

THE EFFECT OF MEDIA ON CITIZENS' FEAR OF CRIME IN TURKEY

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This study was conducted on-site in Istanbul, Turkey, to determine the effects that mass media has on citizens' perceptions about fear of crime, in particular, and fear, in general. Specifically, the study was designed to (1) determine the tendency of citizens' media consumption, (2) determine the level of fear of crime among Turkish citizens, (3) establish the effect of media on citizens' fear of crime, and (4) determine if gender, age, educational level, neighborhood, and monthly income have an independent effect on fear of crime. To achieve this purpose, after administering a survey in Istanbul, the researcher collected appropriate data and then utilized regression analysis to examine the relationship between media variables and fear of crime.

A survey consisting of three parts was administered to 545 Turkish citizens over the age of 18 who currently reside in Istanbul, Turkey. In Part I of the survey, respondents were asked to identify their trends in relation to media consumption, and in Part II respondents were asked to report their feelings about fear of crime. Finally, Part III consisted of socio-demographic characteristics including gender, age, marital status, level of education, and income.

The media variables used for this study were, general TV viewing, watching crime drama, watching TV news, listening to radio news, reading newspaper news, and reading Internet news.

Regarding the independent effects of socio-demographic variables on fear of crime, only gender was found to be significantly related thereby supporting the research hypothesis.

From six media variables, only watching crime drama show and reading Internet news found to be related with individuals' fear of crime; however, this relation disappeared after controlling with socio-demographic variables. In addition, no cultivation effect could be found among the sub-groups of sample.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Official statistics released by Ankara Ticaret Odasi (Ankara Chamber of Commerce, 2007) revealed that Turkey's crime rate increased 64% in 2006 compared to 2005, and the interval between each crime committed dropped from 64 seconds to 39 seconds from 2005 to 2006. Even more disturbing, during the first nine months of 2006, one house was burglarized every six minutes, one automobile was broken into every seven minutes and one workplace was robbed every nine minutes. Further, pick pocketing occurred every 18 minutes and stealing by snatching followed every 41 minutes. In addition, cases of sexual assault or rape were reported every four hours and a mugging took place every 59 minutes. To add to the magnitude of Turkey's crime problem, at least one individual is beaten, knifed or even murdered every four hours. As a startling reality, during the first nine months of 2006 alone, the number of both property and individual crimes escalated from 487,761 to 598,388. Sinan Aygun, Turkey's director of Ankara Ticaret Odasi, blamed the news media as well as the violence portrayed on televised programs as a probable source leading to heinous crimes and also asserted that individuals feel a sense of fear in their neighborhood due to high crime rates.

Clearly, the role that mass media plays in today's society shapes one's perceptions of victims and criminals, and its portrayal of victimization directly impacts public opinion about the fear of crime. Television, among other means of communication, creates a unique role that is much more pronounced from other forms of mass media. For example, Shanahan and Morgan (1999) argued that the total amount of exposure to watching television far exceeds other types of mass media and represents a prime source for gathering information and entertainment that begins early on in a majority of households where television is considered a part of the household. Children begin to watch television even before they learn to read and speak, and, moreover, television is most accessible since it does not require specific computer skills or a knowledge of literacy in printed materials.

To illustrate the increase of television's evening news broadcasts relating to crime and violence, Klite, Robert and Jason (1997) reported that out of 100 television stations, 72 opened with a crime story and one-third addressed crime or its prevention.

In another study, Shanahan and Morgan (1999) emphasized how individuals are influenced by violence portrayed through television:

The words 'television' and 'violence' are inextricably linked in the mind of the public. And with good reason; with violence occurring in approximately 70 percent of all broadcast network television programs, at

a rate about five violent acts per hour (more than twenty per hour on children's programs) and involving close to two-thirds of all major characters each week, even light viewers can have a difficult time avoiding substantial doses of symbolic mayhem. As has been so often noted, our children see about 10,000 acts of violence per year on television; by the time they graduate from high school, they will have witnessed about 18,000 violent deaths. (p. 43)

Compared to other countries, Turkey's television history is relatively new. Until 1990, for example, the Turkish Radio and Television Organization (TRT) was the only state-founded national television system that originated as a radio broadcast in 1937. In the early 1970s, the first black and white screen television was introduced and remained in effect until 1981 when color television made its debut. From 1986 to 1992, only four extra channels were added to the TRT, and by 1993, the organization was broadcasting 24 hours a day. However, the first national channels did not exist until 1990. With this advent, according to the Directorate General of Press and Information (2008), the number of national television channels increased to 27, followed by 16 regional and 215 local channels. Currently, a variety of televised choices are available for the Turkish people to watch in the privacy of their own homes. Thus, on the one hand, the television industry has provided a new network of wholesome entertainment, but

on the other hand, consequences that affect one's personal behavioral activities have, in some cases, resulted.

### Background of Study

The first studies relating to the effects of mass media began in the United States that has an older television history background and more experience with topics pertaining to violence portrayed both fictionally and in reality. Beginning in the 1960s, scholars researched this area in an effort to determine if there were any significant effects related to fear of crime based on media consumption. In Turkey, however, although the mass media is invited to come into practically everyone's home, due to its short history, the effect that television plays on one's daily lives, either directly or indirectly, remains wide open for meaningful research.

### Purpose of the Study

Conducted on-site in Istanbul, Turkey, this study explores the effects that mass media, namely television, has on citizens' perceptions about fear of crime, in particular, and fear, in general. Specifically, the study was to (1) determine the tendency of citizens' media consumption, (2) determine the level of fear of crime among Turkish citizens, (3) establish the effect of media on citizens' fear of crime, and (4) determine if gender, age, educational level, and income have an independent effect on fear of crime.

The results may facilitate media agencies in selecting and adjusting their policies based on possible negative effects as well as provide a unique and scientific approach. Because this study represents the first to address the media topic in Turkey, it will serve as a base for future research.

#### Scope and the Significance of the Study

As is discussed in the following chapter, the literature review pertaining to the effects of mass media covers a wide and varied topical area. However, this research focused on the effects that media may play on citizens' fear of crime specific to Turkey. Because the study is limited to citizens residing Istanbul, it therefore does not represent a nationwide study.

In light of previous studies, this research plays a significant role considering Turkey's unique environment. With Turkey's diverse cultural and historical background, as well as its diverse socioeconomic status groups among the citizens, this study is the first academic research that attempts to examine the media's effects on citizens' fear of crime in Istanbul, Turkey.

Another contribution of this study will be to the information science area. Mass media can also be considered as a source of information by providing individuals with current events through a variety of advanced technologies made available that include a wide range of channels as well as the Internet or digital broadcasting. An individual's choice of media sources can be better understood if the major factors affecting selection behaviors are identified.



## Overview of the Chapters

Consisting of five chapters, Chapter I briefly introduces information pertinent to the study, followed by its purpose, scope and significance. Chapter II provides a review of the literature as well as a theoretical perspective related to how the mass media can be instrumental in bringing about fear of crime among citizens. Because fear of crime represents the dependent variable, the literature was based on the media's effect on selected variables. Chapter III presents and explains the methodology that was gathered through a previous survey questionnaire, the population and sample, sampling techniques, survey instrument and administration of the survey. Chapter IV presents the results of data analysis by providing detailed information regarding all selected variables. In addition, various regression analyses are employed to assist in determining the existing relationship between the roles that mass media plays on fear of crime among Turkish citizens. Chapter V concludes by offering an overall assessment and providing suggestions and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER II  
LITERATURE REVIEW  
Fear of Crime

According to Webster's current online dictionary, *fear* is defined as "an emotion experienced in anticipation of some specific pain or danger." Similarly, the term has been referred to as "a sort of pain or agitation derived from the imagination of a future destructive painful evil" (as cited in Kennedy, 1991, p.141). The state of "fear" is rooted from different sources, with crime being one of the most common. For example, Lee (2007) reported that *fear of crime* developed into an important issue over the past forty years particularly among criminologists, policymakers, law enforcement agencies, media, and politicians as illustrated by the emergence of increased research. In an earlier study, Conklin (1971) defined "fear of crime" as "the sense of personal security in the community" (as cited in Vanderveen, 2006, p. 4) whereas Covington and Taylor (1991) suggested that fear of crime is the "emotional response to possible violent crime and physical harm." However, not all types of crimes generate fear as reported by Kershaw et al. (2000), who argued that crimes which directly affect individuals, namely robbery and burglary, result in higher levels of fear than larger-scale crimes, for example, dumping chemicals into rivers or selling experimental drugs to undeveloped countries.

In discussing the negative consequences that fear of crime has on an individual's daily life, Venderveen (2006), suggested that its anxiety results in social isolation due to behavioral constraints placed on a person. Similarly, the Queensland Police Service (2009) categorized the negative effects of fear of crime under six major headings: restriction of lifestyle, poor quality of life, decreased confidence, disempowerment, reduced natural surveillance, and increased financial costs. Although society's fear of crime has different implications in relation to gender, age, education, type of residence and income, scholars have attempted to determine why reported fear of crime varies among certain social categories (Ferraro, 1995).

#### *Fear of Crime and Gender*

While women are less likely to be victimized, they are typically more fearful than men (Chiricos et al., 2000; Dowler, 2003; Lee, 2007; Warr, 1984) based on the assumption of their weakness and defenselessness. Consequently, because the rate of sexual assault toward women is ten times greater than against men (Crowell & Burgess, 1996), females are more likely to fear being raped or sexually assaulted (Ferraro, 1995) which also results in their fear of other type of crimes. Ferraro demonstrated this claim by arguing that women are more likely to fear being robbed while home alone since the crime may also be accompanied by a sexual attack.

### *Fear of Crime and Age*

Considered as one of the most important demographic variables in social sciences, the relationship between fear of crime and age represents a substantial amount of research. Similar to women, the elderly characteristically appear to be more vulnerable to a wide variety of crimes due to their physical defense limitations. Although this assumption applies to cases involving muggings or robberies, it fails to support the elderly fear of sexual offenses (Evans, 1995). Accordingly, Moore and Spherd (2007) asserted that there is a recent shift in the correlation of fear and age by suggesting that although elderly individuals have been found to be the most fearful when compared to other groups, in reality, the opposite exists. As such, Ferraro (1995) found that despite being limited in the ability to defend themselves, the level of fear is less than among the younger population because the elderly reduce their likelihood of being attacked by going out less (Ferraro, 1995).

### *Fear of Crime and Type of Neighborhood*

Liska, Sanchirico and Reed (1988) suggested that fear of crime is a problem among individuals in both city and suburban communities that restricts the freedom to move around from one place to another in the area where they reside. According to the Chicago school of thought, crime rates are higher in inner cities. From this perspective, one can assume that inner city residents are prone to be more fearful of crime. Yarwood and Gardner (2000) stated that

crime is more likely to be considered as an urban rather than a rural issue due to official crime rates that consistently indicate higher crime incidents in urban areas.

### *Fear of Crime and Socioeconomic Status*

Baumer (1978) suggested that income and education are less consistently related to fear of crime when compared to gender and age, similar to Clemente and Kleinman's (1977) earlier claim that fear of crime is inversely related to socioeconomic status. After evaluating the results of a 1974 Gallup Poll, Clemente and Kleinman found that both income and education are negatively related to fear based on the claim that one's enhanced financial status is more likely to protect a person from harm as the result of having sufficient resources to afford living in safe neighborhoods.

Based on a previous study, Clemente and Kleinman (1976) suggested that individuals who have less than a high-school diploma are more likely to feel fear than those who have a high school education or above. Conversely, this relationship differed in other cultures according to Liu's (2007) study which revealed that educated individuals residing in urban China exhibit a higher level of fear of crime than their less educated counterparts.

### Media and Fear of Crime

In determining how the media, both positively and negatively, affects individuals' feelings about victimization and fear of crime, among the most well-

known studies were conducted by Gerbner and colleagues in 1976, 1977 and 1994. Their theory of cultivation has been evaluated by other researchers and determined to be rational in explaining the relationship between media and its effects (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999; Wober & Gunter, 1983). The following discussion examines Gerbner's cultivation theory that serves as the building foundation for the present research.

### Gerbner's Cultivation Theory

Cultivation theory, also referred to as a cultivation hypothesis or cultivation analysis, was founded by Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, and Signorielli (1994) who initiated their research in the mid-1960s in an effort to explore whether television viewing had an effect in shaping an audience's ideas in relation to the social world.

### *Core Assumptions and Statements*

Gerbner et al.'s (1994) cultivation theory proposed that the role of television as a main source of storytelling can be considered as a socializing mediator worthy of investigating, if indeed, viewing audiences are enticed into believing that televised fiction is actually a portrayal of reality, given the increased amount of time watching drama scenarios.

