

Rapid technological advancements that enable exploitation and abuse have exacerbated the pervasive and escalating issue of digital sex crimes. This report provides an analysis of digital sex crimes with a specific focus on the analysis of the Nth Room Case in South Korea. It examines the relevant international and domestic legal frameworks, focuses on the types and impacts of digital sex crimes, evaluates South Korea's response to the Nth Room case, and finally gives recommendations for the areas of improvement.

Digital Sex Crimes; The example of South Korea

Stella Liantsi, Valentina Palcovicova

Southeast Asia Team – September 2024



Riviermarkt 5, 2513 AM The Hague, Netherlands



+ 31 62 72 41006



info@ghrd.org



<https://www.ghrd.org>

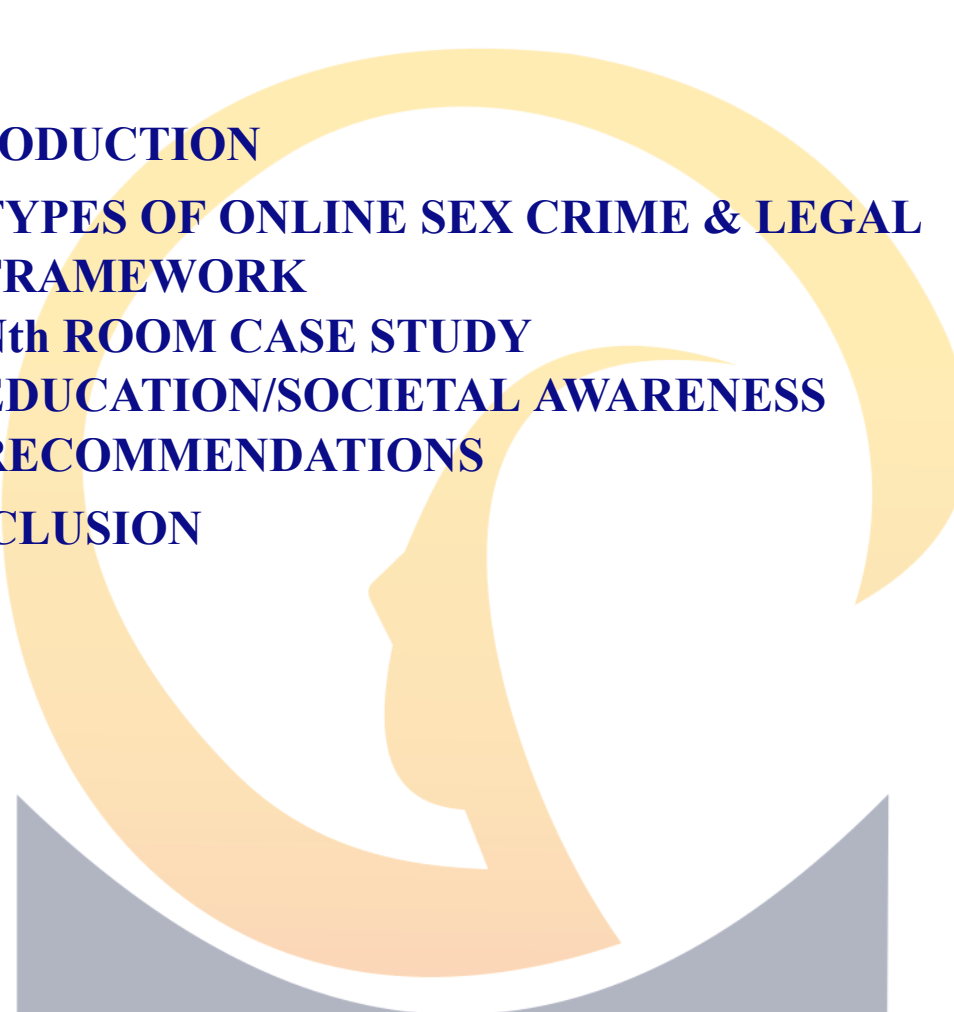


CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

1. TYPES OF ONLINE SEX CRIME & LEGAL FRAMEWORK
2. Nth ROOM CASE STUDY
3. EDUCATION/SOCIETAL AWARENESS
4. RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSION



GLOBAL
HUMAN
RIGHTS
DEFENCE

INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has given rise to new forms of sexual abuse and exploitation, disproportionately affecting women and minors. Online Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (OSEA) encompasses a range of harmful behaviours facilitated by the internet, including online grooming, live-streamed sexual abuse, child sexual abuse material (CSAM), sexual coercion and extortion, online sex trafficking, and image-based sexual abuse.

