Clines In New York And Seoul: A Comparison

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Abstract: Across the world, highly populated urban areas are widely regarded as generators of various crimes. From petty crimes to organized crime activities, cities and other urban areas provide some form of haven for criminal activities and their proponents. In this paper, we look at two highly urbanized areas, New York City and Seoul, South Korea. We look to compare the crime trends and activities in these two areas and see if there are points of comparison by which these two are similar or if they are separated by some factors.

Index Terms: Cities, Criminal, New York City, Organized Crime, Seoul, Sex Slavery, South Korea, Trends, Urban.

1 INTRODUCTION
CRIME is a crime, regardless of the culture, society or nation in which it occurs. For example, a robbery in New York, USA is not that different from one that occurs in Seoul, South Korea. A rape or sexual assault is no different from one that happens in either Seoul or in New York. In this light, it can be said that the parameters that define a criminal act is the same even if the countries are separated by thousands of miles physically and centuries culturally and societally. What can then be used to compare crimes in these two very unique locations? The answer seems to lie in the manner that these are reported to the public. In New York, there seems to be a drive in generating enough fanfare to save the reputation of the officials of the city as well of the city itself. Mayor Bloomberg, whether he knows the actuations found by researchers, must be able to account himself against the allegations of tampering with crime statistics in order to project a safe image for New York City. On the other hand, city officials in Seoul have come out in the open about the crime wave hitting their city. The manner by which even the highest official in the land expressing sadness and disappointment in the killing of a seven year old girl has seemed to galvanize his nation into addressing their crime problem head on. The means that they want to address their sex crime problem, though, may be headed for a wave of debate, given that there are those who want either harder or more lenient punishments.

2 CRIMES IN NEW YORK AND SEOUL
2.1 New York City Crime Rate
Detailed submission guidelines can be found on the author resources Web pages. Author resource guidelines are specific to each journal, so please be sure to refer to the correct journal. In a study conducted by Adamoli, Di Nicola, Savona and Zoffi (1998)\(^1\), in the North American region, trade in illegal narcotics was among the crimes that generated the highest level of policy response as well as lawmaking effort. This is due to the high level of extreme violence, degree of distribution and wide scale use. The groups that engage in these types of activities also engage in money laundering activities to avoid detection of their nefarious proceeds. The trend of engaging in the narcotics market is as lucrative in recent times as it was then. Grandoni (2011)\(^2\) reports that as recently as two years ago, illegal possession of marijuana was considered as the most popular crime among the populace. In 2010, there were more than 50,000 arrests, for "criminal possession of marijuana in the 5th degree across the city, a sharp rise from the 46,000 arrests in 2009 in the data released by the state’s Division of Criminal Justice Services. At 616 arrests per 100,000 residents, illegal drug possession is considered as the most popular crime in the state. According to Rayman (2012), the steadily rising crime rate in the city is considered as a blemish on the claims of New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg who seems to have a penchant of trumpeting his accomplishments as the city’s Chief executive, among them the city’s falling crime rate. In the Compstat sheet of the Police Department of the City of New York\(^4\), there is a rise in some criminal activities, while there is a seeming decrease in others.

3 Rayman, G. (2012 October 3). For the first time in 20 years, New York's crime rate is on the rise. The Village Voice News

However, Francescani (2012)\(^5\) notes that in November 2012, a peculiar event occurred in New York. On that day, there were no reports of violent crimes that took place in the city. The incident coincided with a year-end report that disclosed that the city’s murder rate was to hit its lowest rate since the 1960s. Though according to New York City Police Department spokesman Paul Browne that the overall crime rate in New York is up by 3 percent that includes a 9 percent rise in grand larceny cases owing to a spike in smart phone thefts, the rate of murder cases is down by 23 percent. The rare incident did not go unnoticed among the foreign press. In the report of Katie Daley\(^6\) for the BBC News group, the “crime less” wave lasted for more than 36 hours. The “freeze” in criminal activities started at 22:25 on Sunday and continued until 11:20 on Tuesday. For Alfred Blumstein, public policy professor at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, that considering there were 472 homicides in New York for that year, with the current year ready to show even fewer deaths, the statistics for a day without any violent incident is not a farfetched idea. Even with the reported decrease in crime activities in New York, the BBC\(^7\) still reports an average 3% rise on the overall
crime rate in the city. Though there has been a surge in larceny crimes, owing to the rise in Smart phone thefts, killings are at a 50 year-low, down 23 percent compared to the same period from last year. More than 500,000 New Yorkers were responsible for crimes such as rape, robbery and arson have been on the upswing since the IMF crisis. Crime rates are still low in general, owing to the influences of Confucianism that gives a strong sense of community within the Korean community. even with these influences, there are still criminal activities that occur, of which prostitution and sexual crimes are the most common. Crime rates are still low in general, owing to the influences of Confucianism that gives a strong sense of community within the Korean community.