Using Gerbner's cultivation theory, Shanahan and Morgan (1999) identified the role of television drama as a key factor that

... exploits a particular style of 'representational realism', a dominant convention in Western narrative in general. Representational realism is the form of story-telling in which the hearer or viewer is convinced that, if certain assumptions are taken for granted, the events taking place could happen 'in reality'. (p. 21)

Gerbner and colleagues (1994) claimed that although television viewing had a small effect on public behaviors, this effect was found to be important on their attitudes, beliefs and judgments of how the social world is perceived by "heavy viewers" (Gerbner & Gross, 1976).

Shanahan and Morgan (1999) further elaborated on how television shapes an individual's thoughts based on the cultivation theory:

The presumed realism of the background—a background that is highly consistent across genres and over time—is critical in the process regardless of the degree of 'perceived reality' we bring to bear on our viewing, no matter how aware we are of the fact that we are watching a made-up story, and no matter how much we refuse to suspend our disbelief.

Through narratives and actions that take place against a highly realistic background, the stories television tells can help shape the deeper, invisible, rarely questioned assumptions all of us carry around; they do not determine our thoughts and actions so much as they color and help inform the meaning of what we think, say and do. (p. 22)

According to Gerbner and Gross (1976), individuals who watch four or more hours of television per day are labeled as 'heavy viewers' as opposed to 'light viewers' who spend less than four hours in front of the television. In other words, heavy viewers are more likely to be affected by the 'Mean World Syndrome', an idea that depicts the world as a worse place although in reality, it actually is not; thus, the overuse of television may encourage a sense of fear.

#### *What Counts as Cultivation?*

According to Shanahan and Morgan (1999), cultivation is based on what television says about reality and what individuals think about reality with the relationship between the two comprises cultivating in the final step. For example, cultivation simply begins with cross-tabulations between an individual's media or television consumption categorized by heavy and light viewing followed by the responses to substantive questions. The percentage difference between the two viewer groups is referred as "cultivation differential," or, simply stated, 52% of the heavy viewers worry about being victimized whereas 39% of light viewers think they might be victimized. As depicted in Figure 1, the difference in variation between the 52% and 39% "cultivation differential" of heavy versus light viewers would support Gerbner and Gross' (1976) cultivation hypothesis.





*Figure 1. Variation between the cultivation differential (Gerbner & Gross, 1976).*

### *Cultural Indicators Project*

The cultural indicators project consists of a three-dimensional research strategy. The first, also referred to as an institutional process analysis, is related to constructing main policies directed by the substantial flow of media messages. In the second prong, or the message system analysis, Gerbner and colleagues (1994) created a massive observation database consisting of over 26,000 characters and 2,200 programs by recording samples of United States network television drama spanning over two decades and subjecting them to content analysis. The third part of the project, also known as cultivation analysis, involves an examination of responses related to social reality questions (Gerbner et al., 1994). In the analysis, the researchers often used secondary data taken from large scale national surveys, namely the National Opinion Research Center's general social surveys, if they involved questions relating to the media world and amount of time consumed in watching television. Gerbner and colleagues' cultivation effects were also found to differ among sub-groups through

mainstreaming and resonance effects. Essentially, the mainstreaming effect caused heavy viewers from different socioeconomic groups to develop a similar outlook. As such, television content resonates with real life experiences thereby intensifying the cultivation effect in certain groups (Gerbner et al., 1994). After decades of research development, the cultivation theory is considered to be a practical research methodology.

#### Perception and Selection of Media Sources by Individuals

Mass media can also be considered as a source of information by providing individuals with current events through a variety of advanced technologies made available that include a wide range of channels as well as the Internet or digital broadcasting.

An individual's choice of media sources can be better understood if the major factors affecting selection behaviors are identified. For example, Dervin and Nilan (1986) claimed that users' behaviors are not always an outcome involving a simple rational calculation, or individuals do not always choose the optimal information sources. Rather, information-seeking behavior is defined as "the purposive seeking from information as a consequence of a need to satisfy some goal" (Wilson, 2000, p. 49). Wilson also pointed out that users searching for information have the ability to use either books, newspapers, or computer-based systems, namely digital libraries or the World Wide Web. Thus, mass media variables can also be considered under this category in the form of daily

or crime news, the Internet, and newspapers. Wilson (1999) earlier suggested that individuals also face personal barriers while satisfying their informational needs, for example, role-related and environmental issues. These barriers, in turn, affect the media selection that individuals use to obtain news reports. Availability and ease of use are the most important factors during the selection phase.

#### Other Literature Related to Media and Fear of Crime

Beginning in the 1960s, scholars determined that the mass media plays a variety of roles concerning the effects of one's feelings about fear of crime. In particular, Gerbner and Gross (1975) and Gerbner et al. (1977) found significant relationships between media variables and citizens' fear of crime through cultivation analysis. Specifically, violence portrayed on television occurs more than actuality in the real world which, in turn, transforms into fear of crime by viewers.

#### *General Television Viewing and Fear of Crime*

In subsequent research based on Gerbner and Gross (1975) and Gerbner and colleagues (1977), the relationship between fear of crime and television was not found to be strong. Hirsch (1980, 1981) and Hughes (1980) further utilized the same data and other researchers who performed analyses through new data (Doob & Macdonald, 1979; Heath & Petraitis, 1987; Wober & Gunter, 1983) found that the relationship between television watching and fear of crime is

much more complicated than reported by Gerbner and Gross (1975) and Gerbner et al. (1977). According to Comstock et al. (1978), who concluded that frequent television viewing is more common among women, the elderly, the less educated, and lower income populations, cultivation studies may thus be problematic to a certain degree because these factors are independent predictors of fear of crime.

Consequently, Heath and Petraitis (1987) conducted a study to examine the cultivation hypothesis by applying it to two different settings consisting of immediate and non-immediate environments. They hypothesized that television viewing would cultivate impressions in distant urban settings but would have no effect on citizens' perceptions of danger in their immediate surroundings. By performing two studies to test the hypothesis, Heath and Petraitis (1987) first interviewed by telephone 372 nationwide television viewers in 26 different mid-size cities across the United States. Respondents were asked how much time was spent on daily television viewing and whether their viewing was oriented more toward particular types of programs, for example, comedies, talk shows or crime drama. Fear of crime was then measured by asking questions related to the likelihood of risk of victimization in their own city as compared to New York City. Multivariate analysis of variance was performed to examine the effects of television viewing on fear of crime by education and gender. Since television viewing was considered by using total hours and crime drama viewing, two sets

of analysis were conducted. The results indicated a significant relationship between total amount of viewing time and fear of crime in distant urban settings, namely New York City. However, Heath and Petraitis (1987) did not find any significant relationship between total television viewing as related to the respondent's own city or own neighborhood. In sum, the researchers argued that there is no relationship between crime drama viewing and fear of crime in the respondent's own neighborhood; on the other hand, a statistically significant relationship was found to exist between exposure to crimes portrayed and perceptions of crimes in the respondent's own city. In the second study, using a sample consisting of 89 male and 103 female undergraduate students from Chicago, Heath and Petraitis (1987) found a positive relationship between total television viewing time and general crime drama viewing as well as fear of crime in non-immediate, urban environments. Heavy viewers were reported to have higher levels of fear, and consistent with prior findings, women reported more fear of crime than men.

Although Heath and Petraitis (1987) acknowledged that their over-sampling of females making up 68% of the sample was not problematic, this was considered to be a limitation since the sample did not reflect the population. Accordingly, their studies revealed that females are likely to report more fear of crime when compared to males, an over-sampling issue that would affect the significance of findings.

When Heath and Gilbert (1996) examined the effects of mass media on perceptions of crime danger, personal fear of crime and reactions to risk of crime, they found a complex relationship between fear of crime and television viewing accredited to multiple factors including type of television programming, credibility of the individual, and level of apprehension prior to watching the crime event. The same relationship was found between newspaper crime coverage and fear of crime that was attributed to the complex factors of level of sensationalism, randomness and crime location.

*Television Viewing and Fear of Crime Controlled with Neighborhood Type*

In an earlier but similar study, Doob and Macdonald (1979) hypothesized that heavy television viewers are more likely to report fear of crime yet the fear is not related to heavy viewing but rather to residing in more dangerous neighborhoods. To test this hypothesis, Doob and Macdonald conducted a survey of 408 Toronto residents by analyzing reported television viewing and fear in urban and suburban neighborhoods with high and low crime rates. Although the overall model was consistent with Gerbner et al.'s cultivation theory based on geographical subgroups, the findings revealed that fear is related to television viewing by only those residents living in a high-crime urban area. Doob and Macdonald (1979) explained their results by stating that police dramas representing a form of violence were related primarily to high-crime neighborhoods, and, thus, persons residing outside of those neighborhoods in

low-crime areas were not affected. Doob and Macdonald (1979) concluded that the amount of television watched had no effect on citizens' perception of fear of crime.

Gross and Aday (2006) conducted a telephone survey of 921 residents living in Washington, D.C. to compare the effects of local television news, neighborhood crime rates and personal experiences leading to fear of crime. After data were gathered and regression analyses were performed to examine the relationship between dependent and independent variables, heavy viewers who watched local crime news were found more likely to regard crime as an important issue. On the other hand, Gross and Aday found no relationship between watching local television news and fear of crime, but personal experience and neighborhood crime rates were predictors of fear consistent with the previous findings of Doob and Macdonald (1979).

In examining the effect of media on fear of crime, Dowler (2003) conducted a telephone survey derived from the National opinion survey on crime and justice (Flanagan & Longmire, 1995) comprised of 1,005 adults living in the United States. Dowler (2003) classified variables under three media topics representing primary news sources: regular crime drama viewers, hours spent watching television and print media reporting. Although a significant relationship was found between watching crime shows and fear of crime, a significant relationship was not found between hours of television watched and fear of

crime. Moreover, the relationship between print media as the primary source of news and fear of crime was not found to be significant. Consistent with Doob and Macdonald's (1979) prior research, respondents who reported a high number of crime-related neighborhood problems were more likely to fear crime, most probably resulting from living in an unsafe area. Consistent with prior research findings, Dowler's (2003) findings also indicated that female and elderly respondents were more likely to fear crime.

#### *Televised News and Fear of Crime*

Further, Romer, Jamieson and Aday (2003) found a significant relationship between media viewing of local televised news and fear of victimization by using three different sources of data. The first was based on the results of a national risk survey consisting of 1,024 subjects, and their second was based on general social survey (GSS) results. The third data source was taken from an earlier survey they conducted in 1998 consisting of 2,369 subjects from Philadelphia. Romer et al. (2003) reasoned that by using three different data sources they could compare results gathered from different settings. For example, when media variables consisting of national and local television, radio programs and national and local daily newspapers were included, the most common source among respondents was found to be through national and local television and local newspaper news. After conducting regression analysis between respondents' perceptions of crime risk and the sources of crime news, findings



indicated that the primary source was local television news. Although Romer et al. (2003) found a significant relationship between local television news viewing and risk perception, results from their first study did not indicate any relationship between risk perception and national television or local newspaper news.

In their second study, a comparison was made between the results of 1990-1991 to 1993-1994 GSS surveys that included Federal Bureau of Investigation crime reports taken from metropolitan areas to control for the relationship between media and fear of crime. The findings indicated that fear of crime among respondents increased dramatically during all these years, and fear in the cities was shown to be higher than in the suburbs. Consistent with their previous findings, reported fear was related to police crime rate reports, and in addition, age, income and gender were found to be significantly related to the level of fear reported as well as local television crime coverage.

In their third study, Romer et al. (2003) used regression analysis to examine the relationship between local television news viewing and fear of crime in Philadelphia. The results indicated a positive relationship between television news viewing associated with fear of crime. The researchers further utilized local police crime reports to determine if the relationship would disappear. Similar to their previous research, findings indicated that television news viewing remained a predictor of fear of crime. Because Romer et al. (2003) used three different sources of data with each consisting of a sample size comprised of more than

1,000 subjects, their methodological approach is considered powerful enough to support significant and solid findings.

