

# Fear of Crime and Terrorism Among Israeli and Swedish Citizens

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**Abstract** The objective of the chapter is to broaden the understanding of the determinants of fear of crime and fear of terrorism while expanding the existing literature. Israel and Sweden provide case studies of two countries with a relatively similar population size, whereas their cultures are inherently different in their attitude toward terrorism and refugees. Several conclusions can be drawn from this study. The findings show higher rates of fear of crime and terrorism in the Israeli group than among the Swedes, despite the similar rates of actual exposure to crime. This finding could be explained by the Israeli society's higher exposure to terrorism. In addition, the comparison between the Israeli and Swedish samples may indicate the significance of cultural explanation in accounting for differences between the two groups, especially with regard to fear of being a victim of crime. It is suggested that the diverse perception of the government's responsibility for preventing the negative effects and of the "other" as a source of harm may account for the higher rates of fear of crime among *Israelies explain this finding*.

**Keywords** Israel · Sweden · Fear of crime · Fear of terrorism · Neighborhood disorder · Social integration

## Learning Outcomes

After reading this chapter, the reader should be able to know the following:

- There is a gap between the actual risk of becoming a victim or actual exposure to crime and terror and between levels of fear.

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- The results suggested that the intercultural differences are highly relevant to the study of fear of being a victim, which should be further examined.
- The study points out the need to explore the trust in the law enforcement systems as a factor that can influence levels of fear of crime.
- The study indicates the need to study the perceptions of "the other" or "the stranger" as affecting fear of being a victim.
- The results of this study reveal that ongoing exposure to terror and security threats lead to habituation and psychological resistance (desensitization) to its consequences. This process moderates the levels of fear.

## 1 Introduction

Numerous countries, particularly in Europe, have recently been exposed to a wave of terror attacks. At the same time, a vast wave of migration to their territory by refugees and asylum seekers occurred. This exposes entire populations to fear they never experienced before. Fear of victimization is considered a severe contemporary social problem, and some scholars see it as a more serious problem than the crime itself. Reports of waves of immigration from various countries, as well as of terror incidents around the world, corroborate this premise.

Over the years, considerable research has focused on fear of crime, mostly involving property crimes (burglary, theft, etc.), interpersonal physical attacks (Rengifo and Bolton 2012; Schafer et al. 2006), and, with recent potency, terrorism (Perry and Alvi 2011). A literature review shows that both kinds of fears, of terrorism and crime, share common elements. They affect the social fabric of life by creating a sense of fear and interfering with normal daily life routines (e.g. Zemishlany 2012).

The objective of this chapter is to broaden the understanding of the determinants of fear of crime and fear of terrorism while expanding the existing literature. Israel and Sweden provide case studies of two countries with a relatively similar population size and cultures that are inherently different in their attitude toward terrorism and refugees. While on the subject of terrorism, Israel differs from Sweden quite dramatically, due to its history of ongoing terrorist attacks (Bensimon et al. 2013; Laufer et al. 2009; Shechory-Bitton 2013), with regard to the experience with refugees, some similarity is found.

There is no exact estimate of the scope of refugee arrivals in Israel. According to official statistics of the Israel Population and Immigration Authority, in 2016 there were 29,367 asylum seekers from Eritrea and 8066 asylum seekers from Sudan, mostly from Darfur, where genocide has been taking place in the last 13 years. Israel's refugee question is attributed to the wider phenomenon of incoming labor

migration. The massive illegal migration and the high concentration of illegal destitute African refugees, who are forbidden by the authorities to work and earn money, have resulted in very strong tensions between the refugees and the local veteran Israeli population. The refugees' high numbers coincide with a deep feeling of resentment, discrimination, and dejection among veteran Israeli residents of the southern neighborhoods. It forced the Israeli government to declare a policy of "closed skies" (forbidding the entrance of foreign laborers by air) and to enforce very strict border control with the aim of reducing the rate of foreign labor in Israel (Kemp and Kfir 2012). One of the prominent claims against the infiltrators from Africa is that of growing crime rates, although there is no support to this claim by official statistics.

Sweden is known for its high rates of immigrant and asylum seeker integration. According to official statistics, Sweden absorbed 134,000 immigrants in 2015, and its population increased from nine million inhabitants in 2014 to over ten million in 2017 (Chakkour and Johansson 2017). Eighteen percent of Sweden's population is foreign born. Many of its immigrants during the 1980s and 1990s, as well as nowadays, are asylum seekers from war zones in Africa and Asia. Sweden has a liberal "open borders" tradition, indicating a strong belief in individuals' right of self-determining their place of residence. The strong socialist heritage (Peterson 1993; Rydgren 2002) leads many Swedes to regard the need to absorb asylum seekers and immigrants as part of social solidarity and a humanistic obligation. Since the late 1960s, the lack of working hands and the need for cheap labor have created policies that allow labor migration in order to support the Swedish economy (Knudsen 1997). The attitude underlying this policy is "the more working individuals, the more taxpayers."

