A Qualitative Study on the Effects of Hidden Cameras on the Everyday Lives and Romantic Relationships of Female College Students

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Abstract

Based on a social justice counseling theory framework, this study aimed to understand how the hidden camera phenomenon affects the everyday lives and romantic relationships of female college students. Interviews were conducted with 12 female college students. Analysis using consensual qualitative research revealed themes related to emotional, cognitive, and behavioral changes, changes in perception about men and romantic relationships, and changes in individual values due to the hidden camera phenomenon. These results indicate the need for and applicability of social justice counseling to consider social contexts in understanding individuals dealing with the psychological discomfort caused by the hidden camera phenomenon.

Key words

hidden camera, social justice counseling theory, digital sex crime, gender microaggression, consensual qualitative research (CQR)

Introduction

The hidden camera phenomenon prevalent in Korean society seems to threaten the mental health of women. According to a survey of Seoul citizens conducted in June 2019 on the issue of hidden cameras, two out of three feel anxious about hidden cameras in their everyday lives, and 80% of women reported high levels of daily fear about hidden cameras (Ahn, 2019). The fact that even a celebrity posted

secretly filmed sex videos through group messengers increased the visibility and seriousness of the hidden camera phenomenon in the eyes of the public (Lee, 2020).

The use of hidden cameras is classified as a digital sex crime with the combined characteristics of cyber- and sexual violence (Bloom, 2014). Victims of revenge pornography, one type of digital sex crime, experience trust issues, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, suicidal intentions, and many other mental health problems (Bates, 2017). Women who have experienced sexual violence tend to be ashamed of the fact (Bates, 2017), and fear that their private affairs will be made public (Weiss, 2010). According to one study (Kwon & Lee, 2013), female college students' daily fear of sexual violence has led to cognitive changes, degrading their sense of control over themselves. In another study (Jang, 2009), the main difference between men and women's perception of the danger of sexual violence is that 48.9% of women (and 19.7% of men) believe that they are likely to experience sexual assault. These results suggest that the hidden camera phenomenon would cause changes in women's daily lives similar to those caused by fear of sexual assault.

Hidden cameras are frequently placed in metro stations and other public places (59%) such as restrooms and changing rooms, which causes wariness and anxiety in women in public places, and approximately eight out of ten perpetrators are strangers to the victims (Shin, 2019b). The rise in hidden camera incidents extends the crime scene from private to public areas (e.g., public restrooms) which increases the daily effect on women (Jeon, 2019). Although both men and women evinced a fear of being secretly filmed, the sources of that fear were different. Men fear hidden cameras in hotel rooms (65%) while women fear hidden cameras in public restrooms (52%) (Ahn, 2019). This finding shows that the subject of hidden cameras is not only sexual activity but also the private daily activities of women. The use of hidden cameras in public restrooms and the prevalence of the sharing of these images in the male online community show that women are being sexually objectified in the course of their everyday lives.

Women' fears of being filmed secretly are often invalidated or ridiculed by the fact that the hidden cameras are unseen, despite the fact that they can be aimed at anyone by anyone. Whether intentional or unintentional, having concerns about illegal filming dismissed is a form of gender microaggression, a form of indirect and subtle discrimination in the daily life of women (Sue, Capodilupo et al., 2007). It includes microassaults, rude or demeaning microinsults, and microinvalidation that denies or excludes a woman's feelings or thoughts (Sue, Capodilupo et al., 2007).

Among these, microinsults and microinvalidations are often dismissed as trivial incidents because it is harder to clearly reveal the damage they cause compared to sexual harassment or overt sexism (Gonzales, Davidoff, Nadal, & Yanos, 2015; Minikel-Lacocque, 2013). However, women who experience subtle sex discrimination (microinsults and microinvalidations) feel low self-esteem, anxiety, and depression (Basford, Offermann, & Behrend, 2014; Derthick, 2015; Judson, 2014). Also, it was found that women targeted by subtle sex discrimination experience confusion, self-doubt, alienation, and feelings of incompetence more strongly than women who experienced overt sex discrimination (Dumont, Sarlet, & Dardenne, 2010; Nadal & Haynes, 2012). Therefore, it is clear that the impact of gender microaggression can be greater than that of overt sex discrimination, even though gender microaggression can be perceived as a trivial matter.