In another study, Chiricos, Padgett and Gertz (2000) conducted a survey of 2,250 Florida residents to determine how the relationship between television news watching and fear of crime is affected from the reality of crime. Reality of crime was measured by variables consisting of local crime rates, victim experiences and perceived realism of crime news. By using multivariate analyses to examine the relationship between media and fear, Chiricos et al. found that fear of crime was higher in high crime rate areas, consistent with Doob and Macdonald (1979) who also did not find a significant relationship between watching television news and fear of crime, but rather argued that the relationship is related to the actual crime rates in a specific region. Chiricos et al. (2000) further found that frequency of watching local and national news as well as its credibility had a significant positive effect on fear of crime. Finally, the relationship between watching national news was overshadowed by local news which also indicates that there is a significant relationship between watching local news and fear of crime. This finding is consistent with an earlier study conducted by Heath (1984) related to crimes reported in local newspapers that tend to have more effect on citizens' fear of crime. In terms of demographic variables, Chiricos et al. (2000) found that on a bivariate level, education and income are both significantly related to fear of crime. However, after controlling

with other factors, the effect was found to be indirectly related. In addition, the researchers argued that fear of crime increased with the respondents' age and then dropped as they grew older, or, in other words, the relationship between age and fear of crime was not linear. Finally, the results indicated that females consistently reported a higher level of fear of crime.

In a study conducted by Sparks and Ogles (1990) to determine the distinction between fear of crime and probability of becoming a crime victim, the authors maintained that the fear of direct victimization is difficult to measure. When respondents were asked to estimate their feelings of being involved in a crime or their feelings about safety in their neighborhood, their answers generally supported the results of a previous survey the researchers conducted in a Midwestern state. One-half of the respondents were selected from a city having a high crime rate and the remaining one-half were chosen from a city having a low crime rate. By utilizing two different scales to measure these concepts – media and fear of crime– Sparks and Ogles (1990) concluded that a correlation between media and fear of crime was not found; however, there was a significant relationship between television viewing and fear of violence. Although their research revealed significant findings about fear of crime, the survey sample ( $n=101$ ) was not large enough to estimate population trends.

### *Newspaper Media and Fear of Crime*

Heath (1984) conducted a survey on the role that newspapers play on citizens' fear of crime by classifying 36 newspapers according to their proportion of reporting local, sensational or random crimes. The survey, consisting of 300 newspaper readers, was divided into two parts, a field quasi experiment and a laboratory experiment. Utilizing a telephone survey in the quasi experiment, the findings indicated that higher levels of fear of crime were reported if the local newspaper published a high proportion of crime news. These findings were replicated in the laboratory experiment by selecting 80 college students to represent the experimental group who expressed more fear if the crime was reported in the local newspaper. Heath's (1984) findings indicated that if the crime occurs near to the respondent's surroundings, the level of fear increases.

Using a micro level relationship whereby units of analysis do not include human subjects, Liska and Baccaglini (1990) researched fear of crime from a social aspects perspective. In the context of treating fear of crime as a characteristic of social units, the researchers examined 26 cities, or units, derived from a national crime survey. The purpose of their study was to analyze the relationship between fear of crime and structural and cultural characteristics of cities, namely crime reports and newspaper coverage. Data were collected from sources including uniform crime reports, national crime surveys, and the U.S. Census. In an effort to obtain newspaper crime data, Liska and Baccaglini (1990)

conducted a content analysis of newspapers in the 26 cities and found that homicide stories had the most influential impact on fear of crime. Further, local crime stories had a positive effect on fear of crime as opposed to non-local stories that had a negative effect, suggesting that in comparison to one's own city, crime occurrences in other cities tend to give citizens a feeling of safety, a finding consistent with Heath's (1984) research.

In a study pertaining to media crime coverage and public opinion regarding crime, Sheley and Ashkins (1981) found similarities between televised and newspaper reporting. They suggested that although televised news had very little impact on public opinion, the type and method of presentation was considered to be, more or less, a summary, and the public preferred broader and more detailed coverage concerning crime news, possibly a main reason for the lack of impact. On the other hand, newspaper coverage of crime is broader and tends to report more local crime when compared to television. Conversely, newspaper crime reporting was found to have a greater impact on public opinion that is not consistent with other research findings.

### *Crime Drama and Fear of Crime*

To examine the relationship between television crime drama viewing and authoritarian aggression structure, based on data obtained from the 1976 elections held in the United States, Reith (1999) tested both Gerbner et al.'s (1994) theory claiming that viewers who watched crime dramas had an

increased fear of victimization and Bryant and Zillmanns' (1994) theory which posited that fear of victimization motivates watching crime dramas. Reith justified the selection of these data by asserting that although numerous surveys had been conducted on time spent watching television, the 1976 election survey was the only one that included detailed information regarding respondents' crime drama viewing patterns. Although Reith's (1999) findings suggested that there is a positive relationship between frequency of viewing crime dramas and authoritarian aggression structure, a significant relationship was not found to support either Gerbner et al.'s (1994) or Bryant and Zillmann's (1994) theories between crime drama viewing and fear of crime.

Ditton, Chadee, Farrall, Gilchrist, and Bannister (2004) conducted a survey consisting of 167 respondents from Glasgow, Scotland, to determine if a relationship exists between fear of crime and media viewing. To obtain qualitative data, of the 167 subjects, 64 were also interviewed. The media consumption variable consisted of daily newspaper reading, crime television programs currently watched and earlier programs previously watched. Quantitative survey results did not indicate a significant relationship between any type of media consumption and fear of crime that were also supported by the qualitative data collected from interviews. Overall, a very weak relationship existed between media consumption and fear of crime.

### *Radio News and Fear of Crime*

In an earlier study, Chiricos, Eschholz and Gertz (1997) surveyed 2,096 adults in Florida and found a significant relationship between frequency of watching televised news and listening to radio broadcasts. However, they were unable to establish the same relationship between reading newspapers or magazines and fear of crime. Nevertheless, their survey did reveal a negative relationship between media and fear of crime among older respondents, a finding that is not consistent with fear of crime in general. According to Warr (1984), the fear of crime is commonly higher among females in terms of gender and higher still among the elderly in terms of age despite that criminal victimization represent the lowest rates among these two groups.

### *Internet News and Fear of Crime*

Internet news can be classified under the same heading as newspaper media due to most daily newspapers having online net versions. Typically, the news is more likely to be read over the Internet as opposed to purchasing an actual hard copy, and in addition, the Internet is a dynamic source when compared to traditional newspapers since the news can be updated at any time. Furthermore, current news video content is available that is associated with television broadcasts.

However, there are differences in terms of utilizing the news sources. First, the Internet requires basic computer skills, and second, individuals must

have access to the Internet which requires a PC or telephone and an online connection, or service provider. Thus, by watching television versus using the Internet, no skills are required which may, in turn, lead Internet readers to draw a different interpretation of the news. Because Internet users generally enjoy different socio-demographics and are more likely to be more educated and financially secure, the relationship between Internet news reading and fear of crime in the present research are based on these characteristics.

#### Summary

As presented Table 1, while some scholars claimed that general television viewing is positively correlated to fear of crime (Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Heath & Petraitis, 1987), others asserted that there is no significant relationship (Chiricos et al., 2000; Ditton et al., 2004; Doob & Macdonald, 1979; Dowler, 2003; Sparks & Ogles, 1990). Of particular note, Hirsch (1980) found a negative relationship between total daily television viewing and being afraid to walk alone one mile at night.



Table 1

*Summary of Literature Review*

<b>Authors</b>	<b>Dependent Variable(s)</b>	<b>Independent Variable(s)</b>	<b>Control Variable(s)</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Effects</b>
<u>Gerbner and Gross (1976)</u>	*Chances of being personally involved in violence	* Total daily viewing	*education, *gender, *age	OLS	*Positive (Cultivation differential in right direction)
<u>Doob and Macdonald (1979)</u>	*Fear of being a victim of crime.	*Total TV viewing (number of programs) *Total crime drama viewing (number of programs)	*Urban-Suburban *High-Low Crime rate	OLS	No relation
<u>Hirsch(1980)</u>	* Afraid to walk around (1 mile) at night	* Total daily viewing	*education, *gender, *age, * race	OLS	*Negative p < .05
<u>Heath and Petraitis (1987)</u>	*Fear of distant urban setting	*The TV viewing *Crime drama viewing	*education *Gender	ANOVA	*Positive p < .05
	*Fear of immediate neighborhood.				* No relation
<u>Romer Jamieson and Aday (2003)</u>	*Perception of crime risk	*Local TV news	Local police crime reports	OLS	*Positive p < .05
		*National TV news *Local Newspaper			* No relation
<u>Chiricos, Padgett and Gertz (2000)</u>	*Fear of crime	*National TV news *Local TV news	*Local crime rates *Victim experience *Perceived realism of crime news	OLS	* Positive p < .05
		*General TV viewing			* No relation
<u>Sparks and Ogles (1990)</u>	*Fear of violence	*General TV viewing	*Gender, *age, *previous victimization *city of residence	OLS	* Positive p < .05
	*Fear of crime				*No relation
<u>Ditton et al. (2004)</u>	*Fear of crime	* Newspaper * General TV viewing	*Gender *age	OLS ANOVA	*No relation
				Qualitative	*Weak relation

*(table continues)*

Table 1 (continued).

Authors	Dependent Variable(s)	Independent Variable(s)	Control Variable(s)	Method	Effects
Reith (1999)	*Fear of crime	*Crime drama viewing	*education, *Gender, *age, *income, *job prestige *employment status	OLS	*No relation
	*Authoritarian aggression structure				*Positive (for men) p < .05
Gross and Aday (2006)	* Fear of crime	*Local TV news	*personal experience *neighborhood crime rates	OLS	*No relation
Dowler (2003)	* Fear of crime	*Crime show viewing	*Socio-demographic variables *Police effectiveness *Neighborhood problems	OLS	* Positive p < .01
		*General TV viewing			*No relation
		*Newspaper as crime news source			*No relation
Heath (1984)	* Fear of crime	*Newspaper crime reports	*Gender	Content Analysis, OLS	* Positive p < .05 (for local crime news)
Liska and Baccaglioni (1990)	*Fear of crime score for cities	*The newspaper coverage of crime	*Race, *Gender, *Age *Crime rates	Content Analysis, OLS	Positive for local and initial stories p < .05 Negative for non-local and follow-up stories p < .05
Chiricos, Eschholz and Gertz (1997)	* Fear of crime	*watching television news, Local TV	*age, *gender, *race, *victim experience *other perceptions of crime,	OLS	Positive p < .05
		*listening to news on the radio			Positive p < .05
		*Reading newspapers and newsmagazines			No relation

When watching crime drama television was used as a predictor of fear of crime, Dowler (2003) and Heath and Petraitis (1987) indicated that viewing these types of productions were positively related to fear of crime whereas Doob and Macdonald (1979) and Reith (1999) found no significant relationship.

On the other hand, watching crime news that is generally categorized under national or local media was a factor which affected fear of crime on different levels. For example, while Chiricos et al. (1997, 2000) and Romer et al. (2003) found a significant relationship between local televised news and fear of crime, the same significant relationship could not be established on a national level. For example, Gross and Aday (2006) determined that fear of crime is not related to local new coverage as well as national (Romer et al., 2003) televised news events.

Finally, when newspaper and radio news were used as predictors to determine the effects on fear of crime, although Liska and Baccaglini (1990) and Heath (1984) reported a positive relationship, other researchers (Chiricos, et al., 1997; Ditton et al., 2004) concluded that a relationship could not be established.

In addition to demographic variables, researchers have also employed type of residence, official crime reports, prior victimization, and police effectiveness to control for the existing relationship between media variables and fear of crime. While the literature review is broader, the present researcher examined the basic relationship between media coverage and citizens' fear of

crime in Turkey. As previously discussed, there are various aspects of media's impact on the fear of crime, and although the subject has been approached from the perspective of television viewing and fear of crime, other operationalized mass media variables include televised news or crime drama viewing and newspaper reporting.

In terms of methodological approaches, researchers generally utilize human subjects as units of analysis in quantitative techniques and perform regression analysis to establish the relationship between media variables and fear of crime. As demonstrated in the literature review, the majority of researchers used demographic variables or actual crime reports to control regression models.

#### Research Question and Hypotheses

The main research question to be addressed in this study is "What is the relationship between media consumption and fear of crime in Istanbul, the largest city in Turkey?" To answer this primary question, the following hypotheses were created based on a review of current and previous literature.

##### *Hypotheses Related to Demographic Characteristics*

H<sub>1</sub>: Females are more likely to report more fear of crime than males in the city of Istanbul.

H<sub>2</sub>: Elderly citizens are less likely to report fear of crime than younger citizens in the city of Istanbul.

H<sub>3</sub>: More educated citizens are less likely to report fear of crime than less educated citizens in the city of Istanbul.

H<sub>4</sub>: Citizens with higher incomes are less likely to report fear of crime than citizens with low incomes in the city of Istanbul.

