



A Theoretical Approach to Fear of Crime

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Abstract

Fear of crime studies increased in the 1960s. It has become an important subject studied in disciplines such as criminology, sociology, and psychology. One of the best ways to understand and solve the high crime rates in a society is the fear of crime. Fear of crime is studied to understand what types of crime the individual fears and for what reason. Hence, it is an important method that can be used to identify the problem. In this study, it has been tried to make a theoretical analysis of fear of crime. With the theoretical study, a definition of fear of crime has been made from different perspectives. In addition, important studies in the literature were analyzed and common findings were brought together. In this way, it was desired to take a picture of the effects of various demographic characteristics such as gender, age, education level and income level on individuals' fear of crime scores. In addition, an analysis was made about what can happen in individuals and societies with high fear of crime scores. It has been tried to show the cyclical process of how individuals and societies create environments that can lead to new crime while protecting themselves from being victimized.

Keywords: Fear of Crime, Crime Rates, Vulnerability Theory, Victimization Theory

Suç Korkusuna Teorik Bir Yaklaşım

Özet

Suç korkusu çalışmaları 1960'lı yıllarda ortaya çıkmıştır. Kriminoloji, sosyoloji ve psikoloji gibi disiplinlerde çalışılan önemli bir konu haline gelmiştir. Bir toplumda yüksek suç oranlarını anlamak ve çözüme kavuşturmak için kullanılacak en iyi yöntemlerden biri de suç korkusudur. Suç korkusu genellikle, bireyin hangi suç türlerinden, hangi sebeplerle korktuğunu anlamak, bu konuda bulgulara ve gözlemlere dayalı çıkarımlar yapmak ve bu çıkarımları bir sonuca dönüştürmek amacıyla çalışılmaktadır. Dolayısıyla, problemi tanımlamak için kullanılacak önemli bir yöntemdir. Bu çalışmada da suç korkusuna teorik yönden bir analiz yapılmaya çalışılmış ve yine teorik olarak farklı bakış açılarından yararlanılarak suç korkusu kavramı üzerine bir tanım yapılmıştır. Buna ek olarak, literatürde yer almış önemli çalışmalar analiz edilerek ortak bulgular bir araya getirilmiştir. Bu sayede, cinsiyet, yaş, eğitim durumu ve gelir düzeyi gibi çeşitli demografik özelliklerin bireylerin suç korkusu skorlarındaki etkilerine dair genel durumu gösteren bir çerçeve çizilmesi amaçlanmıştır. Ayrıca, suç korku skoru yüksek olan bireylerde ve toplumlarda hangi durumların meydana gelebileceğine dair de bir analiz yapılmıştır. Son olarak bireyin ve toplumların kendilerini mağdur olmaktan korurken yeni suç oluşmasına neden olabilecek ortamları nasıl oluşturduğuna dair döngüsel süreç gösterilmeye çalışılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Suç Korkusu, Suç Oranları, Savunmasızlık Teorisi, Mağduriyet Teorisi

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Introduction

Humans are creatures with basic emotions. These emotions have both positive and negative effect on the daily life of individuals and direct their lives. Love, anger, pleasure, disgust, and fear are the basic emotions of people. Fear is a spiritual and emotional process in the heart and mind of individuals. It exists within the human body from birth, and fear continues its evolutionary process, just like a baby's development and growth.

Fear is a universal emotion. In other words, regardless of color, language, race and gender, it is inevitable for people to have a sense of fear. The failures and weaknesses that people have experienced since childhood teach them the existence of fear first and they permeate the individual forever. This is how the experience of fear begins. It may stagnate or decrease from time to time, but it never leaves the individual (Mannoni, 1992, p. 8).

Fear has both psychological and physiological outcomes in the individual. Psychological phenomena caused by fear can make their lives unbearable in the long run. The most important of these cases are anxiety, panic, and horror (Andre, 2019, p. 31). There is no need for an individual to go through a bad experience. The victimization of the relative or witnessing the victimization, in other words, indirect victimization can also expose the individual to fear that will never leave him again.

