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MEDIA CONSUMPTION AND FEAR OF CRIME (QUALITY APPROACH)

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ABSTRACT:

As one of the social determinants, people in the media community provide mechanisms to through which we present our living experience in society and development of social understanding happens in many aspects through the media. This issue is true about a relatively unknown phenomenon such as crime and delinquency and criminal behavior. This article by using a combination method and the use of analytical and qualitative approaches examine the relationship between media consumption and the fear of citizens from crime in the crime-prone areas in Tehran. The results of this study show that the respondents' view and understanding of the mechanisms of social commentary such as media are formed and they exclusively obey direct personal experiences.80% of the respondents also stated that the mass media of news and pictures affect them and others in both dimensions.

Keywords: Fear of crime, media, media consumption

INTRODUCTION

The issue:

Crime and media are the issues that attracted much attention independently and sometimes in conflict with each other in many countries in various fields. Most people consider the crime as an important social issue and the feeling of being unsafe on the streets, particularly in urban areas are reported (Maubi and Alklyt, 1994). Zandar (2007) believes that fear of crime is much higher than the victimization of people and this has caused their fear of crime as a problem in society. Many factors are involved in the process, but in the age of information and

communication, media plays an important role as the main source of many cases.

People are not directly affected by crime in their community and even they are less often associated with judicial systems and police. Accordingly, understanding and reception of crime and fear of crime is influenced by media representations. In other words, it is the mass media. In other words, citizens' exposure to criminal behavior, crime, and victimization and the formation of cultural context don't cause to the understanding of these concerns arising from direct experience, but they are originated from the mediated portrayals. Few people may appear in court or police stations in each week, but millions of people face with various criminal plans with the subject of crime in various media.

In addition to lack of relative personal experience of crime, delinquency, judicial issues, there are less alternative sources of information about crime, and judicial punitive systems for the citizens. Therefore, most of people do not have enough knowledge about the crime and its effects, and something they know about the crime and fear of that is a media image and even in most of the cases it is real.

So, the role of media in fear of committing the crime among the people in society is the aim of this research. This research tries to study the effects that the media clarify the people's understanding of the crime especially the fear of committing the crime.

The aim of this research is to study this important relationship (media and crime) in modern society especially in crime-prone areas in Tehran.

It is clear that media affects the public understanding about the fear of committing the crime and violence of victims and offenders, and the victimization process. The role of media in criminology and media communications and studies is more concerned and has a long history. Even some researchers believe that media and crime should be studied simultaneously because they are connected with each other in a compulsory conditions (sourt, 2007:2).

Comparing to other countries, Iran has a radio and television organization with several television and radio networks as the only national media system. Annually, by the development of digital networks, the other networks are added. Private media do not allow media activity; the satellite channels are available via the receiver. Currently, a variety of TV channels are available for Iranians, they can watch different channels in their homes. In addition to television, there are print and online newspapers that the readers can read the news on various

topics. Also, for a country that has the most network generation (youth) and the most of the Internet users are in the Middle East, and the younger generation is familiar with cyberspace, they know how to work with them, Internet can play a major role in the occurrence and prevention of crime. Thus, media presents a new network of safe entertainment and information, and in other side it has several outcomes and effects on the behavioral personal and public activities in some cases such as crime.

However, in Iran media has developed in all fields in various fields and has a special space of media consumption, but the effect of media on daily life directly or indirectly is meaningful, and if it is related to the media consumption and crime in Iran, this issue is more important and valuable. This research studies the effects of the media on the citizens' understandings of fear of committing the crime. Therefore, the main question is: "How media affects the citizens' fear of committing the crime in crime-prone areas in Tehran?

The results of research by providing the special and scientific approach are helpful for media organizations in selecting policy based on the negative effects.

Because of the few researches in this area and the importance of the relationship between the media and the outbreak and

spread of crime in the age of information and communication, it can determine the media's role in crime prevention and social damage. Also by providing perspective and interdisciplinary scientific approach, it creates a link between the judiciary and the media, because the study associated the media in relation to the other issue that is the crime and can be used as the basis for future research in this field.