The last elections in 2014, however, showed a retreat from this ideology as the Swedish Democratic Party. It questions the massive migration. It is considered racist by many, and it became the third largest party in Sweden (Rydgren and Tyrberg 2016; Rydgren and van der Meiden 2016). One claim voiced by the Swedish Democratic Party is that of increased crime rates, especially in neighborhoods highly populated by immigrants. In the Swedish case, unlike Israel, official data provided by the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brottsförebyggande rådet - Brå 2017) support this claim. During a ten-year period (2006–2015), the number of reported offences increased by 278,000 (a rise of 23%).

### ***1.1 Theoretical Background: Fear of Crime and Fear of Terrorism***

Fear of crime is a complex multidimensional concept, defined as an emotional reaction charged with a sense of danger and threat due to fear of bodily injury and/or property damage to self and others. Fear has the potential to affect individual behavior, attitudes, and lifestyle. As fear increases, one's sense of personal safety

decreases (Rountree 1998; Schafer et al. 2006). These effects on the individual can be expressed on physical, psychological, and behavioral levels (Shirom et al. 2008). Psychologically, feelings of anxiety, depression, alienation, and lack of life satisfaction may trigger outbreaks of mental illness (Amerio and Roccato 2005). Behaviorally, fear of crime may limit the activity of individuals by leading to social withdrawal at night, the purchase of safety devices and weapon possession, change of residence, etc. (Miceli et al. 2004).

Fear of being a victim of terrorism can be regarded as a subtype of fear of being a victim of crime, although one cannot ignore the essential difference between the two kinds of harm, grounded in their motives. Terrorism, unlike "regular" crime, is violence uniquely motivated by ideology to achieve political objectives and is by nature designed to instill general fear, threatening entire populations with no regard for random victims harmed due to the incidental location of terrorist attacks (Dougall et al. 2005).

While the definition of crime is quite clear, dozens of definitions exist for the concept of "terrorism" (e.g., May et al. 2011). Literature reviews indicate a difficulty in forming a uniform definition. Multiple social and political contexts lead to ambiguities resulting from definitional perspectives (Atran 2003). However, it is agreed that the purpose of terrorism is to destabilize daily life and demoralize society by using violence to spread fear and confusion as a means of generating insecurity (Howes 2011; Romanov et al. 2012).

The broken windows theory (e.g., Wilson and Kelling 1982) and the collective efficacy theory (e.g., Sampson 2010; Sampson et al. 1997) form a comprehensive approach to community fear of being a victim.

The broken windows theory is focusing on neighborhood disorder. The theory links disorder and crime. It posits that physical signs of neglect facilitate both actual victimization and higher levels of fear of crime. The visual signs of disorder (e.g., loitering, gangs, vandalized property, etc.) signal criminals that no one cares about the neighborhood they lived in and that the community lacks the cohesion needed to deter crime. The collective efficacy theory emphasizes the sense of communal collective efficacy and the neighborhood's social integration and connections as an important factor for achieving public order and controlling crime, which in turn improves residents' sense of security.

Following the assumptions of these theories, elevated levels of fear were found when neighborhood crime levels were higher (Austin et al. 2002) and police presence lower (Scarborough et al. 2010), along with higher population density and class disparity (Ferguson and Mindel 2007; Sampson 2001). Overall, lower neighborhood order and lack of social integration were found to predict higher levels of fear of crime (e.g., Franklin et al. 2008; Scarborough et al. 2010; Vilalta 2011). Similar correlations were found between lower neighborhood order and higher levels of fear of terrorism (Shechory Bitton and Cohen-Louck 2016). However, with regard to the association with social integration, the results are ambiguous. While some research findings show a positive relationship between social support and low levels of distress among residents living in combat areas (Gelkopf et al. 2012; Shechory Bitton 2013), others show no correlation (Shechory Bitton and Cohen-Louck 2016).