H<sub>5</sub>: Citizens living in urban areas are more likely to report fear of crime than citizens living in non-urban environments in the city of Istanbul.

*Hypothesis Related to General Television Consumption*

H<sub>1</sub>: Heavy television viewers are more likely to report fear of crime than light viewers in the city of Istanbul.

*Hypothesis Related to Crime Drama Consumption*

H<sub>1</sub>: Regular watching of crime dramas on television positively affects citizens' fear of crime in the city of Istanbul.

*Hypotheses Related to Crime News Consumption*

H<sub>1</sub>: The duration of time spent watching crime news on television positively affects citizens' fear of crime in the city of Istanbul.

H<sub>2</sub>: The duration of time spent reading crime news in the newspaper positively affects citizens' fear of crime in the city of Istanbul.

H<sub>3</sub>: The duration of time spent listening to crime news on the radio positively affects citizens' fear of crime in the city of Istanbul.

H<sub>4</sub>: The duration of time spent with reading crime news over the Internet negatively affects citizens' fear of crime in the city of Istanbul.

H<sub>5</sub>: Citizens using television as the primary source for crime-related news are more likely to report fear of crime than citizens using other media sources in the city of Istanbul.

## CHAPTER III

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The research is designed to determine the role that the mass media plays in relation to Turkish citizens' perceptions of fear of crime through both exploratory and explanatory research methods. Since substantial literature in Turkey is non-existent pertaining to these topical areas, this study is considered exploratory, and, by the same token, the study is explanatory in nature through its examination of the relationship between media and fear of crime.

#### Research Method

Gerbner et al.'s (1994) cultivation theory is the primary method applied to this research in determining Turkish citizen's perceptions of fear of crime as well as in the selection of variables. In addition, a variety of the most common news media sources examined by Gerbner and Gross (1976) and Gerbner et al. (1977) are utilized as independent variables.

A survey method was utilized in accordance with suggestions offered by the literature. Hagan (2006), for example, stated that survey research is one of the most common ways to collect data in the field of criminal justice. Utilizing the survey method also captures respondents' opinions, attitudes and beliefs as well their experiences (Alreck & Settle, 2004; Friedrichs, 2004). As such, in addition

to a household survey encompassing 32 cities located in Istanbul, Turkey, face-to-face interviews were conducted using close-ended questions.

### Operational Definitions of Variables

#### *Dependent Variable*

*Fear of crime:* Seven survey questions were constructed to examine and determine the greatest concerns or fears expressed by respondents regarding personal crimes consisting of (1) respondent/family sexually assaulted, (2) attacked while driving a car (3) getting mugged (4) getting beaten up with a knifed, or shot (5) getting murdered, (6) getting burglarized while at home (7) getting burglarized while no one is at home. Response categories ranging from one to four for each question relating to fear of crime included: 1=very frequently, 2=somewhat frequently, 3=seldom, and 4=never. A fear of crime index was established by scaling the seven items; therefore, the index ranged from seven to twenty-eight. Higher scores indicated a greater amount of fear while lower scores indicated a lesser amount of fear or concern.

#### *Independent Variables*

##### *Media Variables*

*Citizens' perceptions of violence on television programs:* To determine citizens' perceptions of violence aired on television programs, respondents were asked to estimate how much attention was devoted to violent crime. The response category ranged from too much, about right and very little.



*Primary source of crime news:* Respondents were asked to report their primary source of crime news including television, radio, newspapers, and the Internet.

*General television viewing:* Respondents were asked how many hours they spend viewing general television. Time spent is categorized as 0 to 30 minutes, 30 minutes to one hour, 1-2 hours, 2-4 hours, or more than 4 hours.

*News (television, newspapers, radio, the Internet):* Respondents were asked to report the time spent watching televised news, reading crime reports from a newspaper and listening to radio news. Finally, respondents were asked to report the amount of time per day spent on the Internet reading about crime-related issues. Time spent watching, listening and reading crime news from television, radio, newspapers, and the Internet was categorized as 0 to 30 minutes, 30 minutes to one hour, 1-2 hours, 2-4 hours, or more than four hours.

*Crime-drama viewing:* The last media variable is crime drama. As such, from a prepared listing of television programs, respondents were asked how many of the crime dramas they are watching or used to watch regularly. Response category ranges from none to five.

#### *Socio-democratic Measures and Control Variables*

In an attempt to ensure the actual effect that the media variables play on fear of crime, controlled socio-demographic variables were employed. Gender was categorical as male and female, the respondent's age was a continuous

variable and education was categorized under nine categories. Family income was also categorized under specific income groups based on the Turkish Lira, and neighborhood type was categorized under urban, suburb or town. Finally, marital status variable was categorized as married, single, widowed, divorced, or separated.

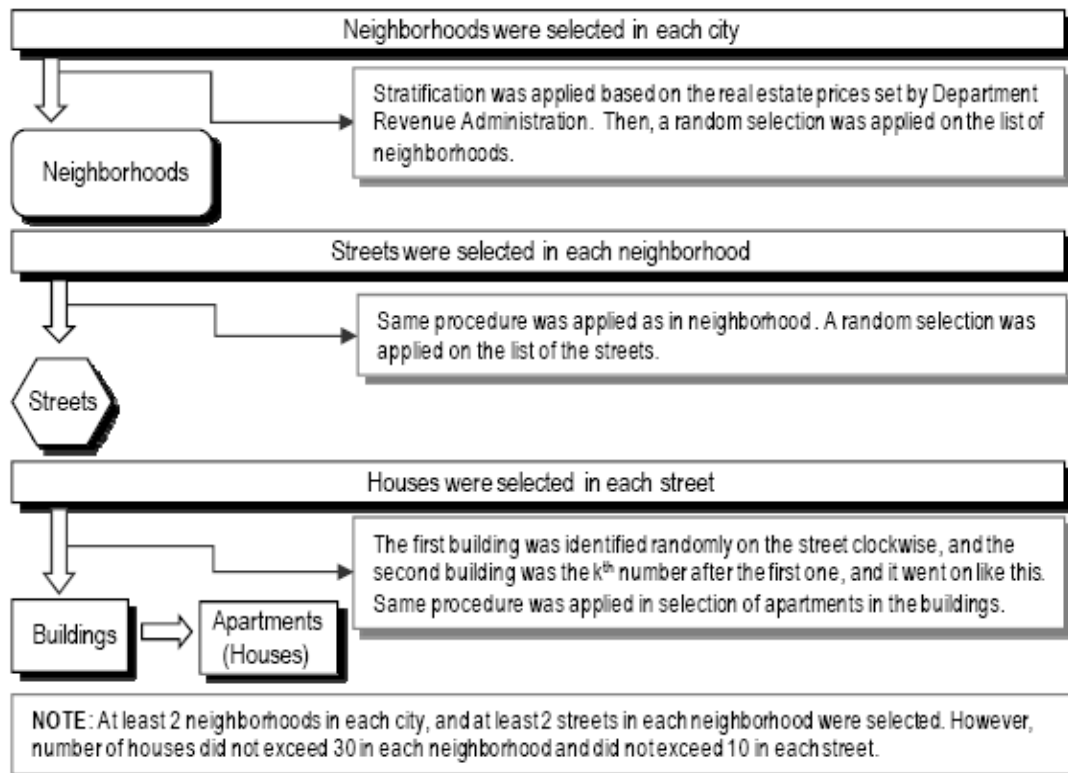
#### Population, Sample and Sampling Technique

The target population was comprised of Turkish citizens over the age of 18 who currently reside in Istanbul. Although referred to as a city in Turkey, Istanbul is considered a county in American jurisdictions since it encompasses 32 provinces. As such, Istanbul was chosen for this research because the city is Turkey's most populated "county" with a population of more than 10,000,000. In addition, its diversity and socio-cultural background was taken into consideration because Istanbul is a cosmopolitan county where people of every background reside. According to the Turkish Statistical Institute (2008), Istanbul's official population is 12,573,836, with the number of citizens over 18 years old representing approximately 9,000,000. A 95% confidence level and 4% confidence interval was used; based on these levels, an appropriate sample size should include no less than 600 subjects. In the case of this research, the sample size consisted of 545 citizens over the age of 18 years, or extremely close to the confidence level. Stratified multistage cluster sampling was employed because

this method improves the accuracy of estimation, and the total sample number was stratified into subgroups according to each city's population.

### *Sampling Procedure in Each City*

All neighborhoods in each of the 32 cities located in Istanbul County were randomly selected followed by a random selection of streets and houses situated on those designated streets. At least two neighborhoods and no less than two streets in each neighborhood were selected. On the other hand, the maximum number of selected houses did not total more than thirty in each neighborhood or more than ten on each street.



Adapted from Sever (2008)

*Figure 2.* Illustration of the sampling method.

Figure 2 illustrates the stratification process that was employed based on real estate values determined by the Department of Revenue Administration. Istanbul's total population determined the number of households to be included in each city that was calculated by weighing the city population by the total county population in proportion to the sample size. Thus, each result provided the sample size for each city. Table 2 displays the number of households from each surveyed city.

Table 2

*Sample Size in Each City*

	City	Population*	Sample Size
1.	Adalar	10,460	6
2.	Avclar	323,596	13
3.	Bağclar	719,267	28
4.	Bahçelievler	571,711	23
5.	Bakırköy	214,821	10
6.	Bayrampaşa	272,196	12
7.	Beşiktaş	191,513	10
8.	Beykoz	241,833	10
9.	Beyoğlu	247,256	10
10.	Eminönü	32,557	6

*(table continues)*

Table 2 (continued).

	City	Population*	Sample Size
11.	Esenler	517,235	21
12.	Eyüp	325,532	13
13.	Fatih	422,941	19
14.	Gaziosmanpaşa	1,013,048	41
15.	Güngören	318,545	15
16.	Kadıköy	744,670	29
17.	Kağıthane	418,229	18
18.	Kartal	541,209	21
19.	Küçükçekmece	785,392	31
20.	Maltepe	415,117	18
21.	Pendik	520,486	22
22.	Sarıyer	276,407	12
23.	Şişli	314,684	13
24.	Tuzla	165,239	10
25.	Ümraniye	897,260	35
26.	Üsküdar	582,666	23
27.	Zeytinburnu	288,743	14
28.	Büyükçekmece	688,774	30

(table continues)

Table 2 (continued).

	City	Population*	Sample Size
29.	Çatalca	89,158	6
30.	Silivri	125,364	7
31.	Sultanbeyli	272,758	13
32.	Şile	25,169	4
	Total	12,573,836	545

\**Note:* Population derived from the Turkish Statistics Institute (TUIK)

A telephone survey or telephone list (sampling frame) was not used because, first, various telephone numbers may not necessarily be registered under the household's name. Second, telephone directories are not periodically updated or residents may choose to be unlisted. Third, and finally, with the advent of cellular phones, landlines have begun to lose popularity as a result of recurring charges.

#### Administration of Survey

The survey was conducted in collaboration with one of Turkey's professional research agencies, the Ankara Social Research Center (ANAR) located in Ankara, Turkey's capital city. A majority of the pollsters responsible for contacting the selected sample households consisted of college students working as part-time employees in the agency. Participation in the survey was voluntarily, and respondents over the age of 18 completed the instrument. Respondents

were not asked for any personal identification and all responses were anonymous and kept confidential. In an effort to cover all segments of the target population, the survey was conducted on different days of the week and at different times of the day.

#### *Training of the Pollsters*

All pollsters participating in the survey were briefed about the scope of the research, sampling technique and sampling procedure. In addition, a manual was prepared and distributed providing details of the sampling selection (neighborhoods, streets, buildings, and houses or apartments).

#### *Survey Instrument*

The National Opinion Survey of Crime and Justice (Flanagan & Longmire, 1995) regarding citizens' attitudes toward crime and justice issues was adapted for this research. Flanagan and Longmire's (1995) survey consisted of attitudes toward police, neighborhood problems, courts, the death penalty, gun control, prisons, and concerns regarding crime as well as basic demographic characteristics and information related to media variables (for example, hours of television viewing, source of crime news and crime dramas watched). For the purpose of this research, their survey was modified by selecting appropriate questions and adjusting socio-cultural characteristics according to those common to Turkey.

Flanagan and Longmire's (1995) survey was tested for validity and reliability before being disseminated to citizens residing in the United States. In order to utilize and modify this survey instrument, written permission was obtained from the principal investigators.

In Part I of the survey, respondents were asked to identify their trends in relation to media consumption, and in Part II respondents were asked to report their feelings about fear of crime. Finally, Part III consisted of socio-demographic characteristics including gender, age, marital status, level of education, and income.