2.2 Seoul Crime

In the report of the United States Department of State-Bureau of Diplomatic Security, though relatively smaller compared to the crime statistics in the United States, there are still street crimes that occur in the country. Though there are still increases in overall crime rates, there are none or very few incidents involving foreigners in the Republic of Korea. According to the ChosunIlbo, the number of crimes, such as rape, robbery and arson have been on the upswing after the 1997 Asian financial debacle, the number of arrests and convictions have steadily been going down. The increase in the number of violent crime incidents have been out pacing the population growth rate and is still rising. Data shows that from 1967 to 2007, the South Korean population grows by an average of 70 percent annually. In the same period, violent crime cases rose from 3,495 in 1967 to over 20,000 cases in 2007. Analysts attribute the seeming deprivation factor that suspects have in committing these crimes, inculcating a sense of competition with others, hence fueling their resentment and hatred towards others. According to Cumorah.com, the largest jump came from crimes by foreigners up by 23 percent at more than 7,700 crimes in the given period. Crimes such as prostitution and adultery also rose by double at more than 6,200 cases in the given period. According to the Seoul Metropolitan Police Agency, as reported in the Dongguk Pos16, 2012 has seen more than 19,000 sex crimes that have been reported to the police. Thirty-two of the crimes were reported in the city’s subway, increased to 186 by the second quarter of the year. The reasons why the crimes happen seem to be simple; there are weak laws and ineffective implementation of the laws. In response to this growing menace, the Yonghap News Agency reports that police officials have established autonomous departments within subway stations across the country that have the sole task of preventing sex crimes from occurring within the system. This after the National Police Agency disclosed a series of measures designed to prevent violent sex crimes that have disturbed and shocked the Korean people. According to Lee Sang-man, one of the senior police officers in the Seoul subway team, the crimes occur between the Jamsil and Seoul National University stations. One of the reasons, according to the officer, is that many women commute to the Gangnam region coupled with the prevalence of women who wear very short skirts and low cut dresses. According to Future Hope alliance legislator Yoon Sang-il, the number of sex crimes

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-

canada-20536201
http://www.theyerge.com/2012/12/28/3811498/nycofficials-apple-thefts-responsible-for-increased-crime-rate
14 Ibid.

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occurring in the city’s subway system is double from 2007, rising from 557 cases that year to more than 1,100 in 2010. In response to this increasing sex crime cases, South Korea has become the first nation in Asia to adopt chemical castration as a means of punishment under its criminal code of justice. The first convict to be handed down this punishment, known only by his surname Pyo, was convicted of raping several teenage girls and then using their photos and videos to blackmail them. According to Amlin (2013), high levels of testosterone can be linked with levels of aggression, thus the high number of sexual crimes. Injecting the convict with Depo-Provera has the effect of limiting or reducing the production of testosterone that stimulates the male organs and thus reduce the sexual drive in men. There are those in Korea, however, who argue for more humane measures to be applied against these offenders. According to Kim Hyun-Chung, who works at the National Medical Center in Seoul, culture is a great barrier in seeking medical help, particularly if the condition is a psychiatric or medical one. In the report of News Track India (2013), violent sexual crimes took a turn for the worse after Korean President Lee Myung-bak offered a public confession after a seven year old girl became the latest violent sex crime victim. According to the National Police Agency, the rape happened a day earlier in the Naju area in the South Jeolla Province. The police has since arrested the man, known only as Koh, while the victim is confined in a hospital to treat a possible ruptured intestine. The case of the girl came on the heels of another rape case, where a 42 year old convicted sex criminal who was wearing an electronic anklet attempted to sexually assault and then killed a 37 year-old woman in eastern Seoul. In the data released by the police, there were more than 19,000 sex crimes committed last year, averaging 53 a day, an increase of 6.7 percent from 2010.

3 FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC INFLUENCE

3.1 Crimes Involving Foreigners

According to columnist Lee Tae-Hoon in his article in the Korean Times, expatriates are getting involved in crimes is increasing in proportion to the local population. According to the National police Agency, the number of expatriates getting involved in criminal activities such as rape, theft, robbery and even murder rose by 22 percent to 8,086, up from 6,615 in 2008. According to the report, the highest increase was robbery cases, with 221 arrests up from 133 cases. The same was true for cases of rape, increasing from 114 to more than 150 cases, while assault cases rose from 4,940 to 5,885. All of these cases handled by the government with kid gloves. This accusation in light of the report that the government reduced the number of police officers handling these types of cases, from 408 to 326. Is the crime rate accurate? As mentioned in ROK Drop, a leading Korean military weblog, though there is indeed a rise in the crime rate involving foreigners, this still is not enough to surpass the crime rate in Korea done by locals. In the contention of the authors, out of a population of 1.2 million foreigners in the ROK, there were 154 incidents. On a per capita basis, this would translate to 1 major crime per 93 Koreans, compared to the earlier figure for the expatriate population in the country.

References


15 The Korea Times (2010). Number of crimes in Seoul hits 8-year high. The Korea Times Issues
22 Borowiec, Ibid


[14] Ibid.


