

Factors Related to the Perception of Digital Sex Crimes Among University Students of the MZ Generation in Korea

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MZ세대 대학생의 디지털 성범죄 인식 관련 요인

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Abstract This is a descriptive research study to explore factors related to the perception of digital sex crimes among university students of the MZ generation in Korea. Data were collected by conducting a survey of 150 university students in Korea. As a result, the variable that showed the highest relevance to the recognition of digital sex crimes among MZ generation university students was sexual perception ($\beta=-0.390$, $p<.001$). Total explanatory power was 25.2% after adding gender ($\beta=0.207$, $p=.018$) and sexual attitude ($\beta=0.157$, $p=.045$). Our results suggest that customized education in consideration of factors related to digital sex crime perception is needed to form and improve a correct perception of digital sex crimes among MZ generation university students.

Key Words : Digital sex crimes, Perception of digital sex crimes, Sexual knowledge, Sexual attitude, Sexual perception, University students of the MZ generation

요약 본 연구는 국내 MZ세대 대학생들의 디지털 성범죄 인식과 관련된 요인을 탐색하기 위한 서술적 연구이다. 본 연구를 위해 국내 대학생 150명을 대상으로 설문지를 배포하여 자료를 수집하였으며, 참여자들의 평균 연령은 21.17세이었다. 분석 결과, MZ세대 대학생의 디지털 성범죄 인식과 가장 관련성이 높은 변수는 성적 인식이었으며($\beta=-0.390$, $p<.001$), 성별($\beta=0.207$, $p=.018$)과 성적 태도($\beta=0.157$, $p=.045$)가 더해져 설명력은 25.2%였다($F=17.588$, $p<.001$). 본 연구는 MZ세대 대학생들의 올바른 디지털 성범죄 인식 형성 및 개선을 위해 대학생의 디지털 성범죄 인식과 관련된 요인을 고려한 맞춤형 교육의 필요성을 제안한다.

키워드 : 디지털 성범죄, 성범죄 인식, 성지식, 성태도, 성적 인식, MZ세대 대학생

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1. Introduction

As the development of the Internet environment and the use of digital devices such as smartphones become common, digital sex crimes through Internet websites and SNS are rapidly spreading. According to the National Police Agency statistical data [1], there are over 2,000 cases of cyber pornography that are illegal content crimes every year. Digital sex crimes have increased 23 times in the past 10 years. It has been found that 25% of cases of sexual violence crimes are digital sex crimes [2].

Digital sexual crime is gender-based violence that occurs online and offline through digital devices and information and communication technology. It includes acts of photographing, distributing, distributing, threatening, storing, or displaying the body of another person without consent. It also includes acts that infringe on sexual autonomy and moral rights of others in cyberspace [3]. Around the 2000s, the concept of 'online sexual violence' emerged, but the concept of 'digital sex crime' appeared in 2014 as 'sexual harassment in a Kakao Talk group chat room' [4] and in 2015, the movement to close 'Soronet', the largest illegal filming and damage site in Korea, and then it began to be used in earnest with the announcement of 'Comprehensive Damage Prevention Measures' in 2017 [3].

In a survey on online sexual harassment, sexual violence, and misogyny targeting 600 women in their 20s and 40s nationwide [5], 40% of respondents answered that they had experienced harm. In a survey [6] on awareness of illegal filming targeting 1,500 men and women between ages of 19 and 59, 39.6% of them responded that they had ever been filmed illegally or heard of seeing them in the vicinity. The highest number of digital sex crime perpetrators was in their 20s (42%) and most (62%) victims were teens [1].

On the other hand, university students are the MZ

generation forming the largest group in online content production and consumption [7]. In MZ generation, 'M' stands for millennials, referring to the generation born in the early 1980s to early 2000s and 'Z' stands for generation Z, referring to the generation born between late 1990s and 2010s. What these generations M and Z have in common is that they all grow up in a digital environment. Thus, they are familiar with information technology (IT) and digital devices. In Korea, these two generations with these characteristics are collectively called the MZ generation [8]. They already form the largest group in the production and consumption of online content, interact with various people through social media, form thoughts and values through various experiences, and have no hesitation in self-expression [7].

After the 2015 Kookmin University's small group 'sexual harassment in group chat room' incident was reported, since 2016, 'sexual harassment in small group chat room' incidents have occurred at universities such as Korea University, Sogang University, Yonsei University, and even after that, cases of sexual harassment in group chat rooms such as Hongik University, Kyonggi University, Kyungpook National University, and Seoul National University of Education continued [4]. In our society, it is also the university where digital sex crimes such as 'sexual harassment in group chat rooms' were first reported.

