A series of Rapes and Homicides of Criminal Motives and Dangerous Knot in Gansu and Inner Mongolia Provinces

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Abstract: The criminal motive, which is the driving force that causes the criminal to commit, has important value in the criminal psychological structure. The criminal motive of Gao chengyong's series of rapes and homicides belongs to a relatively hidden type of criminal motive. The criminal modus operandi of Gao is cruel, which is beyond the normal degree of sexual crimes. The criminal psychology of Gao, which is related to sex, belongs to the kind of awareness knot in the dangerous knot. On this basis, it is inferred that Gao's sexual pleasure is obtained through the high excitement generated by victim's mutilation. Because of sexual disordered, it can't be obtained through normal sexual life. The purpose of paper is to deepen the understanding of human nature in the field of criminal psychology based on levels of consciousness and Freud's model of the mind.

Keywords: A series of rapes and homicides, crime motive, dangerous knot, paraphilia.

1. Introduction

Gao committed two rape and murder cases between 1996 and 1997 in Baotou, Inner Mongolia, resulting in the death of two female victims. From May 1988 to February 2002, Gao committed a series of robberies, intentional killings, rapes and insulting corpses in Baiyin city of Gansu Province, killing a total of nine females. The semen spot of the murder had been collected at the crime scene on March 28, 1997, in Kundulun District of Inner Mongolia [1]. According to the DNA test results, the police found the semen stains extracted at the crime scene in Bai yin was from the same person. The modus operandi was similar. On August 5, 2004, The Ministry of Public Security conducted an incorporated investigation into the series of rapes and homicides in Bai yin and two cases in Baotou. Hereinafter referred to as a series of rapes and homicides of Gan-Meng in "8.05" [1]. In March 2016, the suspect was finally identified as Gao Chengyong through DNA-Y chromosome test and fingerprint comparison [2]. The murderer and rapist Gao was executed on January 3, 2019, ending the series of rapes and homicides of Gan-Meng in "8.05".

After Gao had been captured, he used "life is so bitter and he doesn't have money" to explain his crime motive. However very few possessions were lost at the scene of the crime, and degree of harm

to the victim was far beyond normal. The modus operandi was cruel. In 4 cases occurred in Bai yin, parts of the victim's body and skin were taken away by Gao. The deep crime motive behind these cases is worthy of research.

The human science approach in psychological science mainly employs qualitative paradigm which investigate psychological process and cognitive mechanism mainly depending on narrative analysis or other phenomenological methods [3]. This article broadly follows this approach to analyze the motivations and dangerous mind knot of offender (Gao) to deepen the understanding of human nature in the field of criminal psychology.

2. Criminal Motive and Dangerous Knot in Criminal Psychology

2.1. Unspeakable Motive for the Crime

Motivation is the psychological tendency or internal drive that stimulates and maintains an organism's action that leads the action to a certain goal [4]. Need is the physiological and psychological requirement for objective things felt by an organism in the process of survival and development. It often shows the dependence of its survival and development on objective conditions by its internal lack or unbalanced state [5]. Modern psychology defines motivation as the internal reasons that drive an individual to engage in an activity. It is used to explain why an individual engages in an activity, rather than to explain what the activity itself is or how it is performed [6]. It's shown in Fig. 1.



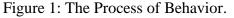


Figure 2: Classification of Dangerous Knot.

Every conscious action must be influenced by motivation, otherwise it is an unconscious action. The organism is scarcity to the induce need in some way, and need leads to motivation, and motivation leads to behavior. For example, the blood sugar concentration in the blood reduces, the activity of the hypothalamus feeding center is strengthened, through the nerve electrical signal conduction to the cerebral cortex, the person feels hunger. When blood sugar levels drop, physiological needs are triggered, which makes people feel hungry and look for food to fill their stomachs. In the same way, crime motive is the impetus causing the criminal to commit the crime. Among them, the criminal motive, as one of the factors of the criminal personality tendency, has very important value in the structure of criminal psychology, and is the theory and countermeasure system that occupies the core position [7].

