

Fear of Crime among People in Muang-Ake, Lak-Hok, Muang, Pathumthani

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Abstract: This study provides the basic idea to understand and create the recommendation to solve the fear of crime among people in Muang-Ake, Lak-Hok, Muang, Pathumthani. This research has the objectives to study the level of crime fear and the difference of the crime fear level of the people living in Muang-Ake, including the opinions to the crime violence along with the cause of the crime problem in Muang-Ake by utilizing the quantitative methods with the questionnaire of 400 samples. The result found that over the past year, most of the samples did not have the crime experiences for both their family members and themselves in Muang-Ake but they acknowledge that the crime happened to other villagers 1-2 times. Also, their overall level of crime fear is at the high level and the fear of the rape and sexual harassment in Muang-Ake is at the highest level of fear. The comparison analysis of the crime fear in Muang-Ake shows that the gender, related-crime experiences and the acknowledgement of crime problem are different making the levels of crime fear in Muang-Ake are statistically different at eh 0.01 level of significance. Furthermore, most questionnaire respondents commented that the robbery is the highest violent crime in Muang-Ake and the most important cause of these crimes will come from the entertainment places.

Key words: Fear of crime, Muang-Ake, gender, questionnaire, Thailand

INTRODUCTION

The research about the fear of crime has been an important issue of the academic criminology, since the 1st publications in the US to explain the public interactions to the crime, as the concerns of the citizen in the city during 1930's (Bacanovic and Jovanova, 2012). Thus, the President's Commission of Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice (Warr, 2000) suggested that the extreme danger of the crime impacts are the underestimated fear leading to the study of the crime expanding to not only the direct victims but also to the indirect victims that is the fear as well.

Although, the development of this study in the European academy is not intense comparing to the US, indeed it had not been known before 1960's. The case of the Great Britain with the formal investigation to the fear of crime started in 1982 and the case of Republic of Slovenia in the decade later (Bacanovic and Jovanova, 2012). However after the end of 1960's, the study of the fear of crime had the important roles (Lee, 1999) among the criminologists and social science researchers (Lee, 2001). This created the argument and went beyond the suggestion such that at present the fear of crime may be the problem in the everyday life more than itself (Warr, 1984; Bennett, 1990; Hale, 1992, 1996; Ewald, 2000; Beckett and Sasson, 2004).

Faculty of Criminal Justice and Security Studies, University of Maribor, Slovenia emphasized that this issue is still important even in the end of 2010's to the beginning of 2020's, Mesko and Fields (2012) by publishing the Journal of Criminal Justice and Security special issue under the topic of fear of crime in the capitals of South Eastern Europe in 2009 in order to be another starting point to improve the indicator of the crime fear. At least, the opinions of the 4 invited editors were not clear particularly in the measurement across the culture to be more clear (Mesko *et al.*, 2012a).

In Thailand, there are only few researches of the DRDRTP (1996), Faculty of Political Science, Ramkhamhang University (Chummanikul, 2000) and Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University (Neesang, 2005) attempted to explain the feeling of the general people. Moreover, Faculty of Social Administration, Thammasat University and Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mahidol Unveristiy which are the pioneer institutions to study the fear of crime by focusing on the groups that is believed to be fragile or need special care, such as women (Bubpachat, 1996; Rouchanukul, 2009), entrepreneurs (Pethploynil, 2003), people who live in slums (Wattannasin, 2003), tourists (Amommuneepong, 2005) and the elder (Sammastian, 2009), respectively.

Although, the survey result indicated that more than a decade, >77% of the Bangkok citizen feel the unsafe

from the crime outside their house (Hemarajata, 1983). This led to the suggestions that the crime problem is the most urgent task to be solved more than any other problem (CUSRI, 1993). Then, it is contained to the Royal Thai Police Strategy 2012-2021 (RTPSO, 2014), as well as to be the crime protection and prevention policy of the fiscal year 2014 that pays attention on the control and decrease the severity of crime that the citizen feel to be the threats of their lives and properties by concentrating on the the case of property crime in the public affecting to the fear of crime of the citizen to be the 1st priority.

