



The Characteristic of a Criminal's Face from Sexual Cases from Sketches

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Abstract

Crime is not something that people should neglect, especially a sexual crime. Sexual crime leaves behind both mental and physical illnesses to the victim. Physical health can be cured over time, but mental health cannot be cured that easily. The purpose of this study is to study the characteristics of a face and find the similarities among the criminal's face from a sexual crime base on the composite sketch. Moreover, the research will also find a way to improve the effectiveness of the work under the Criminal Records Sub-division 2. This research is qualitative research with a key informant interviews.

The research showed that based on the sketch similar facial features of sexual criminals are an oval face shape, double eyelids, bulbous nose and bow-shaped lip. For suggestions of the improvement that the sub-division can be done are to make people know what they should do when they are facing the crime, the needs for an officer who has a degree in art and the lack of equipment. Another obstacle that should be overcome is the duration of the time before the victim or witness was sent to see the police sketch artist to create a composite sketch. These suggestions are to solve all of the problems and then the workflow will go smoother.

Keywords: *Criminal sketch, Sexual crime, Composite sketch, Metropolitan area*

1. Introduction

We all know that crime will always leave something bad behind for all of us. If an assault happened, a person will get wounded, or if a robbery occurred to a family then we all know that the family will lose some of their property. Some types of crimes will make people lose something important, including their lives. Even if it is a life or belongings, no one should lose anything. A wound from an assault can be cured with medicine over time. An item that is stolen from a robber can be replaced by buying a new one or finding a replacement. However, some things cannot be replaced or healed with medication.

For a sexual case, both physical and mental health of the victim is painful. One of the victims from that rape case said, "even though the rapist did not kill me, I feel like that I am slowly dying inside" (Posttoday Domestic News Team, 2014). It is sad just to hear these words, as the victim feels that if she can choose, she would die instead of living her life with this nightmare for the rest of her life. She is not just hurt with a physical wound, but a mental one as well. Mental wounds might not be able to heal at all, and time might not be good helps in this case. Not only does the victim suffer both physically and mentally, but she also lost her career because she was forced to leave her job. Even worst, she suffers from hallucination and cannot control her mind. She had to go through mental treatment for years before her mental health got better (Posttoday Domestic News Team, 2014).

Only a little over half of the reported cases were criminals arrested. This proves that there are some obstacles for the officers to arrest them. When we cannot arrest and push those criminals into the justice system that means we are allowing them to commit more crimes. One process that will help push sex offenders into the justice system is to be able to arrest them first. If the case has no photo evidence that will lead to the suspect, the officer should send the witness or the victim to the Criminal Records Sub-Division 2 to do a composite sketch of the suspect as soon as possible. This composite sketch will be important evidence to help the officer arrest the suspect and send them to the justice system. Sometimes, just one type of evidence might not be powerful enough to arrest them and put them in jail.

In the case that the witness has seen the suspect, the first thing the officers need to do is to send the witness to do a sketch of the suspect as soon as possible for the best quality of the suspects' features



(Tienchai, 2018). Furthermore, approximately 3,000 cases per year, about 20 percent of the cases have been captured due to the help of the composite sketches from the Criminal Records Sub-Division 2. A criminal sketch has played an important role in the investigation (Nation Multimedia Group, 2010).

In order to process the sketch, one of the most important things is that the witness or the victim has to be able to tell the details of the face features. They cannot feel unsure about how the suspect looks because the victim or witness needs to be able to select each facial feature accurately. The victim or witness will select each facial features from the data based on what the Criminal Records Sub-Division 2 has. After that, all of the selected parts will be put together as a composite sketch. After the officer finishes putting it together, they will ask them to see and make an adjustment if needed. The officer will make any adjustment according to their opinions and thoughts, and will not do any other adjustments that have not been asked from the victim or witness.