The importance of and the need to study the importance of the media in the age of information and communication on the one hand and large cities as spaces causing offense or crime are on the other. The conditions governing metropolitan are the causes for the outbreak, escalation of crime and criminal behavior. But fear of crime and committing the crime in cities and their awareness and their experience of crime are mainly related to the media. The official talks indicate an increase in crime in the country, particularly big cities. The report also was mentioned about the status of Social Security in the Assembly on the role of mass media in prevention of crime. Therefore, it is essential to study the effect of media on our sense of security and fear of crime and committing the crime.

Literature Review and Theoretical Principles:

Research findings about the relationship between the mass media and the crime showed that there are few researches in this regard, but in other countries this issue is developed as an important area of research.

Farajiha (2006) in an article entitled "mass media reflections of crime and by using content analysis of written and visual news and reports present this issue that the reporters and editors of newspapers Service and news executives in media have the important role in formation of public opinion about crime and justice; lack of analytical aspects and emphasis on describing the criminal phenomenon in news and criminal events prevent proper understanding of the causes of crime and ways to control the audience; selection of criminal news based on determining factors of "newsworthy" have numerous consequences, including magnification, violent crime and increase the sense of insecurity in the community.

Mohammad Soltani Far (2008) in an article entitled "Media education and social security" review the strategies and tactics of the media to provide effective education and social security. This means that using the strategies and tactics can be used to convince the crimes and reduction ofdelinquency.

Habibzadeh and Ghasemi (2009) investigate the use of audio and video media in 13 to 18 years old delinquent young.

The main issue is whether the means of audio and video affect the delinquency of the juvenile and how much is the effect? The methodology of the research is survey and includes 170 offenders and 260non-offenders.The findings show the extent to which more than 5 hours of TV non-delinquent adolescents 21.5 percent and the rate was 33 percent among juvenile offenders.

Failure to use the Internet in non-offenders was 39/6%inthe offenders was 67/6%.The use of videos and CDs for more than an hour a day in non-offenders was 49/2% and in the offenders was 83/5%.

There was no significant relationship between the use of satellites and the incidence of crime. The results showed that among the audio and video devices (TV, satellite, Internet, tapes and CDs and movies) there is no significant difference between the use of satellite and TV in the offenders and non-offenders. The juvenile offenders use Internet less than the juvenile non-offenders. Generally, it seems that long-term use of television, video films and CDs increases the delinquency in the juvenile.

Habibzadeh, Afkhami and Naderpour (2009) emphasized on the dual role of the media in crime or prevention of that and in recognition of the positive and negative effects of the mass media in preventing crime.This study is document and library and it is not a case study, it only studies the different views in this regard and trying to prevent another role of mass media. Finally, it concluded that efficient use of media, especially mass media can be an effective agent in reducing crime in the community.

In determining how the media affects the positive or negative feelings of people about victimization and fear of crime, many studies have been carried out by Gerbner et al. 1976, 1977 and 1994.He planted the idea by other researchers evaluated the relationship between the media and their effects, is considered rational (Shanahan and Morgan, 1999; Vober and Gunter, 1983).In the 1960s, researchers determined that media has various roles in impact on a person's feelings about the fear of crime. Particularly, Griner and Gross (1975) Griner and others (1977) found that there are important relationships between the variables, the media and citizens fear of crime through the planting analysis.The display of violence in television happens morethan the activity in the real world that

the audience face with them, so it affects the fear of crime.

In the study of effects of media on fear of crime, Davler (2003) conducted a telephone survey of national opinion surveys about crime and justice (Flanagan and Long Meyer, 1995) and included 1005 adults who lived in America.

Davler (2003) categorized the variables based on three media issues that show the main sources; regular viewers of police series, number of hours watching television and print media reports, however, a significant relationship was found between watching serials police and fear of crime,

There was no significant relationship between watching TV and fear of crime. However, the relationship between the print media as the main source of news and fear of crime were significant. According to previous research, DVB and McDonald (1979), respondents with a lot of issues and problems related to crime, fear of crime reported. This is likely due to living in an unsafe area and location.In accordance with previous findings, the findings of Davler (2003) showed that women and older people are more afraid of crime.

In a study conducted by the Asparkz and Avgls (1990) it was determinee the distinction between fear of crime and

potential victims, the authors noted that fear of victimization is difficult to evaluate directly.When the respondents were asked to evaluate their findings in the case of a crime or their feelings about their security in place, their responses are the results of a previous survey confirmed that the researchers had done in the state Midostern.