Andre (2019, p. 17) likens fear to an alarming situation, a system. He argues that alarm signs warn the individual about danger and enable the individual to struggle against danger. Within the framework of this argument, there are also researchers in the literature who define fear as a useful emotion rather than a bad one. For example, Warr (2000, p. 455), while examining the nature of fear, stated that it is not actually bad in its essence, but this condition is valid in cases where the proportional balance is preserved in the feeling of fear. He referred to the fear feelings of animals to strengthen his thinking. According to him, animals have a sense of fear just like humans, and thus they can survive. In fact, fear is the most basic emotion for animals to survive, otherwise, from an evolutionary point of view, animals without fear will not be able to live long enough to reproduce. If a person can control the feeling of fear, he will use it for precautionary purposes and the consequences of fear will not be panic and anxiety.

Garofalo (1981, p. 840) defined fear as "*an emotional reaction characterized by feelings of danger and anxiety.*" He limited this definition to danger and anxiety, which are the consequences of the threat of physical harm. According to him, thanks to the reaction which occurs in individuals, a measurement of fear of crime can be made. When doing research, participants can be asked questions like "how afraid are you of a crime (for example, your bike being stolen when you lock it out)?" with such questions, the crime fear scores of the residents living in a neighborhood can be measured on certain issues.

Fear is not only a problem of people living in today's modern society, but also actually an emotion that manifests itself in ecological society life. Fear has taken the basic steps in ending ecological life by shaping human life and has caused the

concept of domination to enter our lives. Evaluating the ecological community life from the framework of anarchism, Bookchin, (in the third chapter of the book "Ecology of Freedom", "The Emergence of Hierarchy") explains the feeling of fear with the fact that older individuals are driven to the need to create dominance over younger people because of their efforts to secure themselves with the fear of being excluded, being alone, and uncertainty in nature. This situation has taken the first steps in disrupting the ecological society structure (where everyone is at an equal level, human does not establish hierarchy between man and nature) (Bookchin, 2015).

As a result of the psychological and physiological effects of the feeling of fear on the individual, the negative reflections that occur in the person are also reflected in the society through the individual. Therefore, the fear of crime in our daily lives shapes both the individual and the society negatively. According to Çolaklar and Solak (2017, p. 314), "fear of crime is a strong emotion that creates both individual and social effects and affects people's thinking, behavior and decision-making processes."

Fear of crime is a social problem rather than a person's victimization and uneasiness (Karasu, 2018: 333). Fear of crime in everyday life weakens the power of social solidarity. The individual is under pressure because of his/her fears of crime. This situation affects people's social behavior. Moreover, people are not only afraid that they may be a victim of a crime but also worry that their family, friends and loved ones may also be victims of the crime. As a result, people have difficulty interacting with others. Therefore, social solidarity in community life cannot be realized by individuals (Özcan, 1994, p. 152).

As a result, the feeling of fear in people's minds inevitably reflects on the behaviors of individuals and shapes their daily lives. For example, crime rates in urban life are higher than in rural areas. An important reason for this situation is that urban life makes crime production more possible. In other words, advantages such as not being recognized and being able to hide for criminals make urban life an attraction for criminals (Sipahi, 2016, p. 2158). The fact that urban life poses specific problems, and these problems are common increase the crime fear scores of women (Senol and Gülver, 2020, p. 38). In the study of fear of crime by gender, Callanan and Teasdale reached similar results. According to the research, women have more fear of crime in their daily lives than men (Callanan and Teasdale, 2009, p. 363). According to another study conducted in cities, 88% of women are afraid of walking on secluded streets late at night, 85.6% are afraid of dark subway stations and 81.2% are afraid of being in empty parks and forests at night (Tandoğan and İlhan, 2006, p. 2015). As a result of this fear, women have to lead a more cautious life in urban life than men. She avoids walking on dark streets late at night or using public transport such as the subway. Therefore, the fear of being a victim of a crime is so important that it shapes the behavior and daily life of the individual. Continuity and increase in the severity of the anxieties, according to Andere's (2019, p.31) statement, ends with the emergence of panic anxiety and horror feelings in the person. The fear of crime, which is a part of human life, is also reflected in the society through the individual. The idea of communion in social life is weakening. Consequently, there is a decrease in organizational capacity in neighborhood and city life, a worsening economy, social living conditions that prepare the

environment for crime and disorder, and a serious population change leading to demographic collapse. Therefore, fear of crime studies is not only a discipline that targets the individual but also a research topic that focuses on solving social problems.