Bangkok is a good example to demonstrate sexual crimes because it is the capital city of Thailand. Second, it has the highest population among all of the provinces in Thailand. In 2017, Bangkok had approximately 5,700,000 people while other provinces have around 1,500,000 people (Department of Provincial Administration Registration, 2018). The highest population is equal to the increasing number of the victims. If compared to the other dense population provinces in the north, south, or east, Bangkok still has the highest rate of sexual crimes. Not only is it because it is the capital city of Thailand, but also due to the dense population it has. The more population there is, the harder it is for the police to take care of the population. The area is responsible by the metropolitan police and they divides the area into 9 divisions and each division divides into police stations. Each division will be responsible for their own area that was assigned to them (Metropolitan Police Bureau, 2018).

2. Objectives

1. To study the characteristic of the criminal's face from the sexual case from the sketches
2. To analyze the similarities face features of the criminal from the sexual crime
3. To suggest ways to improve and develop the work flow of the police sketch artists

3. Materials and Methods

In order to identify the similarity of those sexual criminals, this research will use the sketch database from the Criminal Records Sub-division 2 from 2015-2017. Based on the sketch database, the research will be able to identify the similarity and the characteristic of the facial feature among the sexual criminals. The research will analyze each part of the facial features individually and find the one that has the highest number of similarity. Moreover, the research will also give the recommendation about what to improve and to develop in order to make the workflow of the subdivision smoother.

This research is using the qualitative research method with key informant interviews. The data of the facial features of sexual criminals used in the research will be the data from the Criminal Sketch database from the Criminal Records Sub-division 2 of the Criminal Records Division under the Police Forensic Science. For the interview, it will be semi-structured interviews and it involved the six criminal sketch artists of the Criminal Records Sub-division 2. A set of open questions was asked and the officers had a chance to answer it freely. In addition, they are welcomed to give any additional details they want to share from their experience. These officers are the ones who have the most experiences with sketches and this is their main duty under this sub-division.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Characteristics of the Criminals' Faces

The research showed that more than half of the sketch artists feel that there are not any specific facial characteristics of the sexual criminals that they can identify right away when talking about them. Based on the interview, the fourth interviewer said that the facial features or characteristics did not guarantee that this is a good or a bad person because no matter what type of facial features they have, they all can become a criminal. The fourth interviewer also said, "No matter what type of facial characteristics they have, they all can become a criminal if they decide to be one." Likewise, the sixth interviewer also said



“some of the rapists or the sexual criminals are attractive while others from the same type of case look very unattractive.” She also said that the facial features cannot tell that the person is a criminal or not because if a person wants to be a rapist or a criminal, they will just be one. It has nothing to do with how they look at all. However, based on the researcher’s experience, not every sketch artist will have a chance to sketch in every case. The schedule of each sketch artists go by rotation, so what case they will face or have a chance to sketch will just go with the rotation of all of the sketch artists in the division. The division did not have any specific sketch artist assigned to a specific type of case except the fact that only the female sketch artist will be responsible for the sexual case, as everybody knows that sexual case is a very sensitive one.

Retrieving the memory is the first step before any other procedure for the sketch. It is the first and most important step because some of the victims feel that they can remember how the suspect looks like. However, when the officer started asking what their face shape is or how their eyes look, some of them just cannot answer the question and some just feel unsure about what they have in their mind. If the witness or victim cannot describe how the suspect looks like while interviewing with the officer, it will be difficult for them when they need to select facial features because they will see more faces from the database. If they are not sure about the facial features they saw, they will get confused while they select each facial part. Then, if the officer knows that the victim or suspect cannot clearly remember how the suspect looks, we are sad to inform them that we cannot do a criminal sketch for them. If they can remember more than half of the facial features, the officers feel very welcome to help the victim do the criminal sketch. The victim might feel that the face looks a bit more similar when they see what they chose, and that might help them to recall their memory. If they can remember more than half of the detail, when they start seeing the whole face of what they had selected, they will know what part the officer should do the refinement in.

Moreover, after interviewing the sketch officers and receiving the information, there are no similarities of the sexual criminals. Therefore, the researcher will analyze the similar facial features from the database of the criminal sketch of the Criminal Records Division 2, which is responsible for the criminal sketches in the metropolitan area. This research has gathered the sexual sketches from 2015-2017. Out of these three years, the database showed that out of 44 sketches from 34 sexual cases, there are some similarities among these sexual criminals. Out of all the facial features, the research only picked four outstanding ones that are already classified into each type, which are face shape, eyes, nose, and lips.