This report provides an overview of the types of online sex crimes, from cyberstalking to image-based sexual abuse, and the international legal frameworks developed to combat them. It explores key treaties such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Budapest Convention, and the Lanzarote Convention, which collectively address issues like child pornography, online grooming, and sexual exploitation.

Focusing on South Korea, the report delves into the nation's struggle with digital sex crimes, exacerbated by technological growth and insufficient legal protections. Through the lens of the Nth Room case, one of the most notorious examples of online exploitation, the report will analyse systemic shortcomings and explore the urgent need for stronger legal responses, better law enforcement, and enhanced sex education to curb these rising offenses.

The report additionally examines how education and public awareness shape public perceptions of digital sex crimes and identifies shortcomings in the way that sex education is currently provided. The last part of the report offers a number of suggestions meant to improve victim care, reinforce legal frameworks, and raise public awareness with the aim of building a stronger defense against digital exploitation. On the whole, the report seeks to shed light on the complex nature of digital sex crime by exploring the legal frameworks and by offering practical solutions.

1. TYPES OF ONLINE SEX CRIMES & LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Initially emerging as cyber sexual violence in the early 2000s, digital sex crimes were primarily seen as verbal abuse or harassment online. However, with the rapid advancement of technology, these crimes have expanded to include the production, distribution, and consumption of pornography and other non-consensual sexual acts online.

Digital sex crimes vary by jurisdiction, but generally, these crimes involve using digital technology to engage in acts of sexual harassment, exploitation, or abuse. Broadly, digital sex crimes encompass illegal activities where sexual content or behavior is shared, threatened, or coerced through electronic means without consent. While international treaties and legal frameworks have been developed to protect vulnerable individuals, such as minors, there remains a significant gap in legal protections specifically addressing crimes against women. In many countries, laws are either underdeveloped or inadequately enforced, leaving women particularly vulnerable to digital sexual abuse, including revenge porn, sextortion, and image-based sexual exploitation. The lack of comprehensive legal frameworks contributes to the ongoing victimization of women, underscoring the need for stronger protections and enforcement.

Different Forms of Online Sex Crimes

- **Revenge Porn:** non-consensual distribution or publication of sexually explicit images or videos of an individual, typically with the intent to cause harm, distress, or humiliation.¹
- **Sextortion:** coercing an individual into providing sexual favors, images, or videos by threatening to reveal private and sensitive information or explicit content about them. This form of coercion often takes place online and can involve various situations, such as threats to share intimate material, unauthorised access to private accounts, or pressuring individuals into sending more explicit content.²
- **Cyberstalking:** Utilising a digital platform to intimidate, harass, or threaten an individual.³

¹Legal Information Institute, 'Revenge Pornography' (Cornell Law School) https://www.law.cornell.edu/women-and-justice/keyword/revenge_pornography accessed 4 November 2024

² Alana Ray and Nicola Henry, 'Sextortion: A Scoping Review' (2024) *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*

³ Wilson, C., Sheridan, L., and Garratt-Reed, D., 'What is Cyberstalking? A Review of Measurements' (2021) *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*

- ***Child Sexual Exploitation Material (CSEM)***: any images or videos of a minor engaged in sexually explicit conduct. This encompasses a wide range of materials including but not limited to pornography, obscene depictions of children, and any material that sexually exploits minors.⁴
- ***Online Grooming***: Engaging with minors through digital channels to exploit or manipulate them for sexual purposes
- ***Voyeurism***: Secretly recording or capturing images of someone in private moments, often shared without their consent.
- ***Deep Fake Pornography***: The creation and distribution of sexually explicit material that employs artificial intelligence (AI) and deepfake technology to digitally manipulate and superimpose an individual's likeness onto pornographic content without their consent.
- ***Non-Consensual Upskirting/Downblousing***: Taking images or videos of someone's private parts without their knowledge or consent, often through hidden cameras.
- ***Sexual Harassment Online***: Sending unwanted sexual content, such as explicit images, videos, or messages, to another person through digital communication channels.

International Legal Framework

01

Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)⁵

Adopted in 1989, it is an international treaty designed to protect children from abuse, exploitation, and neglect.

Article 34 specifically addresses sexual exploitation and abuse, and urges States Parties to implement national, bilateral, and multilateral measures to protect children from sexual harm, particularly through the prevention of:

- i. inducement or coercion of children to engage in unlawful sexual activity.
- ii. Exploitation in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices.
- iii. Exploitation in pornographic performances and materials.

