

Fear of crime: The concept's evolution from 2001 to 2021

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The article aims at the general description of the academic research that examines the fear of crime concept after September 11, 2001, when new areas of research became a part of security studies, substantially changing the very understanding of fear of crime. Thus, there was a change in the academic models for examining the social perception of crime. At first, there were some fruitful years for the sociological analysis of the fear of crime concept. Today, sociological studies of fear of crime continue, but this concept became even more important for criminological studies. Therefore, we analyzed the fear of crime category in the articles published in peer-reviewed academic journals in the criminological and sociological perspectives (Sage, Jstor, EbscoHost, and others). The findings explain the evolution of the fear of crime concept in the research from 2001 to 2021. For Latin America, the concept of fear is quite recent, which is very different from other regions of the world. Moreover, the interpretation of fear in Latin America is very different from both Europe and the United States. Although Latin America and the United States have much in common, the article presents the unique features of the Latin-American approach to this phenomenon.

Keywords: fear, crime, fear of crime, victimization, sociology, criminology, risk, security

Since the 9/11 attacks in New York and Washington, the concept of insecurity has spread over the world through the mass media, becoming an important part of contemporary societies. Now, feeling unsafe is a part of everyday conversation and news agenda in many countries, even in those with a low crime rate. Moreover, the fear of crime became a common word for common citizens in the United States. The emphasis on the threat of violent attacks made public safety a public priority (Haner et al., 2019: 1), and national policy could not fail to respond in all states, including western countries such as the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, Germany, and many others.

Thus, there is a new phenomenon: historically, before the attacks, most people's fears were associated with natural catastrophes or wars (Smith, Zeigler, 2017). Now, the new fear is a part of everyday life (Enders, Sandler, 2005) due to the 9/11 attacks that were covered by many social and mass media in all languages. These attacks are considered one of the most important moments in the millennium, and determined a new type of analysis and theories related to the fear of crime in the multidisciplinary perspective (Young, Findley, 2011; Diez, 2021).

After the events such as Chernobyl in 1986 or Fukushima in 2011, the world became smaller, and the feeling of risk can appear anywhere at any time in a catastrophic way;

however, since the 9/11 attacks, risk has become the biggest everyday threat people face in contemporary societies. Despite this apocalyptic scenario, Beck (1998) argues that it was in our era that contemporary societies started to think as a more conscious humanity, that is, not totally depending on science to control its future as it was in the last three centuries since the start of the modern science with the publication of *Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica*, during which people tried to create technologies to improve their life quality, while today we rather try to control nature and the social world. Therefore, by conscious actions in the present, the future has a chance to become better despite still staying risky.¹

The main feature of the new concept of risk is that it seems universal in not paying attention to gender, age, social status, or other classical social-economic variables. On the one hand, this is determined by the 'boomerang effect' as a part of contemporary risks, i.e., those who create risks are to experience their results. On the other hand, risks blur the social-economic boundaries, thus producing intersecting group relationships that enhance the effects of risks. In general, the adjective 'risk' can be added to the description of contemporary societies in both the micro- and macro-dimensions. Thus, fear of crime depends on many factors, perhaps, the most obvious being actual crime: at the micro-level, it might be expected that people who have suffered from crime experience more fear, and, at the macro-level, that regions with a higher level of crime are considered to be less secure (Prieto, Bishop, 2018).

The concept of risk allows to understand its effects in the macro-social perspective and to comprehend the fear of crime at the micro-level. Today, risk societies imply the subjective perception of risk, communications of risk, and social experiences of living in the risk society. These dimensions determine the new concept of risk as "the probability of an adverse event and the magnitude of the consequences" (Ekberg, 2007), and in a more neutral perspective, as "the potential to deliver beneficial as well as detrimental outcomes" (Mythen, 2007). Both interpretations have global consequences for social safety, causing important changes in national and international security policies.

A new scientific approach

Fear of crime is a relatively new concept in the academic world. It was introduced in the late 1980s, but its origins can be traced to the 1960s in the United States and the 1970s in Europe (Garofalo, 1981; Hale, 1996; Lee, 2001; Jackson, 2004; Jackson, 2006; Doyle, Gerell, Andershed, 2022). In those decades, researchers focused on such topics as safety, victimization, and risk perception using both qualitative and quantitative methods.

1. According to Luhman, "the concept of risk is, however, clearly distinguished from the concept of danger, that is to say, from the case where future losses are seen not at all as the consequences of a decision that has been made but are attributed to an external factor" (Luhman, 1993: 101–102). As a rule, the difference between risks and dangers is that the hazard is a potential source of something that can hurt the person, i.e., risk is the very possibility for a person to be hurt when exposed to danger (see, e.g.: Young, Brelford, Wogalter, 1990).

In Latin America, the concept has been explicitly used since 2008–2010 (Pearce, 2013), while there are indications that the concept was introduced earlier in the United Nations Programs in the region and the International Crime Survey (ICVS).² In Spain, the concept ‘fear of crime’ was introduced in the early 1990s, but studies of insecurity were already conducted in the 1980s, and the first comparative study was conducted in 1996. Spain is mentioned both for the spread of the ETA terror from 1968 to 2010 and for being the first country to study the citizens’ fear of crime, including in the comparative perspective.

