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Security Policy of POLICE according to Increase of Elder Crimes

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Abstract

Demographic dynamics is a factor having a huge impact on society and economy of a nation and especially Korea, which is set to mark the eighth out of the countries with eldest population globally based on median age by 2030 is projected to undergo many changes. Change of such megatrend is expected to trigger social welfare problems and be connected to crimes, which means security policy of police should have strategy tailored to the elderly people.

In line with the increase of elderly divorce and 'living alone' elders in this aging society, they may not only experience dementia and missing but also are positively engaging in insurance frauds and easily become the targets of ever evolving 'voice phishing'. Should the increase of sexual assaults out of elder crimes and traffic accidents emerge as a social issue, it may trigger generational conflicts and is highly likely to cause the increase of so-called 'wild and violent elders'.

So, police's security policy should brace for client-oriented trends in a mid and long term in step with the aging society, while elders could be the victims of sophisticated forms of crimes alongside the increase of elder crimes, probably resulting in shortage of correctional facility for elders in the future.

From official crime statistics, we can see the increase of elder crimes remarkably, whereas police are currently dealing with this trend just in the level of preventing their abuses and also lack diverse PR strategy, meaning mostly ex post police activity.

Under the circumstances, some provincial police offices are promoting public order strategy customized to the aging society but with little effects so far. So, as part of police activity in local community, police are conducting active PR by visiting living-alone elders and many other elder-care facilities, which needs to be expanded further in the future.

Therefore, to brace for the aging society, police desperately need to have plans to play an important mediating role in physical health and psychological counseling as an organization not only ensuring the safety of senior citizens from crime but as a leading one in collaborations between organizations.

Based on this need, this study examined the present state of elder crimes and damages from crimes, cases of elder crimes in our country, the actual state of police security policy and problems related with elder crimes and damages. By doing so, the study aimed at suggesting security policy measures of police to brace for the aging society in the future.

[Keywords] Policing, Elders, Aging Society, Elder Crime, Security Policy

1. Introduction

Demographically-changing trend is, needless to say, a key driving force having a fundamental impact on the society as a whole. No. 1 out of ten issues that will have an important

impact on our society ten years later is low birth/aging[1].

For the moment, our country sees improved quality of life in step with the advancement of top-notch medical services and

expansion of social welfare against a backdrop of rapid economic growth and consequently the increase of average life span each year. The country already entered an aging society in 2000 and, coupled with low birth rate, is expected to have its rate of aged population rapidly increased to 14.3% in 2018, 20.8% in 2026 and 41.0% in 2060[2]. Social problems such as poverty of the aged, their suicide and elder crimes may function as a big social danger, and elder crimes and damages from them are expected to rise relatively. A crime seriously coming to the forefront of social concern particularly among the old is 'murder', because this prompts tensions due to hard support of the spouse from poverty and diseases and sometimes has been connected to a murder[3].

As a matter of fact, our country sees plenty of problems in various areas in society rising from phenomenon of excluding elders and of these, sensitive issues such as the increase of their violent crimes and sexual violence have come to the forefront as social issues. Though customized security measures are needed to prevent crimes and reduce elder crimes out of the existing policies focused on the field of elderly welfare, the current security measures of the country's police agencies are deployed only for relevant fields by functionality, resulting in low effectiveness.

On the other hand, physically young and healthy elders, suffering still economic poverty and alienated from emotional interaction, have more lonely death. While, the increase of elderly divorce causes more elders of living alone, leading to the potential even for self-funeral rituals and proportionally we see the increase of the number of the dead without family or friends.

Amid the rise of social unease factors as such, police, along with the launch of Moon Jae-in government in 2017, is performing security policy focused on protection of the socially alienated as one of national issues. In this framework, the existing police activities in charge of child abuse are being comprehensively engaged in abuse protection. For the present, police are approaching problems of the elderly by each functionality and, bracing for the entry into a aging society, it is time

now for police to have preemptive security policy by fostering specialists as well as operating a collaboration system by each functionality.

Thus, this study conducted analysis on the state of elder crimes and damages from crimes, cases of elder crimes, and the actual state and problems of police security policy to prevent and deal with elder crimes. By doing so, in preparation of a forthcoming full-scale aging society, the study aimed at suggesting security policy of the Republic of Korea's police.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Concept of aging

'Aging' means that the rate of the old out of the total population the increases along with the rise of the number of the old. Trend of aging is generally indicated by the 'rate of aging' - the rate of the population of 65 years or older out of the total population. According to the United Nations, a society with less than 4% of the population of 65 years or older is 'young society', a society with 4-7% is 'mature society', more than 7% is 'aging society' and more than 14% is 'aged society' And a society that advances aging further from an aged society is called 'super-aging society'[4].