⁴ Europol, 'Child Sexual Exploitation' <https://www.europol.europa.eu/crime-areas/child-sexual-exploitation>

⁵ UNICEF, *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1990) <https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention>

02

The Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography⁶

It complements the CRC by outlining specific obligations for States in order to eliminate the sexual exploitation and abuse of children, while also safeguarding children from being sold for non-sexual purposes, including forced labor, illegal adoption, and organ trafficking

The Protocol defines the offenses of ‘sale of children,’ ‘child prostitution,’ and ‘child pornography,’ and establishes responsibilities for governments to criminalize and penalize activities linked to these crimes. It mandates punishment not only for those who offer or transfer children for sexual exploitation, organ trafficking, profit, or forced labor but also for individuals who accept the child for such purposes.

05

The Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention)⁷

The first international treaty to address internet-based crimes, including online sexual exploitation. This convention establishes legal frameworks to criminalize offenses such as child pornography, online grooming, and the distribution of sexual abuse material.

It defines "child pornography" as any pornographic material that visually depicts: (a) a minor engaged in sexually explicit conduct; (b) a person appearing to be a minor engaged in sexually explicit conduct; or (c) realistic images representing a minor in sexually explicit conduct..

05

The Convention on the Protection of Children Against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention)⁸

The convention addresses the prevention of sexual exploitation of children, particularly via the Internet. It obliges countries to criminalize offenses such as child pornography, grooming, and other forms of exploitation, while also emphasizing victim support and international cooperation.

⁶ UNICEF, *Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography* <https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention>

⁷ Council of Europe, *The Budapest Convention on Cybercrime* (2001) <https://www.coe.int/en/web/cybercrime/the-budapest-convention>

⁸ Council of Europe, *The Lanzarote Convention: Protecting Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse* (2012) <https://www.coe.int/en/web/children/lanzarote-convention>

Child prostitution is defined as the use of a child in sexual activities in exchange for money, remuneration, or any form of consideration, whether it is given directly to the child or to a third party.

Countries must enact laws to criminalize intentional acts related to child pornography, including:

- a. Producing child pornography.
- b. Offering or making child pornography available.
- c. Distributing or transmitting child pornography.
- d. Procuring child pornography for oneself or others.
- e. Possessing child pornography.
- f. Knowingly accessing child pornography through information and communication technologies.

Legal framework in South Korea

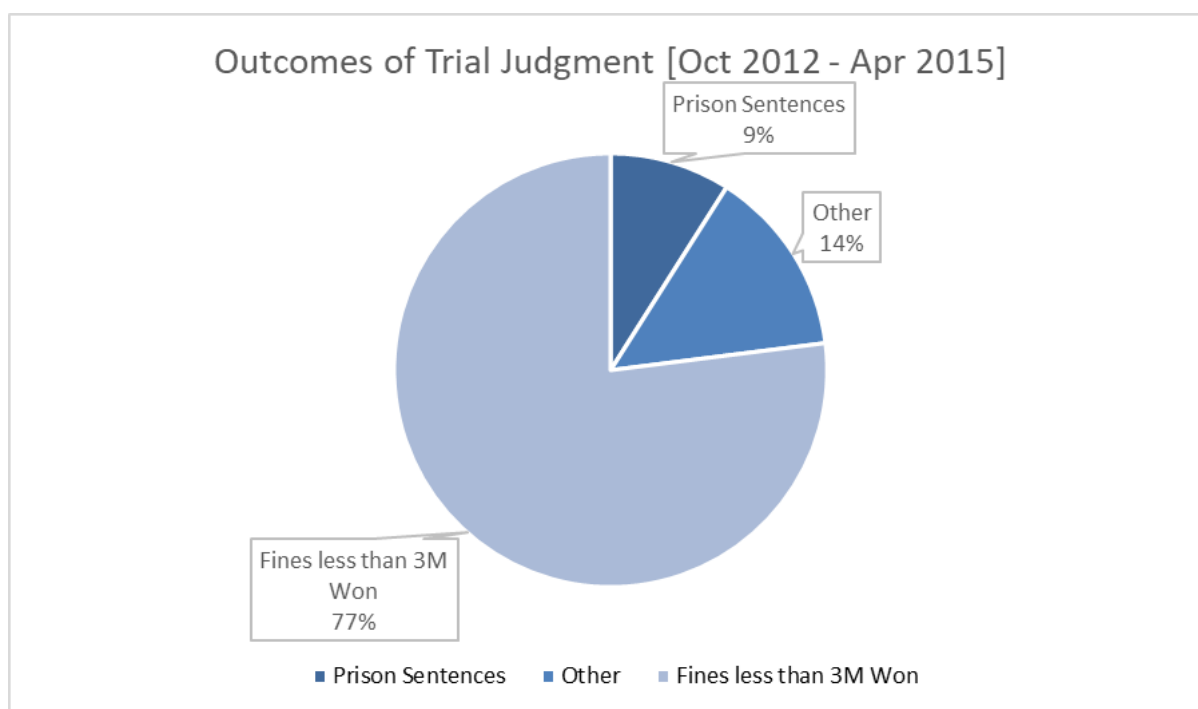
Act on Special Cases Concerning the Punishment of Sexual Crimes⁹

Addresses sexual crimes, including various forms of sexual exploitation, harassment, and violence. This law is particularly significant in the context of digital sexual crimes, such as non-consensual pornography and online sexual harassment.

