Damage from Online Sexual Violence and Victim Protection

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A wider use of the Internet and smart phones makes it possible to use information limitlessly beyond time and space but at the same time brings about serious online sexual violence. The former is deemed to be functional but the latter is regarded as dysfunctional. Given that online sexual violence insults victims' character, leading them to avoid the use of online systems, distorting human relations, and creating abnormal relations, it is necessary to identify the root causes of such problems and seek ways to effectively cope with them.

At present, online sexual violence is being committed in indiscriminate ways which include 'illegal filming,' 'threatening to distribute illegally filmed materials,' 'the distribution and secondary distribution of such materials,' 'image editing for indecent purposes,' 'cyber sexual bullying,' 'sexual harassment at group chat rooms,' 'lewd acts via telecommunications media,' 'written sexual insults or sexual images in cyber space including SNS,' and 'adult

advertisements.'

Online sexual violence is not accompanied by physical contact but has as much negative impact on the ego of victims as physical sexual violence, so that it is regarded as a very serious act of violence. Moreover, considering that most of the victims are women, it is desperately necessary to conduct studies based on the perspectives of female victims.

Against this backdrop, this paper is designed to look into damage from online sexual violence on the basis of the experience of victims and to seek ways to protect and support victims and to prevent such violence.

For this research study, precedents and press reports regarding online sexual violence are analyzed, conducting online surveys, holding in-depth interviews, and reviewing foreign cases.

For the protection of and support for online sexual violence victims, the following legal and policy measures are proposed: 1) Eliminate blind spots in punishing online sexual violence offenders; 2) Improve systems to cope with reports to the police; 3) Seek effective ways to support victims; 4) Seek ways to actively control and regulate cyber sexual bullying; 5) Toughen penalties for online sexual violence; 6) Control excessive press reports; 7) Establish gender-equal online culture; and 8) Seek ways to prevent teenagers from becoming online sexual violence offenders.