Half of the respondents were selected from a city, half of them were selected from a place with the high crime rate and half of them were selected from a lower crime rate.Using two different scale to assess the media and the fear of crime. Mfahym- Asparkz and Avgls (1990) concluded that a correlation was found between the media and the fear of crime; however, a significant relationship was found between watching television and the fear of violence.

Hayes (1984) did a survey on the role of newspapers in the citizens' fear of crime and this category in terms of volume and 36 newspapers to local reports, emotional or crime was accidental.Newspaper reader survey, including 300 laboratory methods and apply the laboratory.After using the phone navigation in the sub-test, the results showed that by high publishing newspapers about crime by higher levels of fear of crime was reported.These findings were repeated in vitro with 80

students to determine the mass printed in the local newspaper, more fear expressed by the group or not.Results Hayes (1984) showed that if the crime occurs close to the respondents, the level of fear would be increased.
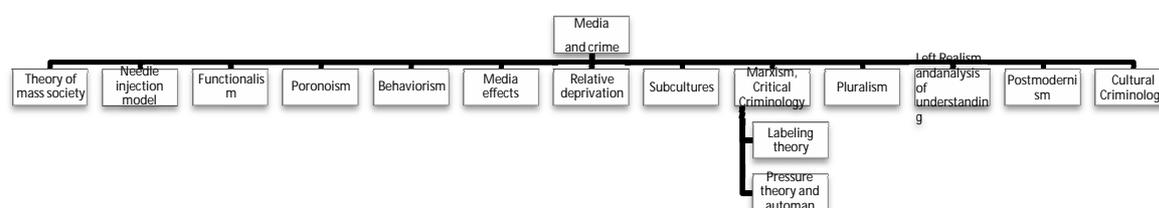
In a study of media coverage of crime and public opinion on crime;Chile and Ashkinz (1981) found similarities between television and newspaper reports.

They stated that although television had little impact on public opinion;the type and method exhibit more or less in the form of a summary, as well as lack of coverage and more detailed news about crimes, mainly because the impact was minimal.On the other hand, newspaper coverage of crime is wider and tends to report more local than the TV.On the contrary, public opinion was more ether report of your accomplice, the result was not consistent with other findings.

Dayton, Chadi, Faral, Gylchrist and Bannister (2004) 167 of Glasgow, Scotland, did survey to explain the relationship between fear of crime and watching media.To collect qualitative data from 167 people, 64 people were interviewed.Variable daily media consumption, including reading newspapers, watching television programs and new programs previously observed.

The results of a small surveydid not show any relationship between media consumption and the fear of crime. With qualitative data gathered from the interviews could not be verified.Overall, there is a very weak relationship between media consumption and fear of crime.

Theoretical framework of research: there are different viewsto determine the influence of media on people's feelings about the fear of crime among the studies,including Yoon Joks 2004 in his book entitled (mass media) presents theory in the field of mass media in below table.

Media and crime													
Theory of mass society	Needle injection model	Functionalism	Poronoism	Behaviorism	Media effects	Relative deprivation	Subcultures	Marxism, Critical Criminology	Pluralism	Left Realism andanalysis of understanding	Postmodernism	Cultural Criminology
								Labeling theory				
								Pressure theory and automan				

Theoretical approach of this study is derived from the traditions effects and the study of crime and violence on a lot of research and the theories that emphasize the long-term effects of the media. Gerbner planting theory and colleagues in 1976 and 1977 and 1994 presented influential study in this area. The theory is that the media has a central place in our daily lives which led to dominance on the symbolic and its effects are replaced instead of the reality of personal

experience and other knowledge of the world (Mc Koail, 2006). This study will be based on the role of the media in connection with the receipt of the explanatory and analytical methods to determine the mass of citizens. Because of the nature of research in the study of the relationship between the media and the fear of crime is an explanation. Also, due to the use of qualitative research methods and analytical interpretation.