Article 1 serves as a foundational provision that defines what constitutes a “hidden camera crime.” This article specifically targets the unlawful use of cameras or similar devices to record individuals in a manner that invades their privacy and can induce sexual desire or shame. In addition to this Article 14 provides the criminalization of filming or recording individuals without their consent in sexual contexts.

Those convicted of hidden camera crimes face a maximum sentence of five years in prison or fines of up to 10 million won. However, as seen within reports victims have expressed dissatisfaction with the sentences handed down to offenders, as they do not adequately reflect the severity of the crime or the lasting impact it has on their lives.

⁹ Government of the Republic of Korea. (2012). *Act on the prevention of child sexual abuse*. <https://law.go.kr/L.SW/lsInfoP.do?lsiSeq=199502&viewCls=engLsInfoR&urlMode=engLsInfoR#0000>



The Act on the Protection of Children and Youth from Sexual Abuse (Act No. 10391)

The act establishes special provisions for the punishment of individuals convicted of sexual offenses against minors, aiming for harsher penalties to deter such crimes. It also specifically prohibits the production, distribution, and possession of child pornography.

This legislation includes mandatory reporting of offenses, enhanced penalties for offenders, and mechanisms for the protection of victims. Significant amendments made in 2010 require the Minister of Gender Equality and Family to disclose personal information about sexual offenders if the victim is under 19 years of age.

The Act on the Promotion of Information and Communications Network Utilization and Information Protection (ICNA)

This act contains provisions aimed at preventing the illegal distribution of harmful information, including digital sexual content. It requires internet service providers (ISPs) to take action against illegal content.

Enforcement Agencies

Cyber Investigation Units: The South Korean National Police Agency has dedicated units that focus on cybercrimes, including digital sex crimes. These units investigate cases, gather evidence, and enforce laws against offenders.

Korean Communications Commission (KCC): The KCC plays a role in regulating and monitoring telecommunications and broadcasting services, including the prevention of digital sex crimes through oversight of content.

3. Nth ROOM CASE STUDY

The Nth Room case is a digital crime case that occurred in South Korea between 2018 and 2020. It involves the widespread distribution and selling of sexually exploitative videos on the Telegram app of a large number of minors, including middle school students with a total of 1154 victims confirmed at the end of the investigation in December 2020. Reports have said that approximately 260.000 members paid to enter these chat rooms suggesting that with the population of Korea, 1 out of 200 Korean citizens were in the Nth Rooms¹⁰. The case caused public outrage resulting in public protests, feminist movements, and pushing for more aggressive government actions against digital sex crimes and legislative reforms.

The leader operator Cho Ju-bin known as ‘Doctor’ together with other alliances such as Hyungwook Moon known as ‘GodGod’ were producing child sexual exploitation material and distributing them on the Telegram chat rooms called Nth Rooms or Doctor’s Rooms. These rooms had three price levels varying from 250.000 to 1.5 million won, with the higher-tier rooms having more extreme or violent content. To enter these rooms prospective members were required to pay in cryptocurrency which made the transactions more challenging to trace.¹¹ In several cases, the potential members had to prove their willingness or loyalty by engaging also in questionable ethical activities.

There are two main versions of how the operators were blackmailing the victims. Firstly, they used social media posts and chat applications such as ‘Recruiting sponsor part-time workers’ to entice victims to send their IDs together with facial photos. After the victims applied he tricked them into sending nude photos.¹² The second version is that they were searching for females who had posted pictures of themselves online naked or engaging in sexual activities. Then they would write a fake Twitter link to inform them that these pictures and their names were going viral online. After clicking the link the victims were sent to a webpage where they were prompted to enter their passwords and usernames. However, they were unaware that these details would eventually be sent to the Doctor and he would gain access to these personal materials. Either way in both cases, the Doctor was using these photos to blackmail them into filming sexually exploitative material or carrying out ‘missions’ which he then