...theories, such as the vulnerability theory (Pantazis 2000; Skogan and Maxfield 2000), and research focused on personal variables show that people who feel more socially and sexually vulnerable report higher levels of fear of crime (Fox et al. 2009; Scarborough et al. 2010), with women and older people more vulnerable (e.g., Scarborough et al. 2010; Brück and Müller 2010; Franklin et al. 2008; Chui et al. 2012). This is known as the "fear-victimisation" hypothesis (Ferraro 1996; May et al. 2010). Research findings show that although exposure to objective exposure to traumatic events is positively associated with the sense of distress (Benzion et al. 2009; Hobfoll et al. 2007), few studies fail to confirm these findings, indicating that subjective sense of fear and duration of exposure (e.g., continuous and chronic vs. single incident exposure) (Laufer and Shechory Bitton 2013) have the greatest impact.

### ***Fear of Crime and Fear of Terrorism in Israel and Sweden***

A few studies have been published on fear of crime in Israel (e.g., Shechory Bitton and Cohen-Louck 2016; Shechory Bitton and Soen 2016), and their results are compatible with other international findings (e.g., Fox et al. 2009; Scarborough et al. 2010). Gender, age, neighborhood disorder, and social integration confirm that women and older people report experiencing greater fear of victimization.

A recent study (Shechory Bitton and Soen 2016) focused on fear of crime experienced by foreign residents. The findings show that perceptions of symbolic threat play a much more important role than real feelings of threat or fear of socioeconomic competition. Likewise, it was found that the African residents are perceived as a threat to the cultural and national homogeneity of the veteran Jewish residents. In addition, most of the participants had not been the victim of any crime. Namely, the questions posed to respondents directly examined whether they had been assaulted by illegal immigrants (physical violence, property offences, or sexual harassment). Nevertheless, residents of south Tel Aviv are concerned that they will be assaulted either on the street or at home. They are concerned of being robbed, sexually assaulted, and the like. It should be noted that the largest concentration of refugees who have entered Israel illegally reside in south Tel Aviv, an area regarded as the most neglected, run-down part of Tel Aviv, characterized by high crime rates and multiproblem populations. According to different official sources, about 15,000–17,000 African illegal refugees are based there (Illegal Immigration from Africa to Israel 2015).

In Sweden, fear of crime has been examined more extensively than in Israel. Generally, the findings are compatible with the abovementioned international tendency (e.g., Bennet and Flavin 1994; Kury and Ferdinand 1998; Jansson et al. 2013; Jansson 2009; Lindgren and Nilsen 2012; Lindström et al. 2003). A constant

increase in reports of fear of crime since the 1990s has been found (e.g., European Commission 2002). A gender bias in reporting was found, with women and older people more inclined to report a fear of crime (Jakobsson and Hallberg 2005; European Commission 2002). Different levels of fear of crime were reported in neighborhoods with differing levels of integration (Mellgren et al. 2010; Wikström and Dolmén 2000), social order (Wikström and Dolmén 2000; Kullberg et al. 2009), and poverty (Larsson 2009). No correlation was found between higher fear of crime reported and the composition of the population in the neighborhood (Mellgren et al. 2010). A comparison between migrants and native Swedes showed that immigrants had a higher fear of victimization, and they were found to have a higher level of victimization than native Swedes when three aspects of crime against the person were considered (i.e., violence causing death, serious violence, and threats of violence) (Martens 2001).

Unsurprisingly, a review of the literature indicates significant differences between Israel and Sweden with respect to the extent of research on the subject of terrorism. While the issue has been extensively studied in Israel, only few studies were conducted on fear of terrorism in Sweden.

Due to its long-standing political and security instability, Israel has become a "stress laboratory" for the study of war- and terror-related stress (Doeland 2012). This has led to a substantial body of literature focusing on the psychological implications of terrorist incidents—both direct and indirect exposure (e.g., PTSD and distress) (Bensimon et al. 2013b; Besser et al. 2015).

A great deal of research has confirmed a correlation between level of exposure and traumatic events and PTS in various populations (e.g., Henriksen et al. 2010; Pfefferbaum et al. 2000). However, Israel has proven itself something of an outlier, with a minimal association between objective exposure and PTS or distress. This may be attributable to the development of habituation processes in response to the generally threatening environment (Sagy and Braun-Lewensohn 2009).

As the overall notion is that terrorism is not relevant to Swedish society, the perception of terrorism and its outcomes have not been widely investigated. Swedish cultural awareness reflects a self-concept of being a peaceful war-avoiding land, with a long history of refraining from any involvement in wars or international conflicts (e.g., Rabinowitz and Werner Carr 2001). International terrorist attacks (e.g., the World Trade Center in 2001, Madrid in 2004, and London in 2005) were perceived as not relevant to Swedish society, compatible to her open international policies. However, following the suicide-bomb attack in the center of Stockholm in 2010 and the Breivik attack (when an individual attacked a group of young people from the Social Democratic Party on a summer camp in Norway in order to influence the party's emigration policy), the subject was further investigated (e.g., Bergström 2012). The relatively recent international comparison by Finseraas and Listhaug (2013) indicates increasing pessimism and increasing support for government-funded security, following terrorist attacks such as that in Mumbai.