Research objectives: The same as the national statistics or a Bangkok survey case (Bhakdinarinath, 2013), the change of the large expanding of the community, also created the fear of crime among the people in Muang-Ake, Lak-Hok, Muang, Pathumthani. This research has the objectives to study, the level of crime fear and comparative analyze the level of crime fear to the people in Muang-Ake, including the opinion to the crime severity and the cause of the problem to be the basic idea to build the understanding and create the suggestion to solve the above problem later.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Population and sample: The population is the people living in the Muang-Ake for both 13,360 registered citizens and other latent people with unclear size around 40,569; total population is about 53,929 people.

The samples are from the people living in the Muang-Ake by systematic sampling and calculate from the formula to find the sample size when the population size is unknown (Cochran, 1977) at the level of significance (Z) 95%, standard deviation (σ) 0.05 and the error sampling (e) = 392 people.

Also in order to reserve some loss of questionnaires, the researchers provided 10% or 39 sets that is the questionnaires are totally collected for 431 sets but selected the full information questionnaire only 400 sets.

Research tools: The research tools using in this study consist of the questionnaire which the researchers create from the theories, concepts and related studies as well as the image indicator of the fear of crime developed by May *et al.* (2008) that classify into 4 categories which are:

- Personal data
- The crime experiences in Muang-Ake and crime perception in Muang-Ake
- The fear of crime in Muang-Ake
- The opinion to the severity and reasons the crime problem in Muang-Ake

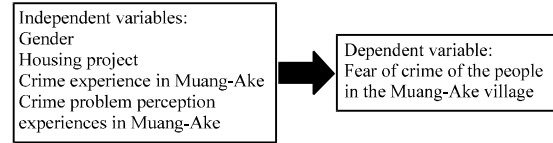


Fig. 1: Research framework

Tools testing: The study finds the validity of the questionnaires by testing the content validity of each question such that it is following the research objective or not. Then, it will be improved to find the reliability by using the improved questionnaires to try out with the population groups that is similar to the sample for 30 people and analyze to find the item analysis with the internal consistency method by using the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient and found that is has the level of confidence at 0.90.

Data analysis: This study utilize the quantitative research with descriptive statistic, such as percentage, arithmetic means, standard deviation, independent sample t-test, one-way ANOVA and multiple comparison of Tukey (1994).

Research framework: The independent and dependent variables are discussed in Fig. 1.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Personal data: The 400 questionnaire respondents consist of 159 male or 39.80% and 241 female or 60.20%. The age median is 21 years. Majority of them have the age around 15-20 years (45.80%), homeland in the central region (59.30%), Buddhism (63%), education level at the diploma to the bachelor degree (77.80%), single status (83.00%), be a university student (65.00%), average monthly income range is in 5,001-10,000 Baht (50.30%) with the median income at 10,000 Baht, live in the housing project 1 (36.80%), 6 (22.00%), 4 (19.50%) and 9 (10.80%), respectively.

Crime experiences and the crime perception in Muang-Ake: The majority of the respondents (88.20%) have not crime experience to themselves and their families over the past year, following by 1-2 crime experience (8.80%), 3-5, 6-11 and >12 times (1.00%), respectively (Table 1).

For the crime perception of the other people in Muang-Ake over the past year, most respondents know at 1-2 (26.50%), following by 3-5 times (23.70%) and never (23.30%), respectively (Table 2).