However, it was the *Fear of Crime as a Social Fact* research that the concept of fear was first studied as a social rather than an individual phenomenon (Liska et al, 1982: 768). Liska et al considered those structural differences between cities that could influence the people’s fear of crime. Liska et al used the traditional sociological variables and compared their ‘whites’ and ‘nonwhites’ values. In the macro-dimension, there is fear of crime in the entire country rather than in its regions. The study of Hernández, Dammert, and Kanashiro (2020) showed that Latin America was a violent area with the fear of crime widely spread but not fully understood, and that Peru had the highest level of crime and crime victimization in the region (according to the international statistics on crime and justice of the European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, Vanderbilt University’s 2012 public opinion survey (LAPOP), and the Human Right Watch (2020)). The results of the study showed that the body-aimed victimization was the strongest driver of fear of crime, even greater than armed victimization. Safety measures based on social capital are negatively associated with fear of crime, which means that they are palliatives rather than real protection. On the other hand, people of higher social-economic status were more likely to fear more due to having more to lose.

The European surveys in 1979 and 1980 were conducted with the victimization approach. For instance, Spain participated in the first International Crime Survey in 1989, but not in the next two surveys in 1992 and 1996. One of the key surveys was the British Crime Survey that started in 1982 and ended in 2015 when the last report was published. This survey is important because it was based on the methodology that both operationalized Ferraro and LaGrange (1987) fear of crime concept and was the largest survey applied in different countries.

The definition of fear of crime is evolving (Liska et al, 1982; Muñoz, 2009; Gray, Jackson, Farral, 2011) and the number of related research grows every year. In 2000, there were 800 studies on the topic (Restrepo, Moreno, 2007) and in 2020, about 1900. At present, there is no general definition for fear of crime. According to Hale (1996) and Gray, Jackson and Farrall (2007), fear of crime refers to the fear of being a victim of crime as opposed to the real probability of becoming a victim of crime; according to Ferraro (1995: 24), FOC is an emotional response in the form of ‘dread’ of becoming a victim of crime, or anxiety about crime in general, or symbols associated with crime (Franc, Sucic, 2014).

2. The ICVS is based on the National Crime Survey (NCS–1984) of the United States Department of Justice (van Dijk et al, 2007; van Dijk, 2010; Kesteren, van Dijk, Mayhew, 2014), which aimed at describing either victimization or the fear of ten criminal offenses.

Thus, there is still no agreement for the definition of fear of crime. According to Etiopo and Berthelot (2022), there are three disagreements in defining FOC: first, whether fear is different from concern, or whether they are interchangeable terms; second, whether fear of crime includes perception of risk; and third, whether crime includes anxiety, or they are absolutely different. After fifty years of attempts to conceptualize the fear of crime, these questions remain unanswered, determining the need to clarify what the fear of crime is.

The study's methodology

We searched for relevant publications in the Jstor, Ebsco, DOAJ, Sage, and Scielo to identify different meanings of the concept of fear of crime in the well-known databases that index articles in English as well as Spanish, French, Portuguese, and Italian. Articles in other languages allowed us to see the evolution of the concept in the academic world³ for fear of crime has been extensively discussed. It should be noted that in Latin-American universities, the language barrier in science is the main reason for their contributions being often ignored. This is the reason why theories and findings from this region and others non-English-speaking countries have not been spread as they should, which made us include other languages to increase the variability of the theoretical sample.

The criteria for search in the databases were as follows; the category “fear of crime” in the content or in the title, articles in languages listed, articles published between 2001 and 2021 (before 2001, there was no international terrorism, only national or regional, and two decades are a sociologically relevant period), in the sociology and/or criminology fields. Based on these criteria and the object of the study, the first sample consisted of 207 articles. Based on their content (as sociological or criminological), the final sample was reduced to 112 articles fully meeting all research criteria.

The third procedure applied to 112 articles was the ‘term frequency — inverse document frequency’ (tf-idf) technique which allows to assess the probability of meaningful words in the corpus of articles, for both each article and the whole dataset (Cheng, Chen, 2019). The tf-idf formula is as follows: $w_{i,j} = tf_{i,j} \times \log(\frac{N}{df_i})$, in which $tf_{i,j}$ — frequency of i in j , df_i — number of documents with i , N — number of articles. This technique is a result of the traditional ‘text mining’ and ‘information retrieval’ (Antons et al., 2020) in the computational text analysis, which consisted in the identification of ‘token’-words and N-grams equal to two words maximum. Its application on English articles in the sample allowed us to study articles in other languages (based on the translation of meaningful words into English): the corpus was standardized in English to make all articles comparable.

The method for identifying tokens follows the Wang, McCallum and Wei (2007) approach for identifying a token next to another one in the same sentence. Methodologi-

3. The concept of fear of crime in other languages: peur du crime (French), o medo do crime (Portuguese), miedo al crimen or miedo al delito (Spanish), and paura del crimine (Italian).

cally, this decision was determined by the category of interest in two separate concepts, fear and crime. If two tokens had similar probability for each document just like the N-gram of these two, the article was perfectly reliable for the sample and further analysis (Kruzeck et al., 2020). Thus, the final research sample consisted of 48 related articles in sociology (34) and criminology (14); 9 from the DOAJ (sociology — 5, criminology — 4), 21 from the Sage (sociology — 11, criminology — 10), and 8 from the EBSCO, 6 from the JSTOR, and 4 from the Scielo in sociology. With the graphical tdf–tf analysis, we identified four different groups in sociology and three groups in criminology focused on the fear of crime concept (Kim, Gil, 2019).

