Urban neighborhoods: Investigation of women’s security and its strategies

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Abstract
Searching the security and in its general concept, freedom from fear, intimidation, harassment and threat has been one of the initial and fundamental human’s requirement since the beginning of social life. One of the bitter experiences of our community is oppression of women's rights and security including threatening their security outside and inside the home, and damages according to their mental and physical conditions. Reducing violence against women, fear about crime and improvement of their security are the obligations of the state and the community at various levels. Current article has been conducted by library study and investigation of various countries trade about the strategies to cope with the risk factors for women seeking to improve the security factor of the women emphasizing on neighborhood societies. Since the security is an aftermath of threats and vulnerabilities, security for the women in the neighborhoods is investigated by two aspects; firstly, empowering the women and reducing their vulnerability degree and this issue is possible by identifying various types of injuries and ways to deal with it and secondly, eliminating the threatening factors in neighborhoods and public places and enhancing the level of security of the neighborhoods which is possible through intersect oral collaboration of all organs involving the security and community issues. In this regard, creation of women’s security groups which tackle the women’s security issues in the neighborhoods is suggested; these groups are able to play the role of the relationship between local, regional and metropolitan levels. Also, they mostly have the duty of informing, education, conduct and supporting the women particularly those are high risk or live with violent husbands. Features of the mentioned groups and their operation have been explained using the experiences of other countries.

Introduction
Our society is a transition society in which the occurred changes have brought the women into the field of market, urban relations and social activities. On the other hand, considering that the women’s vulnerability due to various crimes is higher because of psychological and physical characteristics, therefore, violation to them is easier especially in poor laws condition.

Despite the weakness in the penal and official system about fighting with crime and delinquency and the needs of women who are victims of domestic and street violence, the emergence of informal supports and based on community-based societies will be necessary, so, the important issue is identification of suitable social mechanisms to fight various types of the injuries which threaten the women, and here, the needs of victims should not be neglected. Basically the penal systems do not have such abilities in their formal functioning; also, there are major problems in police behavior toward the victims. These problems are imaginable from a number of aspects; firstly, Police have no institutional responsibility toward the victims, informing them does not have any institutional responsibility to make up the damages through the existent way, and on the other hand, in many cases, the police considers the victims as a witness and not only the victim of crime [12].

On the other hand, according to the nature of women’s victimizations particularly related to the family violence, the official systems are not able to support victims and access to the facts and matters. Statistics of crime, particularly family crime suggest the high black value of these matters. Hence, informal support which can sometimes be in the form of a neighborhood network has the ability to detect and monitor the people.

About curbing the crime, global experiences have shown that, governmental reactions without the society participation have been less successful. In many countries, there are voluntary organizations of people (charities) which play a major role in services for victims and sometimes have asked about essential and emergent requirements of the victims via some questionnaires. In this article, we intend to identify the nature of
women’s fear and insecurity in addition to introducing the local supports mechanisms in reduction crime against women through informal community organizations. In this regard, the global experiences are suggested.

Anyway, one of the goals of informal measures can be considered in the detection of crime and for better supervision of the people actions by based on these measures, and another goal of informal measures is to prevent crime which is not separate from the supervision issue. Additionally, informal measures are basically based on victim cognitive view and can consider are forming goal of in relation to offenders and victims. So it seems that, the purposes of informal organizations are the same purposes of the official organizations that are to fight against crime, but they pursue their goals by different tools and non-penal policy.

1. The concept of security in neighborhood space:

Urban neighborhoods are formed by adjacent houses in an urban space which amplify the sense of neighborhood among their people. The families have a sense of dependency to their neighborhood and by entering to the neighborhood they see themselves in a familiar environment. Neighborhood generally is created by strong neighborhood ties and informal alliance between a mass of people. The study of neighborhood in the West World began for the first time, by “Robert Park” and “Roderick Mackenzie” in 1926. They emphasized maybe for the first time, in a physical range (neighborhood) on understanding the social groups, life quality of the groups, the manners quality, crime and etc.[5].

