



Risk factors causing sexual crimes

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Abstract

This paper is about sexual crimes which are considered one of severe social problems that has a serious impact against the society, and there should be a study to find prevention methods urgently. The purpose of this study aimed to study the risk factors causing sexual crimes according to Crime Triangle Theory and Sexual Crime Prevention Methods. As the result, it was found out that risk factors causing sexual crimes could be categorized into 3 elements; perpetrator, victim and opportunities. However, the element causing the most sexual crimes in this study was opportunity; i.e., factors of being a close acquaintance, factors of scene which are often isolated areas, and factors of time which often occur at night to late night. Followed by an element of perpetrators which is caused by factors that perpetrators often use drugs. The suggestions for preventing sexual crimes are as follows. Relevant agencies must encourage people to have knowledge of self-defense skills. Family institutions and educational institutions must provide knowledge about sexual crime prevention and should include knowledge about sexual crimes in the educational curriculum. There should be more measures to monitor the safety of all areas. As well as the community participation on crime prevention, the media must have responsibility towards the society in presenting various media, media control, and the operational integration of all sectors.

Keywords: Risk, factors, sexual crimes

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1. Rationale

This paper has motivation from sexual crimes situation which is the problem causing the losses to victims in terms of physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally. In some cases, sexual crimes may cause property damages including the severe losses of life. According to the aforementioned consequences, remedies must be made for victims because some may have to deal with traumas in their mind for the rest of their lives. This problem is also as important as other social problems, and it is likely to be more severe every year. As can be seen from the statistic of violence against women and children of Ministry of Public Health, it indicates that the tendency is likely to increase as it is found that that children and women were abused every 15 minutes, averagely 4 persons per hour [1]. There are 2,259 cases for statistic of rape and abuse reports [2]. Also, a statistic only in August 2018, there are 198 cases for rape reports from Counter Crime Planning Division, Strategy Division Office of Police Strategy, Royal Thai Police (Royal Thai Police, Strategy Division Office of Police Strategy, [3]. However, Royal

Thai Police also indicates that numerous sexual crimes are still underreported in Thailand because victims are afraid to report, feel shame, fear of disgrace and losing reputation due to social contexts and culture of Thai society. That is the reason why this problem needs an urgent solution as well as the development of effective sexual crime prevention systems for the welfare and safety of the people. Therefore, the study of the factors causing sexual crimes will be beneficial to people. Most research studies pay attention to sexual offenders. Information reflects that the causes of associating with friends who have inappropriate behaviors, viewing pornographic media, drinking alcohols [4, 5] are the major causes of sexual crimes. Regarding of victims, most of the victim's bases are incomplete family and poverty [6]. The researcher wanted to apply Crime Triangle Theory which is commonly used in the crime prevention and suppression in order to have more comprehensive analysis of risk factors for sexual crimes. The knowledge gained can be applied to avoid and prevent problems before problems occur which can lead to unpredictable mental and physical losses, leading to the destruction of security of the society.

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2. Objectives

The purpose of this study aimed to study the risk factors causing sexual crimes and methods to prevent sexual crimes.

3. Methodology

The methodology of this study was a research synthesis from research papers and theses that are related to the factors and causes of sexual crimes by means of quantitative synthesis using frequencies and percentage values and lecture with the results of the synthesis. The selection processes were as; first, the researcher searched for research papers on the internet on the websites of libraries of higher education institutions by using key words; such as “sexual crime” “sex offense” “rape” for the search, after that, the researcher searched for complete, credible and quality research documents by evaluating preliminary research, and there are total 12 research topics which have the following details;

Research Topic #1 - The study by Uea-amnuay [7]: The Research of Risk Factors towards Being a Victim of Sexual Crimes among Thai Women.

Research Topic #2 - The study by Sophondirekrat [8]: The Research of Causes of Sexual Harassment among Female Students Caused by Nightlife in Bangkok and Perimeters.

Research Topic #3 - The study by Woranetipho [9]: The Research of Causes of Being Rape Victims among Children: Case Study in Specific Areas in the Area of Responsibility of Office of the Attorney General, Juvenile and Family Case Section.

Research Topic #4 - The study by Chuchuenklin [6]: The Thesis of Family Conditions and Social Environments Causing Children to Become Victims of Sexual Crimes: Case Study on Children Who Have Become Victims of Sexual Crimes Who Receive Service in Police General Hospital.

Research Topic #5 - The study by Yimyaem, Tiansawat, and Chaiwut [10]: The Study for Articles of Sexual Abuse and Domestic Violence in Women’s Family in the Workplace.

Research Topic #6 - The study by Kaeonui and Thammarangsee [4]: The Research of Sexual Harassment Behavior among Children and Juvenile under the Influence of Alcohol Consumption.

Research Topic #7 - The study by Suriyamanee and Lerttomarasakul [11]: The Research of the Analysis of Factors Related to Sexual Abuses: Case Study of Rape and the Abuse against Female Victims among Children and Juvenile in the Integrated Theory Context.