As the corpus was consistent and with a clear aggregation, we categorized the corpus of the machine learning technique called ‘clustering analysis with the kmeans algorithm’ which grouped the related documents according to the probability of every vector. This method aims at comparing each article with other articles in each discipline. According to the above-mentioned graphical aggregation (Kin, Gil, 2019), four clusters for sociology and three clusters for criminology were identified. The kmeans algorithm was calculated by the following formula: $J = \sum_{n=1}^N \sum_{k=1}^K r_{nk} \|x_n - \mu_k\|^2$, in which k — number of clusters, n — number of cases, x — case, and μ — center of the cluster.

We could identify more than a thousand vectors; therefore, it was necessary to eliminate correlated vectors and similar values over 95%. Thus, 1,011 vectors in 34 sociology articles were reduced to 146 vectors, and 490 vectors in 14 criminology articles were reduced to 47, which allowed the examining of how sociology and criminology had considered the fear of crime concept from 2001 to 2021.

The methodology applied followed the concept’s evolution to identify its features, differences, attributes, prerequisites, uses, and meanings for two decades. This methodology was first developed in nursing studies as opposed to sociology, criminology, or social sciences in general. In the early 1980s, this methodology aimed at “clarifying the range of events, situations, or phenomena over which the application of concept is considered to be appropriate” (Rodgers, 1989: 334). The best way to learn the concept’s evolution is to follow its process, which is based on the next seven steps of the methodology as revised by Walker and Avant (2011): identify and name the concept; identify surrogate terms and relevant uses of the concept; identify and select an appropriate sample for data collection; identify attributes of the concept; identify references, prerequisites, and consequences of the concept; and, if possible, identify concepts related to the concept and its model case (Rodgers 1989, 2000; Rogers et al, 2018).

With this method, we can analyze empirical concepts in the environment they belong to and during their ‘lifetime’. Rodgers developed a way to classify concepts and their uses in different disciplines, which is why we selected this approach for our research, because traditional social-science methodologies such as grounded theory, discourse analysis, or content analysis have different purposes and means for examining data (Carrie et al., 2021; Rafii et al., 2016).

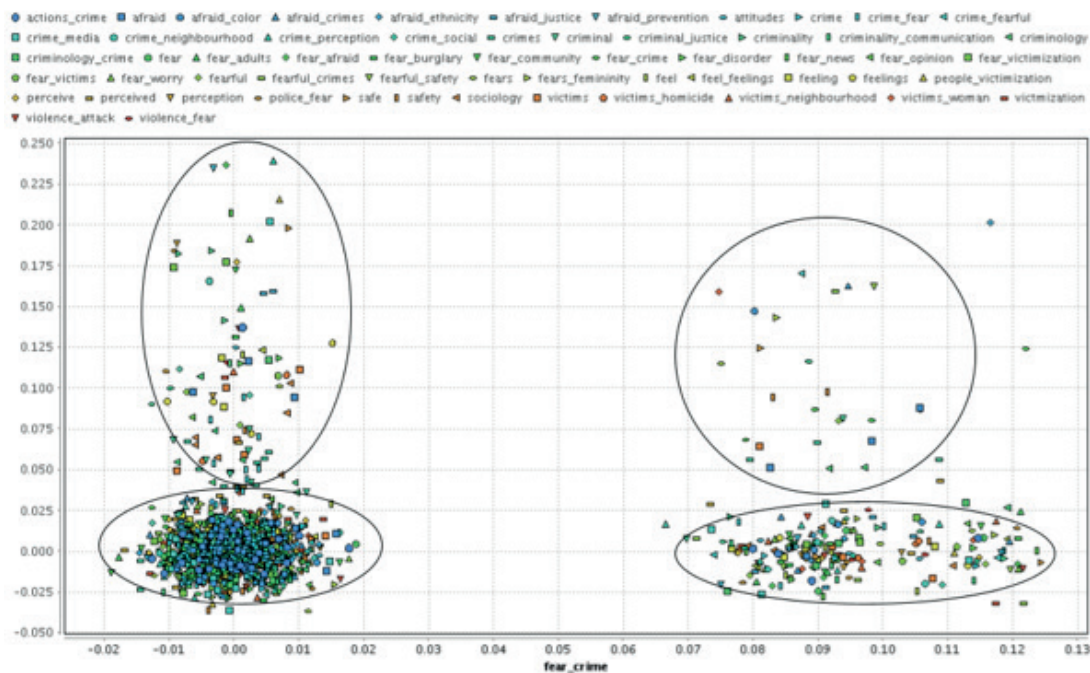


Fig. 1. Tf-idf of articles from the 'fear_crime' vector in correlation with surrogate concepts (post vector elimination $r > 0.95$)