¹⁰ Vanilla, ‘The Nth Room: The Rise of Digital Sexual Exploitation on Internet’ (*Debating404*, 14 June 2020) < <https://debating404.com/nth-room-rise-of-digital-sexual-exploitation/> > accessed 27 September 2024

¹¹ ‘Face of notorious child porn suspect revealed’ (*TheKoreanTimes*, 28 September 2024) < https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2020/03/251_286686.html > accessed 27 September 2024

¹² Manager, ‘Arrest of Telegram operator “Doctor’s Room” for producing and distributing child pornography’ (*Seoul Metropolitan Police*, 20 March 2020) < <https://www.smpa.go.kr/user/nd42986.do?View&boardNo=00236016> > accessed 22 October 2024

distributed to the Doctor's Rooms¹³. The 'missions' varied from producing explicit and degrading videos following detailed instructions, harming themselves on camera, publicly degrading themselves and recording it, as well as involving forcefully in sexual activities with others or engaging other people in sexually abusive situations.

The case came to the surface by a journalist named Kim Wan upon a useful piece of information he was assigned to investigate child pornography being shared on Telegram. Kim thought that the assignment would be rather straightforward since digital sex crimes were becoming more common in South Korea. However, he discovered a story that was far broader than he had anticipated. Kim Wan together with his colleague were the first ones to do in-depth reporting of the case. Another duo of student journalists known as Team Flake were the first ones to write about the case.¹⁴ Slowly the case gained public attention as more and more Korean newspapers started writing about it. Fast forward, the Blue House National Petition had more than 2 million signatures supporting the request to disclose personal information and set up a photo for the suspect in the case as well as the subscribers of the Nth rooms.

With an average age of just 21, 3,757 people had been arrested and 245 imprisoned in relation to the Nth Room by the end of 2020. By the end Hyungwook Moon with 9 charges in total including distribution of pornography, crimes of intimidation crimes of rape crimes of compulsory indecent assault etc on 21 November 2021 he was sentenced by the Supreme Court to 34 years of prison.¹⁵ The main operator Cho Ju-bin was sentenced to 8 years more than Hyungwook Moon receiving a total of 42 years of prison which excluding murder cases is the highest fixed-term sentence.¹⁶

After the Nth Room case, the government recognized the gaps between evolving criminal tactics and the system's inability to keep up with them and decided to implement some changes to its policies. Initially in order to reduce the blind spots of punishment the government expanded the definition of digital sex crimes. Pornography that exploits children or adolescents, digital sexual images, illicit recordings made with modified cameras and other material disseminated without the consent of the persons are all considered forms of digital sexual crime.¹⁷ The main change is also to the Sexual Violence Punishment Act which stipulated that anybody found in possession of, purchasing, storing, or viewing illicit sexual videos may face a maximum term of three years in jail or a fine of up to thirty million won. That means that those who shared sexual content created by others in the Nth Room case but did not take centre stage, like the 'Doctor' or 'GodGod' will also face consequences. The rule

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ Alicia Geigel, 'The Chilling Story Behind Netflix's "Cyber Hell: Exposing an Internet Horror" (PS, 18 May 2022) < <https://www.popsugar.com/entertainment/nth-room-true-story-48826733> > accessed 22 October 2024

¹⁵ Moon Hyeong-wook, Namu Wiki <https://en.namu.wiki/w/%EB%AC%B8%ED%98%95%EC%9A%B1> last modified 17 October 2024, accessed 2 November 2024

¹⁶ Jo Joo-bin, Namu Wiki <https://en.namu.wiki/w/%EC%A1%B0%EC%A3%BC%EB%B9%88#fn-5> last modified 3 November 2024, accessed 2 November 2024

¹⁷ Seogang Herald, 'Nth Room' Case: the Evolution of Digital Sex Crimes' (Social Focus, 4 June 2020) < <https://sgherald.seogang.ac.kr/front/cmsboardview.do?siteId=sgherald&bbsConfigFK=3875&pkid=855804> > accessed 3 November 2024

also made it clear that anyone caught photographing their own body and then sharing it with others would face consequences as well. In addition, it also increased the age at which negligent rape occurs from under 13 to 16 years old. The provision that penalized individuals for having intercourse with minors under the age of 13, whether or not the child consent, is known as negligent rape. In the past, teens who were 13 years of age or older were not protected.¹⁸

This case also highlights the important role that social media platforms play in digital sex crimes. Telegram's strong security was a big issue during the investigation. Telegram users can hide their mobile number and use a 'user ID' instead making it hard for the authorities to identify suspects.¹⁹ For more than seven months the police asked Telegram seven times to assist in their investigation of the case just to be turned down each time. Police were unable to figure out the email address of Telegram's security officer at the time and the requests were sent to a generic email account that is often used for reporting postings. Police had to collect evidence from other platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and virtual currency exchange operators to detain the responsible after Telegram refused to collaborate.²⁰ In May 2024, news of another case involving graduates of Seoul National University distributing deepfake pornography through Telegram also came to the surface. The graduates used deepfake technology to create sexually explicit videos based on photos of other classmates from social media and yearbooks and share them through Telegram's channels²¹. It is worrying the fact that Telegram is still used as a cover for cyber-sex crimes but still gets away with it.