Back to our purpose and following the above background, an examination of the differences between the two societies, in their fear of crime and fear of terrorism, can provide an interesting comparison. We compared population groups susceptible to

frequent security threats to those not similarly exposed to safety risks, although the latter may be entering a new phase of terrorism awareness. Demographic, personal, and community predictors of perceived fear of crime and terrorism were considered.

## 2 Method

### 2.1 Participants

The study consisted of 340 consenting adult volunteers, 150 Swedish (age:  $M = 31.99$ ,  $SD = 12.34$ ) and 190 Israeli (age:  $M = 31.21$ ,  $SD = 8.26$ ). Sixty eight percent of the Swedes ( $n = 102$ ) and 61% of the Israelis ( $n = 116$ ) were men, and the rest were women, with no significant difference between the two groups.

Most Israeli participants were Jewish (99%), and most Swedish participants were Christian (87%). Most Israeli participants were Israeli born (92%). The Israelis had been living in their neighborhood for longer than the Swedes ( $M = 18.11$ ,  $SD = 12.96$ , and  $M = 10.76$ ,  $SD = 11.13$ ,  $t(319.41) = 5.51$ ,  $p < 0.001$ , respectively). About half (47.6%) of the Israelis and of the Swedes (54%) were married. Differences were found between the academic level of the two groups ( $\chi^2 = 113.81$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). While most of the Swedish participants had an academic background (80.4%) or were students (18.2%), in the Israeli group 20.5% had an academic background, 49% were students, and 30.5% had a high school education. Most of the participants in both groups defined themselves as secular (80% of the Israelis and 87.9% of the Swedes), with no significant difference between the groups. Most of the Israelis (83.2%) and 60.4% of the Swedes lived in urban areas, whereas the rest lived in rural areas and small communities.

### 2.2 Instruments

*Demographic characteristics:* the questionnaire gathered information on age, gender, religiosity, marital status, living situation, educational level, current employment characteristics, social status, income level, etc.

*Previous exposure to crime and terror:* participants were asked four questions to assess their own or their relatives' victimization experiences in the past 12 months. All were defined dichotomously, with "had been victimized" coded as (1) and "had not been victimized" coded as (0) (e.g., Have you been the victim of a violent crime/Have you been hurt in a terrorist attack?).

*Fear of crime and fear of terrorism:* fear was defined as a behavioral response to the possibility of being a victim of crime or terrorism, including behavioral adjustments performed to minimize the likelihood of that victimization. The items were based on previous instruments (Franklin et al. 2008; Klar et al. 2002). *Fear of crime* included seven items (e.g., "How much do you worry about getting mugged,"

"getting beaten up," "knifed," or "shot"?), to which replies ranged from 1 (never) to 4 (always) ( $\alpha = 0.89$ ). *Fear of terrorism* included six items (Klar et al. 2002) (e.g., "I am afraid of becoming a victim of terrorism"; "When I am in a public space I fear the possibility of a terror attack"; "I try to avoid travelling by bus due to the security situation"), to which replies ranged from 0 (never) to 4 (always) ( $\alpha = 0.88$ ). A total score was calculated for each scale, with higher scores reflecting greater fear.

*Neighborhood disorder* was examined based on previous instruments (Franklin et al. 2008; Gray et al. 2011) and was measured by asking participants about a list of nine incidents of neighborhood incivility (e.g., vandalism, youth gangs, garbage, and litter, drinking to excess in public) ( $\alpha = 0.90$ ). A total score was calculated for the items, ranging from 1 (not a problem) to 4 (a serious problem), with higher scores reflecting greater disorder.

*Social integration* was captured through responses to four questions derived from prior literature (Franklin et al. 2008): (1) "Would you describe the area where you live as a place where people help one another or as a place where people mostly go their own way?" (2) "Do you feel that the area where you live is more of a real home or simply a place to live?" (3) "How often do you talk to your neighbours?" and (4) "When you do a neighbour a favour, can you trust the neighbour to return the favour?" Higher scores reflected greater social integration. Due to differing metrics in which the questions were measured (dichotomous, four-point scales, five-point scales), responses to each item were standardized. The total scale score was composed of the mean of the items, such that higher scores reflected greater social integration. Reliability tests indicated acceptable internal consistency ( $\alpha = 0.74$ ).