2.2. The Concept of Dangerous Knot and Awareness Knot

2.2.1. Dangerous Knot

Heart knot refers to the phenomenon that people experience some external stimulus in the psychological process from psychological trauma and results buckle phenomenon of clinging to psychological trauma. Dangerous knot is related to crime [8](see Fig.2). It is traced back to the psychological experience of insurmountable traumatic events in early years. "We tend to pay attention

to ancestral experiences and experiences in adult life, and completely ignore childhood experience. In fact, childhood experiences are more important because they occur when they aren't fully matured and are more likely to produce significant results." [9].

If a person experiences a major traumatic event during childhood, it is likely to cause permanent psychological trauma. One consequence of psychological trauma is that the "pain of failure" is repressed into the subconscious, causing the individual to trigger pathological response patterns later in life. The second consequence is that make individual psychological development appear to stagnate, performance for persistent and degeneration [9]. For example, in the Wenchuan earthquake, 2008, most survivors who lost relatives and belongings experienced post-traumatic stress disorder. If their experience is not well handled, the stress disorder may turn into a chronic psychological shadow, leaving a permanent psychological trace in the mind. It could stimulate current behavior that doesn't fit in a similar situation later in life. This psychology is also reflected in high-intelligence crimes, killing family members and etc. On July 5, 2020, a husband killed his wife in Hangzhou, dismembered her body, pulverized the parts and flushed them down the toilet (referred to as "2020.07.05" case). On February 23, 2004, a student killed four roommates at Yunnan University. On July 14, 2019, a couple abducted and killed an eight-year-old girl in Zhe Jiang. Their motive isn't a simple assault on property or emotional disputes. It's obscure. In serial homicide cases, some suspects run with marriage and steady jobs, and without any criminal record. Their criminal motives are more conform to this characteristic.

2.2.2. The Concept of Awareness Knot

The phenomenon of awareness knot refers to people don't know part of their own psychological content or have difficulty in realizing their own psychological content due to the conflict between different consciences when they are awake and without serious mental illness. The most common manifestation of this psychological phenomenon is that people who are perfectly normal and with normal mental abilities are unable to clearly say the reasons for their criminal acts [8].

As shown in Fig. 3, people can perceive consciousness in daily life, it is one part of the phenomenon of consciousness. Another part is unconscious, and it is the deepest part of the unconscious at the bottom of the mentality, i.e. "the deepest part of the ice". It may be the consolidation or stagnation of early psychological trauma. With the passage of time and people's growth, the psychological development doesn't turn over at a certain point, stagnate or be covered by time to the subconscious level. Freud called preconsciousness the underwater part near the surface of an iceberg. When people pay attention, it comes to the surface and vice versa.

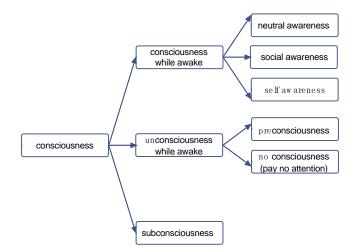


Figure 3: Classification of Consciousness.

3. Statements of Case

From 1996 to 1997, Gao worked both in the Gansu and Inner Mongolia provinces. The first case was "97.3.28" case. The other nine cases were all in Bai yin city of Gansu Province. And there are two cases occurred in Baiyin Power Supply Bureau. In serial cases, the suspect committed more than two crimes in the same location means he may work or live nearby. It was confirmed that Gao had lived in a rented house in the cotton mill where the "2000.11.20" case took place. Gao's ex-girlfriend was his classmate in technical secondary school.

The distance between the nine cases is a few kilometers to a dozen kilometers. He didn't have to go home and face his wife when he worked outside, so he has the ability to get rid of clothing and knife used to commit crime. The nine cases of the scene should be the place where Gao had worked or lived. The time of the crime was mostly in the afternoon. It suggested that Gao didn't work steadily. There was a lot of free time for Gao to know about the victim's family life to ensure that no one else would be back during the commission of the crime. Gao was very clear on the life of the victims. He might have inspected the spot in advance. He played temporary work in Baiyin. All nine cases were committed in the busy downtown areas of Baiyin city. After sorting out the public information published on the network, he may be disguised as a meter reading or electrical maintenance staff and cheated trust immediately after entering the door. Foreign researchers found similar characteristics in serial rape cases: The vast majority of serial rape offenders limit their crimes to small flats, single or group apartment units. An indoor rape is premeditated. Most of these criminals have prior convictions for burglary [10].