4. EDUCATION AWARENESS IN SOUTH KOREA

While there are advantages to the world becoming more and more digitised, new avenues for criminal activity including sex crimes are opened. South Korea, which is considered a leader in the technological industry, has also fallen victim to digital sex crimes. 10,606 digital sex offenses were recorded in 2022, double the 5,007 reported just a year earlier, according to a Korean safety report published by Statistics Korea. Data gathered by the Sex Crime Victims Support Center in an organization affiliated with the Gender Ministry shows that a total of 243,855 unlawfully generated and transmitted sexual photographs and videos were deleted in 2023.²² The number increased by 30,855 from 213,000 in 2022, painting a worrying picture of the rising number of victims of cyber-sex crimes. Additionally, according to Human Rights Watch, prosecutors in South Korea dropped 43.5% of digital sex crimes and 46.8% of sex

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ Shafeeq Alingal, 'Telegram App a Safe haven for Criminals, Police Tell HC' (2019) The Times of India < <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kochi/telegram-app-a-safe-haven-for-criminals-police-tell-hc/articleshow/72231135.cms> > accessed 2 November 2024

²⁰ 'How Telegram became a hotbed of digital sex crimes in South Korea' (HANKYOREH 26 August 2024) < https://english.hani.co.kr/arti/english_edition/e_national/1155393.html > accessed 1 October 2024

²¹ Ibid

²² Park Jun-hee, 'Distorted awareness weak law: How digital sex crimes thrive in S. Korea' *The Korea Herald* (14, July 2024) < <https://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20240714050200> > accessed 3 November 2024

crimes in 2019, compared to 27.7% of homicide cases and 19% of robbery cases, citing the lack of seriousness with which such crimes are handled in the country.²³

Many people put the blame for these incidents on the insufficient and narrow view of sex education offered in schools. Sex curriculum includes superficial-level content centered on the problematic nature of societal issues relating to sex with the sexiest views. Also, the majority of the content is characterized as shallow and serves only to discourage students from engaging in any sex-related activity. Despite the ‘Sex Education Guideline’ that was set in 2015 by the Ministry of Education most schools continued to downplay the significance of sex education by only teaching the lesson less than three times per year.²⁴ They also suggested that the sex education guidelines implied that the majority of sex offenses are attributed to women and that victims’ behavior can lead to sex crimes. Another possible cause is the existence of one-gender schools and the prejudiced stance they adopt in these schools. The issue is particularly highlighted in the only boys' schools where the existence of “low perceived necessity to give sex education to boys (compared to girls)” leads to inadequate sex education.²⁵

In 2022, the ministry stated that revising the guidelines required extensive expert opinion exchange and that it takes a lot of work to evaluate the 2015 revised guidelines as entirely problematic. It was observed that members of the ministry were reluctant to develop defenses against the current guidelines since the incumbents were the ones who had drafted the criteria and it would not be in their best interests to self-object to their earlier efforts. Further, even if the petition was approved and the department was required to implement the changes the same members would be in charge of the revision process, which means that the desired adjustments would probably not be made.²⁶

In 2018, the authorities removed 28,000 pictures and videos that had explicit sexual content. According to the Gender Ministry, the number increased to 95,000 in 2019, 158,000 in 2020, and 169,000 in 2021.

The Nth Room case occurred in 2018 together with the spycam epidemic in the same year alerted South Korea to the seriousness of digital sex crimes and informed the need for a strong response.²⁷ In an effort to stop the spread of harmful and pornographic content online, the Ministry of Science and ICT²⁸ declared in November 2018 that it will invest 2 billion won

²³ Human Rights Watch, ‘My life is not Your Porn: Digital Sex Crimes in South Korea’ (16 June 2021) < <https://www.hrw.org/report/2021/06/16/my-life-not-your-porn/digital-sex-crimes-south-korea> > accessed 3 November 2024

²⁴ Da-sol Goh, ‘Misogynistic sex education in South Korea is making students have distorted view on sex’ (Medium 13 July 2020) < <https://uifcsol0122.medium.com/sexist-sex-education-is-a-culprit-of-sex-crimes-in-south-korea-8ef18b3c28fc> > accessed 7 October 2024