Women's psychological experiences in relation to the hidden camera phenomenon can be understood through social justice counseling (Vera & Speight, 2003). Traditional counseling theory attributed the cause of clients' problem to internal factors (Jeong, 2015), but the latest trend in counseling psychology is to look at the social context that individuals interact with (Hou & Bonanno, 2018). Social justice counseling is an approach that considers the social context in line with changes in society and recognizes the importance of a preventive model that goes beyond a therapeutic intervention (Neukrug, 2015; Ratts, 2009). In other words, social justice counseling implies that the counselor should help clients using macrolevel changes, meaning institutional and social changes (Constantine, Hage, Kindaichi, & Bryant, 2007; Lim & Yeo, 2015; Vera & Speight, 2003).

To be more specific, the Advocacy Competencies of the American Counseling Association (ACA) describes necessary counselor skills, knowledge, and behavior that can be implemented to address systemic barriers (Lewis, Arnold, House, & Toporek, 2002). The Advocacy Competencies are organized around two dimensions: extent of client involvement in advocacy (collaboration with, on behalf of) and level of advocacy intervention (individual student/client, community/school/organization, public arena) (Lewis et al., 2002; Toporek & Daniels, 2018). The first domain, client/student empowerment, is to help clients advocate for themselves through direct counseling, and the second, client/student advocacy, refers to actions a counselor takes to advocate on behalf of an individual client, student, or family (Lewis et al., 2002). At the community/school/organization level, community collaboration and systems advocacy identify barriers and develop programs with groups or on behalf of groups (Choi, 2018; Lewis et al., 2002; Toporek, Lewis, & Crethar, 2011). Collective action and social/political advocacy

refer to advocacy that counselors address through changes in public perception or policy (Toporek & Daniels, 2018).

Women's anxieties about the possibility of being targeted by hidden cameras is based on the fact that illegal filming can happen anytime and anywhere without the victim being aware of it. The uncertainties associated with hidden cameras can make it difficult to determine whether (potential) victims were damaged or not, meaning that women's fear and sense of having had their privacy violated is often ignored or minimized, which can be considered a form of gender microinvalidation. Therefore, the hidden camera phenomena could have a negative psychological impact on women through gender microaggression, suggesting that this problem should be viewed and resolved from a social justice counseling approach.

Despite the prevalence of the hidden camera phenomenon, only 20 studies have been carried out on this issue, and these were conducted in the areas of laws, legislation, and crimes (Ahn, 2018; Kim, 2018). Given the psychological impact of the hidden camera phenomenon on women, a psychological approach is needed. Accordingly, this study was conducted from the perspective of social justice counseling theory to understand the impact of the hidden camera phenomenon in Korean society on women, advocate for the social contexts of women to be taken into account, and participate in institutional and socio-environmental changes.

Methods

Participants

The participants in this study were recruited from eight private universities located in and near Seoul. The research information was posted on the school websites or social networking sites of college students with the targets being college students in their 20s to determine the change in romantic relationships of such students. Twelve Korean women in their 20s (mean = 25; standard deviation = 2.26) enrolled in four-year college courses in Seoul participated in this study. The participants' majors, including engineering, liberal arts, law, and social sciences, were diverse. Three out of twelve reported that they were currently in romantic relationships with men while the other nine were not dating.

Procedure

Semi-structured interviews were conducted separately with each participant. The

participants were asked open-ended questions about the impact of hidden cameras in their daily lives and romantic relationships. For example, the first question was, "After recognizing the hidden camera phenomenon, what changes do you think have occurred in your thoughts, actions, and emotions in your daily life?" In the case of behavior change, specific questions were asked, such as changes in behavioral radius or social relationships. Each interview lasted for approximately 60 minutes, all were recorded and transcribed, and all participants read and signed research agreements on the purpose and ethics of the study in advance. This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board of Hankuk University of Foreign Studies.

Data Analysis

In this study, we used consensual qualitative research (CQR) to analyze the data and capture the understanding and experience of participants involved in the phenomenon of hidden cameras and subsequent changes. CQR is an inductive research method whose conclusions are estimated from the data. In CQR studies, participants' interviews and data-driven extractions of key topics can be performed to minimize researchers' biased views, checking the research team's judgment and complementing reliability and validity (Hill, Thompson, & Williams, 1997). CQR is useful in investigating individuals' in-depth attitudes, inner experiences, and beliefs (Hill & Knox, 2021). The research team was composed of four members— one graduate student studying for a master's degree, two graduate students in the doctoral program, and one professor of counseling psychology— while one external auditor (a professor of counseling psychology in a different institution) participated in the data analysis and also confirmed the research team's interpretation of the meaning with the participants. Before collecting data, all team members participated in sharing their expectations and prejudices to reduce subjectivity. The domain, core ideas, and categories were extracted, after case-by-case analysis and cross analysis, following the guidelines on CQR (Hill, 2012). The research team analyzed two or three data items individually, discussed them, and reached an agreement to create a list of domains. Each team member conducted a line-by-line analysis on a case-by-case basis and constructed categories in each domain according to the core ideas. After team members had agreed on domains and categories, the external auditor reviewed the results to ensure that the raw data were categorized correctly and that the core ideas reflected the data appropriately (Hill et al., 2005). Subsequently, the team engaged in a cross-analysis process that identified