The Conceptual Framework for Fear of Crime

In the 1960s, US citizens were faced with steadily increasing crime rates every year. Increasing in crime rates has generally been triggered by political events. Incidents such as assassinations, the ongoing Vietnam War, black citizens' street movements in search of equal rights, and inflation increases have led to an expand in the crime fear scores of individuals living in city life (Furstenberg, 1971, p. 601). As a result of these occurrences, policy makers who want to find out the extent of fear of crime in the street have developed studies on fear of crime. This research area, which developed politically at first, later became an important subject in the field of criminology. In the following years, the fear of crime was not only the science of criminology but also attracted the attention of sociology (Yin, 1980, p. 500).

There is no consensus in the literature to define fear of crime. In other words, "*Fear of crime is difficult and complex to define*" (Solak, 2015, p. 17). Therefore, conceptual definitions of fear of crime vary and are generally explained by some independent variables (age, gender, education, and income, etc.). Fear of crime is a problem of the city (Özaşçılar, 2015, p. 329). It can be defined as a problem (Taylor and Hale, 1986, p. 151; Keown, 2001, p. 1). Fear of crime is an important problem that negatively affects the social relations between individuals in urban life and harms the unity in the society (Özcan, 1994, p. 152). Warr and Ellison (2000, p. 551), explaining the fear of crime, emphasize that it should be perceived as a social phenomenon rather than an individual phenomenon.

In the aspect of simplest form of fear of crime can be accepted as a fear of being a victim of a crime. The victimization is life experiences of the individual who are shaped according to different independent variables such as age, gender, being a victim of a crime, neighborhood and environmental conditions, and socio-economic status of the individual (Sipahi, 2016, p. 2159). McLaughlin and Munice (2001, p. 118) draws attention to the feeling of anxiety that occurs in the individual and makes the following definition: "*Fear of crime is a rational or irrational state of alarm or anxiety arising from the belief that the person is in danger of being a victim of crime.*"

Garofalo also uses the expression of emotional reaction when describing fear of crime: "*Fear of crime is an emotional reaction to the danger of physical injury and anxiety*" (Garofalo, 1981, p. 841). Garofalo draws attention to physical injury from the vulnerability framework. Garofalo states that when examining fear, making a distinction between two points would be more meaningful in measuring fear of crime. In fear of crime studies, the answer received after a question directed to a participant may not exactly give real fear. If the participant has not been a victim of a similar crime before, it may be difficult to feel the real fear of crime during the survey, especially when confronted with hints that trigger true crime fear or past events. Therefore, fear should be considered in two stages: Real fear (actual fear) and Expected or Predicted (anticipated fear). Expected fear is the individual's past

experience based on their experience of real fears. If the individual is faced with a similar negative experience again in the future, then true fear will reappear.

Although there is no common definition explaining fear of crime, some theoretical approaches or concepts make fear of crime more understandable. These concepts are the main independent variables used to measure the fear of being a victim of crime in individuals (Özaşçılar, 2015, p. 333). Independent variables do not only consist demographic characteristics, but it also covers situations such as environmental disorder. The main approaches which are very useful to explain fear of crime appear as Vulnerability, Victimization, Socio-economic status, Disorder / Incivilities, Sub-cultural diversity, and Media (Kul, 2012).

Vulnerability Model

The first theory used to explain the vulnerability theory is the individual's inability to protect himself/herself against others in society and to have the idea that they can be hurt physically, mentally, or socially by them. In other words, according to the vulnerability theory, the individual cannot defend himself effectively against a possible attack and due to this victimization, he/she is hurt more than other people (Kul, 2012, p. 31). Therefore, some researchers accept the vulnerability theory as an important variable in determining fear of crime (Killias, 1990, p. 97).

Negative experiences of people in the past can cause an increase in their fear of crime scores. Especially, if physical or social attack emerged by the others, fear rate is more effective than an attack against property. For example, a person whose parked car is stolen is less affected than a physical or social attack (Rountree, 1998).

The theme of vulnerability is micro-variables such as gender, age and race. Therefore, this theory is explained by socio-demographic variables (Otis, 2007, p. 201; Jackson, 2009, p. 6; Özaşçılar and Ziyalar, 2009, p. 8). Vulnerability theory was first introduced in 1978 in "*Theoretical models of Social History*" was brought to the literature by Stinchcombe (Doran and Burgess, 2012, p. 30). Vulnerability is often explained in terms of weakness and the fear of being hurt based on this weakness. For example, if the individual does not have the physical ability to prevent a crime when faced with a crime, he feels the fear of crime more than other people (Karasu, 2018, p. 334). Skogan and Maxfield (1981, p. 69) define vulnerability more detail. According to this definition, individuals are vulnerable to attack and if they are weak to resist these attacks, people are likely to suffer physical and emotional trauma because of the attack.