Mediaand the Understanding of the Young People to the Crime: A Qualitative Approach

Generally, the relationship between the mass media and the crime has been the subject of many researches in the science field, as Surat (2007) in the field of mass media believes that both of them should be evaluated together because they are connected with each other in compulsory form. Since the issue of crime is the critical components of many people in society, it is important for individuals and society, and its coverage by the media affects public attitudes towards illegal actions and crime (Mason, 2003; Potter and Kappler, 2006).

Research has shown that no matter what pose Statistics, the media shows a picture of a society where the offense has always been there and it is growing steadily. It also states that media shows evil nature of the crime because of its importance for society it is as a charm for the media and the inclusion of the crime or criminal matters will be enhanced to attract audience, thus the variety of ways in different programs are always used to become a norm. The media presents a lot about murder, rape, violence against women and children and drugs (Grier, 2005).

However, empirical studies provide strong evidence of a causal relationship between the media and the attitude and behavior of people has not been successful. Although there is the evidence, but the relationship between media use and attitudes toward crime has not been systematically and analytically. Does this mean that the mass media are so important? Is it only affected public opinion in relation to the mass media?

These questions are obviously related to the aim of research. Media representations has a mediator role in the relationship between the media and the public perception of crime and the justice system. If the media presents false or a distortion of the image of the judicial system and crime, this may affect the level of public faith in the judicial system and the authorities of security.

It is assumed that the media affects attitudes toward crime and the justice system, but the effect is not necessarily a direct impact or too powerful; but the relationship between the media and the people is affected by various factors and processes of individual and collective interpretation.

Among the factors, the media is one of factors that affects the people's thinking about specific topics such as crime; but since most aspects of our daily lives are

formed more through a number of different media, the role of media in the people's understanding in crime and fear of crime can be discussed.

For better understanding of citizens of crime and use of media approaches, the qualitative research is used.

Media consumers should not be considered as a homogeneous mass, passive and quiet, but also it is bilateral contacts between the media and the audience and this brings us to the qualitative research that taken from the tradition of cultural studies. Using qualitative method (focus group interviews), we studied the relationship between mass media and the crime. The results are qualitatively analyzed based on the audience approach of research.

Focus Group Interview

As outlined above, this study uses a combination of methods to reach the goals of the research, therefore, with the social groups that are most of the perpetrators of the crime are in crime-prone regions in Tehran, qualitative methods focus group interviews are used because the audience is as a receiver, a constituent part of the communication process and quantitative methods of the audience were not successful in the interpretation of the audience, this is true about the relationship between media and the crime.

The aim of using the focus group interviews is individual interviews and group consent to the matter of investigation. The interview allows the researcher to focus the mind of the audience comments, their assessment, understanding, feelings, attitudes and motives (Creswell, 2007).

In fact, the focused interview is used on a particular topic, and the results in contrast to other quantitative methods can be generalized. It reflects only a small number of groups the and the results are not necessarily representative of the general population, but also a deep understanding of the audience's views or opinions with respect to certain issue is achieved.

A. sampling

In the qualitative analysis, sampling techniques are different from the quantitative analysis that is often randomly. In the qualitative analysis, sampling is purposeful and it is based on the purpose of research (Dimon and Holloway, 157: 2001).The purpose of sampling in qualitative analysis is to achieve a deep and profound information. What, when, how and why to be selected depends on the research objectives. Determining the samples provides criteria to include or reject. Samples include the boundaries between the research, including

research and those who are outside. Members generally share certain characteristics with our specific experience is necessary and required analysis (Dimon and Holloway, 159: 2001).According to Dimon and Holloway (2001), features of sampling sum up qualitative analysis as: they are flexible (that is spread throughout the sample), they are consecutive because they are directed by theoretical variables, and they are continuous (it means that it continues as long as new different data is not achieved) and in a research samples can also be misleading.

Sampling in this study was purposive sampling, the young age group were selected. First, they were 25 to 25 years old. Second, they lived for 5 years in the crime-prone region in Tehran. This is a common feature of participants and in that regard, all members of the concentrated groups were quite homogeneous, but in some cases, such as education, social status, etc. have different characteristics and they are heterogeneous; the separate groups are formed or each group was interviewed separately. Many researchers believe that young people are part of social groups that are more sensitive to the effects of media (Lafi, 2007) and young people because of their age consume more media and a variety of genres. It is also widely been seen that young people are more attracted to violent media. However, in our country there is a few research evidence about attitudes toward crime and the media. The young people in the area concerned to withdraw the study of the relationship between mass media and the crime. It is assumed that there are many similarities between the media and their attitude to crime or fear of committing the crime. It has been tried that by considering the comments from participants in group interviews as far as possible the various explanations or interpretations of the issue from the perspective of the study participants would be achieved.