the similarities between cases and analyzed the frequency of responses from study participants. After that, the material was again reviewed by the auditor, and team members reflected on the auditor's feedback.

Results

We used social justice theory as an overall theoretical framework with CQR methodology in analyzing the data, and the results of the study were categorized as follows: (a) effect of the hidden camera phenomenon on everyday lives, (b) effect of the hidden camera phenomenon on the perception of men and romantic relationships, and (c) transition of recognition due to the hidden camera phenomenon. Table 1 shows the results. Since 12 cases were used in this study, results corresponding to all 12 cases are classified as general, 50% or more as typical, and less than 6 cases as variants.

Table 1

Qualitative Analysis of the Effect of Hidden Cameras on Female College Students

Domain	Subdomain	Categories	Frequency
Effect of the Hidden Camera Phenomenon on Everyday Lives	Emotional changes	Increased anxiety and fear	General (12)
		Feeling of anger	Typical (8)
		Feeling of helplessness	Typical (7)
	Cognitive changes	Feeling less safe	General (12)
		Loss of control	Typical (7)
	Behavioral changes	Narrowing the radius of behavior	General (12)
		Changes in social network	Typical (8)
		Purchase of self-defense products	Typical (7)
		Not wearing revealing clothes	Variant (4)
		Refraining from using cameras	Variant (3)
Effect of the Hidden Camera Phenomenon on the Perception of Men and Romantic Relationships	Changes in the perception of men	Becoming warier of men	General (12)
		Distrusting men	Typical (10)
		Finding it difficult to communicate with men	Typical (7)
	Changes in attitudes toward romantic relationships	Change in the ideal type	General (12)
		Lost interest in dating	Typical (9)
Transition of Recognition due to the Phenomenon of the Hidden Camera	Personal changes	Feeling of inequality in society	General (12)
		Increase in self-reliance	Typical (10)
		Attracted to feminism	Typical (9)
		Changed outlook on marriage	Typical (7)
		Increased concern about the future	Variant (3)

	Gender equality policy	Typical (7)
Hope for social changes	Gender equality in education	Typical (6)
	Strengthened women's solidarity	Typical (6)
	Stronger punishments	Variant (5)

Effect of the Hidden Camera Phenomenon on Everyday Lives

The "Effect of the hidden camera phenomenon on everyday lives" domain reflects the changes in everyday lives caused by hidden cameras, which are classified into three subdomains: emotional, cognitive, and behavioral changes.

Emotional Changes

All the participants reported increased anxiety and fear in their everyday lives due to hidden cameras ($n = 12$). They added that the idea that they could be unaware of the hidden camera and become victims at some point has increased their daily fear. Most participants reported that the feeling of helplessness was due to the idea that they could not completely avoid hidden cameras ($n = 7$). Eight participants felt anger because it is unfair that victims themselves should have to prevent such crimes.

> I think I'm very nervous whenever I go to hotel rooms. Guys lie down comfortably, but I turn on the flash and check if there are holes in the fire sensor. I always check the bathroom to see if there are hidden cameras. I feel nervous all the time. I don't want to go to public restrooms, so I hold my urine. I even have a friend who had a bladder infection because she held her urine too much because of fear of hidden camera. (P10)

Cognitive Changes

All participants reported that the increased negative emotions have brought cognitive changes in their perceptions of their surroundings. All reported that they felt less safe in their everyday lives than before. Furthermore, given that most victims of hidden cameras are women, they have come to realize that life as a woman is unsafe. Most participants reported loss of control as a result of feeling helpless in their everyday lives ($n = 7$).