²⁵ Ibid

²⁶ Leo Hwang, ‘Sex Education in South Korea: What can be done better?’ Medium (21 April 2022) < <https://medium.com/writ-150-at-usc-fall-2020/sex-education-in-south-korea-what-can-be-done-better-4844f85c9bdb> > accessed 3 November 2024

²⁷ Woonchun Jun, ‘A Study on Characteristics Analysis and Countermeasures of Digital Sex Crimes in Korea’ MDPI (21 December 2021) < <https://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/19/1/12> > accessed 3 November 2024

²⁸ Information Communication Technology and Innovation

in developing technology that can identify and prohibit offensive context from streaming websites and videos.²⁹

The same year the Seoul metropolitan government launched a program to regularly check the city's restrooms to curb the increasing number of spy cameras installed in public restrooms.³⁰ In addition, last year the city government announced its intentions to use an AI surveillance system to automatically find and remove videos of sexual exploitation from social media and stop them from being shared. It can be seen that even though the government made some changes in the legislative framework and increased public awareness, changes in sex education itself haven't received much attention.

Digital citizenship education should be integrated with comprehensive sexuality education. A former government official stated, "Law is not enough to control digital sex crimes - training and educating people from the beginning to get their own citizenship in the digital world, to raise digital citizenship is necessary". Early sexuality education and digital citizenship education for children are vital, but adults including those in all professions such as law enforcement and the judiciary also require this kind of education. According to a member of the Korea Women's Hotline "Gender equality education should be mandatory in public education and for all public figures".³¹

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations were inspired from the Human Rights Watch report³² which shared interviews with survivors and experts and a survey documenting the spread and impact in South Korea of what are referred to there as 'digital sex crimes'.

Category	Recommendations
Legal Reforms 	- Appointment of a commission - including survivors, activists, and specialists in the field of free speech and criminal defendant rights - that will assess the efficacy of the present sentencing guidelines and remedies for digital sex crimes focusing on the proportionality of criminal punishments and the accessibility of civil remedies. - Pass legislation that would limit the public disclosure of identifying

²⁹ 'S. Korean Police to Invest Millions to Prevent Deepfakes' *The Standard* (3 November 2024) < <https://www.thestandard.com.hk/breaking-news/section/6/220663/S.-Korean-police-to-invest-millions-to-prevent-deepfakes> > accessed 3 November 2024

³⁰ Human Rights Watch, 'My life is not Your Porn: Digital Sex Crimes in South Korea' (16 June 2021) < <https://www.hrw.org/report/2021/06/16/my-life-not-your-porn/digital-sex-crimes-south-korea> > accessed 3 November 2024

³¹ Ibid

³² Human Rights Watch, 'My life is not Your Porn: Digital Sex Crimes in South Korea' (16 June 2021) < <https://www.hrw.org/report/2021/06/16/my-life-not-your-porn/digital-sex-crimes-south-korea> > accessed 3 November 2024

	details of victims including allowing civil lawsuits to continue without disclosing personal information and give judges the authority to issue orders protecting the plaintiff's identity and privacy. ● Strengthening safeguards against victim pressure and intimidation to avoid drop of criminal charges ● Remove the criminal defamation clause from the Criminal Act to encourage people to speak about sensitive matters and to prevent retaliation
Education and Public Awareness 	● Reform the curriculum eliminating gender stereotypes and including subjects such as consent, gender-based violence, healthy relationships, digital citizenship including digital sex crimes ● Call for and support all educational institutions to create policies for dealing with cases of digital sex crimes. From raising awareness to holding perpetrators accountable and providing support to the impacted ones. ● Raise awareness by training the police and the judiciary on gender sensitivity and digital sex crimes ● Promote women's participation in the legal and law enforcement fields, political representation, public life, and the private sector, particularly at higher levels
Victim Support 	● Create supporting programs and services for the victims of digital sex crimes including legal support, compensation advice and ● Improve the hotlines that support victims on how to handle gender-based violence cases with regular seminars on relevant topics (sensitivity, confidentiality and privacy, legal rights, and resources)
Technology & Platform Responsibility 	● Demand from platforms to strengthen their policies, compel them to flag and take down personal, non-consensual intimate images, and ban and penalize rule breakers ● Demand from social media platforms to reveal data on the cases that involve digital sex crime incidents

CONCLUSION

Digital sex crimes pose a significant danger to everyone's safety and dignity, regardless of gender, age or origin. These crimes not only cause severe personal trauma but also erode public trust in digital spaces. The example of South Korea, especially in light of the Nth Room case highlights the urgent need for a comprehensive response combining societal, educational and legal reforms. To guarantee justice for victims and accountability for the offenders, legal institutions must change and education programs should be improved to promote empathy, respect, and digital literacy in all communities. Governments, technology companies and civil society should collaborate to create safer online environments. By implementing a cohesive and inclusive strategy South Korea can set a strong example for the international world on upholding human rights in the digital age by taking lead in the fight against digital sex crimes.