In the case of sex crimes that occur in real space, although they leave great scars on victims, most of them only cause one-time damage. However, digital sex crimes have the characteristic of continuously causing damage through dissemination and redistribution [9].

Although digital sex crimes have been steadily increasing and have emerged as one of the serious social problems in our society that can no longer be overlooked, there is still a lack of social interest and awareness related to digital crimes [10]. In particular, there are some studies on victims of

digital sex crimes [11-12], but studies on perpetrators of digital sex crimes are relatively lacking. However, in order to present an effective alternative to prevent digital sex crimes, it is essential to search for the process of digital sex crimes, and it is necessary to identify factors related to digital sex crimes.

It was the solidarity and play culture between men that was pointed out as the direct cause of the occurrence of digital sex crimes such as 'sexual harassment in group chat rooms' [3]. They take it for granted that they can freely access, consume, and share Internet information where both beneficial and harmful contents coexist. It has reached a stage where it can play the role of an information producer who can directly produce and distribute false news, violent and sexual content, and so on, raising serious ethical issues in society [13].

Currently, there are many studies on the sexual health of university students, such as sexual health, sexual attitude, and sexual behavior in Korean studies. However, it is difficult to find studies that relate knowledge, perception, and attitude to digital sex crimes and university students' sexuality to the perception of digital sex crimes. Sex crimes are highly likely to be related to personal factors such as lack of empathy, antisocial characteristics, and impulsiveness [14]. In addition, their sexual knowledge, sexual perception, and sexual attitude are major factors influencing sexual behavior, it is formed through interactions with the social institutional environment and changes according to the developmental stage [15]. Regarding digital sex crimes, which have become a problem recently, the Korean government prepared 'Comprehensive Measures to Prevent Damages from Digital Sex Crimes' in September 2017 [16]. However, due to limitations of laws and institutions that cannot keep up with the rapidly changing reality, the suffering of victims of digital sex crimes is aggravating, and the damage can be considered great. Therefore, this

study aims to find out the relationship between sexual knowledge, sexual perception, and sexual attitude in the recognition of digital sex crimes among university students in their 20s, who account for a significant number of digital sex crime perpetrators, and especially the MZ generation. In addition, by identifying the influence of these variables on university students' digital sex crimes, we intend to reveal more educational implications for the development of digital sex crime prevention programs or sex education targeting MZ generation university students.

2. Research Method

2.1 Study Design

This is a descriptive research study to explore factors related to the perception of digital sex crimes among university students of the MZ generation.

2.2 Participants

An internet survey was conducted targeting Korean university students with online access from April 25 to May 15, 2022 who understood the purpose of this study and agreed to participate in this study. For the ethical consideration of research participants, information on the purpose and method of this study, protection of personal information, right not to participate, and information related to data disposal, as well as information about the fact that participation can be withdrawn at any time during the survey, is provided first. Data were collected only from subjects who gave their consent.

The number of study participants was calculated using G*Power 3.1.9.7 version. According to the statistical test method used for linear multiple regression with an effect size of 0.15 (medium), α error of 0.05, power of 0.95, and five random predictors, the minimum sample size was calculated to be 138. Considering a dropout rate of 10%, 150

participants were enrolled. There were no participants with missing responses. Thus, we finally analyzed all 150 data.

2.3 Tools for Study

We investigated general characteristics (age, gender, grade, major, religion, heterosexual relationship, parental attitude, whether to live with family members, and whether graduated from coeducational high school), sexual knowledge, sexual perception, sexual attitude, and perception of digital sex crimes among university students of the MZ generation who understood the purpose of this study and agreed to participate in the study.

2.3.1 Sexual Knowledge

For participants' sexual knowledge, the tool developed by Jeon et al. [17] was used. This tool consisted of a total of 35 items with six sub-domains: 8 items on reproductive physiology, 3 items on sexual psychology, 8 items on pregnancy, 5 items on contraception and abortion, 10 items on sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS, and 1 item on sexual violence. Correct answers were treated as 1 point. Incorrect answer or not knowing was given 0 point. A higher score meant more knowledge about sex and a lower score meant less knowledge about sex. At the time of tool development [17], the reliability was Cronbach's $\alpha=0.85$, and the reliability of the tool showed a Cronbach's α value of 0.88 in this study.