Skogan and Maxfield elaborated the vulnerability theory in 1981, giving it two different perspectives. The vulnerability of the individual should be examined under two headings as physical vulnerability and social vulnerability (Skogan and Maxfield, 1981, p. 69).

Physical Vulnerability

Physical vulnerability is seen in people who cannot protect themselves against an attack by others. Also, it can be explained as people who feel physically powerless and who believe that if they are attacked, it will create traumas (Skogan and Maxfield, 1981, p. 69). According to the results of the studies, it has been determined that the people who see themselves as more handicapped in physical defense in daily life are generally women and elderly individuals (Franklin and

Franklin, 2008, p. 4). In terms of fear of crime, those who are vulnerable in social life are evaluated in two categories as gender and age.

Gender Vulnerability and Fear of Crime

There are many studies in the literature on fear of being exposed to crime by gender. Results from these studies generally shows similarity. It has been revealed that women in society have more fear of crime than men (Box et al., 1988, p. 344; Bennett and Flavin, 1994, p. 360; Beaulieu et al., 2007, p. 337; Maxfield, 1987, p. 278; Warr, 2000, p. 478; Pantazis, 2000, p. 414; Stanko, 1995, p. 48).

Researchers have found that women have more fear of crime than men while studying fear of crime on the basis of gender. But, when the official crime statistics in the region where the research was conducted were examined, it was noticed that women were less victims of crime than men. The result that emerged after this was accepted as a “*paradoxical situation*” (Sipahi, 2016, p. 46). The roles and sexual crimes determined by the society for the genders have shown how women have to live uneasy in daily life. For example, in a study, female participants were asked, “*What is the crime you fear most?*” The question was asked, and the answer mostly received was “*rape crime*” (Killias, 1990, p. 99). Stanko (1995, pp. 50-51) in his study on *Women's Crime and Fear* found that sexual crimes are the worst scenario.

The transition from an ecological society where everyone lives equally and freely without gender discrimination to a patriarchal society structure based on domination has given genders specific roles. As a result of these roles, specific emotions have emerged in men and women evolutionarily. In society, crying for men is generally an unacceptable behavior. Men are socialized to protect themselves, to stand out with their physical strength and to take risks. Women, on the other hand, are raised with a perspective that needs protection from childhood, avoids risks and is fragile (Groof, 2008, p. 286). Due to these roles determined by society for genders (Kul, 2012, p. 32), contradictory results are obtained in individuals' fear of crime. While women expressed their fears of crime with a more sensitive framework, men do not reveal their fears of crime realistically and hide the fact that they may actually be victims of a crime they fear.

Stanko (1995) claims that there are two important experiences underlying women's fear of crime. First of all, they are exposed to violence not only on the street but also in their homes. Women experience the violence starting from a young age. Because of the oppressive male mentality, women may experience violence from their spouses and as a result, they have the thought that they will always face a crime. This situation raises the risk perception in their crime fear scores. Stanko's work was actually another research that proved Garofola's (1981, p. 841) idea that true fear of crime would be triggered by negative experiences in the past.

According to Stanko's research, the second main reason for women's higher fear of crime scores compared to men is the perturbation of being exposed to sexual crimes. The high rate of sexual crime not only increases women's fear of crime but also restricts their individual freedoms. For example, in August 1994, law enforcement officers in Melbourne had to warn women not to walk alone at night in order to protect them (Stanko, 1995, p. 54).

Ferraro, (Fear of Victimization: Shadow of Sexual Assault?) has proven that the underlying cause of women's general fears of crime is sexual harassment. In other words, the fear of being harassed increases the fear of being exposed to other crimes. For example, a significant number of young female participants are afraid of being killed. Ferraro states that the underlying cause of being killed idea is sexual harassment. The fear of being raped, especially women living in urban areas, is striking. Also, fear of sexual harassment is seen at higher rates in young women who had to move due to various reasons such as education, family reasons, career etc. and they started to live in a new settlement (Ferraro, 1996, pp. 677, 686-687).

