



E9 Crime Fear Comparison Based on Residence Selection: Gated Communities vs. Apartments

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The goal of this presentation is to focus on the prevention of types of crime that are based on routine activities due to changes in life styles as a result of industrialization and urbanization movements.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by focusing on the importance of private security in crime prevention in neighborhoods.

Crime has been one of the major problems of urban life. Hence, fear of crime and suspicion of urban places are among the costs of the increasing crime rate. This fear has been the driving force in the rise of private security businesses. The basic services that gated communities' private security task force supply are access controls, vehicle and/or foot patrol, extra lightening in dark corners, Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) screening of the site and delivering briefs, and place signals at the site for emergency situations.

This research focuses on the fear of crime of people who live in different types of residences in urban areas. The sample group of the research consisted of individuals 17 to 79 years of age who reside in Istanbul. The purpose of the study was to make a comparison between the housing priorities of residents who choose to live in gated communities and those who choose to live in downtown apartments with no security personnel and/or agents. The first sample group of 100 people (78 male, 22 female; 17 to 79 years of age) was randomly chosen from a gated community where approximately 1,600 people are living in 420 households. The comparison group consisted of 100 people (51 male, 49 female; 17 to 76 years of age) who were randomly chosen from people living in non-secured apartments in 12 different neighborhoods of Istanbul.

The method used in this study, in order to measure the level of crime fear of attendants is similar to Ferraro's The Fear of Crime Scale.¹ The standard questionnaire consisted of 22 open-ended questions, divided into four different categories and grading was based on the four grade Likert scale.

The questionnaire used in this study was pre-tested on ten randomly chosen respondents and no cultural biases were observed. The questionnaires were distributed to all participants after delivering an introductory explanatory presentation and were collected one week later. The purpose of the seven-day time span was to provide adequate time and privacy to the participants to answer the questions carefully and comfortably.

The obtained data were quantitatively analyzed with SPSS. A standard *t*-test was used to analyze the data. The results obtained were scientifically impressive. The study reveals that the crime fear of the residents who live in gated communities is significantly lower than those who live in unsecured apartments. The research also reveals that the need for security is the third-most important criteria in home selection for people who live in gated communities. Surprisingly, building supportive and lasting neighborhood relations is significantly higher among these residents. Also, a significantly higher majority of unsecured apartment residents claimed that the main crime prevention method is to live in secured sites.

Reference(s):

- ¹. Ferraro K.F. (1995). Fear of crime: Interpreting victimization risk. New York: SUNY Press.

Crime Fear, Crime Prevention, Private Security