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## A Study of Airport Special Guards' Perception of AVIATION SECURITY

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### Abstract

*Today, organizations that cause aviation terrorism make use of large funds earned from support of terrorism-sponsoring countries, smuggling, and drugs, and carry out terrorism with sufficient training and advanced technologies. Therefore, it is harder to find effective countermeasures.*

*The key to the security of airports and airplanes is security search which is considered to be the most effective response to prevent aviation terrorism. Given the point that strong aviation security and security search are required, special guards performing security search are the main body for the security of airplanes and passengers and play a very important role in the aviation security field.*

*Therefore, this researcher tries to conduct exploratory research on airport special guards' perception of aviation security by having in-depth interviews with them.*

*To conduct this study, qualitative research method fitting exploratory research subject was applied. From Aug. to Oct., 2017, in-depth interviews had been conducted with 20 special guards working at Incheon International Airport and Gimpo International Airport each, or a total of 40 special guards.*

*According to the research, airport special guards had the perception of aviation security as follows:*

*First, special guards were non-regular workers so that they felt insecure and had the issue of treatment. As a result, their perception of aviation security lowered.*

*Secondly, their professionalism and their perception of aviation security were low because of insufficient education and training.*

*Thirdly, poor work conditions and strong labor intensity impeded their concentration on security search, and frequent personnel transfers led to the absence of members.*

*In order to manage an international airport as the gate of a country efficiently, it is necessary to guarantee security from technical and human errors, and to make protection against terrorism and crimes. Therefore, the results of this study help to manage human resources well in the unexpected situation of an organization.*

**[Keywords]** Airport, Special Security Guard's, Aviation Security, Security Search, Private Security

### 1. Introduction

Today, with the high economic growth and the development of science and technologies for traffic, communication, and weapon system, the development of the civil aviation area contributes to minimizing the temporal and spatial restrictions and making the world as a one-day life zone.

However, the rapid expansion of today's society worsens the gap between the developed countries and the underdeveloped, and causes political, economic and social anxieties, the rise of nationalism, and religious conflicts. As a result, wars and terrorist attacks occur. In particular, aircraft hijacking, explosion, and other accidents threatening

the security of civil airlines and air transportation have emerged as a big issue[1].

Moreover, since other various ways to threaten the security of airplanes and passengers appeared, aviation security employees have strung up their nerves for security, and their security work has been more difficult. Internationally, new terrorist threats are on the rise. In Korea, 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics and other large international events will be held. Given more diverse aviation security threats and intelligent and advanced terrorism, it will be necessary to establish the future aviation security strategy to cope with many potential security threats in consideration of convenience of passengers[2].

Therefore, this study tries to have in-depth interviews with airport special guards to find their perception of aviation security in an exploratory way.

## 2. Theoretical Background

### 2.1. Concept of aviation security

The purpose of aviation security is to protect the way of carrying persons and goods and flying in air through artificial systems like aircraft against crimes. To put it simply, aviation security is aimed at protecting human life

and assets against air crimes. Also, it means the measures to prevent aviation activities from being damaged from crimes like aircraft hijacking and destruction.

Aviation security is the means to maintain the security of civil aviation and to prevent illegal actions to threaten the safety of human life and assets or aviation jobs. It is all types of work to take legal measures like punishment for persons doing illegal actions. According to Annex 17 to the 「Convention on International Civil Aviation」, aviation security is defined as "the measures and human and physical combination for protecting passengers, flight attendants, ground crew members, ordinary people, civil aviation, and aviation facilities from act of illegal interference"[3].

### 2.2. Relevant works

Aviation security has actively been researched so far since the 9/11 terrorist attack in the US. However, the research on airport special guards has mainly focused on marketing, psychology, organizational culture, and organizational effectiveness. Therefore, this study tried to analyze airport special guards' perception of aviation security and problems in an empirical and exploratory way. <Table 1> shows relevant works.