As a result, although similar questions are asked to people in different countries, women's fear of being the victim of any crime in their social life is more common than men. Unfortunately, this situation negatively affects women's daily routine activities (Tandoğan and İlhan, 2016, p. 2013) by restricts their freedom. For instance, women avoid using public transportation such as the subway alone at night. Therefore, women's freedom of movement in social life may be restricted.

Another vulnerable group is age. Various studies have been conducted to show that the fear of being exposed to crime is according to certain ages. The picture that emerges thanks to these studies is that older men and women generally feel more fear than younger people (Lindesay, 1997, p. 81). Some researchers, who advocate this argument, explain the high fear of crime among elderly individuals as a "paradox." For example, a study conducted in San Antonio examined official criminal records in the region. According to the study, the rates of exposure to crime and fear of crime are inversely proportional to the elderly people in the region. While the elderly's exposure to crime is quite low, their fear of crime is contrastingly high. This situation creates a paradox as in women's fear of crime (Lindquist and Duke, 1982, p. 125).

There are some justifiable reasons why older individuals feel more fear of crime in society. Depending on age, individuals become physically weaker. The state of physical vulnerability is among the biggest reasons that increase the fear of crime in older women and men. The second reason is that conditions such as a person's financial income, health status and living alone increase people's fear of crime psychologically (Braungart et al., 1980, p. 56).

Social Vulnerability

In the socio-economic situation, researchers focus on the income levels and education levels of individuals and try to establish a connection between these variables and the individual's fear of crime. In other words, the fear of crime score is measured according to the income level or education level of the person. The common finding from studies conducted in this area is that people with low-income levels generally have more fear of crime (Clemente and Kleiman, 1976, p. 209). Because individuals can protect themselves from being victimized as they become economically stronger and their education level increases (Clemente and Kleiman, 1977, p. 523). In addition, the higher the education level provides less fear score (Hale, Pack and Salked, 1994, p. 229). While there are many studies supporting these analyses, some researches show that there is no positive correlation between income level and fear of crime.

People prefer or are forced to live in a neighborhood according to their socio-economic status. People residing in ghettos or slums in cities generally consist of people with low income levels. Depending on this decrease in income level, violence increases, and regions produce crime. People living in such a neighborhood are afraid of being exposed to a crime at any time (Kul, 2012, pp. 36-37). People with a high-income level move to safer districts in cities. Thus, they develop various methods to create a safe environment and they reduce crime which can be exposed in residential environments. (Apak, Ülken and Ünlü, 2002, p. 66).

People with high incomes have less fear of crime with the safe world they have created for themselves (Lauer, 2005). Because people living in safe areas have set a barrier between them and crime. In regions with low crime rates, an extra "defensible space" (Apak et al., 2002, p. 66) is created and security is further increased. At this point, the fear of crime appears only in certain districts of the city, depending on the income level. As a result, the connection between socio-economic status and fear of crime is broken and meaningful results cannot be obtained (Kul, 2012, p. 37).

According to the researchers who argue that the fear of crime also varies depending on the education level of the individual, fear of crime is seen more in people with low education level (Mireku, 2002, p. 155). Generally, it is claimed that with low-income level in socio-economic situation, education level also be low and accordingly problems such as unemployment will arise. Such situations will further increase the crime rates, especially in the depressed neighborhoods of the city. From this point of view, education level is also seen as an important variable. People with a low level of education also have a low perception of security and will be insufficient to protect themselves. As the education level rises, individuals be more aware of the crime and have less fear of crime as they will take the necessary precautions (Sipahi, 2016, pp. 50-51).

Victimization Theory

One of the focal points of fear of crime is the fear of being victimized by the others. A person's the focus of the victimization theory is not only being a victim of the crime, but also learning that a family member, a close acquaintance, or someone else is victimized by means of communication such as the media.

Directive 2012/29/Eu of The European Parliament and of The Council to establishing minimum standards on the rights, support, and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council Framework Decision:

- “A natural person who has suffered harm, including physical, mental or emotional harm or economic loss, directly resulting from a criminal offence”,
- “Family members of the deceased and of the person injured as a result of that person's death.”