#### *Pilot Test*

According to Hagan (2006), to eliminate potential confusion or misunderstanding, the survey instrument should be pretested before its actual administration. Therefore, the researcher first conducted a pilot survey in Istanbul consisting of 30 non-participants for the purpose of offering constructive feedback. Importantly, because the original survey was developed for English or Spanish-speaking respondents, often translation into another language does not make sense. Accordingly, a pretest was necessary to systematically revise the language.

#### Data Analysis

In addition to media consumption characteristics, descriptive statistics were utilized in the first part of data analysis to determine the survey



respondents' demographic characteristics, including gender, age, marital status, level of education, and income.

Second, the researcher conducted bivariate statistics to examine the relationship between fear of crime and each individual independent variable. Independent sample *t* tests, ANOVA and correlations were performed to test the research hypotheses.

In the final segment of the analysis, the researcher first examined the relationship between media variables and citizens' fear of crime with an OLS model and then conducted the same OLS model by entering socio-demographic variables into the model.

CHAPTER IV  
FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Descriptive Statistics

Prior to beginning analysis, the dataset was screened for missing data which revealed that there were very few omitted, or less than three percent in each variable. Therefore, these missing data were replaced with the mode value. As shown in Table 3, out of a total of 545 respondents, 253 were female (46.4%) and 292 were male (53.6%).

Table 3

*Distribution of Gender*

		Frequency	Percentage
<i>Gender</i>	Female	253	46.4
	Male	292	53.6
	Total	545	100.0

The minimum age of respondents was 18 and the maximum was 75 with an average age of 31.4. As Table 4 shows, 206 (37.8%) respondents were within the 18-24 age bracket, 150 (27.5%) ranged in age from 25-34, 98 (18%) were 35-44, 62 (11.4%) were 45-54, 27 (5%) were between 55-64, and two (0.4%) were over 65.

Table 4

*Distribution of Age*

		Frequency	Percentage
<i>Age</i>	18-24	206	37.8
	25-34	150	27.5
	35-44	98	18.0
	45-54	62	11.4
	55-64	27	5.0
	65 and over	2	.4
	Total	545	100.0

Out of 545 respondents, 262 (48.1%) were married, 267 (49%) were single, and the remaining 16 (2.9%) were separated, widowed or divorced. (see Table 5)

Table 5

*Distribution of Marital Status*

		Frequency	Percentage
<i>Marital Status</i>	Married	262	48.1
	Never married	267	49.0
	Separated	3	.5
	Widowed	6	1.1
	Divorced	7	1.3
	Total	545	100.0

Table 6 represents the respondents' level of education. The number who completed elementary school, were illiterate or were educated but did not finish elementary school totaled 118 (21.7%), 99 (18.25%) respondents completed middle school and 253 (46.4%) graduated from high school. Seventy-two (13.2%) had a college degree but only three (.6%) had a graduate, master's or PhD degree.

Table 6

*Distribution of Education Level*

	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Education Level</i> Up to elementary school	118	21.7
Middle school	99	18.2
High school	253	46.4
College degree	72	13.2
Graduate degree	3	.6
Total	545	100.0

As depicted in Table 7, based on the Turkish Lira, 99 respondents (18.2%) reported a family monthly income ranging from of 0-750, followed by 91 (16.7%) ranging from 751-1,000, 174 (31.9%) from 1,001-1,500, 100 (18.3%) earning 1,501-2,000, 46 (8.4%) making 2001-2500, and 35 (6.4%) earning 2,501 and over.

Table 7

*Distribution of Monthly Family Income*

		Freq.	Percentage
<i>Monthly Family Income</i>	up to 750 TL	99	18.2
	751-1000 TL	91	16.7
	1001-1500 TL	174	31.9
	1501-2000 TL	100	18.3
	2001-2500 TL	46	8.4
	2501 TL or more	35	6.4
	Total	545	100.0

As Table 8 illustrates, out of a total of 545 respondents, 410 (75.2%) were residents of a city or urban area, 48 (8.8%) lived in the city's suburb, 76 (13.9%) were from a small town, and 11 (2%) resided in either a rural area village or "other."

Table 8

*Distribution of Place of Residence*

		Frequency	Percentage
<i>Residence</i>	City/urban area	410	75.2
	Suburb of the city	48	8.8
	Small town	76	13.9
	Rural area/village and others	11	2.0
	Total	545	100.0

*Media Characteristics of the Sample*

General television watching among the respondents is presented in Table 9. As shown, out of a total of 545 respondents, 42 (7.7%) watch television 30 minutes or less and 102 (18.7%) watch more than four hours per day. According to Gerbner and Gross' (1976) labeling of television viewers, 443 (81.3%) of the respondents who watch less than four hours per day are considered to be light viewers and 102 (18.7%) of the respondents who watch more than four hours per day are labeled as heavy viewers.

Table 9

*Distribution of General TV watching*

		Frequency	Percentage
General TV watching	0-30 min.	42	7.7
	30 min. -1 hr.	52	9.5
	1-2 hr.	146	26.8
	2-4 hr.	203	37.2
	4 hr. & more	102	18.7
	Total	545	100.0

The distribution of news consumption among respondents is shown in Table 10. As revealed, approximately 60% spend less than 30 minutes listening to radio news or reading newspaper or Internet news events. Simply stated,

respondents spend less time using the radio, newspaper or Internet in comparison to televised news. On the other hand, a large majority (70%) spend between 30 minutes and two hours watching news on television.

Table 10.

*Distribution of News Consumption*

	TV		Radio		Newspaper		Internet	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
<i>News</i> 0-30min.	123	22.6	463	85.0	307	56.3	333	61.7
30min.-1 hr.	180	33.0	37	6.8	131	24.0	71	13.0
1-2 hr.	189	34.7	19	3.5	89	16.3	82	15.0
2-4 hr.	49	9.0	12	2.2	15	2.8	22	4.0
4 hr. & more	4	.7	14	2.6	3	.6	37	6.8
Total	545	100.0	545	100.0	545	100.0	545	100.0

Table 11 represents the number of crime drama shows watched. Accordingly, out of a total of 545 respondents, 199 (36.5%) reported that they do not partake of any televised crime dramas. Nearly one-third (33.6%) watch at least one per week, and approximately one-fifth (20.6%) watch at least two

crime drama shows per week. Only 41 (9.3%) of the respondents watch three or more crime drama productions per week.

Table 11

*Distribution of Crime Drama Watching*

		Frequency	Percentage
Crime Drama Watching	0 (None)	199	36.5
	1	183	33.6
	2	112	20.6
	3	34	6.2
	4	16	2.9
	5 (All)	1	.2
	Total	545	100.0

As presented in Table 12, when respondents were asked to describe their perceptions of the media, 168 (30.8%) believed that too much attention is directed towards violence, and 145 (26.6%) were of the opinion that the media pays too little attention to violence. On the other hand, a majority (232), or nearly one-half (42.6%) of the respondents, agreed that appropriate media attention is dedicated to violence.



Table 12

*Distribution of Media Violence Perception*

		Number	Percentage
Media Violence	Too much	168	30.8
	About right	232	42.6
	Too little	145	26.6
	Total	545	100.0

As shown in Table 13, 476 respondents, or an overwhelming majority (87.3%), prefer televised broadcasts as their primary news source, whereas only 69 (12.7%) prefer to listen to the radio or read current events through the newspaper or over the Internet.

Table 13

*Distribution of Primary News Source*

		Frequency	Percentage
Primary News Source	TV	476	87.3
	Newspaper	29	5.3
	Radio	5	.9
	Internet	35	6.4
	Total	545	100.0

Crime types according to the fear of crime index are graphically presented in Figure 3. Clearly, the most fearful crime among respondents was reported as “being burglarized while no one is at home” with a mean score of 3.13 out of 4.00. Conversely, murder was considered to be the least fearful crime with a mean score of 2.19.

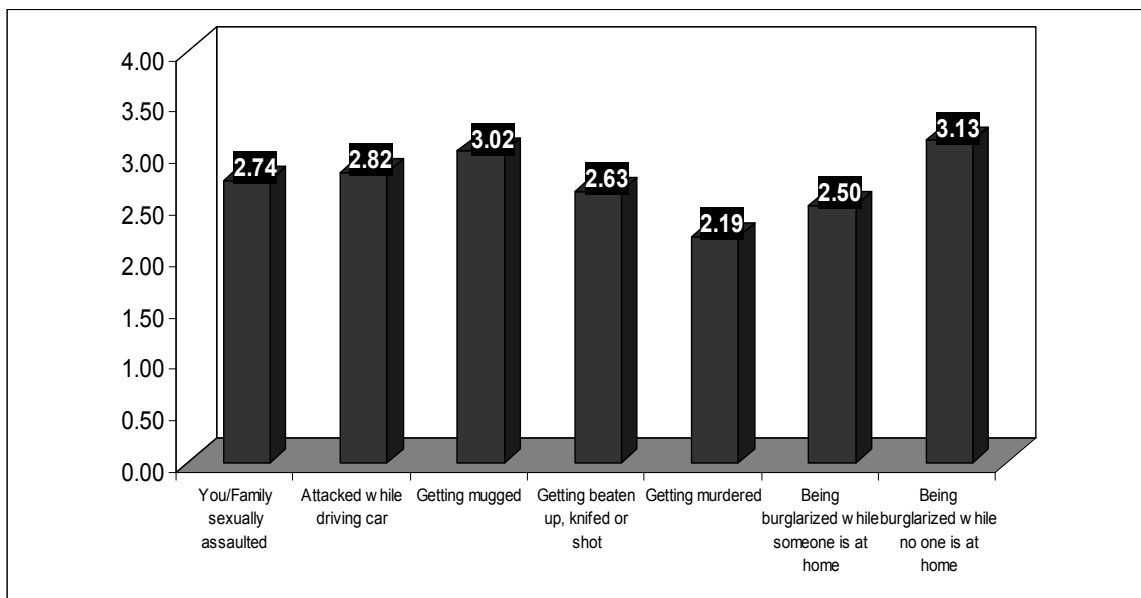


Figure 3. Distribution of crime types by fear of crime index.

### Bivariate Analyses

Prior to creating the *fear of crime* variable by computing each item in the *fear of crime index*, because the items were negatively structured (for example, 1= *very worried of being victimized* to 4= *not worried at all of being victimized*), questions were reverse coded; thus, higher scores indicate a greater amount of fear and/or worry regarding crime. Next, a reliability analysis as shown in Table 14 was employed to check the internal consistency among the seven variables

that revealed a Cronbach's alpha of .88 indicating that the scale is highly consistent.

Table 14

*Reliability Statistics*

Cronbach's Alpha	<i>N</i>
.881	7

Following computation of the seven items related to the fear of crime scale, each respondent had a score ranging from 7 to 28. As shown in Table 15, the mean score was 19.03 with a standard deviation of 6.16.

Table 15

*Fear of crime*

<i>N</i>	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
545	21	7	28	19.03	6.16

After creating the *fear of crime* variable, bivariate analyses were conducted to establish any significant difference between the group means (fear of crime scores) in each demographic variable.

*Gender vs. Fear of Crime*

An independent *t*-test was performed to determine whether a significant difference exists between males and females in terms of fear of crime levels. As

Table 16 reveals, there is a significant difference on the level of fear of crime between the two groups:  $t(543) = 8.138$ ;  $p < .001$ . On average, females have a higher fear of crime score (mean=21.21;  $SD=5.49$ ) than males (mean=17.14;  $SD=6.1$ ).

Table 16

*Gender Differences on Fear of Crime*

	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Females	253	21.21	5.49	8.138	543	.000
Males	292	17.14	6.10			

The crime types by fear of crime index are graphically illustrated in Figure 4 according to gender differences. As shown, there is a significant difference between the fear of crime scores ranging from 1 to 4 on each crime type. For example, "being burglarized while no one is home" represents the most fearful crime among men with a mean score of 2.95, whereas women typically fear "getting mugged" the most (3.39). Murder represented the least fearful crime among all respondents.