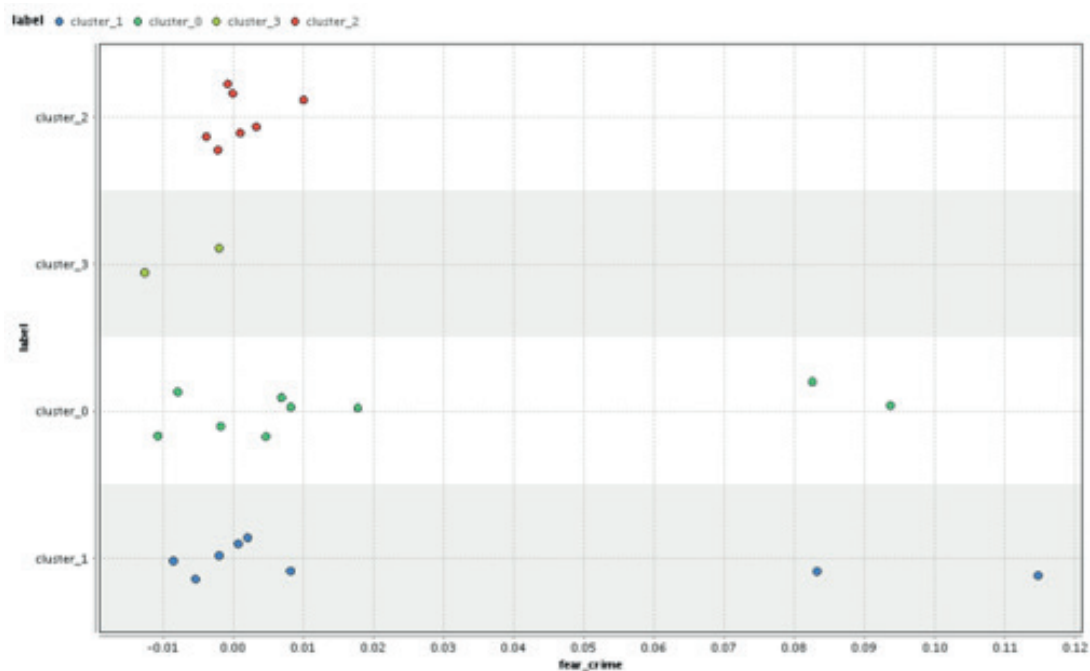


Fig. 2. Clustering ($k = 4$) end of the articles from the 'fear_crime' vector in sociology

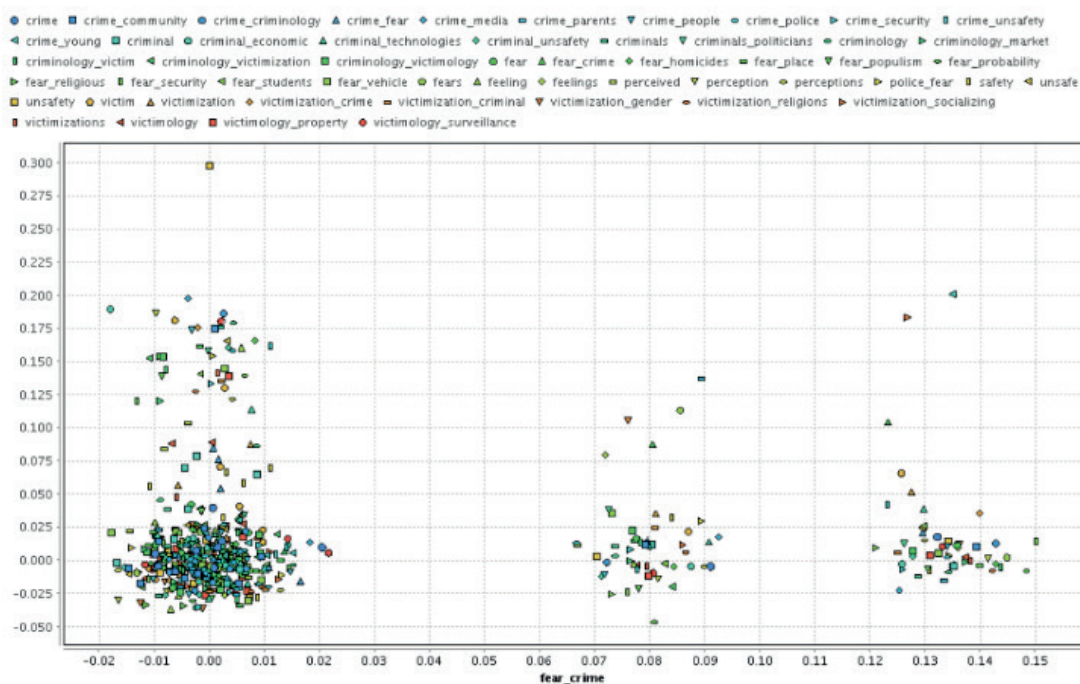


Fig. 3. Tf-idf of items from the 'fear_crime' vector in correlation with surrogate concepts (post vector removal $r > 0.95$)