Location of this research is twenty-two areas of Tehran; although the number of police stations in Tehran is not identical to the number of municipal areas; but the boundaries are the matches; therefore, crime statistics and data from various organizations such as the municipality of Tehran, capital of Iran, General Population and Housing Census in Tehran province, deputy police community and in some cases local police were collected; then, in the next step, all statistics are compared and combined. The results of all types of crime in the twenty-two regions showed that region 4 is less crime-prone than other regions in terms of types of crimes, region 22 is the most crime-prone region.

Hence, 4 region was chosen as the location of the focus group interviews.

The focus interviews are accomplished based on triple levels of Bauer and Gaskell (according to Hajimohammadi, 2009).

- Planning
- Run
- Interpretation of concentrated groups

The research study based on three stages, the interpretation of the interview each of the groups, and the general interpretation of focus interviews.

The First Step: Planning of Focus Interviews

Participants in accordance questions and theoretical perspectives are selected and grouped as defining the target audience. This allows comparison of features between the groups. In this study, three groups of young people aged 25-35 are studied in Tehran in December 2012 to discuss the role of mass media; it means that "how the mass media prevents the people to commit the crimes and how the media can encourage people to commit crimes.

In selecting members the variables such as gender, age and education were taken into consideration. To understand the youth's view aged 25-35 region 22 where it is not crime-prone area are compared with the young of region 4, a focus group interview with "the control group" are prepared for this region. The number of participants was twenty in the 3 meetings. The focus group interview were carried out and the number of members in this study is as follows:

The number of participants	Group focus interview
7 participants (all male)	Group 1: youth aged 25-35 years, region 4
7 patients (all women)	Group 2: the young age group of 25-35 year-old Region 4
6 (3 males and 3 females)	Group 3: the young age group of 25-35 year-old Region 22

The focus group interviews are selected based on selecting the persons for each group and the number of members (usually 6 to 12). This number causes that the participants represent their opinions, so there would be dynamics in the discussion. The members are selected in a way that the participants have the required experience. As they have the same experience, it would be possible that the considerable

446

information would not be achieved. Also, it has been tried that the members are selected in a way that they don't know each other because the friends know the opinions of each other. So, there would not be a good discussion. On the other hand, being friend may prevent members to say their real idea (flake, 2008).Due to the limitations and sensitivity of the issue, especially the unpredictable cases, the number of participants in each group were considered to fifteen because if a number of the guests was not present for any reason in the meeting, the implementation of group interviews would not encountered with particular problems. In different levels such as selecting the members, meeting them, representing the issue, inviting to cooperation, and satisfying them until the day of interview, if some participants missed the meeting, this issue has validated the guess of the researchers. After selecting the participants, the subject was explained for them by phone or a meeting, and after their acceptance, the subject and the main question of research was reminded. Three days should be considered between acceptance and interview to be the adequate opportunity in this field and the personal planning. Finally, the time of interview should be announced them.

The Second Step: Implementation of the Focus Group Interviews

Media consumption habits of participants

Before the focus group interview session, participants were asked to respond to the brief questions about their media consumption habits. Participants announce that they do not use a variety of media; traditional news media largely ignored this research by young participants and criminal movies had little luck for them. Although respondents were relatively spent watching TV (on average 3-4 hours per day), but they preferred the sports programs, few of them were interested in politics and current affairs. This pattern of use of the entertainment media is not looking for information or knowledge about sensitive issues like politics or crime.

Participants had little confidence in the media. All three groups criticized television, radio, and magazines in terms of knowledge, skills and moral. However, participants noted that the media could have a great impact on individuals as it allows the audience to be manipulated. On the other hand, the respondents agreed that the media has a direct effect on the behavior and thinking (especially children and the elderly).