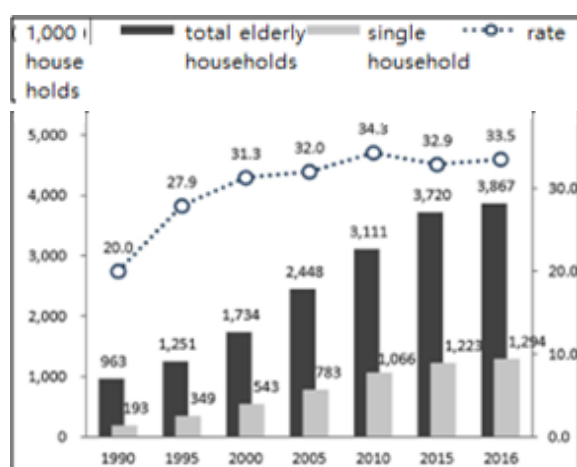
2.2. Current state of Korea's aging

The total population of the Republic of Korea as of 2017 is 51,446,000. Of these, people of 65 years and older are 7,076,000 taking up 13.8%. And in 2018, the country, with the aging rate of 14.3%, enters into an aging society. By age, rates of 65-69 year-olds and 70-79 year olds decrease, whereas the rate of 80 year and older people is expected to continually increase.

Looking at <Figure 1> below, in 2016, we see single households with the householder's age of 65 year or older amount to 1,294,000, making up 33.5% of the total households with the same age group of 3,867,000. By gender, in 1990, the number of female single households was six time more than that of males but in step with advanced medical technology and prolonged life expectancy, the rate of

male single households continually increased, reaching more than that of females by three times. By age, rapid aging saw the rate of single households of the 70s being 47.5% as well as the continual increase of the rate of 80 years and older. In other words, the rate of 65-69 year olds decrease, while the rate of 80 years and older increase, telling us more aging trend. So, along with countermeasures in society as a whole, police security measures should be prepared preemptively by separating the age groups of elders.

Figure 1. State of single households of elders[5].



3. Characteristics of Elder Crimes

In case of elder crimes, offending rate of ex-convicts is high; in 2015, ex-convicts out of total criminal law offenders of 53,880 were 22,668 taking up 42.1%, while elders without criminal records took up 19.21%. That is, of elder crime offenders, ex-convicts double those without criminal records. Reoffending rate of violent crime offenders in particular is relatively high at 56.5%, which is exceedingly high compared with that of violent criminals of 48.0% and that of property offenders of 20.1%. This implies that special measures are needed to deal with reoffending of criminals of murder, robbery, arson and sexual violence out of violent crimes.

Reoffending of ex-convicts may be caused from diverse reasons such as personal, domestic, social and economic factors, and societal cool reception and discrimination towards them can be the biggest obstacle to

their due return to the society. Reoffending rate of elder crime offenders seems to be caused from those factors[6].

The reality facing them ahead of return to the society after long prison life may work as a psychological burden to them. And they often experience weakened adaptability to the society after leaving the prison because of separation from family and social branding and as a result they sometimes show the willingness to return to a prison[7].

Sexual assaults of elders tend to increase these days according as elders are more interested in their health along with fever for welfare together with strict self-control, advanced medical technology and they are more engaged in leisurely activity than ever.

Looking at the age groups in the order of high occurrence rate of sexual assaults by sex offenders, the 20s take up the largest rate of 23.7% with 6,452 persons, followed by the 30s 5,867, 21.6%; the 40s 5,335, 19.6%; the 50s 3,812 14.0%; ;below 19 year olds 2,820, 10.4%, and 60 years and older 7.4%[8].

People in their 50s or early 60s with criminal records enter into the elderly group in several years later and particularly baby boomers(those born between 1955-1963) all are set to enter into the elderly group in 10 years, prompting the potential for explosive increase of elders. For this reason, the society as a whole must prepare social countermeasures to deal with this group showing the sign of sexual assault reoffending tendency in advance[9].

That is, our country's elder crimes have high reoffending rate and that of sexual assaults tends to be rapidly on the increase. While they are at correctional facility, aging carries on and eventually they may cause unstable social security by difficulty in normal to return to family. So, proper countermeasures to reduce reoffending of elders must be prepared by the government, local governments, civic groups, police, the prosecution and courts all together.

As we see actual cases from Japan, certain elders may be willing to go to the correctional facility by stealing daily necessities. And then

we can infer our country might see the increase of theft for survival by low-income elders as a result of bi-polarization, causing the alteration in sentencing guidelines in the future.

4. State of Occurrences of Elder Crime & Cases

In terms of its frequency, elder crimes in Korean society tends to increase each year and in terms of quality, they turn out to be stronger and more violent. It seems that crimes which elders were not thought to commit in the past continue to be committed by highly motivated and energetic 'young elders' along with more numbers of such crimes[10]. Of total crimes in 2013 of 1,741,302 cases, elder crimes made up 7.7% with 134,506 and the relevant figures in 2014 were 8.9%, 150,902 while in 2015 elder crimes made up 9.6% with 170,904 out of total crimes 1,771,390. We can see the increase rate of 2.8% by the increase of 47,575 cases of the country's total crimes from 2012(1,723,815) to 2015(1,771,390). On the other hand, we see rapid increase rate of elder crimes 36.7% from 125,012 of 2012 to 170,904 in 2015, far exceeding increase rate of total crimes committed.