3.1. A Brief Summary of the Ten Cases

1."88.5.26" case: On May 26, 1988 (Thursday) at 5 p.m., a 23-year-old female, Bai, who worked in Bai yin company was killed at home in Bai yin district. The suspect followed the victim into the house. The police investigation found that the victim's neck had been cut, the upper garment had been pushed over the breasts, the lower part of the body was naked and there were 26 knife wounds to the upper body [11].

2."94.7.27" case: On July 27,1994 (Wednesday) at 2:50 p.m., a 19-year-old female, Shi, who is a temporary worker of Bai yin Power Supply Bureau, was killed in her single dormitory. The suspect followed the victim into the house. The victim's neck was cut and 36 stab wounds to the upper body [11].

3."98.1.16" case: On January 16, 1998 at 4 p.m., residents found a 29-year-old woman, Yang, was killed at home in Bai yin District Victory Street. The suspect followed the victim into the house. The investigation confirmed that Yang was killed on January 13 (Tuesday). The victim's neck was cut and a total of 16 knife wounds to the upper naked body. There were 13×24 cm2 of skin missing from both ears and the head [11].

4."98.1.19" case: On January 19, 1998 (Monday), at 5:45 p.m., a 27-year-old female, Deng, was killed at home in Shui Chuan Road, Bai yin District. The suspect followed the victim into the house. The clothes of the victim had been pushed over breasts and her pants had been pulled down to her knees. Her neck was stabbed and there were 8 knife wounds to her upper body. Her left nipple and back were missing 30×24 cm2 of skin [11].

5."98.7.30" case: On July 30, 1998 (Thursday), at 6 p.m., Miao miao (pseudonym), an 8-year-old girl, was killed at home. The suspect followed the victim into the house. The victim was naked from the waist down, with a belt around the neck. Her vagina was torn where sperms were detected [11].

6."98.11.30" case: On November 30, 1998 (Monday), at 11 a.m., a youth female, Cui, was killed at home on East Mountain Road in silver District. The suspect followed the victim to enter her house.

Her neck was cut open, with 22 stab wounds to his upper body, her lower body naked, both breasts, hands and genitals missing [11].

7."2000.11.20" case: On November 20, 2000 (Monday), at 11 a.m., a 28-year-old female, Luo, an employee of a cotton mill in Baiyin, was killed at home. The suspect followed the victim into the house. The victim was cut at the neck, pants down to the knees, hands missing [11].

8."2001.5.22" case: On May 22, 2001 (Tuesday), at 9 a.m., a 28-year-old female nurse, Zhang, was killed in dormitory at Shui Chuan Road in Bai yin District. The victim was suffered 16 sharp injuries to the neck and was raped [11].

9."2002.2.09" case: On February 9, 2002 (Monday 6) at 1 p.m., a 25-year-old female, Zhu, was killed in the hotel in Baiyin District. The victim's neck was cut open and the coat was pushed over her breasts, in the meantime the lower part of her body was naked and raped [11].

10."97.3.28" case: On March 28, 1997, at 8 a.m., victim Li died in her room in the dormitory area of The Second Inner Mongolia Company of China, in Kun Dulun District, Baotou City. Li was strangled to death. Her coat was not stripped off, but here lower body was naked.

3.2. The Injury of the Corpse, the Demographic Data of the Perpetrator and Victim

Case	Time and Place of Case	Age of Suspect (Cheng- yong Gao)	Age of Victim	Number of Cuts	Lack of Flesh	Whether be Raped	Whether Seminal Stain was Detected	Victim's Clothing
1	1988.5.26, Thursday, PM 5:00, at the victim's home, in silver company's lead and zinc factory	24	23	26	1	/	/	above the breasts, naked below
2	1994.7.27, Wednesday, PM 2:50, at the dormitory area of Baiyin Power Supply Bureau	30	19	36	/	/	/	/
3	1998.1.16, Friday, PM 4:00, at the victim's home, in Shengli Street, Baiyin District	34	29	16	13x24cm2 loss of flesh in both ears and the top of head	/	1	naked
4	1998.1.19., Monday, PM 5:45, at the victim's home on Shuichuan Road, Baiyin District	34	27	8	left nipple, and 30x24 cm2 flesh missing on the back	/	/	the upper body was stripped off over the breasts and the trousers were pulled down to the knees
5	1998.7.30, Thursday, PM 6:00, at the dormitory area of Baiyin Power Supply Bureau	34	8	bridle neck	/	\checkmark	\checkmark	lower body naked
6	1998.11.30, Monday, AM 11:00, at the dormitory area of Baiyin company absenteeism	34	/	22	Absence of hands, breasts and vagina	/	/	lower body naked
7	2000.11.20, Monday, AM 11:00, at the victim's home, in dormitory area of cotton mill	36	28	cut throat	lack of hands	/	/	trousers were pulled down to the knees
8	2001.5.22, Tuesday, AM 9:00, at the victim's home in the maternal and child health hospital	37	28	16	1		\checkmark	/
9	2002.2.9, Saturday, PM 1:00, in Taolechun Hotel	38	25	cut throat	/	\checkmark	\checkmark	above the breasts, naked below
10	1997.3.28, Friday, AM 8:00, in the dormitory area of China Second Metallurgical Company	33	22	bridle neck	1	\checkmark	\checkmark	lower body naked