> In the past, I thought I could handle and prevent sexual violence by being

careful. Unless it's a traffic accident, I can have some control. However, sneak shots are not something I can avoid. People can take a sneak shot without having any reason or my causing it. (P11)

Behavioral Changes

All the participants reported that the increase in negative emotions (i.e., fear) and cognitive changes (i.e., low sense of safety) have led them to change their behavior in their everyday lives. All reported that their suspicions of hidden cameras have narrowed the radius of their behavior. They also reported developing new patterns of behavior to prevent being captured by hidden cameras if they inevitably had to go to these places.

> I try not to use the bathroom when I am outside, and I use the bathroom only when I am at home [⋯] Or I put on a mask and cover my face if I have to use the public bathroom. (P11)

Some participants also reported having changed the way they dress to avoid hidden cameras ($n = 4$), not wearing revealing clothes. In addition, three participants reported re-examining their behavior in case a hidden camera was present.

Seven participants looked for or purchased self-defense products, such as hidden camera scan detectors. Most also reported that they reduced their interactions with males and improved social relationships with females ($n = 8$). They explained that their reluctance to interact with men was caused by the fact that most hidden camera offenders were men, and the attitudes of most men toward hidden cameras are different from those of women.

> I mean, I used to get along very well with male friends, but the more I knew about men, the more I was disappointed about how ignorant and un-empathetic they are regarding these issues. So I think I'm just trying to avoid them. (P8)

Effect of the Hidden Camera Phenomenon on the Perception of Men and Romantic Relationships

The impact of hidden cameras on the perception of men and romantic relationships was divided into the two domains of "Changes in the perception of men" and "Changes in attitudes toward romantic relationships."

Changes in the Perception of Men

All participants answered that they became warier of men ($n = 12$) after the hidden camera phenomenon emerged, and ten participants reported that they distrust men. They replied that if men do not show a genuine understanding for hidden camera issues, they become wary of and distrust them.

> I don't know the exact numbers, but most victims are women. Not all men do it, but there's nothing wrong with being careful. (P11)

Seven participants replied that communicating with men is more difficult now than in the past. They reported that they expected difficulties in communication with men because of their distrust, and the experience of losing trust in men who were close to them was used as a basis for giving up communication with men, thereby increasing their wariness and distrust of men in general.

> I never talk to men about a few subjects, abortion and hidden cameras. I even try not to talk to men about things they don't understand. I've always felt like they talk like they are doing a favor when we talk about these subjects. It's just annoying. It's not something that I need to ask for as a favor, right? (P6)

Changes in Attitudes toward Romantic Relationships

Participants who experienced changes in their perception of men, seeing them as distrustful, and had difficulties in communication reported that they also experienced changes in romantic relationships. The categories of change in romantic relationships consisted of changes in the ideal type ($n = 12$) and losing interest in dating ($n = 9$).

All participants reported changes in ideal types, which appeared to be linked to increased vigilance toward men. The common type of ideal man was characterized by high gender sensitivity ($n = 8$).

> If I told them (men) about Molka (hidden cameras), they'd say, "There's no such thing. Don't worry. Why are you so worried?" When women say, "You won't experience it in your daily life, but we will," I hope I'll meet a man who says, "Really? I didn't know, it must be hard." (P11)

Five participants said that they only want to meet physically attractive men ($n =$

3) or foreigners ($n = 3$), saying that their skepticism toward men had made them believe that men in general were not capable of mutual empathy and that, as their expectations of men decreased, their ideal type had changed to gender-sensitive men or those who are good looking. In addition, given statistics showing the rate of hidden cameras in Korea is higher than in other countries, and perceptions of gender equality are lower (Lee, 2018), certain participants said that they prefer meeting foreigners because they might be more gender sensitive.

> I want to meet someone with gender sensitivity. All men are the same, but I think Korean men are worse because of the patriarchy and Confucian culture. (P11)

Nine participants responded that the change in their perception of men and ideal types have resulted in their losing interest in dating, which is related to difficulties in building trust with men and the risks related to hidden cameras having become greater than in the past.

> I don't want to generalize about all of them, but I don't think there's much good about dating men. I want to be safe and happy. (P5)

Transition of Recognition due to the Phenomenon of the Hidden Camera

The section "Transition of recognition due to the phenomenon of the hidden camera" outlines the changes in overall perceptions, which consists of two-sub-domains, "Personal change" and "Hope for social change."

Personal Change

Participants reported that their experience of hidden cameras as women is significantly different from men's perception of them. In this context, participants felt this reflected an inequality in society ($n = 12$).

> I think it's too unfair. More than 90% of victims of hidden cameras are female. I really think that's ridiculous. I think it's unfair that women have to be afraid of hidden cameras in everyday life. (P8)

All participants believed that the hidden camera phenomenon played a role in informing the public of the existence of inequality in society.