As per below <Table 1>, comparing the crimes committed in 2015 with those in 2011 by the name of crimes, murder increased by 28 cases showing increase rate of 29.8%. Sexual abuse increased by 1,019 cases from 991 to 2,010 marking increase rate of 102.8%. Arson-a violent crime-also increased by 61 cases from 81 to 142, marking increase rate of 75.3%. crime of drugs increased by 62.2% too, In case of crime of violence, it increased by 9,748, marking increase rate of 53.5%. Here we can see the largest increase of sexual abuses in four years time, followed by arson, drugs, violent crime and murder.

Table 1. State of crimes committed by elders[11].

(Unit: person, %)

Year	Total	Murder	Theft	Sexual abuse	Drugs	Violence
2011	20,167	94 (7.6)	81 (1.7)	991 (5.2)	693 (7.6)	18,227 (5.3)
2012	24,051	96 (8.6)	60 (1.7)	1,045 (5.4)	566 (6.1)	22,213 (6.0)
2013	24,741	121 (11.6)	54 (1.9)	1,421 (6.2)	642 (6.6)	22,400 (6.6)
2014	27,173	127 (11.9)	59 (2.8)	1,684 (6.7)	599 (6.1)	24,581 (7.4)
2015	31,420	122 (11.6)	47 (2.3)	2,010 (7.4)	1,124 (9.4)	27,975 (8.1)

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Typical elder crime case in our country may be the murder case of a fisher in Boseong-gun, Jeonnam with following outline of the case.

On October 31, 2007, Mr Oh(then aged 71) let one male and one female in their 20s aboard his boat at the sea in Boseong-gun. The fisher made the male drowned undersea and also killed the female by pushing her to the sea as she resisted his sexual assault. On September 25, the same year, he let two females in their 20s aboard his boat, and three persons all were thrown to the sea while the females resisted his assault. As a result, one female was missing in the sea and another one struggling to get aboard was killed by him as he pushed aside her by fishing gear to the sea. He was sentenced to death in 2008 and he appealed, which was dismissed in 2010. Currently he is in prison.

5. Security Policy of Korea's Police

Looking at the result of the past one month since last June when national police agencies conducted activities to prevent elder abuse and missing of elders with dementia, reports of suspected elder abuse were totally 611 cases, which showed increase rate of 52.4% by 210 cases compared with average monthly reports of 401. This can be attributed mainly to the rise of social interest and promotion of reporting. Along the way, police agencies visited facility for the old to conduct prevention education of 1,889 sessions in total and also carried out aggressive PR via online media and press reports. On top of those, police agencies found 896 elders with dementia

from 899 elders(99.7%) who had gone missing during one month of June. They have been focusing on the activity to prevent missing with the number of prior registration of elders with dementia like fingerprints reaching 1,032. In the future, police agencies are going to raise people's awareness on elder abuses and strengthen the work of responding at the scene and monitoring so as to investigate minor incidents carefully and to build a system that allows early discovery of elders with dementia by distributing wander alarm detectors to them.

In an effort to keep elders safe from crimes, police agencies are conducting 'elastic patrol' customized to elders matching local environments and have built a system to discover and protect elders via monitoring of elders in crisis. Currently they are actively conducting a diverse range of activities: building a system to quickly respond to 112 reports of crimes targeted at elders; prevention of voice phishing among elders and reinforcement of crackdown thereon; reinforcement of preventive policing activity for the block of violent crimes targeted at elders; prevention activity customized to elderly victims. On the other side, in an effort to protect elders from diverse accidents, police agencies are conducting a number of activities: increase their awareness on traffic safety, expand traffic safety facilities, establish a system to deal with prevention of elders with dementia and early discerning and responding system, patrol to care for elders living alone and collaborate with local governments if necessary.

6. Conclusions

In 2016, 43.1% of elder single households expressed their 'anxiety' on our society's overall safety and only 14.2% of them felt it was 'safe'. They cited occurrence of crimes as the major cause of anxiety with 29.0%. That is, elders are currently complaining about unstable security and elder crimes are on the increase in general, needless to say of sexual violence crimes. What makes worse, 'elders living alone' separated from family are on the increase along with the increase of the number of the dead without family or friends, and

elderly prisoners. Under the circumstances, national police agencies are deploying 334 officers exclusively in charge of abuses across the country and promoting collaboration with other governmental agencies but still not enough indeed. Jeonnam Provincial Police Agency has been implementing overall measures for elderly safety since last September as the area's population of the old exceeded 20%, which is still initial phase of implementation and is exploring countermeasures diversely in an effort to firmly establish security policy customized to specific local environments. At this moment when development of police's security policy is desperately needed in this aging society, there must be a certain limit to sort out problems only by police force. Government-wide overall measures for safety of elders are required to solve all the problems of worsened health conditions of elders, increase of poverty rate from bi-polarization, generational conflict with the young and mid-aged and loneliness, emotional instability. It's essentially required to establish security strategy aiming at prevention of elder crimes and reducing the victims at the time of introducing local community policing system by area in step with the changing trend of the aged population.

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