Research Topic #8 - The study by Phadungthiti [12]: The Thesis of Pornography and Sexual Offenders.

Research Topic #9 - The study by Tangchaiwattana [13]: The Thesis of Family Factors Causing Sexual Abuses against Girls by Family Members.

Research Topic #10 - The study by Jaikwang [14]: The Thesis of Social Factors towards Child Rape by Male Detainees: Case Study on Udon Thani Central Prison.

Research Topic #11 - The study by Moontichai [15]: The Thesis of Social Environments towards Severity of Sexual Offences among Children and Juvenile.

Research Topic #12 - The study by Inthawiwat [16]: The Thesis of Factors Related to Violence in Committing Sexual Crimes: Case Study on Prisoners of Rape Cases.

4. Concepts and Theories in This Study

Sexual crime is an offense involving sexual offenses. There are characteristics that violate the customs, traditions and law as victims do not consent. There are actions using forces of molestation, called rape, immoral conduct and sexual abuse.

Crime Triangle Theory can be applied to describe the causes or elements of crimes. However, Clarke and Eck [17] mentioned about the elements of Crime Triangle as follows;

1) Offender means a person who has the desire to cause the act or commit crime.

2) Victim means a person, a place, or an object which an offender or criminal intends to commit crime against or a target desired by an offender.

3) Opportunity means time and place appropriate for an offender or criminal to be able to commit an offence or a crime.

A crime can be easily committed once all of the aforementioned elements are complete. This theory presents a concept of solving crime or preventing crime by omitting one of the elements of the crime triangle to be missing, then, crime will not occur or will be difficult to occur.

The study of risk factors causing sexual crimes has applied the Crime Triangle Theory because this Crime Triangle Theory is a theory that explains the causes or compositions of the crime, making us understand the compositions of the factors of sexual crime easily. By studying and analyzing the data from the offenders and the victims in the past crimes, both in the process of prosecution and the judgment process which has ended, it was found that the factors of sex crime can be divided into 3 major factors which consist of; the offender, the victim and the opportunity. When the risk factors for sexual crimes are obviously seen, the concepts from this theory can be applied to analyze and use to formulate strategies in order to solve the problems of sexual crimes more efficiently, concretely, appropriately for the conditions that are at risk of sexual crimes, which is a social problem that has serious consequences for both victims, family and society.

Table 1. Risk factors causing sexual crimes.

Research*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total	Percent
Offender Element														
- Substance abuse	✓		✓		✓				✓	✓	✓		6	50.00
- Low income	✓							✓	✓	✓		✓	5	41.67
- Being stimulated by media			✓			✓		✓		✓	✓		5	41.67
- Broken family								✓	✓	✓			3	25.00
- Specific personality						✓			✓		✓		3	25.00
- Male oriented idea	✓								✓				2	16.67
- Risk lifestyle						✓						✓	2	16.67
- Being provoked by friends						✓							1	8.34
Victim Element														
- Alcohol abuse	✓	✓						✓					3	25.00
-Precarious dress	✓	✓	✓										3	25.00
- Incomplete and broken family				✓					✓				2	16.67
- Low income			✓	✓									2	16.67
-Teenager	✓	✓											2	16.67
-Good looking and attractive appearance	✓		✓										2	16.67
-Having had sexual intercourse			✓										1	8.34
Opportunity Element														
- Trust and intimacy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	10	83.34
-Staying in secluded area and away from people	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	8	66.67
-Crimes occur at night to late night	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓			7	58.34

***Remark:** Research and thesis titles appear in the Reference Section.

5. The Results

5.1. Risk factors causing sexual crimes

Once the researcher analyzed factors related to sexual crimes, the researcher found all the results of the study (as shown in Table 1), and divided the risk factors causing sexual crimes according to various elements from the Crime Triangle Theory in all 3 aspects. The results are as follows;

1) Offender element. It is found that most of sexual crimes are caused by substance abuse (50%); followed by low income or low economic status and acquiring sexual stimulation from media (41.67%); followed by problems in family or family breakdown or specific personality (25.00%); such as being a person who loses control of oneself, lack of confidence, depression, repression; followed by the factor of male-oriented social value and living a life in risky manner (16.67%) and lastly being encouraged by friends (8.34%).

2) Victim element. It is found that the most risk factor of the victim is; the victim is in a state of intoxication and dresses in precarious dress on the day of the incident (25.00%); followed by the nature of the victim lives in an incomplete and broken family, has a low economic status, and the victim is in an age of teenager with attractive appearance (16.67%), and the

last factor is that the victim had sexual intercourse earlier.

3) Opportunity element. It is found that the most risk factor is the close relationship between the offender and the victim (83.34%), followed by the factor of being amidst risk environment, i.e., secluded area and away from people (66.67%), and the last factor is an opportunity of crime occurrence is during the night and late night (58.34%).

