Gender Differences in Fear of Crime Using Multi-Level Factors in South Korea

1. Topic: Our project focuses on exploring **gender differences in the fear of crime** in South Korea. The fear of crime is a significant public concern as it affects not only individuals' daily lives but also broader societal perceptions and actions. Specifically, our team is investigating why women consistently report higher levels of fear of crime than men, despite men being more likely to be victims of crime. We aim to identify the multi-level factors that contribute to this gender difference.

2. Theoretical Framework: Our study is guided by several criminological theories, including **feminist theory** and **routine activity theory**. Feminist theory suggests that social structures and gender inequalities contribute to women's heightened fear of crime, while routine activity theory emphasizes how different patterns of behavior (e.g., going out alone, being in public spaces) expose individuals to varying levels of perceived risk.

3. Research Questions:

- **Primary Question:** How do gender differences influence fear of crime in South Korea, and what multi-level factors (such as location, age, social status, etc.) impact these perceptions?
- **Sub-questions:**
  o What are the socio-demographic factors that contribute to fear of crime across genders?
  o How does the fear of crime vary across urban and rural settings?
  o To what extent do crime rates and exposure to media influence fear of crime differently between men and women?

4. Data: We will use data from a **survey conducted by Hankook Research** in South Korea. The dataset includes demographic variables (age, gender, education, income), as well as questions related to crime experiences, perceptions of safety, and levels of fear. This data will allow us to perform a comprehensive analysis of the various factors contributing to the fear of crime across genders.

5. Methods: We plan to use **OLS (Ordinary Least Squares) regression** and **z-tests** to analyze the data. These methods will allow us to test for significant differences in fear of crime between men and women and assess the impact of multi-level factors. In addition to gender, we will control for variables such as income, education, location (urban/rural), and previous experience with crime. By using OLS regression, we can estimate the linear relationship between these factors and fear of crime, while z-tests will help us compare the means of different groups (men and women).

6. Contribution to Knowledge: This research contributes to the broader understanding of how gender influences fear of crime and highlights the importance of considering socio-demographic and environmental factors. The study will provide valuable insights for policymakers in South Korea and other regions, as it addresses a fundamental social issue that affects daily behavior, mental health, and public safety. By focusing on gender differences and multi-level factors, we aim to inform crime prevention strategies and improve public safety policies.

7. Challenges: Some of the challenges we anticipate include the **potential for data limitations** (e.g., missing data or lack of certain variables) and **generalizability issues** due to cultural and regional factors unique to South Korea. Additionally, while we aim to identify significant multi-level factors, controlling for all possible influences on fear of crime may be difficult, as perceptions are subjective and vary widely between individuals.

8. Conclusion: Our project will provide a comprehensive analysis of the gender differences in fear of crime in South Korea by considering both individual-level and multi-level factors. The findings of this study are expected to enhance our understanding of how different factors contribute to fear of crime and help in developing more effective crime prevention and safety policies that address the specific concerns of both men and women.