Table 1: Crime experiences occurred with themselves and their families in Muang-Ake

Crime experiences	No. of people	Percent
Never	353	88.2
1-2 times	35	8.8
3-5 times	4	1.0
6-11 times	4	1.0
>12 times	4	1.0
Total	400	100.0

Table 2: Crime perception to the other people in Muang-Ake

Crime perception	No. of people	Percent
Never	93	23.3
1-2 times	106	26.5
3-5 times	95	23.7
6-11 times	74	18.5
>12 times	32	8.0
Total	400	100.0

The fear of crime of the people in Muang-Ake: The overall opinions of the respondents to the fear of crime are in the high level ($\bar{x} = 1.51$). The fear from the sexual level ($\bar{x} = 1.96$). Also they think that in the future, they may be raped in Muang-Ake for most ($\bar{x} = 1.97$) as well. This is contrast to the opinions that the crime in the Muang-Ake reduced more than before which is in the low ($\bar{x} = 0.84$) level and the opinion to the existing law will help to reduce the crime in the village is at the lowest level ($\bar{x} = 0.83$) (Table 3).

The comparison analysis of the level of crime fear in Muang-Ake: The analysis consists of the gender classification by comparing the 2 arithmetic means with t-statistics. Also, the classification of the housing projects, crime experiences and the crime perception in Muang-Ake will be analyzed by the one-way ANOVA and the Tukey multiple comparison method (Table 4).

Gender classification: The analysis of the fear of crime classified by gender found that male and female have the level of crime fear differently at the 0.01 level of significance. Male has the higher level of crime fear than the female.

Classified by housing projects: The analysis found that the each housing project has no difference in the level of crime fear (Table 5).

Classified by the crime experiences in Muang-Ake: The comparison analysis found that the crime experiences are different statistically at the 0.01 level of significance. In addition, the comparison analysis of the difference of the crime fear classified by the crime experiences of each pair found in Muang-Ake found that no crime experience has higher crime fear level than the 1-2 times experiences statistically at the 0.01 level of significance (Table 6).

Table 3: Fear of crime among people living in Muang-Ake

Fear of crime	\bar{X}	SD	Ranking
When living in the village, you fear to be raped or sexual assault	1.96	0.95	High
When living in the village, you fear to be injured and robbed	1.38	0.88	Low
When living in the village, you fear that your property will be robbed	1.31	0.88	Low
When living in the village, you fear to be a victim of criminal outside your house at night	1.23	0.87	High
When living in the village, you fear to assault to death	1.59	0.93	High
When living in the village, you fear that the criminal will enter to the house when you are not at home	1.52	0.93	High
You fear that the crime will happen to you within Muang-Ake	1.46	0.86	Low
You fear that the crime will happen to your family in Muang-Ake	1.55	0.93	High
You fear that the crime will happen to other living in village	1.35	0.86	Low
You think that the existing law can help to reduce the crime in the village	0.83	0.73	Low
You think that the crime is less than in the past	0.84	0.70	Low
You think that the fear of crime will help you to make your life more safe when living in the village	1.91	0.80	High
Your house in the village has the security system	1.36	0.82	Low
You think that your life is not safe when living in the village	1.88	0.75	High
In the future, you think that the robber will invade to steal your belongings in your house in the village	1.73	0.79	High
In the future, you think that the robber will steal your automobile/motorcycle in the village	1.55	0.86	High
In the future, there is the robber to rob your belongings in the village	1.52	0.79	High
In the future, you think that you may be raped or sexual assault in the village	1.97	0.89	High
You fear that in the future, you fear to fall to be a crime victim when going outside at night in the village	1.51	0.84	High
In the future, living in the village, you will be injured to death	1.80	0.87	High
Overall	1.51	0.51	High

Table 4: Comparison analysis of the level of crime fear in Muang-Ake classified by gender

Gender	\bar{X}	t	p-value
Male	1.64	4.087**	<0.001
Female	1.42		

**p<0.01

Table 5: The comparison analysis of the level of crime fear classified by the housing projects

Housing projects	\bar{X}	F	p-value
1	1.55	1.382	0.202
2	1.57		
3	1.63		
4	1.50		
5	1.04		
6	1.46		
7	1.38		
8	1.66		
9	1.49		

Other pairs found that the crime experience in the village has no statistically difference to the crime in Muang-Ake (Table 7).