2.3.2 Sexual perception

Participant's sexual perception was evaluated using the "Gender Sensitivity" tool developed by Lee [18] after slight modifications to fit university students. This tool had a total of 10 items (3 items on attitude toward sex life, 3 items on importance of sex life, and 4 items on sexual desire) evaluated with a 5-point Likert scale (1 = not at all, 5 = strongly agree), with a higher score indicating more positive sexual perception. At the time of tool

development [18] the reliability was Cronbach's $\alpha=0.75$, and the reliability of the tool showed a Cronbach's α value of 0.88 in this study.

2.3.3 Sexual attitude

Participant's sexual attitude was modified and supplemented with the sexual attitude tool developed by Ho [19]. This tool consisted of 35 items in five sub-domains, including 11 items about thoughts on sex (pleasure-playing sex), 7 items about premarital chastity permissibility, 6 items about sexual permissibility, 5 items about homosexual permissibility, 6 items about abortion permissibility. Each item was evaluated with a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 point for 'strongly disagree' to 5 points for 'strongly agree', with a lower score of sexual attitudes indicating that the participant was more conservative and a higher score indicating that the participant was more open. At the time of tool development [19], the reliability range for each area were Cronbach's $\alpha=0.81-0.93$, and in this study, the reliability of the tool showed a Cronbach's α value of 0.87.

2.3.4 Perception of digital sex crimes

As there is currently no stipulated legal regulation that accurately defines the concept of a digital sex crime [20], we used three scenarios developed by the Korea Cyber Sexual Violence Response Center [21]: (1) sexual photos were synthesized and then distributed without permission, (2) digital grooming, and (3) dissemination of non-consensual sexual footage. For items, we used the tool developed by Jin [11]. This tool consisted of eight items for each scenario: crime size, legal punishment, perpetrator responsibility, victim responsibility, victim sympathy, morality of accusation, group honor, and will to accuse. Each item was composed of a Likert scale of 7 points, with each item being 'strongly disagree' with 7 points, from 'strongly disagree' to 7 points. In this study, the reliability of the tool had a Cronbach's α value of 0.88.

2.4 Data analysis method

Collected data were analyzed using the SPSS WIN 25.0 program, and skewness and kurtosis were analyzed according to the criteria presented by Kline [22] to evaluate the normality of the data in this study. The difference in perception of sex crimes according to general characteristics of participants was analyzed by independent t-test, one-way ANOVA, and the Scheffé test for post-mortem verification. And in the case of factors where the number of samples in the group was less than 30 and normality was not satisfied, a non-parametric test was performed using the Kruskal-Wallis test. The degree of digital sex crime perception, sexual knowledge, sexual perception, and sexual attitude of participants were analyzed by frequency and percentage, mean and standard deviation. The relationship between participants' perception of digital sex crimes, sexual knowledge, sexual perception, and sexual attitude was analyzed

with Pearson's Correlation Coefficient.

Multiple regression analysis was used to identify factors related to participant's perception of digital sex crimes. Autocorrelation of errors was performed using Dubin-Watson. Absence of multiple communality problems was confirmed by tolerance and Variation Inflation Factor (VIF) values. Residual analysis confirmed the model's linearity, the normality of the error term, and the assumption of equal variance. The reliability of each tool was analyzed by Cronbach's α value.

3. Results

3.1 Differences in perception of digital sex crimes according to general characteristics

The perception of digital sex crime among university students showed a significant difference according to gender ($t = 5.569, p < .001$), whether to live with family members ($t = 2.895, p = .004$), and

Table 1. Differences in perception of digital sex crimes according to general characteristics

Characteristics	Categories	n (%), Mean±SD	Perception of digital sex crimes	
			Mean±SD	t/F(p)/x ² Duncan test
Age(yr)		21.17±2.12		
Gender	Male	89(59.3)	5.85±0.59	5.569(<.001)
	Female	61(40.7)	5.26±0.71	
Grade	1 st	34(22.7)	5.78±0.77	1.066(.365)
	2 nd	40(26.7)	5.56±0.74	
	3 rd	40(26.7)	5.62±0.61	
	4 th	36(24.0)	5.50±0.69	
Major	Humanities and society	19(12.7)	71.21	6.503(.165) [†]
	Engineering	31(20.7)	63.19	
	Nature	52(34.7)	79.58	
	Art and physical	14(9.3)	64.75	
	Etc.	34(22.7)	87.31	
Religion	Yes	62(41.3)	5.73±0.71	1.703(.091)
	No	88(58.7)	5.53±0.69	
Heterosexual relationship	Currently	36(24.0)	5.55±0.68	0.328(.721)
	Past	82(54.7)	5.61±0.71	
	None	32(21.3)	5.69±0.72	
Parental attitude	Open-minded	26(17.3)	71.21	0.605(.739) [†]
	Moderate	93(62.0)	77.63	
	Conservative	31(20.7)	72.71	
Whether to live with family members	Together with	107(71.3)	5.72±0.65	2.895(.004)
	Apart away	43(28.7)	5.36±0.77	
Whether graduated from coeducational high school	Yes ^a	118(78.7)	75.16	11.353(.003) [†]
	All-boys high school ^b	15(10.0)	49.27	
	All-girls high school ^c	17(11.3)	101.03	