> I think the influence of hidden cameras is really, really huge. I think there were a lot of secretly filmed videos on Soranet (Korea's illegal porn web platform) and chatting applications, and those are evidence of gender inequality. (P5)

By recognizing this social inequality, participants felt that they needed power to protect themselves and be self-reliant ($n = 10$). Examples of increased self-reliance were active confrontation of inequality or sexual crimes, confident assertion of opinions diverging from the traditional female submissive stereotype, and devoting time to self-improvement rather than spending time on romantic relationships.

Most participants reported that increased self-reliance led to a change in outlook on marriage ($n = 7$). In the past, the participants reported that they thought of having traditional families and would depend on their spouses and raise children. However, they noted that their perception of marriage has changed due to the increased self-reliance. Six out of seven participants reported that now they are no longer interested in marrying or having children.

> I used to think marriage was a necessity, but now I think it will be fine if I don't get married. Instead, I want to get promoted to a higher position at work. (P8)

As the outlook on marriage changed, some participants reported that they became concerned that they had to find alternative ways to replace marriage with increased independence ($n = 3$). They reconstructed the developmental tasks of marriage, occupation, and social life after experiencing the hidden camera phenomenon and thereby now face new challenges.

> I always think about it every day, and it's not only about dating, but also about how I'm going to live as a single woman. I think it's something I can't miss out on in my life. (P6)

Participants reported that their attempt to implement a change as individuals in response to the perceived inequalities and concerns regarding the future has led them to feminism ($n = 9$). Feminist practices reported by participants involved the exploration of feminism theories to attempt to combat inequality in daily life or change the perceptions of people around them. Participants said that they learned about feminism as women when they were faced with issues related to hidden

cameras and other aspects of sexual violence.

> I talk about this with my friends (women) a lot. I also talk with my male friends. I want all my friends to know that, so I tell them. Some friends don't want to talk about it because it's uncomfortable. However, some friends accept it. If I can help one person to understand, then he will join the right side, and if he tells others, society will change a little bit. (P11)

Participants reported that they thought hidden cameras affected the development of feminism by giving a new perspective on gender microaggression, and giving the public an opportunity to recognize sexism in society ($n = 7$). They also said that the entire society seems to be undergoing a change because women around them who used to be skeptical or indifferent about feminism have become aware of the seriousness of the hidden cameras issue and its link to the patriarchal view of women.

Hope for Social Changes

Participants reported that they hope changes in society will take place. Most wanted a change in gender equality policies ($n = 7$). The participants reported that practical policies, such as prevention activities focused on hidden cameras at the national level, counseling, technology, and legal support for victims of hidden cameras, were needed. The participants specified that prevention-focused policies and education on hidden cameras at the national level are needed, as well as technological, legal, and mental health-related support. They also hoped for increased gender sensitivity among male politicians and the active participation of female politicians in establishing such policies.

The following opinions on increasing gender equality in education were reported ($n = 6$). Participants mentioned that education on hidden cameras, gender equality, and feminism is needed at an early age. They also argued that cultural changes are important and then talked about the dangers of media content, which people can easily access and follow. They said that people seem to be cautious in talking freely about feminism or gender issues with the opposite sex. Therefore, the participants reported their interest in eliminating existing prejudices through education and communication.

> I think the media needs a change in itself. You know, just looking at the

cartoons, girls and boys have different roles, right? When they grow up watching it, I think it's a society that naturally raises another sexist person. (P7)

Six participants expressed their hopes that there would be a strengthening of women's solidarity. The participants acknowledged the importance of facilitating communication between genders but hoped that building a bond between women would be the first priority. They expressed their interest in building communities where women would share their opinions and strength to create additional avenues for helping women within their social structures. They also suggested the need for a space where women with changed perceptions of romantic relationships or marriage can depend on each other. In a society that encourages dating and marriage, such a space could help ease the anxiety that comes with choosing an alternative life and protect them from becoming socially isolated.

I hope there will be more businesses owned and run by women where women can gather together, and I hope to provide financial support if I know of such businesses. It could be my situation in the future. If I pretend I don't know now, I think I do not deserve any help later. I hope the day will come when I won't be scared like this in my everyday life. […] I wish there was an alternative way for women to live among themselves. (P11)

The last social change they hoped for was the strengthening of punishments for using hidden cameras ($n = 5$). The perpetrators often make excuses, such as "I never knew it was illegal (Shin, 2019a)," and "I tried it out of curiosity (Kim, 2019)." Therefore, publicizing the sufferings of victims (and potential victims) and strengthening punishments can be effective in conveying that using hidden cameras is a serious crime.