However, they stated that this mechanism does not affect them;media content and

messages are important for them when their beliefs are about the subject. Such ideas were drawn from their own direct experience, but in most cases, these ideas were derived from interpersonal relationships in which friends or family members share their experiences, opinions and views on particular issues. ("My friends told me," "such a case had happened to my uncle", "as had happened to my mother," etc.); so it seems that the direct form communications of the indirect power or the effect of media, have a great impact.

The Difference between the Participating Groups

Despite massive gender differences between groups in the region 4 as the crime-prone region in Tehran, and the participants of the control group of region 22 as less crime-prone region, there was no difference between these two groups. Despite the fact that Group 1, due to the presence in crime-prone areas outside the region, had personal experience of crime and said that the media had a lot of impact on fear of crime or crime prevention, participants of groups 2 and 3 believed that they had indirect knowledge and less personal experience about the crime.

According to the same partial views of participants, it can be said that their views and understandings of the mechanisms of

social interpretation like media are formed and they are not only direct and personal.

The Same Attitude among the Groups

All three participants in a context of strongly agreed and stated that crime is one of the main problems in the huge city like Tehran and believed that violence and crime (serious bodily injuries, cases of murder, rape, theft of homes and use of psychotropic substances, etc.) have increased in the past decades. They are afraid of crime in different situations (When the TV and some sites show violence and crimes of men, we would be feared, we live in the city).When they were asked: Are you afraid of committing crime when you or your relatives watch or hear the news about crime? Almost 80% of them stated that their different images and news media affect them and others in both dimensions.

Some of those in the group discussions, the majority of participants criticized the media programs. They believed that in the majority of the media programs, the important role of the police, the courts, personal check, attorneys are emphasized, and they do not consider the offender of a crime, his reasons for committing the crime or the offender's view in the news. The important issue is the judge and the police.They stated that in some series and movies, there is no realistic view about the

crime. So, the audience is given the wrong information. On the other hand, the majority of the participants criticized the time of television programs especially series, and they knew that as the weakness Broadcasting Organization. They believed the time of broadcasting these programs should be at night because these programs are not suitable for teenagers and children. Another issue raised by some respondents was that the news media conservatively act about the crimes. To be aware of its dimensions, we should refer to the other sources and the Internet. On the other hand, the Internet and other alternative media in cyberspace are not very reliable because of the special circumstances.

CONCLUSION

Study the relationship between fear and crime, prevention of committing the crime is a new subject in Iran that is less concerned. By the growth of cyberspace and the Internet and the creation of new spaces, this issue should be considered more than any other issue. Now, the Internet and cyberspace are important media sources for various social groups, especially for the young that they commit the crime more than other social groups.

In other countries,the issue of mass media and its impact on various aspects of the crime (mass balance or crime) is developed as an important area of

research, the specific nature of Iran environment makes difficult the study of the relationship between mass media and crime. It should also recognize different aspects of this issue and have a new point of view at the relationship between mass media and crime because every day many aspects of the daily lives are affected by mass media. Therefore, The Iranian's fear of crime not only affects the people, but also it forces the policy makers of crime area to review the laws to do requirements in society to control the crime.

On the other hand, most studies on the effects of mass media on various aspects of crime (fear of crime, prevention, and committing the crime) are affected by tradition; but for studying the formation of public opinion and attitudes toward crime and the role of media in shaping public opinion about crime, in addition to using the tradition of media effects, the qualitative methods of audience are used and the different dimensions of this issue are studied by multidisciplinary method to achieve to the deep view of research.

And by looking at different aspects of this study to look deeper into this relationship became public.Accordingly, first by using the view of the impact of media on fear of crime, we studied the issue, then, in the most crime-prone region by the use of qualitative method of research, we use the

group interview to study the audiences' attitude toward the relationship between the crime and media, and we tried to understand the manner of dependency of the young to the media in interpretation of crime and its evaluation.

The combination of these two methods were useful because each of them completed information and our assessment of the research.The aim of this study was to create awareness on the relationship between mass media and the crime for the media employees and institutions were involved in the crime. Although this study does not claim that all issues and questions concerning the relationship between the mass media and the crime are answered. First, it tried to create a link between the crime and the media;

Second to study this research in analytical and qualitative methods; Third, it tries to create a horizon between these cases in Iran from other angles.

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