As it can be understood from the definitions, victimization does not only occur because of an attack on the person. A person's victimization can also be experienced indirectly (Skogan and Maxfield, 1981). Moreover, after victimization, the person can be adversely affected psychologically, socially, physically, and economically. The psychological integrity of individuals may be impaired due to

the fear of being a victim of a crime or being in the future (Sipahi, 2016, p. 43; Kavıracı, 2022, p. 303). For example, people may find it difficult to control their fear of being exposed to a crime in their daily routine activities. As a result, there may be anxiety, dissatisfaction, alienation from people and surroundings, and a tendency to use drugs at a higher level. Additionally, there are also people who resort to methods such as taking close defense training to protect themselves and their home, installing alarm systems in the house, or adopting a dog and taking out insurance for high amounts (Liska et al., 1982, p. 761).

Social victimization, results in the damage to the dignity of the individual in the society and the wounding of his social relations (Sipahi, 2016: 43). In physical victimization, the body is damaged due to a physical attack on the individual. Economic victimization, on the other hand, is the financial loss of an individual after the crime he/she is exposed to. (Öztürk, 2015, pp. 79-80).

According to the definition in the literature, emotional reaction is used within the scope of fear of victimization. In other words, the fear of victimization is the emotional reaction of the person towards the symbols associated with the crime, such as anxiety, horror and worry. At this point, fear is an output of the risk phenomenon. After the risk perceived by the individual, physical, psychological, and social reactions may occur. As an emotional response, the person may isolate themselves from social life or psychologically may want to withdraw (Hennen and Knudten, 2001, p. 196).

Direct Victimization

Direct victimization occurs when the individual is exposed to psychological, economic, or physical victimization because of the damage inflicted by someone else against himself or a property he owns. According to the direct victimization theory, the person is afraid of being victimized. At this point, the person's family members or relatives are in the secondary plan.

There are contrasting studies in the literature that the link between direct victimization and fear of crime can be positive or negative (Hale, 1996, p. 104). Yin (1980), Liska et al. (1988) and Skogan (1987) claimed in their studies that there is a positive relationship between victimization and fear of crime. Braungart et al (1980), Garofalo (1979), Box et al. (1988) and Skogan and Maxfield (1981) did not reject the link between fear of crime and victimization but stated that this link is weak.

One of the general reasons for not finding a positive link between direct victimization and fear of crime is that people who have been victims of a crime before, take measures to avoid further victimization and thus experience less fear violence. In addition, depending on the time elapsed after the victimization experience, individuals can get rid of negative emotions or forget the negative emotions experienced over time and allow these emotions to weaken. (Box et al., 1988, p. 352).

Individuals who have experienced victimization go through an internal evaluation of these negative situations they have experienced. The reason why people do this neutralizes the negative situations. At this point, Agnew stated that aggrieved individuals applied five techniques:

- *Denial of physical or emotional injury*: The person consoles himself by saying "I am not hurt"
- *Denial of vulnerability*: With this technique, the individual convinces himself that he has gained a life experience. According to that, "now she has learned how to avoid being victimized in the future."
- *Acceptance of responsibility*: The individual sees himself as guilty and thinks that he is also partially guilty according to the person or people to whom he is victimized.
- *Belief in a just world*: After the victimization, the individual trusts the justice system or the justice system that the universe has hosted since its existence. "He believes that the criminals will get the punishment they deserve."
- *to higher motivation*: The person believes he has been victimized because of good intentions. "He believes that he is a victim while trying to protect his friends or relatives" (Hale, 1996, p. 105).

Indirect Victimization

In indirect victimization, individuals can witness the victims of a crime (friends, family members, relatives, etc.) even if they are not personally exposed to a crime. They learn about the events from other people's narratives through mass media (newspapers, television, radio and social media, etc.). According to this approach, even if people have not been directly exposed to crime, they can empathize with the person who has had a negative experience in the indirect victimization they witness, and they can feel fear even though they have not experienced any victimization. (Yazgan, 2017, p. 75). In other words, people can experience the feelings and fears of the victim person in the same way (Doran and Burgess, 2012, p. 27).

The general findings in the research are the existence of a positive correlation between fear of crime and indirect victimization (Box et al., 1988; Skogan and Maxfield, 1981; Katz, Webb and Armstrong, 2006). According to the indirect victimization approach, the individual empathizes with the victim because of the victimization that he/she be aware of through various channels. Although he/she has never been exposed to crime, the person's defense resistance decrease. Therefore, the fear of crime will become more widespread, especially in the region where the events took place (Hale, 1996, pp. 105, 80).

The focal point of indirect victimization is how or where the people affected by the victimization obtain the information. At this point, the channels provided are grouped under two headings in the literature. The first channel is *communication between individuals* that is spreading news or information transfer. The second important source of information is to be explained as the *media* (Rountree and Land, 1996, p. 1355; Liska et al., 1988, p. 830).