[†]Kruskal-Wallis test

whether graduated from coeducational high school ($\chi^2=11.353, p = .003$) (Table 1).

3.2 Degree of perception of digital sex crimes, sexual knowledge, sexual perception, and sexual attitude of participants

Participants' perception of digital sex crimes scored 5.61 ± 0.70 points on a scale of 1-7. For each subcategory, 'the crime size' had the highest score of 6.47 ± 0.82 points and 'the morality of the accusation' had the lowest score of 4.63 ± 0.70 points. As for the score for each scenario of digital sex crime, 'Dissemination of sexually explicit material without consent' had a score of 5.80 ± 0.90 points, 'digital grooming' had a score of 5.58 ± 0.80 points, and 'unauthorized dissemination after synthesizing photos' had a score of 5.46 ± 0.67 points. Sexual knowledge scored an average of 23.57 ± 6.20 points in the range of 0-35 points. The score of sexual perception was 2.43 ± 0.73 points in the range of 1-5 points. The score of sexual attitudes was 3.18 ± 0.45 points in the range of 1-5 points (Table 2). The skewness of the variables in this study was $< |2|$, and the kurtosis was $< |4|$, which satisfied the absolute value of less than 3 for skewness and less than 10 for kurtosis, which are

the normality criteria presented by Kline [22].

3.3 Correlation between perception of digital sex crimes, sexual knowledge, sexual perception, and sexual attitude of participants

Participant's perception of digital sex crimes showed a negative correlation with sexual perception ($r = -.447, p < .001$). There was a positive correlation ($r = 0.327, p < .001$) between sexual perception and sexual attitudes (Table 3). In other words, the lower the sexual perception, the better the perception of digital sex crimes. The higher the sexual perception, the more open-minded they were.

Table 3. Correlation between perception of digital sex crimes, sexual knowledge, sexual perception, and sexual attitude of participants

Variables	perception of digital sex crimes	sexual knowledge	sexual perception
sexual knowledge	.028	1	
sexual perception	-.447***	.069	1
sexual attitude	.039	.058	.327***

*** $p < .001$

Table 2. Degree of perception of digital sex crimes, sexual knowledge, sexual perception, and sexual attitude of participants

Variables	Categories	Range	Min	Max	Mean \pm SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
perception of digital sex crimes	The crime size	1-7	3.00	6.50	6.47 \pm 0.82	.199	.395
	legal punishment	1-7	2.67	7.00	6.45 \pm 0.87	.199	.395
	the perpetrator's responsibility	1-7	1.00	7.00	6.33 \pm 1.03	.199	.395
	Victim's responsibility	1-7	1.00	7.00	5.12 \pm 1.32	.199	.395
	compassion for the victim	1-7	1.00	7.00	5.14 \pm 1.33	.199	.395
	morality to accusation	1-7	2.67	7.00	4.63 \pm 0.70	.199	.395
	honor within the group	1-7	1.00	7.00	4.91 \pm 1.53	.199	.395
	willingness to accuse	1-7	3.00	7.00	5.89 \pm 0.91	.199	.395
	Total	1-7	3.42	6.75	5.61 \pm 0.70	.199	.395
scenario of digital sex crime	Dissemination of sexually explicit material without consent	1-7	3.75	6.50	5.46 \pm 0.67	.198	.394
	digital grooming	1-7	3.25	7.00	5.58 \pm 0.80	.198	.394
	unauthorized dissemination after synthesizing photos	1-7	2.50	7.00	5.80 \pm 0.90	.198	.394
sexual knowledge		0-35	1.00	32.00	23.57 \pm 6.20	.198	.394
sexual perception		1-5	1.10	4.70	2.43 \pm 0.73	.199	.395
sexual attitude		1-5	1.60	4.11	3.18 \pm 0.45	.199	.395