### 2.3 Procedure

The study was based on a convenience sample. The participants' willingness to participate was ensured by the need to click on a link in order to access the battery of questionnaires and was reassured by an opening message informing them that participation is voluntary and that they can quit at any given time. In addition, participants were referred to the researchers and to the universities' relevant support in case of any questions they might have, resulting from their participation. Respondents were told that they are participating in a study examining perceptions and attitudes regarding crime and their neighborhood and that the questionnaire is anonymous and will be used for the research purposes only. All respondents signed an informed consent form indicating their consent to take part in the study and that they are entitled to discontinue their participation at will. The study followed the ethical recommendations of the Ethics Committee at Linköping University in Sweden and at Ariel University in Israel.



### 3 Results

#### 3.1 Victimization Experience: Objective Exposure to Terrorism and Crime

Duration of residence in the area was related to fear of crime ( $r = 0.14, p = 0.014$ ), fear of terrorism ( $r = 0.20, p < 0.001$ ), neighborhood disorder ( $r = 0.170, p = 0.002$ ), and social integration ( $r = 0.15, p = 0.008$ ). It was thus controlled for in data analysis. The research variables were generally unrelated to age, gender, marital status, and level of religiosity.

Personal exposure to crime was about 44% in both countries, with no significant difference. Other's exposure to crime was somewhat higher, about 50% in Israel and 60% in Sweden, yet with no significant difference. Personal exposure to terrorism was about 36% in Israel and only 3% in Sweden, a difference that was found to be significant ( $z = 7.24, p < 0.001$ ). Likewise, other's exposure to terrorism was about 48% in Israel and only 12% in Sweden, a difference that was found to be significant ( $z = 7.13, p < 0.001$ ). These results are demonstrated in Fig. 1.

#### 3.2 Differences in the Research Variables Between Israel and Sweden

A multivariate analysis of covariance,<sup>1</sup> controlling for duration of residence in the area, showed significant group differences in fear of crime [ $F(1, 337) = 25.34, p < 0.001$ ], fear of terrorism [ $F(1, 337) = 44.61, p < 0.001$ ], and neighborhood

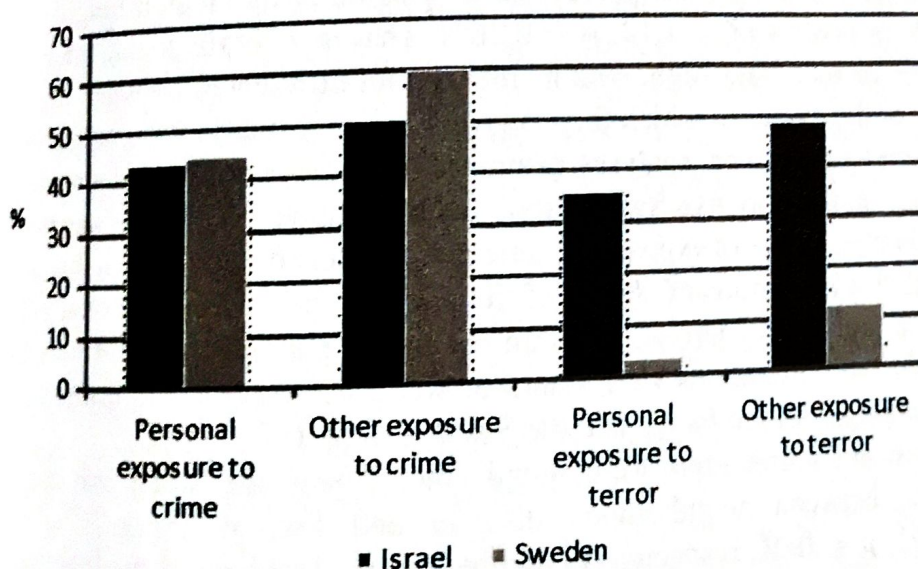


Fig. 1 Exposure to crime and terrorism by country

<sup>1</sup> A multivariate analysis of covariance is a method to test statistical significance differences between groups (several dependent and continues variables), by grouping an independent variable while