Discussion

This study explored the impact of the hidden camera phenomenon in the everyday lives of female college students in Korea from the perspective of social justice counseling theory. In the domain of "the effect of the hidden camera phenomenon on everyday lives," the participants reported negative emotional, cognitive, and behavioral changes due to the hidden camera phenomenon. The results are in line

with previous studies showing similar negative emotional and cognitive changes resulting from gender microaggressions, revenge pornography, cyberbullying, and sexual violence (Basford et al., 2014; Du, 2015; Dumont et al., 2010; Kwon & Lee, 2013; Nadal & Haynes, 2012; Sue, Bucceri, Lin, Nadal, & Torino, 2007). In terms of behavioral changes, the participants reported that they avoided socializing or checked their own behavior to prevent being filmed by hidden cameras. These changes occurred among female college students, showing that fear of hidden cameras limits the scope of their personal boundaries, are consistent with women' response to deal with fear of sexual assault, sacrificing their behavioral freedom to deal with the fear (Kwon & Lee, 2013).

In the domain of "the effect of the hidden camera phenomenon on the perception of men and romantic relationships," the result showed that female college students became wary and distrustful of men due to this. Participants reported it has led to a more negative perception of men, resulting in increased vigilance and distrust toward men around them, causing changes in the social networks of their everyday lives and negative perceptions of being in romantic relationships. This finding is consistent with the results of recent studies that female college students have a negative perception of and progressive ideas about marriage (Park, 2016) and with previous studies showing that women fear a loss of control in relation to sexual violence (Kwon & Lee, 2013).

Finally, in the domain of the "transition of recognition due to the phenomenon of the hidden camera," most participants reported that they had become aware of gender inequality as a result of the hidden camera phenomenon, leading them to be self-reliant and have negative perceptions of the marriage system. They reported that they hope to change people's perceptions through "change in the national gender equality policy" or "strengthening punishments regarding hidden cameras," which is also consistent with the results of previous studies (Choi, 2017; Kim, 2017; Seo, 2017). The participants in this study also suggested that "increasing gender equality education" and "strengthening women's solidarity" should both be centered on communication and support across genders. In other words, they do not think of hidden cameras as a problem on a personal level, but hope to change society by recognizing it as a societal problem. This raises the possibility that providing social justice counseling that enables systematic changes from a macro perspective by recognizing the adverse environmental impact on clients and carrying out social changes with clients would be a more appropriate response than treating the hidden camera phenomenon as an individual problem for each client.

The social justice approach in working with women dealing with these issues can be specified through the ACA advocacy competency model. Counselors who are working with women experiencing difficulties caused by the hidden camera phenomenon should understand the social structural barriers that women face and strive to empower their clients. In addition, by participating in social advocacy at the community level, counselors can engage in active counseling and call for social change, becoming policy makers and participating in public policy making (Choi, 2018; Ramírez Stege, Brockberg, & Hoyt, 2017; Vera & Shin, 2006). Therefore, the scope of counselors' activities must be extended beyond the counseling rooms, and social advocacy training is necessary.

The results of this study suggest that to deal with the issues related to the use of hidden cameras, a space must be created to address the differences in gender-related preconceptions that can lead to both personal and social changes. Hence, education on recognizing hidden cameras as a gender-based crime reflecting gender microaggression in society is needed. In addition, to promote women's mental health, inter-gender communication based on mutual empathy and various social interventions are needed. This study clearly conveyed female college students' voices, and the participants indicated that participating in the study and sharing their concerns and hopes was in itself a meaningful act, showing that this study itself can have a positive impact on the lives and mental health of other women.

Limitations

Given that the participants in this study were all highly educated women, the extent to which the results can be generalized is limited. Sampling bias may also be an issue in that those participants who chose to volunteer for interview may have been women specifically interested in the phenomenon of hidden cameras. Follow-up studies are needed that include broader female populations in terms of age, occupation, social class, region, sexual orientation, and similar factors. In addition, while this article conducted its research from a social justice perspective, it did not specifically demonstrate how social justice counseling theory would be applied in practice. Additional studies are needed to provide specific guidelines and training models so counselors can learn how to apply social justice counseling in practice. Finally, it would also be meaningful to hear men's voices regarding the issue to illuminate the issue from a broader gender perspective.

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