Table 4. Factors related to the perception of digital sex crime

Variable	B	S.E	β	t	p	Adjusted R ²	F(p)
Constant	133.732	8.955		14.934			17.588 ($<.001$)
Sexual perception	-0.906	0.213	-.390	-4.253	$<.001$.195	
Gender (male)	7.089	2.971	.207	2.386	.018	.236	
Sexual attitude	0.169	0.084	.157	2.019	.045	.252	

3.4 Factors related to perception of digital sex crime

In order to identify factors related to the perception of digital sex crime, which was a dependent variable, a stepwise multiple regression analysis was performed with independent variables including gender, whether to live with family members, graduate of a coeducational high school, sexual knowledge, sexual perception, sexual attitude. Gender, whether to live with family members, and whether graduated from coeducational high school. Variables with significant differences according to general characteristics were treated as dummy variables in the regression. The model using the regression analysis method was significant ($F = 17.588, p < .001$). That is, as a factor related to the perception of digital sex crimes, sexual perception explained 19.5% of the perception of sex crimes ($\beta = -0.390, p < .001$). This variable showed the highest explanatory power. When gender (male) ($\beta = 0.207, p = .018$) and sexual attitude ($\beta = 0.157, p = .045$) were added, they explained the perception of digital sex crimes by 25.2% (Table 4).

4. Discussion

This is a descriptive research study to explore factors related to the perception of digital sex crimes among university students who are the MZ generation. As a result, first, the recognition of digital sex crimes of university students of the MZ generation showed significant differences according to gender, whether to live with family members, and whether graduated from coeducation high school. In other words, the perception of digital sex crimes was higher for males than for females, for those living with their families than for those who did not,

and for those who graduated from female high schools than those who graduated from coeducational or male high schools.

Characteristics of digital sex crimes are: 1) the majority of victims are women; and 2) actual criminal acts tend to target women [3]. Although women have been harmed, social criticism is pouring on victims. An aspect of blaming the victim when the filmed footage taken with consent of the victim is illegally distributed is another characteristic of digital sex crimes [23]. These patriarchal social characteristics of Korea and wrong cultural characteristics of accusing victims of sexual crimes may prevent women from recognizing the harm of digital sex crimes as victims. In addition, it is thought that there is an influence of more education on patriarchal sexual attitudes and behaviors for female students at home and at school. Ho [19] has evaluated differences in sexual attitudes and behaviors of university students according to gender and found that males have more open sexual attitudes than females. In addition, male students showed more receptive attitudes than female students in terms of physical, verbal, and psychological sexual violence behaviors [19]. Jin et al. [11] have determined gender differences in attitudes toward verbal sexual violence in group chat rooms and found that women perceive perpetrator's responsibility higher and victim's responsibility lower than men. These studies were contradictory to this study, which showed that men were more aware of digital sex crimes. In the case of men who have a higher opportunity to access pornography than women, awareness of digital sex crimes may be higher [24]. However, since types of digital sex crimes have not yet been clearly

identified legally [25], it is difficult to draw conclusions from a direct comparison because tools for evaluating types of digital sex crimes used in various studies are different. This might be due to differences in tools or differences in types of digital sex crimes. As digital sex crimes increase with various types, it is necessary to develop tools for the perception of digital sex crimes through conceptualization based on accurate legal terms. In addition, in this study, it was revealed that the perception of digital sex crimes was significantly different depending on whether the family lived together and the high school they graduated from. This suggests that perception of digital sex crime has an impact not only at the individual level, but also at the family and school education. Therefore, in future studies, it is necessary to identify not only factors within individuals but also social and environmental factors such as family and school education in more detail.

Second, participants perceived the 'size of the crime' the best for digital sex crimes whereas they perceived the 'morality of accusation' the lowest. By scenario, the crime of dissemination of sexually explicit material without consent' was recognized the best, while the crime of 'unauthorized distribution after synthesizing photos' was recognized the lowest.

According to a survey by the Ministry of culture, sports and tourism [26], 97.6% of participants were seriously aware of the problem of digital sex crimes. Among them, 'those who disseminate sexually explicit material without consent awareness of whether punishment is possible' was high at 95.7%. In addition, the understanding of 'unauthorized distribution after synthesizing photos' was relatively low, showing similar results to this study. Main factors that made the resolution of digital sex crime cases difficult were 'fear of the perpetrator's dissemination of illegal footage' and 'fear of knowing about the victim's facts'. This explains why 'morality of accusation' and 'honor within my

group' received low scores in this study. In other words, even if subjects were highly aware of digital sexual crimes, the fear of dissemination and the fear of knowing the damage could prevent the idea that it is moral to accuse the case and induce them to think about the honor of the group first. Therefore, in punishment related to digital sex crimes, practical measures to protect and relieve victims, such as the ability to delete or block illegal videos more quickly, must be preceded.