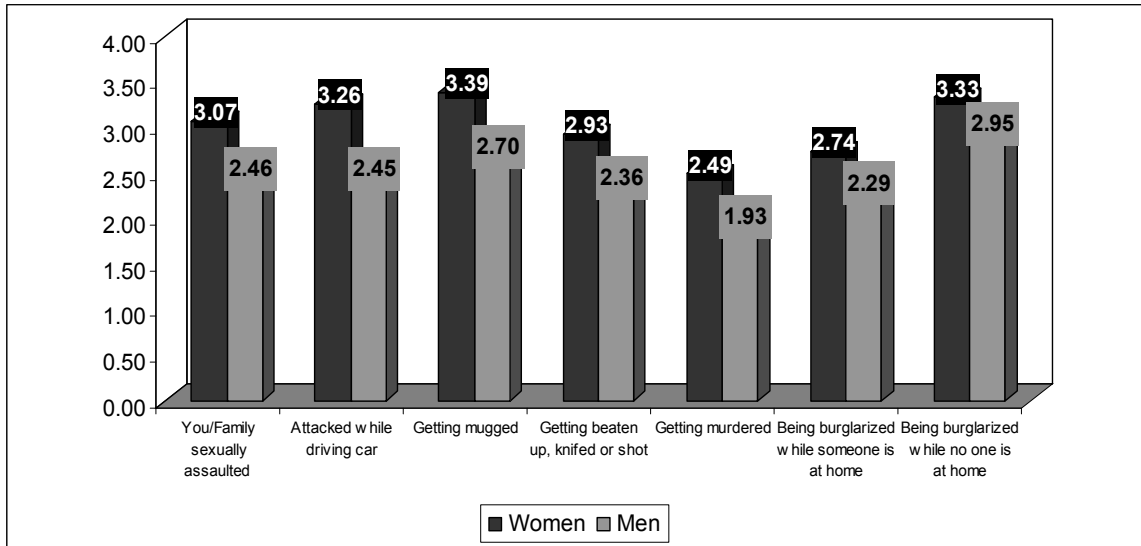


Figure 4. Crime types versus gender.

*Age vs. Fear of Crime:* As shown in Table 17, simple correlation revealed no significant relationship between age and fear of crime  $r(545) = -.028; p > .05$ .

Table 17

*Correlations Age vs. Fear of Crime*

		Age	Fear of Crime
Age	Pearson Correlation	1	-.028
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<b>.516</b>
	<i>N</i>		545

After grouping age into six categories, a one-way ANOVA analysis was conducted that also did not indicate a significant relationship between age and fear of crime ( $F=.447; df=5/544; p > .05$ ) as shown in Table 18.

Table 18

*ANOVA Fear of Crime by Age Groups*

	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>DF</i>	<i>p</i>
18-24	206	19.39	6.20	.447	5/544	.815
25-34	150	18.58	6.24			
35-44	98	18.80	6.30			
45-54	62	19.36	6.05			
55-64	27	18.63	5.42			
65 and over	2	21.50	4.95			

*Place of Residence vs. Fear of Crime*

Finally, an independent *t*-test was conducted to determine if there was a significant difference between fear of crime scores and city/urban residents versus residents of other places. As Table 19 illustrates, there were no significant differences on the fear of crime levels:  $t(543) = .814$ ;  $p > .05$ .

Table 19

*Independent Samples Test Neighborhood vs. Fear of Crime*

	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Others	135	19.40	5.99	.814	543	.416
city/urban area	410	18.90	6.28			

*Educational Level vs. Fear of Crime*

Similarly, a one-way ANOVA analysis as shown in Table 20 did not indicate a significant relationship between fear of crime and educational levels ( $F=.331$ ;  $df=4/544$ ;  $p>.05$ ).

Table 20

*ANOVA Fear of Crime and Levels of Education*

	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
up to elm. school	118	19.11	6.55	.331	4/544	.857
middle school	99	19.47	5.75			
high school	253	18.76	6.27			
college degree	72	19.14	5.74			
graduate degree	3	21.00	6.08			

*Monthly Income vs. Fear of Crime*

As Table 21 reveals, there was no significant relationship between monthly income and fear of crime as indicated by one-way ANOVA ( $F=2.435$ ;  $df=5/544$ ;  $p>.05$ ).

Table 21

*One-way ANOVA Fear of Crime and Monthly Income by Turkish Lira*

	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
up to 750 TL	99	18.98	6.03	2.435	5/544	.064
751-1000 TL	91	19.33	6.08			
1001-1500 TL	174	20.02	6.34			
1501-2000 TL	100	18.46	5.88			
2001-2500 TL	46	17.28	6.43			
2501 TL and over	35	17.31	5.58			

*Sources of Crime-related News vs. Fear of Crime*

Prior to beginning multivariate analysis, a final bivariate analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between news sources and fear of crime. As shown in Table 23, out of a total of 545 respondents, an overwhelming majority (476; 87.3%) reported that crime-related events are learned from watching television, whereas 69 (12.7%) reported other sources.

Table 22

*Distribution of News Sources*

	Frequency	Percentage
TV	476	87.3
Other sources	69	12.7
Total	545	100.0



An independent *t*-test sample revealed a significant relationship between these two variables. As Table 23 displays, there is a significant difference on the fear of crime levels between the two groups:  $t(87.78)=2,657, p<.01$ . On average, citizens who receive televised crime-related news scored a higher fear of crime (mean=19.30; *SD*=6.10) than those who receive news from other sources (mean=17.16; *SD*=6.26).

Table 23

*Independent Samples Test News Source vs. Fear of Crime*

	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Television	476	19.30	6.10	2.709	543	.007
Others	69	17.16	6.26			

*Brief Summary of Bivariate Analysis*

Bivariate analysis between demographic variables and fear of crime indicated that there was only a significant relationship between gender with females reporting a significantly higher score than males. Other demographics were not significantly related to fear of crime as summarized in Table 24.

Table 24

*Summary of Bivariate Analysis*

	<i>N</i>	Mean	Std. Dev.	Sig.Difference Between Groups
females	253	21.21	5.49	YES
males	292	17.14	6.10	
18-24	206	19.39	6.20	NO
25-34	150	18.58	6.24	
35-44	98	18.80	6.30	
45-54	62	19.36	6.05	
55-64	27	18.63	5.42	
65 and over	2	21.50	4.95	
up to elm. school	118	19.11	6.55	
middle school	99	19.47	5.75	
high school	253	18.76	6.27	
college degree	72	19.14	5.74	
graduate degree	3	21.00	6.08	

*(table continues)*

Table 24 (continued).

	<i>N</i>	Mean	Std. Dev.	Sig.Difference Between Groups
up to 750 TL	99	18.98	6.03	
751-1000 TL	91	19.33	6.08	
1001-1500 TL	174	20.02	6.34	
1501-2000 TL	100	18.46	5.88	NO
2001-2500 TL	46	17.28	6.43	
2501 TL and over	35	17.31	5.58	
Other areas	135	19.40	5.99	
city/urban area	410	18.90	6.28	NO

#### *Correlation Matrix*

Finally, as illustrated in Table 25, a correlation matrix was created to examine the relationship between each independent and dependent variable used in the OLS models. Accordingly, there is a significant relationship between fear of crime and gender ( $p < .01$ ), Internet news ( $p < .05$ ) and crime drama ( $p < .05$ ). In addition, gender is significantly related with neighborhood type ( $p < .05$ ), general television viewing ( $p < .05$ ), Internet news ( $p < .01$ ) and newspaper news ( $p < .01$ ). Age was found to be significantly related to

educational level ( $p < .01$ ), neighborhood ( $p < .01$ ) and, with the exception of newspapers, all media variables ( $p < .01$ ), whereas educational level is significantly correlated to monthly income ( $p < .01$ ), neighborhood ( $p < .01$ ), general television viewing ( $p < .01$ ), Internet news ( $p < .01$ ), and televised news events ( $p < .05$ ). Further, income is significantly correlated with neighborhood ( $p < .01$ ), newspaper and Internet news ( $p < .01$ ), while neighborhood type is significantly correlated with Internet news ( $p < .05$ ). General television viewing is significantly correlated with both televised news ( $p < .01$ ) and Internet news ( $p < .01$ ). Finally, watching televised news is significantly correlated with reading newspaper news ( $p < .01$ ) and, similarly, reading newspaper news is significantly correlated with reading news over the Internet ( $p < .01$ ).

Table 25

*Correlation Matrix*

Correlations		Fear of Crime	Gender	Age	Educ.	Income	Neighb.	Gen.TV Viewing	TV News	N.Paper News	Radio News	Internet News	Crime Drama
Fear of Crime	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)												
Gender	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	-0.33*											
Age	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	-0.03	0.03										
Educ.	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	-0.01	0.03	-	0.32*								
Income	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	-0.08	0.04	-0.03	0.24*								
Neighborhood	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	-0.03	0.09*	-	0.21*	0.15*	0.15*						
Gen. TV. Viewing	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	-0.02	-0.10*	0.18*	-0.22*	0.01	-0.03						
TV News	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	0.03	0.01	0.23*	-0.09*	-0.01	-0.01	0.58*					
Newspaper News	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	-0.04	0.12*	0.11*	0.09*	0.18*	0.02	0.06	0.25*				
Radio News	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	0.05	-0.02	0.01	-0.02	-0.04	0.03	0.00	0.08	0.06			
Internet News	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	-0.10*	0.18*	-	0.24*	0.30*	0.18*	-0.15*	-0.05	0.12*	-0.01		
Crime Drama	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	0.09*	-0.08	-	0.19*	0.01	-0.02	0.04	-0.03	-0.03	0.03	0.08	

### *Cultivation Effects*

Previous to running an OLS analysis, sub-category scores of the sample's fear of crime were compared based on heavy or light television viewers. After selecting cases for each variable, for example, examining women's cultivation effect, only women were chosen from the entire data; a *t*-test was then conducted between heavy viewers and light viewers based on their fear of crime scores. The same procedure was employed for the sample's each subcategory. As Table 26 reveals, no significant difference was found between each sub-category of heavy and light viewers.

Table 26

#### *Cultivation Effects of Sub-categories of Sample*

		Light viewers (Fear of Crime Score)	Heavy viewers (Fear of Crime Score)	Cultivation differential	Sig. (p)
Gender	Women	21.04 (N=202)	21.86 (N=51)	.82	.339
	Men	17.20 (N=241)	16.84 (N=51)	-.36	.705
Education	High-School and up	18.79 (N=283)	19.33 (N=45)	.55	.581
	Less than High School	19.24 (N=160)	19.37 (N=57)	.13	.891
Income	Less than 1500YTL	19.53 (N=296)	19.72 (N=68)	.19	.820
	More than 1500 YTL	17.78 (N=147)	18.62 (N=34)	.90	.463
Type of	City/urban	18.81 (N=336)	19.34 (N=74)	.53	.506
Neighborhood	Others	19.40 (N=107)	19.39 (N=28)	-.01	.994
Age	18-34	18.92 (N=306)	19.80 (N=50)	.88	.357
	35 and over	19.01 (N=137)	18.92 (N=52)	.09	.932

## Multivariate Analyses

Standard multiple regression analysis (OLS) was conducted to determine the accuracy of eleven independent variables (IV's) that predict citizens' fear of crime levels. The purpose of multiple regression is to mode or group variables that best predict the dependent variable (DV), fear of crime. The procedure examined the significance of each IV as well as the entire model that contributed to predicting the DV. Thus, the research hypotheses were tested.

### *Dependent Variable*

Fear of crime, a continuous-metric variable was created by using the fear of crime scale.

### *Independent Variables*

1. Gender was included in the analysis as a dichotomous variable with 0=female and 1=male).
2. Age was included in the analysis as a continuous-metric variable.
3. Although level of education represents an ordinal variable, it was included in the regression due to a sequential increase between intervals.
4. Although an ordinal variable, monthly income was also included in the regression due to a sequential increase between intervals.
5. Place of residence is a dichotomous variable with 0=others and 1=city/urban residents.

6. Time spent for general television viewing was included in the analysis as a dichotomous variable with 0=light viewers and 1=heavy viewers.

7. Time spent watching televised news was included in the regression due to a sequential increase between intervals.

8. Time spent reading the newspaper was included in the regression due to a sequential increase between intervals.

9. Time spent listening to radio news was included in the regression due to a sequential increase between intervals.

10. Time spent gathering news over the Internet was included in the regression due to a sequential increase between intervals.