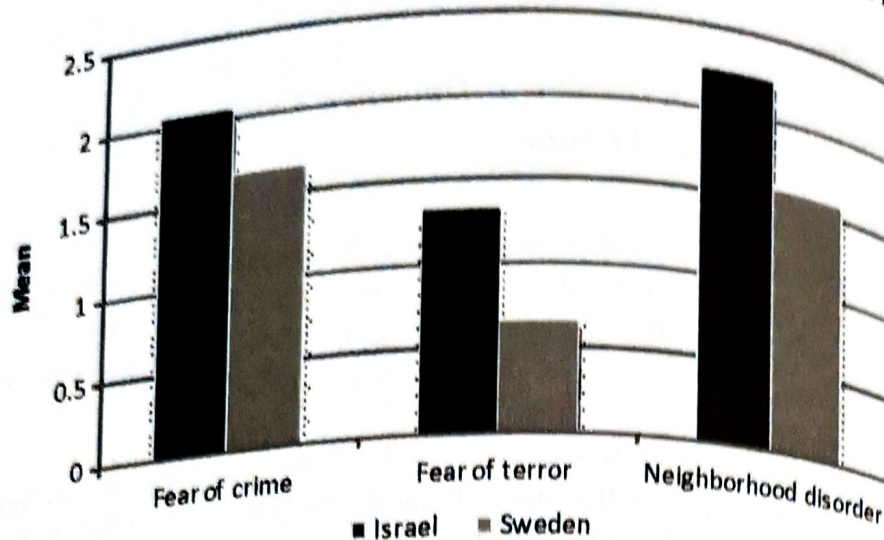


Fig. 2 Fear of crime and terrorism, and neighborhood disorder, by country

disorder [ $F(1, 337) = 66.40, p < 0.001$ ]. Fear of crime and fear of terrorism, although generally low, were higher in the Israeli sample than in the Swedish sample. Neighborhood disorder was assessed as rather low as well and was higher in the Israeli sample than in the Swedish sample. No differences were found in social integration. These results are illustrated in Fig. 2.

Regarding social integration, it should be noted that 58% of the Israeli sample and 65% of the Swedish sample reported that in their residential area, people tend to help each other ( $Z = 1.30, p = 0.194$ ). Sixty percent of the Israeli sample and 61% of the Swedish sample felt at home where they live ( $Z = 0.25, p = 0.806$ ). Seventy-four percent of the Israeli sample and 47% of the Swedish sample reported talking to their neighbors several times a week ( $Z = 4.99, p < 0.001$ ), and 68% of the Israeli sample and 74% of the Swedish sample felt that they could count on their neighbors most of the time or always ( $Z = 1.12, p = 0.263$ ). That is, overall, social integration was perceived as moderate-high, with no meaningful differences between the countries, except for the extent to which they engaged in conversation with neighbors.

A series of Pearson analyses examined the correlations between the research variables. While only five Swedes reported being direct victims of terrorism, correlations between rates of exposure to terrorism and fear of terrorism in this group were not statistically significant. A test of the correlation between personal exposure to terrorism and fear of terrorism within the Israeli population found no correlation. Similarly, no correlations were found between self-exposure to crime and fear of crime among both the Israeli and the Sweden samples.

Significant correlations were found among both the Israeli and the Swedish samples, between neighborhood disorder and fear of crime ( $r = 0.52$  and  $r = 0.51, p < 0.01$ , respectively) and between neighborhood disorder and fear of

removing the effect of a third variable which is called the covariate (in this case, duration of residence in the area). Such tests enable to see if differences between groups are random or not.

terrorism ( $r = 0.29$  and  $r = 0.42$ ,  $p < 0.01$ , respectively). Significant correlations were found among both samples also between social integration and fear of crime ( $r = 0.37$  and  $r = 0.18$ ,  $p < 0.01$ , respectively). However, no correlations were found between social integration and fear of terrorism. Finally, significant correlations were found among both the Israeli and the Swedish samples, between fear of terrorism and fear of crime ( $r = 0.40$  and  $r = 0.56$ ,  $p < 0.01$ , respectively).

## 4 Discussion

The findings of this study indicate differences between the Israeli and Swedish participants in their rates of reported levels of fear. Israelis fear becoming victims of both crime and terrorism more than Swedes, although both groups are similarly exposed to crime incidents (e.g., about 44% of the participants reported personal victimization and exposure to crime). In contrast, while many Israelis reported direct or secondary victimization by terrorism, only few Swedes reported such an experience. The correlation found in this research between the variables indicated similarities between the two populations, particularly in fear of crime. In the following sections, we shall discuss these findings in relation to the other studies' findings and to the theoretical background.

### 4.1 Fear of Crime, Neighborhood Disorder, and Social Integration

As mentioned above, both groups reported similar rates of exposure to crime, though fear of crime was higher among the Israeli population. This finding is compatible with findings from other studies showing that subjective perceptions (experienced level of fear) is not always directly associated with one's objective level of exposure (e.g., Shechory Bitton and Silawi 2016). In this study, we examined the association between fear of crime and social integration and neighborhood disorder based on the correlation found in other studies and theories (e.g., Franklin et al. 2008; Sampson 2010). Since no significant differences were found in social integration and both groups exhibited a positive correlation between reported fear and social integration, it may be assumed that the differences between the two populations are not associated with the reported level of integration.