Figure 1 Retrieving memory of facial features sample sheet



4.2 Similar Facial Features of the Sexual Criminals

Out of 44 sketches, the most outstanding facial features that the sexual criminals have in common are the oval face shape with double eyelids, bulbous noses and bow-shaped lips.



Figure 2 Faces that contain all of the four similar facial features of the sexual criminals

4.3 Improvements that benefit the Criminal Records Sub-Division 2

4.3.1 People's knowledge

Sketch officers feel that they want people to have knowledge about what they should do when a crime happens to them or around them. The most important thing people should do when a crime happens is to stay calm and be sensible. When they are staying focused and know what they are doing, then they will be able to remember the facial features of the suspect. Therefore, when people can remember, the sketch comes out as effective as possible. This will benefit both the victim and the officer. Moreover, the sketch officers feel that we need to teach people to be knowledge on what they should pay attention on the face, what features should they remember, and much more. If people know what to remember and where to pay attention, then they will feel confident about their memory.

4.3.2 Human Resource Management

Officers with a related degree will be beneficial with the sub-division. Most of the current officers do not have a degree in the arts or fine arts; they mainly use their experiences from their work. They gain their knowledge and skills by practicing and learning from their experience. Those who have the skills will learn and develop it faster than those who do not. The ones with the skills will be able to create the work that will meet the satisfaction of the victims or witnesses, but it does not mean that the officers who do not have the skills are doing a bad job. Experiences are more valuable than the skills people have.

4.3.3 Equipements

We cannot deny that human resources are an important key, but equipment is also as important. The division lacks the equipment for the job. They lack computers and pen tablets, which are the main equipment for creating composite sketches. The workflow will be disturbed and not flow well when the division does not have enough equipment to serve for the skilled officers. If the division can solve the equipment problem, then it will help the workflow go smoother and better. The way to solve this problem is the Criminal Records Division or the Forensic Science Office should provide a budget for the sub-division to buy more equipment. The sub-division itself cannot use the budget without the agreement of the committee, therefore, to receive the budget for the equipment or not is not depend on the sub-division only. The sub-division needs to request for it and the committee will approve it or deny it. Therefore, the committee and the Forensic Science Officer need to see that there is a problem of the lack of the equipment and it needs to be solved because it affects the workflow of the sub-division.



4.3.4 Foreigner's Database

The sub-division is not only lacking for the needed equipment for the job, but they also do not have much of the database for the facial features selection. The division's database lacks foreign suspects, and nowadays, crime does not only occur in one country. The criminal is not only the citizen in the country, but nowadays it is also just anyone from any country. The foreign database has become important, and the divisions should pay more attention to it. Because when the witness or victim cannot choose the facial feature that looks like to the criminal, then the sketch will not meet the satisfaction of the victim or witness or they will have a difficult time to select each facial features. Based on the researcher's experience, the witness once said that the database of the sub-division has mostly Asian's, but what they were looking for is the look of someone from South Africa. It is very difficult for them to pick the features that did not represent what they had seen. Currently, the sub-division solved this problem by allowing the witness or victim to select the features from the database of both Asian and non-Asian. They can pick the one that looks like to what they saw the most and if any further adjustment is needed, then the officer will do the adjustment for them until they are satisfied. Even though, the officer can do the adjustment based on witness or victim opinion, it will be easier if the database can provide the accurate facial features for the witness or victim. Therefore, in order to make the job flow smoother, the sub-division should increase the database of the foreigner.