11. Watching crime dramas was included in the regression due to a sequential increase between intervals.

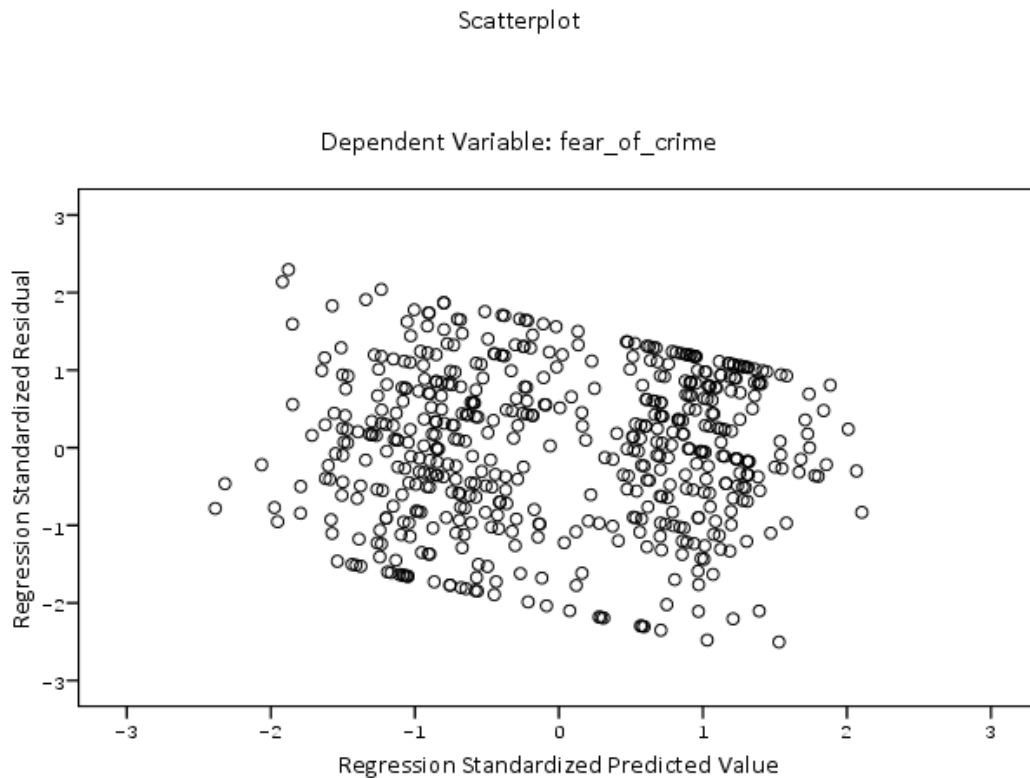
Prior to conducting multiple regressions, the data were screened for outliers that were identified by calculating Mahalanobis distance in a preliminary regression procedure. An exploration was then conducted on the newly generated Mahalanobis variable to determine which cases exceeded the chi-square criteria. Using a chi-square table, the critical value was set at  $p < .001$  with  $df = 11$ , or 37.697. Five cases exceeded this critical value; they were deleted from the analysis.

Assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity should be tested as assumptions of multiple regressions. The routine approach involves analysis of



bivariate scatter plots for linearity, Q-Q Plots, values of skewness and kurtosis for normality, and Box's M Test for homoscedasticity. As diagrammed in Figure 5, Mertler and Vannatta (2005) suggested an alternative approach by examining the Regression Standard Residuals vs. Regression Standardized Predicted Values.

According to Mertler and Vannatta (2005), "when assumptions are not met, residuals may be clustered on the top or bottom of the plot (non-normality), may be curved (non-linearity) or may be clustered on the right or left side (heteroscedasticity)" (p. 55).



*Figure 5.* Regression standard residuals vs. regression standardized predicted values.

Referring to Figure 5, the values are fairly spread by creating a rectangular shape concentrated in the center that is acceptable. Thus, normality, linearity and homoscedasticity are assumed to be met for the analyses. Review of the tolerance statistics and variance inflation factor (VIF) in the coefficients table indicates that there is no problem of multicollinearity since all tolerance statistics are greater than .1 and VIF values equal less than ten.

After handling all assumptions, multiple regressions (OLS) were conducted by creating two models. The first examines the relationship between the media variables and fear of crime. In the second model, socio-demographic variables are introduced to the first model to control for media variables. Both the model and ANOVA summaries indicated that the model containing six independent media variables significantly predict citizens' fear of crime levels, although weak,  $R^2=.024$ ,  $R^2_{adj}=.013$ ,  $F(6, 544) = 2.171$ ,  $p<.05$ . As indicated by  $R^2$ , the amount of variance in the dependent variable accounted for by media variables is 2.4%. In other words, this model accounted for only 2.4% of variance in citizens' fear of crime levels.

Regression coefficients presented in Table 27 reveal that only two variables significantly contributed to the model— amount of time consumed for reading news over the Internet and number of crime dramas watched. The amount of time consumed for reading news over the Internet is negatively related with fear of crime [ $B = -.526$  ( $t = -2.425$ )  $p < .05$ ], and the number of

crime dramas watched by respondents is positively related to fear of crime [ $B=.544$  ( $t=2.166$ )  $p<.05$ ]. There is no statistically significant relationship between other media variables and fear of crime.

Table 27

*Regression Coefficients (Media Variables & Fear of Crime)*

	<i>B</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Light viewers	.075	.005	.100	.921
Televised news	.178	.027	.558	.577
Newspaper news	-.207	-.030	-.665	.506
Radio news	.365	.050	1.173	.241
Internet news	-.526	-.105	-2.425	.016*
Crime drama	.544	.093	2.166	.031*

\* $p<.05$

In the second model, the relationship between media variables and fear of crime was controlled by the sample's socio-demographic characteristics. The model and ANOVA summaries indicated that the model containing six independent media variables and five socio-demographic control variables significantly predicted citizens' fear of crime levels, although weak,  $R^2=.123$ ,  $R^2_{adj}=.105$ ,  $F(11, 544)=6.779$ ,  $p<.001$ . As indicated by  $R^2$ , the amount of variance in the dependent variable accounted for by media variables was 12.3%.

In other words, this model accounted for only 12.3% of variance in citizens' fear of crime levels.

Table 28

*Regression Coefficients (Model 2)*

	<i>B</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
General TV viewing (light viewers)	.061	.004	.085	.933
TV news	.194	.030	.632	.528
Newspaper news	.096	.014	.315	.753
Radio news	.297	.041	1.001	.317
Internet news	-.262	-.052	-1.173	.241
Crime drama	.344	.059	1.406	.160
Gender (female)	-3.861	-.313	-7.475	.000
Age	-.012	-.023	-.505	.614
Education	.148	.024	.519	.604
Neighborhood (non- urban)	-.047	-.003	-.078	.938
Monthly income	-.293	-.067	-1.554	.121

Regression coefficients revealed that only one variable—being female—which significantly contributed to the model [ $B = -3.861$  ( $t = -7.475$ )  $p <$

.001] is negatively related with fear of crime. As shown in Table 28, there is no statistically significant relationship between other media variables and fear of crime, including Internet news and crime drama, that do not show a significant relationship after the model is controlled with socio-demographic variables.

Based on the above table of coefficients, the following equation is generated by using B weights:

$$Y = B_0 + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + \dots + B_kX_k$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Fear of crime} = & 20.773 - 3.861X_{\text{Gender}} - .012X_{\text{Age}} + .148X_{\text{Education}} - .293X_{\text{Income}} - \\ & .047X_{\text{Neighborhood}} + .061X_{\text{General TV view}} + .194X_{\text{TV news}} + .096X_{\text{Newspaper}} + .297X_{\text{Radio}} - \\ & .262X_{\text{Internet}} + .344X_{\text{CrimeDrama}} \end{aligned}$$

According to above results, following hypothesis table was created. (See Table 29)

Table 29

*Hypotheses Testing Table*

Hypothesis		Direction with fear	Accepted or Rejected	Sig. ( <i>p</i> )
Socio-Demographic Variables	Females	Positive	Accepted*	.000
	Elderly	Negative	Rejected	.815
	Educated	Negative	Rejected	.857
	High-Income	Negative	Rejected	.064
	Urban Residents	Positive	Rejected	.416
Primary news source as TV		Positive	Accepted*	.007
Heavy Viewers		Positive	Rejected	.933
Crime Drama		Positive	Rejected	.160
Time spent on news	TV news	Positive	Rejected	.528
	Newspaper news	Positive	Rejected	.753
	Radio news	Positive	Rejected	.317
	Internet news	Negative	Rejected	.241

\* $p < .01$

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study examined the media effects on fear of crime experienced by respondents in Istanbul, Turkey. Analyses were conducted to determine the demographic characteristics that influence the likelihood of reporting fear of crime. A countywide household sample was extracted from the total population of Istanbul by employing a stratified multi-stage cluster sampling technique.

To answer the primary research question, "What is the relationship between media consumption and fear of crime in Istanbul, the largest city in Turkey?" eleven hypotheses were created based on current and previous literature, and each was tested step-by step.

A fear of crime index was created by using the most common crimes against individuals and property that were taken from a previous survey and partially replicated. Among the crime types, respondents indicated that they are most fearful of a burglary occurring while no one is home. The reason for this fear factor might possibly be explained by Turkey's increasing number of crimes committed towards individuals and properties each year as exemplified by one house per every six minutes was burglarized during 2006 alone. On the other hand, murder was found to be the least fearful crime among respondents that may be partially due to Turkey's gun control policy that strictly prohibits the

carrying or possession of firearms except under certain circumstances.

Surprisingly, muggings rather than sexual assaults were the most fearful crime among women. Although women were expected to be the most fearful of sexual assaults, these crimes ranked number four among the seven crime types. On the other hand, because women generally carry handbags, added to the practical impossibility for a woman to apprehend a thief, muggings are easier to accomplish when compared with men.

In terms of Turkey's media consumption trends, a majority of the citizens reported that they watch one to four hours of television on an average day. Although most respondents use television as a media news source, other resources, though available, are less common. Individuals getting news from TV significantly report higher fear of crime scores than those getting news from other sources. This can be explained by analyzing Information seeking behavior of individuals under Information Sciences. Dervin and Nilan (1986) claimed that users' behaviors are not always an outcome involving a simple rational calculation, or individuals do not always choose the optimal information sources. Since TV is much more available as a news source to the individuals and it does not require any kind of skills to retrieve the information, it is more common among respondents. Thus, individuals watching TV news report more fear than those getting news from other sources.



## Socio-demographic Variables and Fear of Crime

Regarding the independent effects of socio-demographic variables on fear of crime, the findings were consistent with previous literature to a certain degree. Only gender was found to be significantly related with fear thereby supporting the research hypothesis. In addition, consistent with previous research findings (Chiricos et al., 2000; Dowler, 2003; Ferraro, 1995; Lee, 2007; Warr, 1984), women are more likely to report fear of crime than men which is thought to be explained based on their assumed physical weakness and defenselessness.

Although the direction of the hypotheses related to other demographic variables was supported, the findings were not statistically significant. For example, according to previous researchers (Evans, 1995; Ferraro, 1995; Moore & Spherd, 2007), elderly citizens were hypothesized to be less likely to report fear. Although findings indicated a negative correlation between age and fear, the relationship was not statistically supported. Despite that respondents' ages were grouped under six categories, a *t*-test did not reveal any significant difference between age groups.

Type of neighborhood was another fear of crime indicator used as a demographic variable. While citizens residing in urban areas and cities were expected to be more likely to report fear of crime, this hypothesis was also rejected. Moreover, citizens living in urban areas reported less fear than others

that can perhaps be explained due to factors including low crime rates in non-urban environments or type of buildings in which citizens reside. For example, in urban Turkish areas, citizens generally choose to live in an apartment whereas non-urban residents typically live in houses. Thus, for a criminal to escape from a non-urban environment is more difficult compared to crowded places which might be another factor accounting for less fear of crime.

Additionally, the findings did not support the hypothesis related to socioeconomic variables and fear of crime. Based on the literature, a reverse correlation was expected; however, there was not a significant positive relationship between either education or monthly income and fear of crime. Although education was grouped under five categories, a *t*-test did not reveal a significant difference between groups, and when the same *t*-test was conducted to determine the difference between groups in relation to six monthly income levels, the findings also did not reveal a significant difference for socio-economic subgroups. Therefore, findings regarding socioeconomic variables and fear of crime were consistent with previous research (Baumer, 1978; Clemente & Kleinman, 1977). Given that higher incomes can be advantageous in improved protection that may lead to less fear of crime, individuals earning higher incomes may also be more prone to experience property crimes. On the other hand, because criminals are typically aware of an individual's income status when they plan a home burglary, if a person has no valuable possessions, the threat of

being burglarized is not a concern which might, perhaps, explain the differences between low fear of crime among the lesser economically privileged.