**Table 1.** Relevant works.

Researcher	Research contents
Kim (2004)	Discussed the development process of aviation security search and operation improvement plan[4].
Cho (2010)	Argued the efficient security activity through clarification of security search rights and responsibilities, equipment improvement, and legal regulations[5].
Jeong (2011)	Raised the necessity for improving work conditions of employees and training experts in order for improved aviation safety security system[6].
Jeong (2012)	Researched the relations between influential factors on job satisfaction of aviation security search employees and service offering factors[7].
Lim (2012)	Researched the relations between security search members' job stress and job satisfaction, and the achievement of organizational goals through improved communication and inter-personal relationship[8].

Kim (2013)	Argued the importance of preliminary security search for airport security[9].
Jeong (2014)	Prepared the aviation security response system through the enhanced education & training and regulations[10].
Kim (2017)	Argued the necessity of aviation security education for airport employees, and cooperation and systemization for information exchange and general training[11].
Kim (2017)	Analyzed the influence of airport special guards' security service value on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty[12].

### 3. Study Results

<Table 2> shows the categories of the results from interviews with special guards

working at Incheon and Gimpo international airports. Some of interviews about categorized qualitative data are presented as below:

**Table 2.** Study results.

Research question	Category of interview	Results of research
Airport special guards' perception of aviation security	Security perception	Non-regular work contract
		High turnover
		Absence of security perception
	Education and training	Poor education and training
		Low responsibility and trust
	Work conditions	High labor intensity
Poor work conditions		

"I perceives the importance of the work at the national major facility. However, it is non-regular work so that I feel insecure at work. Therefore, I am more concerned about my turnover rather than the perception of aviation security."(Oct. 19, 2017, Incheon. PGS. M).

"Recently, there are many new reports about airport security. However, my co-workers are not concerned about it. Because of simple work and poor work conditions, I try to find a different job as soon as possible."(Aug. 28, 2017, Gimpo. KJK M).

"I received education & training, and on-the-job education before beginning to work. However, such education was not helpful. I don't think that security search is professional work. Therefore, the perception of security seems to be low."(Oct. 14, 2017, Incheon. ROC W).

"Some of new employees might work long, but most of them quit the job and change their job. Therefore, it is hard to have a sense of responsibility. I also think that new employees will leave soon. So I don't have high trust in people."(Sep. 19, 2017, Incheon. PJT. M).

"More people use airports, and more demands are given to us by superior departments instructing and supervising security search. However, there are a lack of manpower and poor work conditions. Therefore, many co-workers have difficulty with work."(Oct. 9, 2017, Gimpo. OHT W).

"Insecure job and poor pay and welfare are issues. Incheon airport is far away from urban areas. Therefore, person like me coming from local areas are concerned about lodging and living cost, because of low pay. Furthermore, the firm I belong to is an outsourcing service firm so that I have a lot of complaints about a

demand for wage rise and treatment.”(Oct. 20, 2017, Gimpo. OHT W).

#### 4. Conclusion and Suggestion

Recently, some smugglers of drugs passed through security systems without problem at Incheon, Gimpo, Gimhae, and Jeju international airports with the highest security grade. Korean people who heard of the news are considered to be very concerned about security. The international airports are facilities with the highest security grade as the first border gate. However, failure of security search for illegal persons and dangerous goods can cause a severe problem, and badly influence national security and economy.

The key to the security of airports and airplanes is security search which is the most effective response to the prevention of aviation terrorism. Given the point that strong aviation security and security search are required, special guards performing security search are the main body for the security of airplanes and passengers and play a very important role in the aviation security field.

However, special guards in charge of security search are non-regular workers so that they feel insecure and their job efficiency is low. In addition, their low-wage structure and job insecurity leads to their turnover. As a result, it is hard for special guards in charge of security search to have high perception of aviation security. Therefore, it is necessary to improve organizational structure and work conditions, and enhance their education and training in order to raise their perception of aviation security.

This study tried to find airport special guards' perception of aviation security in an exploratory way. It is expected that the study results will contribute to improving their work conditions and providing policy suggestions to make changes in the management of job performers and improvements in job performance in the theoretical and practical dimension.

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