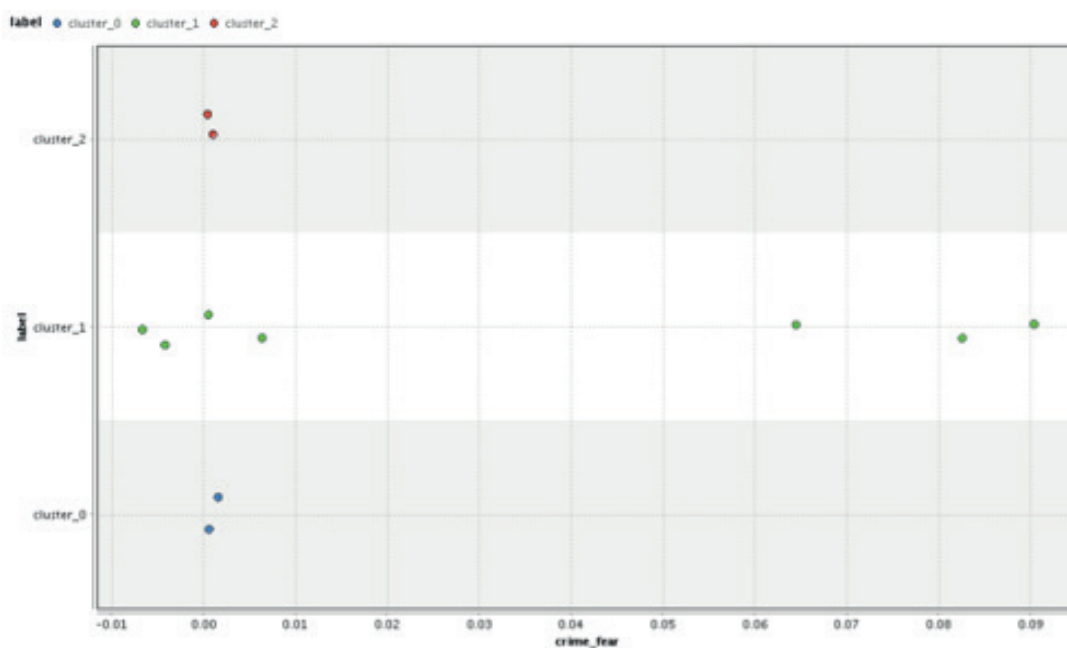


Fig. 4. Clustering ($k = 3$) end of articles from the 'crime_fear' vector in sociology

Findings

According to the concept analysis method, it is first necessary to identify the very concept. We chose the definition of fear of crime as “the negative emotional reaction generated by crime or symbols associated with crime” (Ferraro, LaGrange, 1987: 73), although it has limitations in validity and reliability (Lim, Chun, 2015; Engström, Kronkvist, 2021) due to the concept’s multifaceted nature combining affective, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions. The fact that this definition is still applied after the thirty years of use proves its importance in the academic research (Alper, Chappel, 2012; Rader, 2017; Armborst, 2017). Although the participation bias is common for this type of research, future studies would attempt to minimize the data imbalance determined by the articles’ heterogenous content.

After this concept had been introduced in criminology, it was borrowed by other disciplines such as sociology, communication studies, politics, and international relations, but we focus on criminology and sociology. Every field of knowledge has made efforts to include the fear of crime concept into its disciplinary boundaries by developing theories and methodologies to consider it empirically, and to introduce new concepts based on the original one. This is why it is important to study the evolution of any concept in order to expand its interpretations and to enhance its multidisciplinary applications.

Sociological approach

In the sociology ‘section’, the cluster analysis showed four conglomerates based on 142 meaningful vectors associated with fear of crime, allowing us to interpret the relationship within each article and in the cluster. The clusters were called ‘mass media’, ‘security’, ‘social order’, ‘socialization’, and the ‘justice system’.

‘Mass media’ is the largest cluster. We should admit that it is difficult to explain the phenomenon of fear of crime in an empirical way because there is a contradiction with Ferraro–LaGrange’s concept about the importance of social environment in criminal acts, i.e., the environment is defined by people who act deviantly. In other words, the crimes shown the most on the mass media decontextualize information to create a new environment as ‘forgetting’ the crime situation. This is also linked to business interests for the mass media sensationalize events in the news, as all the research have shown since the development of this field. In Portuguese, Pastana (2007) defined this phenomenon as “*informação espetáculo*” (showbiz news).

The fear of crime variables and categories are difficult to operationalize (Babbie, Maxfield, 2017): scientifically speaking, they must not be related to other variables such as preconceptions, especially if they are in someone’s business interests. Articles in this cluster were strongly related to crime prevention, victims, the police, and the impact of such news on the audience. The connection of these concepts and social actors is a particular feature of these articles since they analyze crime in the legal perspective as punishable

behavior instead of the socially perceived deviant behavior. This is why the only actors identified in the news are the victim and the aggressor, while the context of the crime event is a mass-media mystification that became a part of the idea of crime, safety, aggression, and people's perception.

The risk concept developed by Beck in the 1990s is a part of this cluster due to the western interpretation of security in the macro-theory (Heber, 2011). However, if we use this macro-theory in research, we will face a challenge of learning how the concept of fear of crime was interpreted. Although the concept of risk was to explain the structural framework of fear of crime, this concept instead led to the misinterpretation of its impact and consequences for people's everyday lives at the micro-level. Often the concept of risk is replaced by the meaning of fear of crime, which determines the latter's ambiguous definition and its association with security (Krulichová, 2019). Some other studies associate fear of crime with the concept of risk (making it a tautological interpretation), which is why it is difficult to comprehend risk in the empirical perspective. According to Jackson and Gray (2010), about a quarter of respondents worried about crime also reported that (1) they took precautions, (2) which made them feel safer, and (3) neither precautions nor worries about crime reduced their quality of life. This is why the concept of risk was the less-important subcategory in this cluster.

