



Victimization immunity and lifestyle: A comparative study of over-dispersed burglary victimizations in South Korea and U.S.

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Abstract

Recently, it has been proposed that over-dispersed victimization distributions should be caused by more complex processes than predicted by previously supported arguments such as risk heterogeneity and event dependence. The current study aims to test this proposal by analyzing two national crime victimization surveys: the 2010 NCVS (U.S.) and the 2010 KCVS (South Korea). The comparative aspect of this study is also expected to promote comprehension of causal victimization mechanisms in diverse contexts. For the analysis, the zero-inflated negative binomial regression is employed, and its results are compared to those of the negative binomial model. In conclusion, this study finds several different causal aspects of victimizations between two countries and also different significant covariates between two statistical models, supporting the argument of immunity effect.

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1. Introduction

The studies on victimization distributions have identified that victimization frequencies are more dispersed than expected by the random Poisson process and concentrated on the small portion of the population (Farrell and Pease, 1993; Hindelang et al., 1978; Nelson, 1980; Short et al., 2009; Sparks et al., 1977). This over-dispersed distribution has been addressed with the notion of *repeat victimization*, which indicates repetition of victimizations to the same target (Farrell, 1995; Park and Fisher, 2015; Pease, 1998; Turanovic and Pratt, 2014). Since 1980s, the notion of repeat victimization has gained criminological attention because of its practical benefits of crime prevention (Farrell, 1995; Farrell and Pease, 1993; Fisher et al., 2010; Forrester et al., 1988, 1990; Pease, 1991, 1992; Turanovic and Pratt, 2014). In England and Wales, for example, the phenomenon of repeat victimization has influenced criminal justice policies and become a backbone of their crime prevention practices (Farrell and Pease, 2001).

Theoretically, the phenomenon of repeat victimization has been addressed with two causal mechanisms: individual uneven risk of victimization (*flags*) and event dependence, where the previous victimization *boosts* the risk of future victimization (Gottfredson, 1984; Hindelang et al., 1978; Hope and Trickett, 2008; Ousey et al., 2008; Sparks et al., 1977; Tseloni and Pease, 2003, 2004). While previous studies have been engaged in clarifying the effects of these two factors (Hope and Trickett, 2008; Ousey et al., 2008), recent studies have initiated new approaches to the analysis of victimization distribution. First, through mathematical demonstrations, Park and Eck (2013) proved that repeat victimizations could also happen by chance. They separated this type of repeat victimizations as *random repeats* from *non-random repeats* and argued that the amount of *random repeats* was determined solely based on the incident rate (Park and Eck, 2013: 403). Second, employing the latent class analysis, Hope and Norris (2013) found that the existence of excessive zeros, in addition to excessive high frequency, was the other reason of over-dispersed victimizations. One following study compared the results from non-zero-inflated analysis with those from zero-inflated and argued that a failure to reflect immunity effect might cause erroneous interpretation of victimization determinants (Park and Fisher, 2015).

Despite these new developments, there has been limited number of studies testing the effect of immunity on victimization distributions. Moreover, victimization surveys in western societies served as the main research source for previous victimization studies, and little has been unveiled about over-dispersed victimizations in Asian societies. The main purpose of this study is to fill these vacancies by introducing a comparative analysis of two burglary victimization distributions from the Korean Crime Victim Survey (KCVS) and the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) data. In order to identify the effect of immunity in both countries, the zero-inflated negative binomial (ZINB) regression is employed, and its results are compared to those from the negative binomial (Negbin) regression. The effects of different lifestyles between South Korea and United States are examined to identify the determinants of burglary victimizations in different contextual settings.

2. Previous studies on victimization distribution

2.1. Repeat victimization

Repeat victimization is a type of crime pattern like those of hot spot and repeat offenders (Park, 2015; Weisel, 2005), and generally defined as the recurrence of crime in the same places

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