Searching the security and in its general concept, freedom from fear, intimidation, harassment and threat has been one of the initial and fundamental human’s requirement since the beginning of social life. Development of social deviance is an important harmful factor for the sociocultural system of the cities which nowadays is considered as one of the most complicated social issues considering religious, moral, cultural and social values and the young population structure of the society and existence of numerous economic problems.

Social deviance means the behaviors which continually act contrary to the values and social norms and are considered a social damage that results in divestment of the moral and social security. Here, all groups are more damaged from the social insecurity similarly, but also, some special groups including the women and children are more damaged due to their specific characteristics. Since insecurity is a reflection of a compound of threats and vulnerabilities so, insecurity phenomenon is an aftermath of these two factors [5].

According to Durkheim, the basis of the community discipline is the moral factor not political or economic. Discipline is an involuntary process which comes out from the society. What preserves the discipline is a moral element (1995).

One of the most important factors which cause to make disruption in public discipline is social deviance which means inconsistent behaviors with social values, hence, social deviance as divesting factor of moral and social security and the mitigation of society moral authority is affected by some internal and external social factors in economic, political, social and cultural fields such as disruption of norms, rapid and accelerating the process of modernization, globalization and the information revolution[10].

Lack of urban comprehensive management and structural, operational and normal order of the related organizations in production, maintenance and development of the public security cause disorders including increasing process of violence potential and aggression, trade, ethnic and sexual turbulent in the urban area.

Nowadays, it has been proved that, the security development is possible not only through increase of official security organizations including police, but also, it needs participation of all the people and organizing the grassroots and public groups. The main harmful cultural cause of the sociocultural system is the expansion of insecurity in the cities.

Since the most important functions of the neighborhood is cultural system development and improvement of the living conditions for the residents, creation and expansion of safety for all groups, especially women and children and its sustainability will cause the genesis of social identity and solidarity, therefore, a society that is safe for women and children will be safe for all population groups. Since the security is an aftermath of threats and vulnerabilities, security for the women in the neighborhoods is investigated by two aspects:

A) Empowering the women and reducing their vulnerability degree
B) Creation of the factors of safety and reducing the factors which threaten the security in the neighborhood

2. Human security and the women issue:

The term human security varies from a society to another one over the time based on the society development level. This term is related to the basic needs and human rights. Meeting these needs and respecting these rights include various issues such as social attitudes about gender.

The focal concept of the term human security is the belief in equality and balance between needs and resources, rights, duties and necessities and tolerance levels [2].

This term includes the concept of giving welfare in which the people or groups ensure about protection against physical and psychological injuries, freedom from fear and anxiety, and right to live in comfort.

Nowadays, variations in the society have caused to increase criminal activities due to the ease of communications, wide spread of drugs, money laundering and contraband of women and children. Since the
definition of security includes impunity and without fear or perceived threat to the fundamental benefits, guarding the society against pests and injuries and prevention of converting the pests and injuries to threats and also confronting with the existent threats, so, protecting the public society against factors threatening their lives, property and honor are the instances of the public security expansion [10].  

Therefore, the concept of human security emphasizes on the following matters:  
1. Includes all people, regardless of age, sex and ethnic group.  
2. Includes supporting the people and local communities against all forms of violence, fear and crime.  
3. Refers to some topics such as economy, health, and optimum use and protection of natural environment and developing that.  
4. It is required to finish human rights abuses.  

In insecurity and fear overcoming conditions, the society loses its spirit of hope and glory, and most of public places will have a few users; also fear about insecurity will affect the women’s life quality and what they are able to achieve negatively since, studies have shown that the women have more fear than the men in public places.  

Sense of insecurity not only affects the society in terms of cultural, social and financial but also, is able to destruct the women’s life. Many women restrict their activities to avoid unsafe places; consequently they will have less social participation. In this case, fear of crime and violence become the current part of their life. Considering that, fear of insecurity is harmful as much as the insecurity, so, every measure to improve the security of society will cause to decrease the people’s fear of insecurity. In this regard, the institutions responsible for security have not noted the women’s security especially.