Security is a special concept inside the cluster due to being the starting point of the Latin-American Research. Articles in English did not contribute to this category due to the above-mentioned lack of agreement in the criteria. This part of the concept method evolution in the Latin-American perspective provided a variety of concepts associated with *seguridad-inseguridad* (safe/unsafe) (Pastana, 2007; Moreno, Ponce, 2016; Ogneva-Himmelberger et al, 2019); *percepción de inseguridad* or *sensación de inseguridad* (perception of safety or a sense of insecurity); and *sentimiento de inseguridad* (feeling of insecurity) (Reid et al., 2020). Such different approaches to the same phenomenon prove the academic efforts to ensure the best empirical study of fear of crime in the region. Nevertheless, security and fear of crime are different; the latter is studied in the individual perspective, while the former is studied in the collective perspective (groups, government, law, and so on), although Latin-American scholars have tried to combine both. This can be represented in the traditional Latin-American studies that have focused on urban violence since the 1980s, or "the lost decade" (Briceño-León, 2002). In this period, violence was spreading because cities started to grow quickly, provoking an increase in violence, crime, disorder, and social-economic conflicts.

The cluster 'fear of crime and social order' is the second largest aggregation of articles on the social environment of the studied population, mainly on neighborhoods, with some exceptions focused on the cities (Prieto Curiel, Bishop, 2018; Pastana, 2007; Dammert, 2004). These studies consider relationships in specific urban areas, neighborhood networks, and people's perception of their social environment in terms of deviant behavior. Thus, articles in this cluster interpret the fear of crime phenomenon with the fundamental sociological terms such as community and social order. As a rule, these studies focus on relations between family members, families, and the neighborhoods they live

in. This is the most important change in the field of research under study: scholars aim at understanding how individuals learn both fear of crime and its influence on their definitions of fear of crime (Drinkard et al., 2019; Dammert, 2004).

Another key concept in this cluster is victimization, which adds an emphatic empirical path to the study of people's perception of fear of crime: one's and others' (family, friends, and acquaintances) experiences affect the definition of the fear of crime self-perception (Singer et al., 2018; Kohm, 2009). Moreover, the empirical focus allows us to identify and measure the correlation between the fear of crime perception and such variables as race (Alper, Chappell, 2012), gender and age (Farrall et al., 2021), education (Alper, Chappell, 2012; Maier, DePrince, 2020), and social-economic status (Hernández et al., 2020).

In the sub-category 'crime', scholars use *delito* (crime) and *crimen* (crime) in Spanish as synonyms, but sociology separates these two concepts (Sandoval, Martínez Barón, 2008; García, Solano, Ruiz, 2018; Rossi et al, 1974; Hope, 2001; Aaronson, Shaffer, 2021). The first refers only to crimes defined in criminal codes, while the second one refers to any deviant behavior (not necessarily defined in criminal codes). However, not all crimes can be considered deviant behavior, for instance, state crimes. There are different categories of crime, such as infractions, misdemeanors, felonies, criminal and civil cases that, if merged methodologically and theoretically, produce misinterpretations in the analysis, making it difficult to choose concepts, the questions' validity, and the reliability of the research. Furthermore, by emphasizing the importance of family as the fundamental social institution, this research contributes to the understanding of specific symbols associated with the general concept of crime (with multiple features, ways of behavior, tattoos, gestures, etc.) (Sreetheran, van den Bosch, 2014; Dammert, 2004).

The third important cluster is 'fear of crime and socialization'. It includes studies of the general concept of violence with the focus on youth; family is also considered important since mothers and fathers play the main role in the fear of crime definition since one's childhood (Farral et al., 2021; Cops, 2010). These studies also examine the moral aspect of criminal acts, addressing the idea that the police protect the moral community and social order due to its symbolic legitimacy to control individuals. Thereby, these studies focus on the impact of police responses and its presence in public areas on either people or the government (Dau et al., 2021).

The concept of violence is a part of this cluster in the political-institutional perspective due to the social ideals of the police as the protector of morality and of the government as the only one capable of ensuring social safety for citizens, or at least capable of convincing people of being safe. However, such a concept was only found in Brazilian articles as associated with the sociological concept of deviance defining diverse actions and the absence of social harmony (lack of social order) among people in their social environment (Nurse, 2017). Thus, violence is partially associated with FOC and not related to the sociologically relevant consequences of violence, but implies the effect of social environment and perceptions of crime (Pastana, 2007).

The relationship between the social environment and the category of violence⁴ as focused on diverse behavior and the environment's impact on people's perception added 'social order' to the evolution of the FOC concept. This is important because social order is a core concept in sociology, which allows extending the fear of crime concept beyond Ferraro and LaGrange's definition, that is, from individuals to specific situations. This is why social contexts and social bonds are crucial for comprehending the fear of crime concept in both the social relationship (Pastana, 2007) and social order (Kohm, 2009) perspectives, adding theoretical value to one of the most important fields of studies in the evolution of the fear of crime concepts, that of the 'incivilities thesis' which refers to some social principles and the impact of faults, impolite and rude behavior, and some criminal acts. Following this thesis, sociological studies of violence can be linked to such sub-categories as victimization and crime due to its relationship with the government and police control of crime (Romero, 2014; Reid et al., 2020) as decreasing the people's perception of insecurity (Avila et al., 2016; Romero, 2014).