Table 1: Data Statistics of 10 Cases.

The data statistics of 10 cases are summarised in Table 1. It shows that the victims selected by Gao were mostly between the ages of 23 and 29, among which there was a special case that the victim was 8 years old ("98.7.30" case). The first time Gao committed the crime, his son was born at the same year. After Gao was arrested in 2016, he said that the motive of the "88.5.26" case was the poverity of his family, so he wanted to steal. He was detected by Bai who fiercely resisted and killed her. There was no sexual assault in this case, but there was a sexual orientation in the victim's clothing. In this case, the criminal motive was mainly towards property, and the sexual motive was secondary. In the rest of nine cases, the sexual motive was the main motive. In some cases, there was no financial motive.

3.3. The Location of Nine Cases in Bai Yin City



Figure 4: May 26, 1988, at the victim 's home, in silver company's lead and zinc factory.

Figure 5: July 27,1994 at the dormitory area of Baiyin Power Supply Bureau.



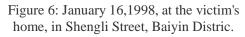




Figure 7: January 19,1998, at the victim's home on Shuichuan Road, Baiyin District.

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Figure 8: July 30,1998, at the dormitory of Baiyin Power Supply Bureau.



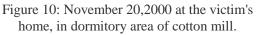




Figure 12: February 9, 2002, in Tao lechun Hotel.



Figure 9: November 30,1998 at the dormitory area of Baiyin company absenteeism.



Figure 11: May 22,2001, at the victim's home, in the maternal and child health hospital.



Figure 13: All nine cases took place in the main district of Baiyin city.

4. Analysis the Criminal Motive of the Suspect

4.1. The Motivation of Sex

Sexual motivation is divided into four types: 1. Sexual need: a physiological need, 2. revenge, 3. Sadism, 4. Curiosity. The most common motive types in sexual assault cases are type 1, 2 and 4. Type 3 is relatively rare. Such crime scenes usually involve extensive destruction of the victim's body. The criminal mood is cruel. Gao's motive is more likely to be the third.

There are two psychological dynamics of sexual assault: instrumental sexual assault and expressive sexual assault. Expressive sexual assault means that the suspect's original purpose is to harm the victim psychologically and physically, and the physical and psychological violence against the victim will make the expressive sexual offender hypersexual. This expressive sexual assault is reflected as sadism in criminal behavior.

Some researchers suggested a link between psychopathy and abuse [12]. Psychopathy is the personality trait most closely associated with violent aggression which is a state of being between a psychopath and a normal person [13]. Abusive violent offenders may have problems with both sexual and personality disorders (lust and cruelty). Holt found that the scores of sadistic personality traits of psychopathic violent offenders were higher than those of non-psychopathic violent offenders [14]. Psychopathy score was moderately associated with abnormal sexual arousal (correlation coefficient between 0.21 and 0.28) [15]. Researchers consider psychopathy to be a personality disorder.

Gao said, "I had no choice but to do what I did because the economy was so bad." The original motive of the first case was to steal. Due to economic pressure, he stole from the victim's home, but the victim's reaction was too fierce, so he killed her to keep her silent. In another case, cash and a ring were taken from the victim. In the other seven cases, there were few property losses. In 1988, Gao's first son was born. According to his wife's memory, the family was very poor at that time. But Gao was lazy, since he was urged to go out to work by his wife and father-in-law. Confirmed that the original motive for the crime was finance.