A possible explanation might be related to the greater neighborhood disorder reported by Israelis compared to that of Swedes. The relationship found in this study between neighborhood disorder and rates of experienced fear corroborates the broken windows theory (Wilson and Kelling 1982), which suggested that neighborhoods in poor physical condition (e.g., loitering, gangs, vandalized property, etc.) will experience higher levels of fear of crime (Cook and Fox 2011; Franklin et al. 2008).

It is questionable whether this explanation is satisfactory as both populations, despite differences in defining their neighborhood order, were exposed to similar rates. Another possible explanation might be related to intercultural differences between the two groups, especially concerning citizens' trust in the justice and executive systems. In this study, this theme was not examined, yet a survey conducted by the European Social Survey (ESS), which examined trust in justice across the 28 countries, supports this assumption (Jackson et al. 2011).

The findings of the ESS survey indicate profound differences between Israel and Sweden. While Israelis tend to be least satisfied, people in Sweden tend to be most satisfied. Israelis express distrust and dissatisfaction toward the police, while Swedes tend to be most satisfied with the police and with the services it provides to citizens. For example, the ESS questions asked about judgement of contact with the police. Among those who have had such contact, Israelis tend to be least satisfied, while people in Sweden tend to be most satisfied. Moreover, Swedes reported high rates of contact with the police and high levels of satisfaction (for more details, see Jackson et al. 2011).

In future research, it would be worth examining the relationship between a population's degree of trust in the state's police and justice system and the rates of fear of crime, additionally to those variables examined in this study. One can assume a relationship between trust in the police and in the justice systems and one's sense of security and diminished fear of victimization. Mediating variables to fear of crime, neighborhood disorder, and trust in the state's executive systems, which require examination, are NIMBYism ("Not in my back Yard" syndrome—Dear 1992), *urban stewardship*, and perceptions of the state's role in providing security and *urban environmental stewardship* (Svendsen 2009; Svendsen and Campbell 2006). Rydgren et al. (2017) found that a collective ethnic memory shapes and differentiates the ability to trust social institutions.

Another possible explanation of these differences is intercultural differences in attitudes toward immigrants and "others." In Sweden, with its dominant socialistic-egalitarian tradition, a vision of people coming from another cultural/ethnicity national group as different or dangerous is considered taboo and pure racism (Rydgren 2002; Rydgren and Ruth 2013; Rydgren and Tyrberg 2016). As a result of this ideology, Sweden is the country that has absorbed the highest number of immigrants per capita. This belief stresses the idea that with the right social conditions and access to work, immigrants will contribute to the nation's economy as more individuals will pay taxes. The media coverage and views tend to emphasize the potential benefits of mass immigration (Rydgren 2002) and sympathy toward the refugees who have been systematically deprived of their human rights.

In contrast, in Israel, which has endured a lengthy ongoing conflictual political history and a highly competitive job market, the intercultural boundaries are

<sup>2</sup>In this study we addressed only two countries. The above mentioned survey included many countries, yet these are not in the scope of the current study.

<sup>3</sup>NIMBYism—"Not in my back yard" syndrome, is a communal protectionist positions signaling resistance to changes and communal developments in the neighborhood and areas in its proximity

emphasized to a greater extent (Kleist 2017) and affect fear of the "other" (Shechory Bitton and Soen 2016). The high concentration of illegal destitute African refugees has resulted in very strong tensions between the refugees and the local veteran Israeli population. The refugees' high numbers coincide with a deep feeling of resentment, discrimination, and dejection among veteran Israeli residents, especially those living in mixed neighborhoods. This feeling was reflected in widely covered protest demonstrations organized by the residents of these neighborhoods. The media depicted the severe deterioration of residents' sense of safety and security (e.g., Peretz 2014; Caspit 2013; Shechory Bitton and Soen 2016). Thus, the cultural perception of the "other" or "stranger" might also be related to fear of crime, yet further research should be pursued.

To conclude this part, a reasonable explanation for differences in levels of fear despite the similar rates of exposure has to do with the characteristics of the participants' residential area, their trust in the law enforcement and police systems, and the cultural meaning they ascribe to mass immigration and to encounters with the "other." However, it is necessary to deepen the research in this context.

