overlapped but also some variables appeared in different regions. Specifically, excepting the variables in the core band, eight crime scene action variables located in the Hostility-Involvement theme were identical with those in the Hostility or Involvement theme of the British model. However, five behavioural variables on the Involvement or Hostility theme of the previous model were indicated in the Control theme (‘single violence’, ‘tears clothing’) or Theft theme (‘identifies Victim’, ‘demeans victim’, ‘implies knowing victim’) in the Korean context. In addition, oral sex behaviours, ‘fellatio’ and ‘cunnilingus’ were noted most frequently in the Hostility-Involvement theme.

Previous research explained that the Hostility theme reflects aggressive offending behaviour (see Canter et al., 2003; Canter & Heritage, 1990). In contrast with this, the offender within the Involvement theme desires social relations with the victim during a sexual offence (Marshall, 1989). Moreover, the victim is treated not as a sexual object but as a reactive person in the Involvement theme (Canter et al., 2003). The two themes were therefore considered to be conflicting concepts (Canter et al., 2003; Marshall, 1989). However, in the Korean setting, the two themes were classified in the same region as well as 44% of the cases were assigned to the Hostility-Involvement theme. The result implies that Korean sex offenders are more likely to treat the victim as a sexual object while simultaneously desiring social relations with the victims.

 One possible explanation for why the Hostile and Involvement theme overlapped in this context (unlike the previous model) may be found in the Korean sex culture. South Korea has transformed itself into one of the world’s most electronically connected nations where most households (98%) use high-speed Internet (Collins, 2013). Consequently, the flood of pornographic materials available on the Internet has been widely prevalent (Kim & Fu, 2008). According to a survey study (Sun, Miezan, Lee, & Shim, 2015), the majority of Korean males had consumed pornography, and this was associated with their sexual relationships. Furthermore, these results differed from American research using identical methodology. Many studies have shown the detrimental effects of pornography on sexual behaviours (e.g., Bloom & Hagedorn, 2015; Hald, Malamuth, & Yuen, 2010; [Malamuth, Hald, & Koss, 2012](https://www-sciencedirect-com.liverpool.idm.oclc.org/science/article/pii/S1359178918302404%22%20%5Cl%20%22bb0130)). This may be because pornography usually shows unrealistic, even bizarre, attempts of a male to develop a relationship with a female and he exhibits aggressive sexual behaviours (Marshall & Barrett, 1990). Furthermore, excessive pornography consumption may result in the false perception that females are sexual objects (Peter & Valkenburg, 2009). For these reasons, offenders may connect hostile behaviours with relationship acquisition due to the model shown in the pornography, and thereby transfer the combination to their sexual acts. Bandura (1973) introduced this idea, which he called observational learning or modelling, to the social learning process. Indeed, a preponderance of previous research showed that watching illegal pornography has a meaningful positive relation to sexual aggression and acts as a significant trigger for sexual crime (e.g., Allen, D’Allesio, & Brezgel, 1995; Crossman, 1995; Vega & Malamuth, 2007).

For the Theft theme, the variables accorded well with those of the Theft theme in the British model. However, contrary to the results of Canter et al. (2003), the variables ‘surprise attack’, ‘identifies victim’, ‘demeans victim’ and ‘implies knowing victim’ appeared in the Theft theme of the current research. Those actions had been shown in the Involvement or Hostility theme in the previous model. Therefore, it is interpreted that Korean sexual offenders in the Theft theme steal the articles of the victims as well as tending to attempt to build intimate relationships with them. However, ‘identifies victim’ and ‘implies knowing the victim’ should be understood with caution. This is because offenders may behave in such a way to make the victims reluctant to report the incident to the police by hinting potential revenge with the victim’s identity.

 In general, the crime scene actions in the Control theme also corresponded with those in Canter et al. (2003). However, unlike the previous results, the variables ‘single violence’ and ‘tears clothing’ occurred in this division, suggesting that some part of the Control and Hostility theme coincided in the Korean study. It was likely that the two behaviours are used to control the victims effectively with the aggressive ways in Korean crime. For example, some offenders may hit the victim to weaken his/her resistance to their sexual behaviour. Also, it was possible that offenders took off or tore victims’ clothes to prevent their escape from the crime scene in a hostile manner.

As such, not only are there frequency differences (in some variables) between this study and Canter et al. (2003) with regard to crime scene behaviour, the thematic structures of Korean sexual offences also differ from those of the British research. These differences suggest that cross-cultural research is necessary. Investigating these differences and searching for the implied meaning behind the observable differences will increase our knowledge of sexual offences across the countries. Furthermore, to test Western-based theories in other cultural contexts will serve to develop universal theory beyond Western culture. Assigning 84% of cases to the dominant themes, the present analysis showed that the proposed framework turns out to be a useful way of classifying Korean sexual offences, which supports hypothesis two. This meant that the thematic divisions can be effectively applied to investigative work in Korean law enforcement.