The rest of the cases did not involve assault on property. In the 5th, 8th, 9th, and 10th cases, there were obvious rapes. The clothing characteristics of the victims in the other cases without rape, the sexual orientation is very clear; In the 3rd, 4th, 6th and 7th cases, the lack of skin of the victims indicated the abusive motivation of high sexual needs. Gao should be aware of his own sexual needs, reflecting the satisfaction of sexual needs; From the perspective of criminal psychology, the missing body parts of the victim were considered "souvenirs". Gao took them away to reach his special psychological needs, such as abnormal sexual arousal. Therefore, the criminal behavior of Gao reflects the abnormal sexual arousal and sadistic motive that is consistent with Holt et al. Because it doesn't qualify as a personality disorder, the criminal psychology type of Gao is the awareness knot in the danger knot (see Figure 2).

4.2. The Awareness Knot of Criminal Psychology

4.2.1. Gao's Self-Statement

In 2018, reporters from The People's Public Security Newspaper interviewed Gao in Bai yin, Gansu Province to explore the motive, along with the working group of the Ministry of Public Security. Gao said, "I often don't know why I did these, in a word, life was hard."(News, 2016). This statement matched the characteristics of the awareness knot of the criminal. Gao couldn't describe his motive for a crime and was ascribed to poor and a sad fate. Obviously, not everyone who is poor and has a sad fate could commit murder and rape or even abuse the victim's body. Therefore, this explanation doesn't set up.

The classical school of psychoanalysis explains why people have the reason of "not being clear" about their actions: when people can't accept things by themselves, they will be suppressed into the subconscious, even unconscious. The deeper and longer on the suppression, the psychological force once encountered the stimulation of reality, the eruption of the force will be more powerful.

What Gao said is not clear and is the unconscious content. It is the unconscious of the unconscious that even the perpetrator's own consciousness cannot express clearly. The most difficult sub-consciousness to clearly express is the sexual content. Sex is a very private and personal thing. It's even very difficult for Chinese people to talk about it in Chinese culture.

4.2.2. Gao's Growing Experience

Gao was born in a rural area of Qingheng Town, Yuzhong Village, Lanzhou City, Gansu Province, which is simple and conservative. The village also has the Gao-family ancestral temple. The binding force on the Gao-clan was strong. He successfully finished high school with good grades. After failed the college entrance examination by one point, he went back to school. After failing again, he started farming at home.

In the eyes of neighbors and relatives, Gao is not talkative and introverted. He doesn't have a good relationship with his seven brothers and sisters. His wife said he never talks billingsgate and doesn't have acts of domestic violence. He is very clean and washes clothes more often than his wife (News, 2016). And Gao has little communication with his two sons. It indicates that his speech function is poor. In the process of pursuing the opposite sex, the speech function is important, it infers that Gao is not dominant in the process of looking for a mate.

Gao has dated a girlfriend in high school. In the interview of the Public Security Newspaper's reporters, with the question of whether he had been hurt by women in his life, he said no. In the interview, he mentioned a girlfriend in high school. He described it like this: the girlfriend was impeccable, pretty, good at learning, and nice to him. Later, the girlfriend was admitted to the technical secondary school. However, he failed the college entrance examination twice. He thought he didn't deserve her. These things hit him hard.

Gao is very depressed. The villagers consider that Gao likes to play cards. He lost ten thousand yuan once, without saying anything. No matter whether he wins or loses, it is hard to see the expression change on his face. Therefore, there is no way to tell whether he is happy or not. Gao loves gambling, but his financial ability is limited. According to his wife, married for a short time, his wife and father-in-law have asked Gao to go out to work in the city, but he was only forced to work. This indicates that he loves the ease and hates work, is excessively gambling, has grandiose aims but puny abilities.