#### Cultivation Effects

As discussed in Chapter II, cultivation analysis begins with simple cross-tabulations between an individual's televised media consumption characterized by heavy and light viewers with the percentage difference between two groups labeled as "cultivation differential." In this research, after the subgroups consisting of females, males, lower - high income individuals, urban citizens, and non-urban citizens were categorized by heavy and light viewers; independent sample *t*-tests were conducted to determine the mean difference between fear of crime scores. Because the findings did not reveal any significant differences, one can conclude that television per se does not cultivate fear in the city of Istanbul, and the findings do not support Gerbner and Gross' (1976) cultivation differential on the population's subgroups. However, because Gerbner et al.'s (1974, 1976, 1997) studies were conducted in the United States, the content of televised programs would be different, and perhaps less violent, than in Turkey. As another explanation, citizens residing in Istanbul would be less affected by the "mean world syndrome," an idea that depicts the world as a worse place than it actually is in reality.

## Media and Fear of Crime

The second part of the present research examined the media effects in relation to fear of crime. After conducting OLS statistics pertaining to media variables, the findings indicated that although some, namely Internet news reading and televised crime drama viewing, were significantly related to fear of crime, the model was not controlled by demographic variables. Nevertheless, watching crime dramas and fear of crime were moderately consistent with the literature (Dowler, 2003; Heath & Petraitis, 1987); however, this relationship could be spurious without controlling for other variables.

Although time consumed in reading news events over the Internet was found to be significantly related to fear of crime, as expected, the relation was negative due to the basic abilities and skills required in accessing the Internet. Because the technology is related to Turkey's educational and income levels, the expected negative hypothesized relationship might possibly be spurious since only media variables were included in the first model.

Due to concerns regarding erroneous and interaction effects of other variables, the model controlled for the sample's socio-demographic characteristics. According to Hirsch (1980) and Wober and Gunter (1982), the cultivation effect disappears after demographic controls are simultaneously introduced into the analyses. Further, the majority of research conducted on the effects of media on fear of crime employed demographics to control the OLS

models (Chiricos et al., 1997; Ditton et al., 2004; Dowler, 2003; Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Heath, 1984; Heath & Petraitis, 1987; Hirschs, 1980; Liska & Baccaglini, 1990; Reith, 1999; Sparks & Ogles, 1990).

After controlling the OLS model with the sample's socio-demographics, the two significant relationships, crime drama viewing and Internet news, disappeared. Out of six media variables and five control variables, only gender was found to be significantly related to fear of crime.

Although not statistically significant, heavy television viewers were found to be less likely to report fear in the city of Istanbul; thus, the hypothesis was rejected. Although this is contradictory to Gerbner et al.'s (1994) cultivation theory, Hirschs (1980) found the same negative relation. Therefore, individuals in Turkey might be either less affected by television violence or positively affected. In other words, television could possibly play a different role in Turkey in terms of giving messages, or, accordingly, the public may learn ways to protect themselves against watching televised crime dramas which, in turn, would lead to less fear.

The findings also revealed no support for the hypotheses that the amount of time consumed in watching crime news is positively related to fear. Although findings indicated a positive relationship, they were not statistically significant. Accordingly, while some scholars found televised news to be related to fear of crime only at the local level (Chiricos et al., 1997, 2000; Romer et al., 2003),

others (Gross & Aday, 2006) did not find any relationship which could have possibly been attributed to how the variable was operationalized. Because the present research did not address local televised crime events due to the scarcity of local television networks in Turkey, as a result, national crime news may not affect the levels of fear of crime due to the isolated occurrence from the respondents' own neighborhoods. According to Heath and Petraitis (1987), the immediate and non-immediate environments of crime have different effects on citizens. If, for example, a crime is exposed through televised news that occurred in a remote environment, citizens do not generally feel fear. Another factor might be the portrayal of televised news reporting pertaining to citizens' fear of crime. For example, Chiricos et al. (2000) maintained that numerous people find media news as irrelevant since the reports are typically far from their everyday experiences. Similarly, Schudson (1989) pointed out that "the media report spectacular crimes which people rarely encounter and the crimes reported rarely take place in the neighborhoods where most of the media audience live" (pp. 168-169).

In addition, the findings regarding newspaper crime events and fear of crime did not support the hypothesis stating that the duration of time spent reading about accounts of crime positively affects citizens' fear of crime in the city of Istanbul. Although not statistically significant, the direction of this relationship was positive and to some extent consistent with previous findings of

Chiricos et al. (1997) and Ditton et al. (2004) who were also unable to establish a relationship between newspaper reporting of offenses and fear of crime. Like television networks, local newspapers are also uncommon in Turkey and, therefore, reading national crime news might have very little effect on citizens' fear of crime. Heath's (1984) findings supported this explanation by suggesting that if the crime occurs near to an individual's surroundings, the level of fear increases.

In regard to crime events heard over the radio, the findings did not support the hypothesis. Although not statistically significant, a positive relation between radio news and fear of crime was found that can be explained by the public's perception of radio. In Turkey, people generally listen to music on their automobile radios where a majority of the news broadcasts are not detailed but very general in nature giving a limited portrayal of crime. Secondly, despite the number of local radio broadcasts, people tend to prefer listening to national radio stations, and even if they listen to crime news, the effect is limited due to the non-immediate environment.

Although news accessed over the Internet was expected to be negatively related to fear of crime, it was not statistically significant at any level; hence, the hypothesis was rejected. Retrieving news from the Internet can be considered no different as receiving current events from a newspaper or from television because both are readily available through the Internet, and thus, a person is

less likely to purchase a newspaper. In the present research, consistent with the Internet, televised as well as printed news was not found to be related with fear.

Finally, the findings did not reveal a significant relationship between viewing crime dramas and fear of crime after controlling for socio-demographic variables. Although the first model showed a significant relationship, it may be a spurious one consistent with Doob and Macdonald (1979) and Reith (1999) due to the content and portrayal of crime drama in Turkey. For example, with the exception of murder, crime dramas do not depict the offenses that were used in the fear of crime index in this research. Further, murder was found to be the least fearful crime among both men and women in Istanbul.

Consistent with the literature, overall findings did not reveal a significant relationship between media consumption and fear of crime in the city of Istanbul, Turkey. Similarly, Gerbner et al.'s (1994) theory of cultivation was not supported by a majority studies in the field. For example, after controlling the media variables with independent factors consisting of namely the sample's demographic characteristics, prior victimization or official crime reports, researchers failed to establish a relationship with fear of crime.

#### Limitations

The limitations pertaining to this research can be considered as typical of public perception and victimization surveys depending on a respondent's personal experiences that might skew responses to survey inquiries. As Hagan



(2006) asserted, the possible weaknesses of victimization surveys including false reporting, mistaken reporting, poor memory, telescoping, and over or under reporting might be considered as another limitation.

Although every effort was taken in ensure increased generalizabilty of the findings, sampling bias may have posed an issue. For instance, due to financial constraints, the survey was carried out in Istanbul rather than the whole country of Turkey; therefore, the outcomes were applicable only to a sample of Istanbul's population.

Another limitation pertained to the operationalization of media variables, namely crime news watching. Determining the precise amount of time spent watching crime news versus general news is not practical or possible since the proportion differs according to the particular television station. Likewise, Internet news reading is also problematic given that the technology allows users to read, listen and watch any content at their own pace. Thus, respondents may have been confused or mistaken when they were asked to report the time consumed in reading crime events over the Internet.

Not controlling the sample for prior victimization is another possible limitation. For example, if respondents had experienced previous encounters involving crime, the fear factor would most likely be affected. On the other hand, because the findings did not reveal any significant effect of media on fear of crime, this limitation can be accepted.

### Recommendations for Future Research

Studying the effects of media on fear of crime is a very new topical area in Turkey, with this research representing the first. However, because the population did not encompass a nationwide sample, to obtain more generalized results, a countrywide household survey is recommended. In addition, the Internet as a media variable should be analyzed by addressing every aspect of its wide ranging possibilities. Although previous research has not focused appropriate attention to the Internet as a media source, innovative developments on rapid changing technology will, most probably, shift priorities in terms of accessing information.

Finally, to improve the findings, future researchers are encouraged to focus on only one primary media source and use open ended questions that would be more effective in conducting an in-depth content analysis before collecting data that will, in turn, increase the strength and validity of the survey questions.

### Closing Remarks

In the United States, the mass media, namely television, and its effects on fear of crime has developed as an important area of research. Compared to other countries, however, Turkey's television history is relatively new. For example, its first national channels did not exist until 1990. Consequently, nearly 20 years later, a variety of televised choices are available for the Turkish people to watch

in the privacy of their own homes. Thus, as a vehicle for delivering information and to entertain, implications have lead researchers to question whether the media creates more harm than good concerning effects on the public's fear of crime. For example, one might turn on any evening news broadcast and be overwhelmed with violence and stories of unsuspecting citizens victimized in their own communities notwithstanding television shows with plots dedicated to the depiction of criminal activities. Therefore, should Turkish citizens be fearful of what the mass media conveys and be cautious of how events are presented? With this question in mind, one may be lead to speculate if the portrayal of crime in the mass media affects the public's perception of safety and danger in Turkey.

Citizens' fear of crime not only has an impact on the public at large but may influence policy makers into initiating laws that affect crime control and prevention. Thus, as one effort to create public awareness among Turkish citizens, this research explored the effects of mass media on citizens' fear of crime in Istanbul and is unique in that there has been no previous effort to research this specific area of concern in Turkey. Ultimately, the study will bring more awareness to the effects that the media plays on fear of crime in Turkey as well as create prevention measures to be seriously addressed in public schools, civic organizations, and communities.

APPENDIX A

IRB APPROVAL FOR THE SURVEY



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OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
Office of Research Services

February 9, 2009

Erhan Erdonmez  
School of Library and Information Sciences  
University of North Texas

RE: Human Subjects Application No. 09008

Dear Mr. Erdonmez:

In accordance with 45 CFR Part 46 Section 46.101, your study titled "Media, Fear of Crime and Police in Turkey: The Effect of Media on Citizens' Fear of Crime and Citizens' Attitudes toward Police" has been determined to qualify for an exemption from further review by the UNT Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Enclosed is the consent document with stamped IRB approval. Please copy and **use this form only** for your study subjects.

No changes may be made to your study's procedures or forms without prior written approval from the UNT IRB. Please contact Shelia Bourns, Research Compliance Administrator, ext. 3940, if you wish to make any such changes.

Sincerely,

Patricia L. Kaminski, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor  
Chair, Institutional Review Board

PK:sb

CC: Dr. Jiangping Chen

APPENDIX B  
PERMISSIONS FOR THE SURVEY

**From:** "Timothy Flanagan" <tflanagan@framingham.edu>  
**To:** "ERHAN ERDONMEZ" <erhanerdonmez@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, December 12, 2008 8:36 AM  
**Subject:** RE: Permission for "1995 National Opinion Survey of Crime and Justice"

Erhan - you have my permission. Please contact Prof. Dennis Longmire of Sam Houston State also.....TJF

-----Original Message-----

From: ERHAN ERDONMEZ [mailto:erhanerdonmez@gmail.com]  
Sent: Friday, December 12, 2008 12:19 AM  
To: [president@frc.mass.edu](mailto:president@frc.mass.edu)  
Subject: Permission for "1995 National Opinion Survey of Crime and Justice"

Dear Sir,

My name is Erhan Erdonmez. I am a Ph.D. student at University of North Texas in Denton, Texas.

Originally I'm from Turkey and have worked with Turkish National Police more than 10 years.

The reason I'm writing this e-mail is asking your permission to use the "survey instrument" that you used for "1995 National Opinion Survey of Crime and Justice".

As a part of my dissertation, I want to apply the same survey instrument in Turkey with some modifications since this is a new research area in my country.

May I have your permission to use the same survey instrument as a part of my dissertation?

Sincerely,

Erhan Erdonmez  
Ph.D. Candidate,  
School of Library and Information Sciences  
University of North Texas  
Denton, TX 76210  
Home: (940) 595-1361

**From:** "Dennis Longmire" <dennislongmire@suddenlink.net>  
**To:** "erhan erdonmez" <erhanerdonmez@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 24, 2008 4:13 PM  
**Subject:** Re: Permission for "1995 National Opinion Survey of Crime and Justice"

Erhan,  
Thanks for the request. You have my permission to use any of the questions included in that survey. Please let me know if I may be of any further assistance.

Peace,  
Dennis

11/24/08 8:43 AMerhan erdonmez wrote:

Dear Sir,  
My name is Erhan Erdonmez. I am a Ph.D. student at University of North Texas in Denton, Texas.  
Originally I'm from Turkey and have worked with Turkish National Police more than 10 years.  
The reason I'm writing this e-mail is asking your permission to use the "survey instrument" that you used for "1995 National Opinion Survey of Crime and Justice".  
As a part of my dissertation, I want to apply the same survey instrument in Turkey with some modifications since this is a new research area in my country.  
May I have your permission to use the same survey instrument as a part of my dissertation?  
Sincerely,

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