Table 6: Comparison analysis of the level of crime fear classified by the crime experiences in Muang-Ake

Crime experiences	\bar{X}	F	p-value
Never	1.55	6.009**	<0.001
1-2 times	1.15		
3-5 times	1.32		
6-11 times	1.05		
>12 times	1.58		

Table 7: Pair comparison analysis of the difference of the crime fear level in Muang-Ake classified by the crime experiences

Crime experiences	\bar{X}	Never (1.55)	1-2 times (1.15)	3-5 times (1.32)	6-11 times (1.05)	>12 times (1.58)
Never	1.55	-	0.40**	0.23	0.50	-0.03
1-2 times	1.15	-	-	-0.17	0.10	-0.43
3-5 times	1.32	-	-	-	0.27	-0.26
6-11 times	1.05	-	-	-	-	-0.53
>12 times	1.58	-	-	-	-	-

Table 8: Comparison analysis of the crime fear in Muang-Ake classified by the crime perception

Crime perception	\bar{X}	F	p-value
No	1.72	13.888**	<0.001
1-2 times	1.54		
3-5 times	1.56		
6-11 times	1.25		
>12 times	1.16		

Table 9: Pair comparison analysis of the difference of the crime fear level in Muang-Ake classified by the crime perception

Crime perception	\bar{X}	No (1.72)	1-2 times (1.54)	3-5 times (1.56)	6-11 times (1.25)	>12 times (1.16)
No	1.72	-	0.18	0.16	0.47**	0.56**
1-2 times	1.54	-	-	-0.02	0.29**	0.38**
3-5 times	1.56	-	-	-	0.31**	0.40**
6-11 times	1.25	-	-	-	-	0.09
>12 times	1.16	-	-	-	-	-

**p<0.01

Classified by the crime perception in Muang-Ake: The comparison analysis classified by the crime perception found that the crime perceptions in the village are statistically different at the 0.01 level of significance. In addition, the pair comparison analysis of the crime fear level classified by the crime perception found that no perception in the crime problem has the higher level of crime fear >12 times statistically significant at 0.01 (Table 8).

Following by the no perception and 6-11 times of perception, 3-5, >12, 1-2, >12, 3-5, 6-11, 1-2 and 6-11 times of perception, respectively. Other pairs found no statistically difference in the level of crime fear (Table 9).

The opinions to the severity and the causes of the crime problem in Muang-Ake: The survey to the severity of the crime problem in the village found that the respondents think that the robbery (26.50%) is the most serious problem, following by the body injury (14.50%)

Table 10: Opinion to the severity of the crime problem in Muang-Ake

Crime problem	No. of people	Percent
Life, body and sex assault		
Murder with intention	15	3.7
Murder without intention	6	1.5
Cause death by negligence	3	0.7
Attempt murder	3	0.7
Assault	58	14.5
Rape	14	3.5
Offense against property		
Theft offense	106	26.5
Snatching	55	13.8
Blackmail	7	1.8
Extortion	18	4.5
Attack and robbery	42	10.5
Robbery	33	8.3
Receiving stolen property	-	-
Cause property damaged	11	2.7
Crime in the police attention		
Motorcycle theft	19	4.8
Automobile theft	3	0.7
Ransom	-	-
Fraud	-	-
Misappropriation	-	-
Government is the victim		
Firearms	-	-
Gambling	1	0.3
Drugs	6	1.5
Prostitutes	-	-
Pornography	-	-
Total	400	100.0

Table 11: Opinion to the cause of the crime problem in Muang-Ake

Cause of crime	No. of people	Percent
Having the entertainment places	251	63.9
Having alcohol/beer selling	202	51.4
Having the casino/football gambling	178	45.3
Having prostitutes	45	11.5
Drug widespread	211	53.7
Juvenile conspiring	212	53.9
Too crowded community	77	19.6
Economic recession	88	22.4
More strangers	118	30.0
More outlander	93	23.7
Moral deteriorate	107	27.2
Bad safety measurement	169	43.0
Facilitate to move in-out of the community	132	33.6

and snatching and run (13.80%), respectively (Table 10). The respondents have the opinions to the cause of crime in the village that it may cause by the entertainment places (63.90%) most following by the juvenile conspiring (53.90%) and drug widespread (53.70%), respectively (Table 11).