Finally, the 'fear of crime and the penal system' is the smallest cluster associated with people's concerns about the system's impartiality. This cluster's small size could mean that the fear of crime category keeps crossing the disciplinary borders of sociology (Singer et al., 2018; Prieto Curiel, Bishop, 2018).

Thus, in the twenty years of research, our analysis identifies three approaches in the sociological study of fear of crime, those of the vulnerability model, the deviation model, and the social integration model.

Criminological approach

During the twenty years after 9/11, most researchers in the criminological field continued to use Ferraro and LaGrange's concept and methodology of fear of crime, but with some critique, expanding the original explanation to focus on specific groups, reinterpret the original fear of crime concept, and question the traditional methods of its analysis. Our cluster analysis identified three conglomerates based on both the 47 significant vectors associated with fear of crime and on the original Ferraro and LaGrange definition with some reinterpretations (Matthews, Johnson, Jenks, 2011), which led to a challenging comprehension of the fear of crime phenomenon (Cops, 2010). The most significant aspect in these articles is that researchers started to empirically explore two terms — fear and crime — separately. Cops writes that "two main clusters of criticism of the traditional measurement of fear of crime — the one-item measurement and the lack of referral to both 'fear' and 'crime'... fear of crime in this study is measured using a multi-item scale, in which the concepts 'fear' and 'crime' are explicitly used in most of the items in the scale" (2010: 391).

Based on the category of 'fear of crime, mass media and community', researchers found reasons to develop policies that would decrease both the effects of fear of crime and the role of the mass media portraying crime situations (Näsi et al, 2021). It was after Cops's findings that changing policies became a relevant part of the fear of crime concept

4. Violence is not a synonymus of crime (see, e.g.: Stanko, 2001: 316).

due to their impact on people's perception. The studies considered bonds between family members, communities, neighborhoods, and cities to assess fear of crime and its impact in people's responses, based on the idea of crime as a byproduct of socialization that objectivizes the symbols of crime and teaches children and teenagers to avoid dangerous situations. This was empirically proven by the most important Ngram result in this part of the research, that of 'crime_fear' instead of the expected 'fear_crime'.

On the contrary, the research related to the category of 'mass media' (Canallan, 2012; Banks, 2005) does not show new approaches compared to the 1970s when the impact of mass media on people's perception of crime was explained by the 'cultivation thesis' (it implies that those exposed to the media interpret social realities according to how such realities are portrayed in the media): Banks writes that "the media (primarily television) generate 'undue' or 'irrational' fear, largely through their obsession with crime news and genres, an overblown emphasis on the crime 'threat' and sensationalized coverage of spectacular (usually violent) crime" (2005: 171). This could also be explained by another category developed in the 1970s, that of the 'mean world syndrome': it comes from the idea that we all have a cognitive bias, i.e., we learn to see the world as more dangerous than it is because "the mass media tend to represent the world predominantly as uncivil, violent and threatening rather than as orderly and secure" (Lupton, Tulloch, 1999: 509). This is why the impact of mass media on the population cannot be measured properly and does not help to understand the fear of crime concept on the micro-level. The contemporary hyper-communicated world makes it difficult to find a methodology that would identify the source of information that directly affects the people's perceptions of crime.

Based on the category of 'risk society', criminological studies of fear of crime identified other aspects that affect the people's perception of crime, such as an increase in the number of murders, an unstable economy, and penal law. The last category is specific for the North American research (Lane et al., 2014; Cops, 2010) due to the impact of the 9/11 on penal law. However, there was little research associated with risk society to expand our interpretations.

On the contrary, research related to 'youth studies' has greater potential for criminology (Walsh, Schubotz, 2020; Cops, 2010). The interest in this specific social group, the largest one in many societies, created a new path to explore fear of crime for the youth group is both the most victimized and the less-scared group worldwide (Bauman, 2002; Farrall, Lee, 2009; Cops, Pleysier, Put, 2012; McKenna, Martinez-Prather, Bowman, 2016; Krulichová, Podaná, 2019). From this perspective, researchers started to focus on such topics as family and socialization and leisure activities and social capital, while still testing the traditional hypothesis of fear of crime depending on the age.

Thus, the evolution of the fear of crime concept in criminology can be defined as a path affected by both the symbolical and rational (De Groof, 2008) and focusing on teens (when symbols associated with crime are internalized) and children (when the 'altruistic fear of crime'⁵ develops in the closest social circles (family and friends), producing

5. According to Warr (1992) and Warr and Ellison (2000), it is when one fears that someone also will be an object of crime.

a specific narrative for describing fear of crime and groups of young criminals (more exposed to the consequences of criminal environments)) (Cops, 2010; Näsi, 2020). The first and last clusters show that during the period under study, there was an increase in the number of victimization surveys (Cops, 2010) and a clear transition to the safety perspective (Ceccato et al., 2021). However, our methods and hypotheses should be further confirmed with more empirical data.