4.3.5 Time period before the sketch

Another obstacle that is not in control of sketch artist officers is a situation where the inquiry officer takes longer to send the victims or witnesses to the sketch artists. When the time of the event is too far apart when the victims or witnesses meet the sketch artists, it becomes a big obstacle. After just a couple of days, the memories of the victim can fade. The victims or witnesses feel unsure and not confident in what they saw, most of the time. Time is a key factor for creating the most effective composite sketch. There is still a very small chance that the victims or witnesses can still remember how the suspect looks no matter how long time passed. Therefore, the inquiry officer should send them to the sketch artists as soon as possible to get the most effective sketch of the suspect. The sub-division should ask for the corporate from all of the police stations in the metropolitan area to send the witness or victim as soon as possible. It will benefit the sub-division, the inquiry officer and the investigation team.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, there are many factors that can be improved in order to make the workflow go smoothly. The first improvement that can be done is to make people gain knowledge about what they should do when they are facing the crime scene. If people know what they should do and what they should remember, when the composite sketch is needed to process the investigation, then the witness or victim can describe details of the facial features clearly. When they can describe the facial features clearly, then the composite sketch will be very effective. In order to make people gain the knowledge about what they should do when they face the crime scene, everybody in public and private sectors need to help each other to promote this knowledge. Success cannot be reached with just one effort, but it is something that can be reached if they are working together.

Second, the sub-division also needs an officer with a degree in art because most people who have an art degree are good in both computer skill and anatomy skill. Computer skill is highly important because it is the main key when doing the composite sketch. The sub-division needs to hire someone who has an art degree in order to make the work flow go smoother and to improve the standard of the work to go higher. When the officer can create a good quality of the composite sketch, then the investigation can flow smoother too. Therefore, it not only benefit the sub-division itself, but also those colleagues who will use the composite sketch to proceed with their job will receive the benefit from this improvement.

Third, the sub-division not only lack of the officers with the needed skills, but they are also lack the needed equipment. The sub-division did not have enough computers and pen tablets. It did affect the workflow of the division when receiving more than one case at the same time. When equipment is not ready for the officer to use, then it will be hard to finish the job and make the workflow smooth as how they want. As the sub-division wants to make everybody feels convenience and comfortable, they want to make the



workflow to go as smooth as they can, therefore, if the equipment problem can be solved, the workflow can go smoother. The Criminal Records Division or the Forensic Science Office should provide more budget for the Criminal Records Sub-division 2, so they can use it to buy more equipment.

Fourth, the foreigner database is something the sub-division is in urgent need in order to make their work more effective. The sub-division should urgently increase the variation of a foreigner database. It is very challenging for the witness or victim to choose the facial feature which does not exist in the database. Even though, some adjustment can be done to solve this problem, but it is better to increase the variation of the foreigner database because the witness or victim will not have a hard time while selecting each feature. It is better for them to select what they had seen instead of doing the refinement of what they think it look close to what they had seen. Crime is widely an international problem, therefore we should move forward along the trend of the world, we cannot freeze ourselves and keep doing the same thing without any improvement.

Lastly, the time period between the crime occurs and when the victim or witness has come and seen the sketch artist officer is one of the biggest problems. If the gap of the time between when the event happens and when they choose the facial feature is way too wide, then it will be hard for the witness or victim to get the most accurate information. As we all know that when time had passed by, the memory started fading, and this is what happened to the look of the criminal too. When memory started to fade, the victim or witness will feel unsure about what they are going to pick as facial features, they will feel that it is this or that. When they start feeling unsure then they will not feel confident that the composite sketch they are about to create will look like the criminal they saw or not. Most of the time, they will remember when they start seeing the composite sketch that almost done, but before reaching that state, they will have a difficult time while choosing each facial features. Therefore, if the inquiry officer can send the witness or victim to see the sketch artist officer as soon as possible, the witness or victim will not have a hard time during the selection of the facial features. When people feel confident, they can choose each feature quickly and most of the time, only a small adjustment is needed. Asking for a good corporation from the inquiry officer will benefit everybody that is involve in this case starting from the victim, the inquiry officer, the investigation team and the police sketch artist officer.

5.1 Recommendations for Future Research

Furthermore, suggestion for future research is to go further in the research, the future researcher should use five years or more of the sketch database; it might give more accurate result. Because the more database the researcher will use will give a stronger and better analyze of facial features. Moreover, by interviewing someone who has a higher experience in this field might help the research to be better. Someone who is in the filed and studies about the composite sketch or criminal sketch will have more understanding and will be able to provide more information about the composite sketch. A person who is an expert in the field will be able to explain about the topic in a detail. Those experiences will be able to answer most of the research questions and may have another point of view that this research never looks into. To be able to see the research from another point of view, will help the research go further than expected.

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