In support of hypothesis three, significant differences were also found in four offender characteristics across the three themes of sexual offences: ‘offender knew victim’, ‘offender used vehicle’, ‘previous conviction of robbery’, and ‘previous conviction of sexual offence’. These findings showed that a correlation exists between previous convictions of the offender and behavioural themes. They also indicated that human behaviour is largely a result of previous experience and that offenders’ behaviours reflect their previous criminal experiences (Davies, 1997). Thus, the outcomes support the idea that the associations between offender characteristics and crime scene actions can be utilized as an investigative profiling technique. In addition, it was shown that offenders in the Hostility-Involvement theme were: i) more likely to commit sexual offences against someone they already knew; and ii) less likely to use a vehicle for the crime compared to those in the Theft and Control theme. The results have great implications for police investigations because the information that can be inferred from the crime scene will assist investigators in reducing the number of possible suspects.

However, the present study has some limitations that should be considered. Firstly, because of the small sample size, the generalisability of the findings may be limited. Furthermore, it may be caused by the number of cases that only four offender characteristics were significantly different between the themes. Therefore, future efforts should be made to replicate the current findings with a larger sample size.

With respect to sexual crime, although this study showed that there are common and distinct aspects in criminal behaviours and relevant themes between S. Korea and the UK, it is still questionable whether comparable results can be found in other Asian countries. However, there has been little evidence on it to date. Thus, future studies should test whether the present behavioural framework is applicable to sexual offences in other Asian countries, particularly in relation to countries or regions where technological change and Internet use is less pervasive.

Furthermore, the data were derived from various documents of investigation, such as offender and victim statements. Even though most cases were coded according to victim statements, some variables may be based on offender statements or other investigative documents. It was therefore sometimes difficult to find the source of a variable.

Moreover, the fact that the data may be biased in various ways should be considered. For example, in victim statements, victims likely focus on specific facets of the offence over others to stress their disapproval and the pain factor of the violence. Consequently, these problems can produce a lack of internal validity. Additional information on offender characteristics would help us to draw more precise results. Unselected variables may contribute to a stronger understanding of offenders and reveal more associations between crime scene actions and offender circumstances than the coded variables in a Korean sample and context. This is because the criminal data were not collected for research purposes; rather, they were collected in line with operational practices; specifically, recording detailed information about the offender was not an essential procedure for every case in police investigations.

Lastly, although the results showed that OP would be useful for police investigations, there have been still unsolved issues which should be explored. Mokros and Alison (2002) among others have questioned the absence of an objective basis to describe why specific aspects of a person should accord with how the person conducts his offence. Furthermore, Alison and colleagues (2003) pointed out that the situational factors affecting criminal conduct should be considered for the validity of offender profiles. Also, further research can consider testing the utility of the model by predicting the offender characteristics with the crime scene action variables. As such, studies investigating and understanding crime scene actions in these aspects would be useful to develop more reliable OP techniques in the future.

# Conclusion

The present study tested the British behavioural theme model developed by Canter et al. (2003) in the Korean context. The British thematic model of criminal behaviour was generally workable to classify sexual crime cases as dominant behavioural themes in the Korean context. However, the Smallest Space Analysis (SSA) revealed that there are differences between the countries in the frequency of criminal behaviours as well as dominant behavioural themes identified. Notably, in the Korean sample, the Hostility and Involvement themes had overlapped one another. Furthermore, a chi-square test revealed that four offender characteristics (i.e., a prior record of robbery and sexual crime, knowing the victim, and using vehicles) differed within the dominant behavioural themes. Those results have implications for the development of validated OP tools in South Korea.

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Table 1.

*Demographic Information of Offenders (N=50)*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Demographics | Frequency (%) |  | Demographics | Frequency (%) |
| Gender |  |  | Age |  |
| Male | 100 |  | 10s | 4 |
| Schooling |  |  | 20s | 28 |
| Unknown | 2 |  | 30s | 32 |
| Primary | 16 |  | 40s | 22 |
| Middle | 20 |  | 50s | 14 |
| High | 44 |  | Marital status |  |
| Undergraduate | 6 |  | Unmarried | 58 |
| Postgraduate | 12 |  | Married | 42 |
| Employment |  |  | Economy |  |
| Unemployed | 34 |  | Low | 72 |
| Student | 4 |  | Middle | 24 |
| Manual | 24 |  | High | 4 |
| Mechanic | 18 |  | Alcohol use |  |
| Business | 14 |  | Non-drinker | 22 |
| Administrative | 4 |  | Drinker | 78 |
| Professional | 2 |  | Military service |  |
| Growth environment |  |  | Unfinished | 16 |
| Parentless  | 12 |  | Finished | 44 |
| Single parent | 30 |  | Exempted | 40 |
| Two-parent | 58 |  | Mental disorder |  |
| Religion |  |  | Non-existence | 84 |
| Non-religion | 62 |  | Existence | 16 |
| Protestantism | 18 |  | Robbery |  |
| Roman Catholic | 2 |  | Absence | 80 |
| Buddhism | 18 |  | Presence | 20 |
| Victim relationship |  |  | Sexual crime |  |
| Stranger | 72 |  | Absence | 70 |
| Acquaintance | 28 |  | Presence | 30 |
| Transportation |  |  | Violence |  |
| Personal vehicle | 26 |  | Absence | 56 |
| Public transit  | 16 |  | Presence | 44 |
| Bike/Motorbike  | 12 |  | Fraud |  |
| Walking | 36 |  | Absence | 72 |
| Others | 10 |  | Presence | 28 |