Table of Legislation:

UNICEF, *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1990)

<https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention>

Council of Europe, *The Budapest Convention on Cybercrime* (2001)

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/cybercrime/the-budapest-convention>

Council of Europe, *The Lanzarote Convention: Protecting Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse* (2012) <https://www.coe.int/en/web/children/lanzarote-convention>

Government of the Republic of Korea. (2012). *Act on the prevention of child sexual abuse*.

<https://law.go.kr/LSW/lsInfoP.do?lsiSeq=199502&viewCls=engLsInfoR&urlMode=engLsInfoR#0000>

Table of All Secondary Sources:

Legal Information Institute, 'Revenge Pornography' (Cornell Law School)

https://www.law.cornell.edu/women-and-justice/keyword/revenge_pornography accessed 4 November 2024

Alana Ray and Nicola Henry, 'Sextortion: A Scoping Review' (2024) *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*

Wilson, C., Sheridan, L., and Garratt-Reed, D., 'What is Cyberstalking? A Review of Measurements' (2021) *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*

Europol, 'Child Sexual Exploitation' <https://www.europol.europa.eu/crime-areas/child-sexual-exploitation> accessed 27th September

— 'Face of notorious child porn suspect revealed' *TheKoreanTimes* (28 September 2024)

https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2020/03/251_286686.html accessed 27 September 2024

— 'How Telegram Became a Hotbed Of Digital Sex Crimes in South Korea' *Hankyoreh* (26 August 2024)

https://english.hani.co.kr/arti/english_edition/e_national/1155393.html accessed 1 October 2024

—Human Rights Watch, 'My Life Is Not Your Porn: Digital Sex Crimes in South Korea' (16 June 2021)

<https://www.hrw.org/report/2021/06/16/my-life-not-your-porn/digital-sex-crimes-south-korea> accessed 20 October 2024

— 'Nth Room Case: The Evolution of Digital Sex Crimes' *Seogang Herald* (4 June 2020)

<https://sgherald.sogang.ac.kr/front/cmsboardview.do?siteId=sgherald&bbsConfigFK=3875&pkid=855804> accessed 20 October 2024

Alingal S, 'Telegram App a Safe Haven for Criminals, Police Tell HC' *The Times of India* (2019)

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kochi/telegram-app-a-safe-haven-for-criminals-police-tell-hc/articleshow/72231135.cms> accessed 22 October 2024

Geigel A, 'The Chilling Story Behind Netflix's "Cyber Hell: Exposing an Internet Horror"' *PopSugar* (18 May 2022) <https://www.popsugar.com/entertainment/nth-room-true-story-48826733> accessed 22 October 2024

Goh D, 'Misogynistic Sex Education in South Korea in Making Students Have Distorted View on Sex' *Medium* (13 July 2020) <https://iufcsol0122.medium.com/sexist-sex-education-is-a-culprit-of-sex-crimes-in-south-korea-8ef18b3c28fc> accessed 7 October 2024

Hwang L, 'Sex Education in South Korea: What Can Be Done Better?' *Medium* (21 April 2022) <https://medium.com/writ-150-at-usc-fall-2020/sex-education-in-south-korea-what-can-be-done-better-4844f85c9bdb> accessed 22 October 2024

Jun W, 'A Study on Characteristics Analysis and Countermeasures of Digital Sex Crimes in Korea' MDPI (21 December 2021) <https://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/19/1/12> accessed 27 October 2024

Jo Joo-Bin, Namu Wiki <https://en.namu.wiki/w/%EC%A1%B0%EC%A3%BC%EB%B9%88#fn-5> last modified 3 November 2024, accessed 2 November 2024

Moon H-W, Namu Wiki <https://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/19/1/12> last modified 17 October 2024, accessed 27 October 2024

Vanilla, 'The Nth Room: The Rise of Digital Sexual Exploitation on Internet' *Debating404* (14 June 2020) <https://debating404.com/nth-room-rise-of-digital-sexual-exploitation/> accessed 27 September 2024

Park J-H, 'Distorted Awareness, Weak Law: How Digital Sex Crimes Thrive in S. Korea' *The Korea Herald* (14 July 2024) <https://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20240714050200> accessed 27 October 2024