6. Suggestions and sexual crimes prevention

The researcher suggested that the approach of solving sexual crimes should be emphasized for all citizens, communities, and all social institutions to be jointly responsible for their own safety and in various areas because only police officers cannot manage all aspects of social problems. Taking care of their own safety and society should be the responsibility of all people, not by any specific organization. According to this idea, the researcher therefore proposes the guidelines for the prevention of sexual crimes as follows;

1. Strengthening the public is essential because sexual crimes may be an unexpected threat to the public. The offender may be both a stranger and a familiar acquaintance. Having self-defense skills for survival from bad situations is extremely important.

2. Related institutions; such as family institutions and educational institutions should perform their role in teaching, providing knowledge and understanding to people about sexual crimes in order to allow people to be aware of their attitudes and behaviors towards opposite sex and should not trust opposite sex too much although such person is very close, as well as to be aware of how to avoid being in a secluded area and away from people, roaming in risky areas, visiting entertainment venue during nighttime, visiting to the opposite sex's room and avoiding intoxication, and always realizing that sexual crimes can occur to any person, anytime and anywhere.

3. Officials who work in relevant organizations must perform active roles in preventing many types of problems; such as campaigns, public relations, providing crucial knowledge and useful information for people in the public that they can use it to prevent themselves from being victims from sexual crimes; such as knowledge of sexual crimes, risk factors causing sexual crimes, for example, realizing that you must not be negligent to both acquaintances and strangers, avoiding going into secluded areas alone, leaving a house at night, refraining from using any type of substance, not dressing in precarious manner, and avoiding wearing jewelry and high-value items, etc.

4. Risk factors on locations that are secluded areas and away from people are considered environments that are vulnerable to crimes. Therefore, responsible agencies should adjust the environment to reduce the likelihood of crime occurrence, for example, building fences or obstructions to prevent the offenders from committing crimes, adjusting areas that are at risk of frequent crime occurrences to be open areas, Install light posts to allow people to have visibility of surrounding area clearly, installing surveillance cameras (CCTV), etc. and the seare solutions to prevent the occurrence of sexual crimes in the aforementioned areas.

5. Risk factors of time, according to the study, it is found that sexual crimes often occur at night or late night, therefore, agencies that are responsible for providing safety and security to people should have measures or policies to monitor those areas, especially during the night where crimes often occur.

6. Agencies who have responsibilities of crime prevention and suppression should have plans and policies for integrating operations by depending on community participation to participate in monitoring, preventing and resolving sexual crimes, as well as encouraging community members to monitor the occurrence of sexual crimes, for example, monitoring of individuals' or families' behaviors in communities that may be at risk of occurrence, setting up security guards to monitor the safety of the community, and jointly managing areas that are at risk of crime in the community in order to eliminate the chances of crime occurrence.

7. Agencies who have responsibilities of crime prevention and suppression should have integrated oper-

ations with every sector in order to improve the operation plans, protocols, measures, as well as to improve personnel plans, techniques, and equipment to be more efficient for the operations.

8. Nowadays, people in every age and every sex can access to information technology very quickly and easily. This matter is a difficult task to control. However, agencies who control of media broadcasting; such as radio and television broadcasting directing board must have more strict measures to control media in order to prevent the broadcasting of media that may provoke or stimulate and lead to sexual crimes.

9. There should be policies, laws, and measures to control the factors causing sexual crimes; such as various types of narcotics. Therefore, there must be laws or measures to control narcotics, for example, more strict measures or laws for selling alcohol to children and youth, having laws to prevent and suppress drugs and prostitution in serious manner in order to reduce the stimulation of crimes.

10. Focus on issuing measures or policies to reduce or control the number of offenders or criminals, which may focus on Law Enforcement Theory, for example, more stringent drug eradication and suppression policies encouragement, measures to control nighttime entertainment venues determination, and examination of locations which may be the risk of crime to occur more frequently.

7. Conclusion

Regarding to the risk factors causing sexual crimes, it is found that the risk factors that are at a high level consist of 4 factors. The component that causes sexual crimes the most is the opportunity factor, which consists of; 1) the factor of trust and relationship between the offenders and victims (83.34%) is the most important cause of sexual crimes from this study, 2) the factor of environment, it is found that the risk would be much higher if the victim is in a secluded area and away from people (66.67%), and 3) the factor of time which most of sexual crimes occur at night to late night (58.34%). The offender element is also the factor that can be categorized as 4), mainly due to substance abuse (50.00%) which results in the offenders losing control of themselves which then leads to the cause of sexual crimes, while the element of victim is the least risk factor. Methods of sexual crimes prevention are as follows, strengthening the people to survive. Relevant institutions must have full roles and responsibilities, and the relevant authorities must proactively work to prevent sexual crimes by monitoring on secluded locations, especially during the night time. Crime suppression organizations should perform the integration of operations from all sectors and public participation by issuing policies, laws, and measures to control factors causing sexual crimes; such as substance abuse,

pornography, as well as issuing more restrictive measures or policies in order to reduce or control the number of offenders.

However, according to the result of this study, it will be beneficial if people apply this knowledge and information for their daily life in order to avoid and prevent the occurrence of sexual crimes before they lead to invaluable losses.

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