There are two types of women who greatly influenced Gao during his growth. One is his mother or sister in childhood; The other is the girlfriend in high school. In the early life and the closest female contact, there is sexual enlightenment. Additionally, his first love in high school had a significant impact on his sexual behavior. The female victims worked in State-owned enterprises except in "2002.2.09" case the victim's job was unknown. In the 1980s, they belonged to the respected whitecollar class. The jobs of victims in 9 cases included: the cotton mills, power supply bureau, maternal and child health care. The youngest victim in the "98 \cdot 7 \cdot 30" case was the daughter of the employees who worked in Power Supply Bureau. The crime scenes were all in the dormitories of employees of state-owned enterprises. Gao chose these places to search for victims for two reasons: he was familiar with these positions where he worked, and he often went to walk these places he yearning for. At the same time, he had looked for targets. In those days, most technical secondary school graduates would enter such enterprises like the one where his ex-girlfriend worked. These complexes are repressed into the subconscious of Gao. From the perspective of psychoanalysis, the first love in high school is more likely to cause him to form a depressive complex than his mother or sister in childhood. It was possible that Gao had a deep complex for the girlfriend before he failed the college entrance examination. Her family conditions were far superior to Gao's. Gao mentioned the girl in his statement with such a high opinion. Gao did not find prostitutes to solve his sexual needs, because he was born in a large family with strong cultural constraints (the Ancestral temple of the Gao's family). Meanwhile he is cleanliness that his character decided not to find prostitutes.

In a video of Gao's conversation with prison guards after his arrest, he stated he had never been hurt by women. According to the degree of injury of ten victims's bodies, as many as 20 or 30 knife wounds or neck cuts were found, which were beyond the necessary of murder. It required him to spend more time at the crime scene. The lack of flesh from four victims was also a typical marking behavior. In criminal psychology, marking behavior refers to a special behavior carried out by the criminal to meet some psychological or emotional needs [16].

5. Inference

5.1. The Concept of Paraphilia

One of the psychological disorders related to sex is sexual disarray which is associated with causing pain or humiliation to others [10]. It is one of the categories of abnormal psychology. As Freud pointed out, the difference between a sexual deviant and a normal person is only in quantity, not in quality. The sexual deviant will have normal sexual behavior. Abnormal sexual behavior is only a few times in the life of decades. As a inference, with the death of Gao, there is no way to confirm. Additionally, from the perspective of cognitive neurology, there is no rule out that there is an abnormality in the nervous system of the brain.

The seemingly superfluous behavior in Gao's crimes is to satisfy psychological needs and certain fantasy. The number of knife wounds exceeding the death necessary, indicating that victims were not killed immediately by a knife. In order for the victim to stop shouting and struggling, the stabbing needed to be repeated. During the continuous stabbing process, Gao's psychological needs were satisfied. It inferred that Gao obtained sexual pleasure by inflicting excessive knife wounds on the victims and cutting off their flesh (see Fig.14).

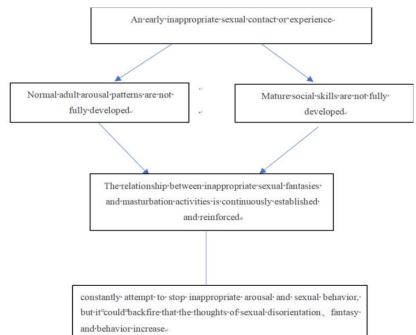


Figure 14: The Causes of Paraphilia.

5.2. The Inferences about Gao's Sexual Dislocation

In the Geographic Profiling written by D. Kin Rossmo, he noted that compulsive criminal fantasies seemed to retrospect from a unique internal dynamic, including: psychopathy, narcissistic tendencies, abuse, paraphilia, fantasy, compulsive behavior, schizophrenia, ect [10].

Gao's sexual need and arousal can't be obtained in marriage. This special sexual arousal must be a minority in the crowd. This unspeakable desire can't be discharged through other ways, including the sexual behavior with his wife. But considering the impact on his family and the ashamed of speaking, he chose to hide the motive after he was arrested.

It is impossible to confirm whether sexual psychology of Gao was persistent or degraded on account of some psychological trauma or events during his sexual development after his death. But one thing for sure, his crime was a sexual motive with sadistic elements with abnormal sexual behaviors. This particular criminal motive can be summed up as the awareness knot of the dangerous knot. Through the criminal psychological analysis of the series of rapes and homicides of Gan-Meng at "8.05", dangerous knot can be used for criminal psychological classification. In crime prevention and control, community police can use psychological questionnaire to screen out the corresponding people with similar psychological structure and mark them as high-risk group. In daily police work, it is more conducive to control, so as to reduce the possibility of criminal crimes.

5.3. Interest Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

All authors have contributed to the creation of this manuscript for important intellectual content and approved the final manuscript. We declare there is no conflict of interest. There is no academic misconduct in this paper.

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