#### **4.2 *Fear of Terrorism, Neighborhood Disorder, and Social Integration***

Examination of the relationship between fear of being a victim of terrorism and actual terrorist victimization indicates importance only in the Israeli context. While many Israelis reported personal victimization by terrorism, only few Swedes reported a similar experience.

In general, the correlations found between fear of terrorism, neighborhood disorder, and social integration are incompatible with previous findings. High neighborhood disorder was found to be associated with higher levels of fear of being a victim of terrorism (e.g., Shechory Bitton and Cohen-Louck 2016; Shechory Bitton and Silawi 2016). Signs of neighborhood disorder might translate into or reinforce a sense of vulnerability and uncertainty among the residents, although these are assumedly unrelated.

The present study's lack of association between social integration and fear of being victims of terrorism is in line with the claim that social integration might be facilitative but is not a sufficient condition (e.g., Gibson et al. 2002). Previous research found contradictory results. While some research findings show a positive relationship between social support and low levels of distress among residents living in combat areas (e.g., Gelkopf et al. 2012; Shechory-Bitton 2013), others show no correlation (Shechory Bitton and Cohen-Louck 2016). However, in the current study, the participants were asked about their social relationships in their place of residence but were not asked directly about support in cases of crisis such as exposure to a terrorist attack. We believe that there is room to shed more light on these contradictory results.

With regard to the differences between the groups, the higher rates of fear of becoming a victim of terrorism, shown by the Israelis, is understandable following the higher rates of exposure, compared to the Swedes. These outcomes corroborate findings reported in other studies showing a higher sense of fear and anxiety among those exposed to terrorist attacks (Benzion et al. 2009; Braun-Lewensohn and Mosseri Rubin 2014).

However, in general, the rates of fear of terror were low (mean of 1.32, ranging from 0–never to 4–always), even lower than the fear of becoming a victim of crime (mean of 2.05, ranging from 1 to 4). Although a great deal of research has confirmed a correlation between level of exposure to traumatic events and distress in various populations (e.g., Henriksen et al. 2010), studies have reported low levels of fear among Israelis who were exposed to terrorist attacks. Israel, with its lengthy experience of terrorist attacks, is a model of resilience and of maintaining a routine despite the threats (Gal 2014). Due to its long-standing political and security instability, Israel has proven itself something of an outlier, with a minimal association between level of objective exposure and distress. This may be attributable to the development of habituation processes in response to the generally threatening environment (e.g., Shechory Bitton and Cohen-Louck 2016; Sagy and Braun-Lewensohn 2009; Zemishlany 2012).

## 5 Conclusions

In this chapter, we have attempted to present an exploratory study that examined fear of crime and of terrorism and related variables within two countries that differ culturally. Before addressing the contribution of this study, it is necessary to point out its limitations. Initially, the sample was a convenience sample and rather small in both countries. There is a need to conduct this comparison with participants from diverse locations, including areas with a high concentration of immigrants.

In addition, this is a quantitative study. There is need to conduct a qualitative study that will include in-depth interviews with participants from both countries, which may provide deeper understanding and support of the current research findings. Finally, it may be worthwhile to study the relationship between the rates of trust in the law enforcement system and rates of fear of crime reported by citizens, in addition to possible mediating variables such as *urban stewardship*. Additionally, the vision of the “other” and socioeconomic stratification might also shed light on the sense of fear aroused by such dangers.

Despite the limitations described above, several interesting points can be drawn from this study. The findings show higher rates of fear of crime and terrorism in the Israeli group than among the Swedes. This is despite the similar rates of actual exposure to crime, but it bears a logical relationship to the Israeli society’s higher exposure to terrorism.

As we articulate these conclusions (April 7, 2017), it happens that in Sweden, a terror attack took place. Four people were killed and 15 injured as a truck collided in

a shop within a known shopping district in Stockholm. Security officials informed that the truck was hijacked outside the city before the event and that it is a terror attack. These events left many people in Sweden overwhelmed. Individuals who were interviewed by the media expressed that "It is incomprehensible how it could have happened here ... we are so peaceful and peace-seeking." The question whether the results would have been different if the questionnaire would have been distributed in Sweden following this attack is inevitable. Future research is needed to be able to answer this question.

### Questions

1. What were the two independent variables checked in the above-presented study, and why is it important to understand what there are effected by?
2. What were the dependant variables tested in this study (what were the determinants of fear of crime and fear of terror, which this study included)?
3. What did the comparison between the two groups of participants reveal?
4. Was there correlation between actual exposure to crime/terror to the level of fear that were reported?
5. What did the researchers suggest for future studies, and what can such studies reveal?

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