Conclusion

The first findings about the evolution of the fear of crime concept in sociology and criminology as related mainly to mass media research can be explained by the fact that, since the 1970s, there have been unsatisfactory explanations of the mass media impact on people’s perceptions (for instance, studies of moral panic), which defined the mass media as one of the causes of fear of crime. Some studies continued to use the classical definition of fear of crime introduced by Ferraro and LaGrange (1987): this research perspective can be associated with the rationalistic era of the fear of crime studies in the 1990s. However, due to the intrinsic conflict in the original definition and measurement of fear of crime, some researchers used this definition critically and applied different (qualitative) methods (Gray, Jackson, Farral, 2011; Lane et al., 2014).

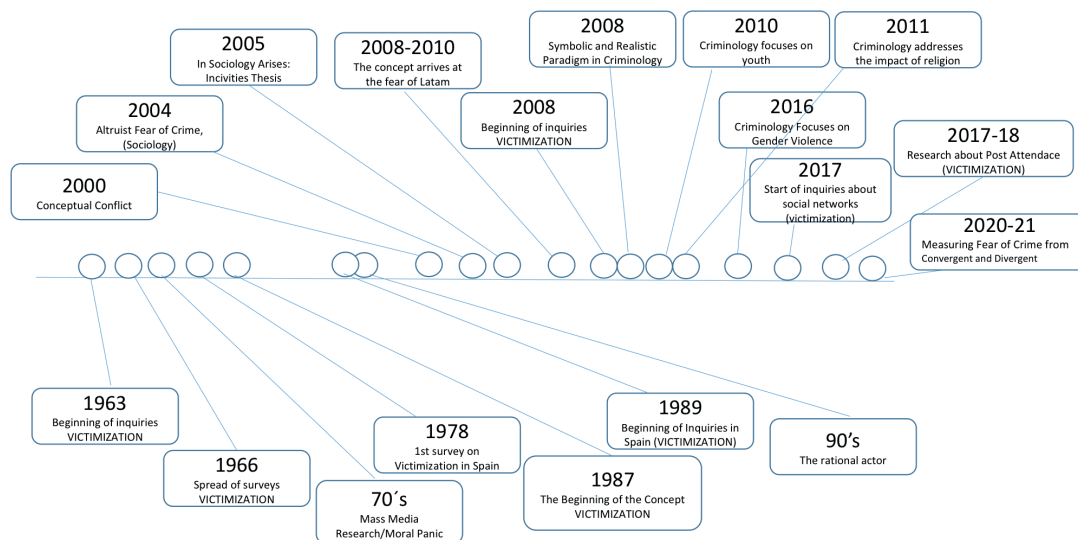


Fig. 5. The evolution of the fear of crime concept⁶

The study of fear of crime has changed its focus from the surveys of the people’s perceptions in general to the qualitative analysis of specific groups’s ideas (family, friends, or neighborhoods). During the period under study, new concepts such as the

6. The figure shows the evolution of the concept — how it started and spread in different fields. The figure presents a general perspective — concepts and fields associated with fear of crime in the period under study.

‘altruistic fear of crime’ were introduced,, which emphasizes the role of socialization, or the ‘incivilities thesis’, which then emphasizes youth and religion as important aspects for the understanding of the origins of fear of crime. Surprisingly, this research reorientation happened in the late 1990s in Lupton and Tulloch’s work related to the rationalistic era, writing that the “fear of crime is not specifically about crime itself, but also incorporates concerns about oneself or one’s intimates, or about society and social life, and is constructed through both personal biography and discourse” (Lupton, Tulloch 1999: 14). In the early 2000s, the new fear of crime concept spread in Latin America but as associated with safety, creating a new branch in this concept’s evolution, differing from the symbolic paradigm and other types of its study, thus, providing more knowledge on people’s perceptions of fear of crime as well as new areas for comparative research.

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Страх преступности: трансформации понятия с 2001 по 2021 годы

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Цель статьи — общее описание корпуса научных работ, посвященных изучению понятия «страх преступности» после 11 сентября 2001 года, когда исследования безопасности

были дополнены новыми тематиками, которые существенно изменили само понимание словосочетания «страх преступности». По сути, произошла смена научных моделей изучения социального восприятия преступности. Первые годы после 11 сентября 2001 года были весьма плодотворными для социологического анализа страха преступности. Сегодня такие исследования продолжаются, но данное понятие стало значительно более важным для криминологических работ. Соответственно, мы рассмотрели, как понятие «страх преступности» используется в статьях, опубликованных в рецензируемых научных журналах криминологической и социологической тематики (в базах данных Sage, Jstor, EbscoHost и других). Результаты исследования позволили объяснить логику трансформации понятия «страх преступности» в научных работах в период с 2001 по 2021 годы. Для Латинской Америки понятие страха — относительно новое, чем она серьезно отличается от других регионов мира. Более того, в Латинской Америке приняты принципиально иные трактовки страха, чем в Европе и США. Хотя Латинская Америка и США имеют много общего в контексте рассматриваемой проблематики, в статье обозначены уникальные черты латиноамериканского подхода к определению и изучению феномена страха преступности.

Ключевые слова: страх; преступление; страх преступности; виктимизация; социология; криминология; риск; безопасность