Third, the perception of digital sex crimes was negatively correlated with the sexual perception. It indicates that the more negative the sexual perception, the higher the awareness of digital sex crimes. Digital sex crime is a new concept emerging as digital development accelerates after the 2000s. Therefore, public awareness of digital sex crimes is currently low, and it is rather than high when the frequency of contact with pornography is high or there are experiences of sharing pornography with others [24]. However, if the perception of digital sex crimes is recognized through harmful media such as pornography, and this can lead to wrong concept establishment through input of distorted information about digital sex crime. Correct understanding and awareness improvement on digital sex crimes are important to prevent digital sex crimes. Therefore, in order to reduce damage from digital sex crimes, it is necessary to develop an educational program that reduces damage through correct concept recognition by identifying where and how the perception of digital sex crimes is obtained.

Finally, the variable that showed the highest relevance to the recognition of digital sex crimes among MZ generation university students was sexual perception. The total explanatory power was 25.2% after adding gender and sexual attitude. In other words, it was found that men who had a negative perception of sex with an open sexual attitude had a higher perception of digital sex crimes. Distorted gender perception is often mentioned as a psychological factor related to digital sex crime

perpetrators [27]. However, research on digital sex crimes is very scarce so far, making it difficult to directly compare the effect of sexual perception on the perception of digital sex crimes through previous studies. However, Kim [24] has explained that the perception of digital sex crimes is significantly influenced by the frequency of contact with pornography and the experience of imitating and sharing pornography. This could explain results of this study that negative sexual perception was a factor influencing the perception of digital sex crimes. Kim [24] has revealed that women perceive digital sex crimes more seriously and that teenagers have a higher awareness of digital sex crimes than other age group. However, teenagers have lower perceptions of the severity of digital sex crimes than other age groups. In addition, people in their twenties had lower awareness of digital sex crimes than other age groups [24]. In the present study, it was found that men were better in recognizing digital sex crimes, with men in their 10s and 20s perceiving digital sex crimes better than women through media exposure. However, they were treated as pranks or a male group's play culture. This might be due to a lack of awareness of the seriousness of digital sex crimes. In addition, referring to a previous study [27] revealing that adolescents with permissive sexual attitudes show more sexually problematic behaviors and abusive behaviors, it is possible to understand results of this study showing that open sexual attitude is a factor related to digital sex crimes. Since open sexual attitude enables various sexual experiences of university students and various sexual expressions in the online space and allows more freedom from exposure to various sex-related media, this characteristic makes it possible to better recognize digital sex crimes. Accurate perception of digital sex crimes can prevent harm and damage of the crime. However, if they understand digital sex crimes through harmful media such as pornography, the possibility of receiving distorted

information cannot be ruled out. Considering that if the concept of digital sex crimes is wrongly established, related crimes can be misused or perceived as a mere play culture, it is important to know where the information for forming awareness about digital sex crimes is mainly obtained. Therefore, in order to form a correct perception of college students, customized education considering factors affecting the perception of digital sex crimes is required.

This study is meaningful in that it identifies factors related to the perception of digital sex crimes among MZ generation university students at a time when the online and digital world has become an important communication space for MZ generation university students and digital sex crimes are increasing.

However, this study had some limitations. First, digital sex crime is a social problem that has been rapidly increasing in recent years. However, clear legal terms and concepts have not been developed yet. And there was no standardized tool for this, making it difficult to compare it with previous studies. Therefore, research related to concept development and tool development related to the perception of digital sex crimes should be preceded. Second, results of this study could not be generalized because data were collected by convenient sampling of 150 university students.

MZ generation university students are more familiar with the use of digital devices such as the Internet and smartphones than in real space, and they are also the main age group of perpetrators and victims of digital sex crimes. Thus, their perception of digital sex crimes is very important for preventing digital sex crimes. To make a suggestion based on this study, first, it is necessary to investigate factors related to the perception of digital sex crimes by repeating studies enrolling various participants and inputting various variables such as the family and social environment as well as individual factors in the future. Second, it is

necessary to establish a clear concept and develop tools for digital sex crimes. Third, this study suggests the need for customized education in consideration of factors related to digital sex crime perception, including results of this study, in order to form and improve a correct perception of digital sex crimes among MZ generation university students.

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