Table 2.

*Variables (N=27) Reflecting Crime Scene Action and Frequency of Occurrence*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Abbreviations | Variables  | Frequency (%) |
| S. Korea | UK |
| Vag | Vaginal Penetration  | 74 | 82 |
| Vicpart | Forces victim participation | 74 | 29 |
| Verbviol | Verbal violence | 62 | 20 |
| Fellatio | Forces victim to perform oral sex | 50 | 34 |
| Threat | Threatens no report | 50 | 23 |
| Cunnilingus | Forces victim to receive oral sex | 46 | 18 |
| Singviol | Single violence | 44 | 28 |
| Stealsunid | Steals unidentifiable | 42 | 20 |
| Demandsgds | Demands goods | 40 | 16 |
| Kiss | Kisses victim | 40 | 44 |
| Multiviol | Multiple violence | 38 | 15 |
| Weapon | Weapon use | 32 | 39 |
| Sup | Surprise attack | 30 | 74 |
| Gag | Gags victim | 28 | 11 |
| Bind | Binds victim | 26 | 14 |
| Blindfold | Blindfolds victim | 24 | 15 |
| Identifies | Identifies victim | 24 | 25 |
| Analpan | Anal penetration | 16 | 19 |
| Offcomment | Makes offensive sexual comments | 16 | 61 |
| Viccomment | Forces victim to make sexual comments | 16 | 4 |
| Disguise | Wears disguise | 14 | 6 |
| Stealsid | Steals identifiable | 14 | 10 |
| Demeansvic | Demeans victim | 12 | 18 |
| Stealspers | Steals personal | 12 | 6 |
| Compliment | Compliments victim | 8 | 16 |
| Implies knowing | Implies knowing victim | 8 | 10 |
| Tears | Tears clothing | 8 | 18 |

Table 3

*Sexual Offences (N=50) Assigned to Behavioural Themes*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Themes | Cases (%) |
|  |  |  |
| Dominant themes | Hostility-Involvement | 44 |
| Theft | 20 |
| Control | 20 |
| Hybrids | Hostility-Involvement and Theft | 6 |
| Control and Theft | 6 |
| Hostility-Involvement and Control | 2 |
| No theme | 2 |

Table 4

*Differences in Offender Characteristics between Dominant Behavioural Themes*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Frequency (%) |  |
| Characteristics | Hostility-Involvement | Theft | Control | Total | $$χ^{2}$$ |
| Alcohol abuse | 72.7 | 70.0 | 80.0 | 73.8 | 0.29 |
| Broken family | 50.0 | 30.0 | 10.0 | 35.7 | 4.98 |
| Mental disorder | 18.2 | 10.0 | 10.0 | 14.3 | 0.57 |
| Unemployment | 18.2 | 30.0 | 50.0 | 28.6 | 3.42 |
| Vehicle use | 40.9 | 80.0 | 80.0 | 59.5 |  6.65\* |
| Victim acquaintance | 59.1 | 20.0 | 10.0 | 38.1 |  8.85\* |
| Previous conviction |  |  |  |  |  |
| Fraud | 36.4 | 30.0 | 10.0 | 28.6 | 2.36 |
| Robbery | 4.5 | 20.0 | 40.0 | 16.7 |  6.33\* |
| Sexual crime | 54.5 | 20.0 | 10.0 | 35.7 |  7.35\* |
| Violence | 54.5 | 30.0 | 50.0 | 47.6 | 1.69 |
| *\* p < .05.* |  |  |  |  |  |

*Figure 1.* SSA configuration of 27 variables and their frequency (%).



2-dimensional solution

Coefficient of alienation=0.23 in 16 iterations

The value in the bracket denotes the percentage frequency of occurrence.

Figure 2.SSA configuration of crime scene actions with regional themes for 50 sexual offences.



2-dimensional solution

Coefficient of alienation=0.23 in 16 iterations

The value in the bracket denotes the percentage frequency of occurrence.