In interpersonal communication, the experience of victimization is transferred to different people with the social network of relations (Yazgan, 2017, p. 75). Since social networks are more closely connected to each other in small districts or neighborhoods than in big cities (Öztürk, 2015, p. 84), the victimization experienced spreads to a wider stratum more quickly. As a result, many people can

experience victimization indirectly. Measures are taken to avoid being a victim of crime, such as self-isolation from society. The weakening of the social networks in the community, the decrease in communication between the residents of the neighborhood and the damaging of social tolerance increase the fear of crime among people (Karasu, 2018, p. 51).

The fact that individuals witness a victimization and then convey this victimization to other people also affects people's perception of being victimized (Doran and Burgess, 2012, p. 29; Mawby, Brunt and Hambly, 2000, p. 467). When elderly people and women, who are among the vulnerable groups, witness a crime, it can spread faster in the neighborhoods where they live. Accordingly, it can cause people's crime fear scores to increase rapidly (Taylor and Hale, 1986, p. 1961).

The effect of the media is shown as another important reason for the widespread fear of being exposed to crime in people (Killias and Clerici, 2000; Weitzer and Kubrin, 2004; Öztürk, 2015a; Heath and Petratitis, 1987;). With the news that are fictionalized and dramatized in the media, it is ensured that the readers are aware of and affected by the crimes (Box et al., 1988, p. 342; Demirbaş, 2023, p. 41). Therefore, individuals evaluate the news presented by the media to people according to their psychological and social environment (Chiricos et al., 1997: 343) through an inference (Garofalo, 1979, p. 89).

The editing and dramatization of news made in mass media affect people indirectly. After the crime, the individual who empathizes with the victim enlarges the crime in his mind and lives in it intensely (Sipahi, 2016, p. 44). Especially, reporting shocking events such as murder crimes on the front pages of local newspapers further increases the fear scores of individuals (Liska and Baccaglini, 1990).

As a result, the media is quite successful in influencing individuals' fear of crime and increases people's fear of being exposed to crime (Weitzer and Kubrin, 2004, p. 515). Thanks to social media, people can reach events that occur both locally and nationally and in any part of the world. When the news on social media is given without waiting for proof of its accuracy and is served by changing it with malicious intent, it can affect many people negatively. Therefore, it is inevitable that the media have a serious impact on fear of crime.

Fear of Crime and Its Consequences

Fear of crime shapes the lifestyles of individuals by affecting life negatively and continues to exist as a social problem in society. Socialization of individuals in society is prevented and mutual trust and communication are weakened. Therefore, alienation, fear of meeting new people, avoidance of socialization, insecurity and psychological problems occur in individuals (Sipahi, 2016, p. 60). Various studies show that people who are afraid of being a victim of a crime take various precautions according to themselves and thus try to get rid of the negative experiences they may experience (Skogan and Maxfield, 1981; Lewis and Maxfield, 1980; Ferraro, 1996; Warr, 1985). People restrict their daily routine activities in order not to be a victim. For example, they prefer to stay at home instead of going out to avoid using public transport late at night. The effects of fear of crime, which can affect every hour of people's lives and shape their lives, are not limited to a single factor, but seriously affect individuals in various aspects.

Küllige

Fear of Crime and Its Consequences on The Individual

The effects of fear of crime on individuals are not only in the physical perspective, but also have negative effects on people's psychology in the short and long term. In the most general terms, fear of crime causes people's psychology to deteriorate. An individual with a disordered psychology leads his life as an unhappy person with a low quality of life (Sipahi, 2016, p. 61). When evaluated at the level of the person, problems such as depression, anxiety, paranoia, prejudice, loss of control, blood pressure and fear of death can be included in a person's life. In addition, the effects of these psychological disorders and the combination of various factors can also damage relationships among people. For example, divorce, unrest at work and problems in the family are among the psychological outcomes of the individual's fear of crime (Skogan, 1987, p. 150). Therefore, the psychological effects of fear of crime are discussed in the literature as a multidimensional construct (Amerio and Roccatò, 2005, p. 18).