The comparison analysis of the fear of crime in Muang-Ake classified by the gender emphasized the best prediction of the fear of crime (Hale, 1996) that the gender difference is the factor affecting the level of crime fear differently consistent with the study of Callanan and Teasdale (2009) in the case of California, May *et al.* (2009) in case of Kentucky and Mesko *et al.* (2012b) in case of Slovenia and other related studies. The results mentioned

earlier found that female has the level of crime fear more than male (LaGrange and Ferraro, 1989; Bilsky and Wetzels, 1997; Mesch, 2000; Pantazis, 2000; Chadee *et al.*, 2007) with 2-3 times in the proportion (Hilinski, 2009; Ozascilar, 2013). Even the level of crime fear of the female often has the higher opportunity to be a victim than the actual victim (Warr, 1984, 1985; Ferraro, 1995, 1996).

The concept of the Fear-Victimization Paradox explain this phenomenon that it seems most of the crime victim is male (Callanan and Teasdale, 2009), the least in the female. However, the female has higher level of crime fear (Rountree 1998 cited in Alvi *et al.*, 2001; McCrea *et al.*, 2005). Vukadin and Golub's explanation of this paradox is the female has the lower potential to protect themselves when facing the crime, so even the fear of crime of the female limit to the fear to be raped but it will affect to other crimes at last making their fear of crimes increase (Hilinski, 2009; May *et al.*, 2009).

In contrast, the comparison analysis reveals that in case of the male in Muang-Ake, they have the level of crime fear more than the female and when considering with the survey result about the crime happening to themselves and their families over the past year, it found that almost 90% has no crime experience. This is the same, as the crime perception happening to other people in the village that about 1/4 have no crime perception and about half of them used to know about 1-5 times. This indicated the much limitation of the direct and indirect experiences of the respondents.

Nevertheless, although the survey of crime fear to the people in the village shows that >60% are female indicating the fear of crime to be raped or sexual assault or even think that they may be raped in the village in the future with highest rank. However, the opinions to the severity of crime in the village is about 70% that emphasizes to their perception to the property assault consistent with the analysis of May *et al.* (2009) that it is the best prediction of the fear of crime for the male but the opinions to the severity of crime by sexual assault that the female has higher fear than male (Hilinski, 2009) has only 3.5%.

CONCLUSION

The comparison analysis classified by the housing project found that the level of crime fear in the village has no different that is in consistent with the research of O'Mahony and Quinn (1999) in case of the Northern community of Ireland. Also, the analysis classified by the crime experiences for both direct and indirect in

Muang-Ake found that there is the difference of crime fear and when considering the pair analysis, it found that some are different, some are not different consistent with the study of May *et al.* (2009) in case of Kentucky, USA.

SUGGESTIONS

According to the importance of the fear of crime, it is widely accepted in the international level that it is the direct responsibility of the police to reduce this (Cordner, 2010). Therefore, this suggestion of this study aims to the management strategy to control the feeling to be in the suitable level by categorizing the traditional crime control which is clearly show that it cannot reduce the fear (O'Mahony and Quinn, 1999). The result of this study, one-way is to reflex the importance of the survey of the crime fear for the people in the below national level because it can provide the different detail of each community and be the data of the direct officers to serve the people most. The support to have the community crime survey is an important suggestion that the related organization should receive to consider and implement concretely later.

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