An individual who thinks that he/she may be exposed to a crime at any time can isolate himself/herself from daily life. By giving up going to work or school, he/she can close himself/herself at home and getting out of the house can become a phobia (Smith, 2019: 36). As a result, people with an advanced fear of crime may have to struggle with serious psychological diseases. According to a study, participants who reported high levels of fear were 50% more likely to exhibit symptoms than those with low levels of fear. In addition, the probability of showing depression in the same conditions is around 90% higher (Stafford et al., 2007, p. 2078).

People who are rarer in the perspective of vulnerability in society may be more inclined to show avoidance behavior. Women, homeless, elderly, physically weak or disabled individuals can isolate themselves from social life in order not to face a crime (Box et al., 1988, p. 352; Yin, 1982, p. 240). They stay away from neighborhoods with physical and social disorders, do not spend time outside at night, and try to stay away from places and neighborhoods that they code as dangerous in their minds (Liska et al., 1988, p. 828). Walking on an illuminated street in the dark can generally cause people to be afraid. In order to prevent individuals from isolating themselves from the society and to reduce their fear of being exposed to crime, lighting studies are carried out in the residential areas (Painter, 1996, p. 200).

Fear of crime can sometimes cause serious avoidance behaviors in people. Behaviors such as not talking to strangers, avoiding meeting new people, or making friends, staying away from people with dirty or torn clothes can turn into a lifestyle that disrupts the mental health of the individual and prevents him from socializing in society. Although the individual thinks that he/she can protect himself/herself from being exposed to crime, he/she may face serious psychological and sociological damages in the long run. According to another study showing the dimensions of avoidance, it is stated that 52% of the people do not prefer to go to the dangerous districts of the city, 83% are hesitant to talk to foreign people and 75% change their ways when they see young people waiting in groups on the street (Miethe, 1995, pp. 22-23).

Fear of Crime and Its Consequences on Society

The outcomes of the fear of crime in the individual are reflected indirectly to the society (Garofalo, 1981, p. 851). The most important negative result of the fear of crime in the social dimension is the weakening of the communication of the individuals in the society. Consequently, the sense of trust among the individuals damage in the long term. In other words, fear of crime can become a major social problem (Box et al., 1988, p. 341).

The deterioration of the mutual trust mechanism between individuals results in people isolating themselves from social life. Therefore, human factors such as common norms and values and neighborhood relations that create the society disappear (Öztürk, 2015, p. 120). As the control mechanisms weaken in such a place, crime may occur more frequently (Yazgan, 2017, p. 86). Due to the fear of crime, individuals do not attach importance to common norms, move away from social life and values. This situation creates conditions that can lead to crime.

Conclusion

Studies on fear of crime have entered our lives since the 1960s. Decision makers who want to investigate the reasons for the increasing crime rates in the political field wanted to determine the crime fear levels of individuals. In this way, they thought that they could identify the problem increasing in crime rates. This system, which was successful in the political field, also managed to attract the attention of the academic field. It has been an area studied in the disciplines of sociology, psychology and law, especially criminology.

The most striking factor in fear of crime studies is the analysis made in terms of gender. In studies conducted in different geographies, women's fear of being victimized is higher than men. Studies carried out to understand the cause of this important problem indicate that women are worried about being victims of harassment crimes (Demirbaş, 2023, p. 92). The roles determined by social norms for genders are also helpful in understanding this problem. Factors such as the necessity for men to be more courageous in society prevent men from reporting their grievances to official statistics. The victim male is hesitant to complain to the official authorities.

The second striking factor in the findings of the studies is the inverse ratio between the income level and the crime about fear score. As the income level of the individual increases, there is a decrease in the fear of being victimized. People with good financial means move to neighborhoods where they can feel safe. He/she can remove the environment and conditions that he/she may be a victim of from his/her life. In this way, he/she feels psychologically comfortable.

Consequently, fear of crime is an issue that seriously affects the individual and society. It is a phenomenon that shapes the daily routine activities of the individual. The individual with a high fear of crime is negatively affected psychologically and physically. S/he isolates herself/himself from society and has to lead a more sedentary life. Depending on this situation, socialization in the society is seriously damaged. The destruction of socialization erodes the neighborhood culture, unity and solidarity. Alienation occurs in society. After all these developments, punitive justice and deterrent effect, which is a natural element

of society, disappears. Thus, an environment where crime can be committed is created and an increase in crime rates is inevitable. As a result, the high crime fear scores in the society paves the way for the formation of new crimes. Therefore, a cycle that feeds each other occurs.

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