3. Vulnerability of women:  
The women are considered among vulnerable segments of society due to their specific characteristics and physical and psychological conditions. In this regard, Fukuyama [6] mentions a number of reasons which evidence more vulnerability of women compared with men. Also he emphasizes on some other matters including lower wage of the women compared with men or possibility of dismissing the women from their works and jobs, also being object by the women in many crime and social problems including battering, divorce, murder and being subject by the men in the same case due to their aggressive and temperament character as more insecurity of the women compared with the men in the common social damages [6].  

Psychological injuries also are considered as other injuries which threat the women more than men. Studies by Kavachi and Berkman about the effect of social networks showed that social networks cause more psychological distress among women than men [9]. The prevalence of these disorders has been higher in divorced, unemployed widows, housewives, and retired women than other groups. Therefore, most of the mentioned groups are formed by women who become severely vulnerable due to weakness of the social communications and links, after placing in the high risk groups. In the definition about mental health which has been proposed by (Kaska et al., 2001), emphasizing on environmental supports as the effective factor on mental health improvement links this process to the social capital. Most of studies have shown that, by increasing the mental health of the people, the amount of their social linkage [7]  

In a research conducted by “Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development” in 2011 it was shown that, the social links of mothers decreases the risk of child abusing and social problems of children and adolescents. In fact, destruction and fragmentation of social capital can have an excessive effect on the women’s operation consistent with their role and position in society. Also the negative effects of such conditions have been higher on the women than men. Spread of social problems makes the women’s population at risk more than men and decreases their abilities due to various causes. Undoubtedly, one of bitter experiences of the society is oppression of women’s rights and security including threatening their security outside and inside the home and injuries entering them due to physical and psychological conditions. Johnson (1996) believes that, sexual incidents and harassments make the women vulnerable against men; in this regard, Stanco (1990) considers violence as the natural and accepted part in the society since, some violence occur in the daily life but, he believes that, the violence takes sexual form automatically because, the men and women experience different kinds of violence in their life and accordingly, the kind of created fear is different. For instance, kids learn not to talk to strangers or not to ride elevators lonely, these doctrines and the women’s fear is a reflection of doctrines and environmental incidents. Also, the women’s fear is resulted from probability of violence by the men [5].  

In addition, the growth of social injuries makes the women population at risk more than men and decreases their abilities due to various reasons [9].  

Hence, the women should be supported against various injuries in order to be able to cope with their important role in protection of the human security; these supports are needed at local, national and global levels.
The harms threatening the women include:

A) Street harassment:

Street harassment includes injuries based on gender which enters the victims in streets, city and society. This kind of harassment is a miserable phenomenon which has many victims around the world and nowadays is a considerable issue that is concerned by the experts of social issues and the society managers.

Fear and insecurity, psychological stress, distortion of personality and decrease of social participation are the lowest consequences of the street harassments which need heavy financial and human costs to be recovered [1].

In addition to individual and family consequences, the street harassments have important social consequences including loss of public modesty, reduced social participation of the women, disturbances in social relationships, a negative impact on the socialization process, reducing the sensitivities and increasing the social apathy, promoting the ethical and moral corruption and moral values insecurity. Also one of common consequences of street harassments is disclaiming of the family security so that, the parents will dare less to take their children to the unsafe environment of society. Street harassments and its expansion in the neighborhood cause loss of the public modesty bring the people who do not commit open immorality due to social shame, to the arena and make the entire neighborhood as their quiet environment of sexual harassment.

Hiding the harassment from the victim person due to fear of honor and some cultural issues and the belief that states all victim women provide the causes of intruders profiteering cause the courage to repeat assault by intruders. Being indifference against street harassment and lack of supervisory role and social pressure against all offenders are the causes to intensify this issue so, in order to deal with street harassments, drawing on police and judicial system cannot be effective lonely therefore, decease of the women’s vulnerability and applying some strategies to extend the security in neighborhoods can lead to provide a safe environment for the women and girls.

B) Domestic violence:

Domestic violence against women includes any kinds of violent behavior and dependent on gender which cause physical, psychological injuries and affliction of the women in the home environment. Such a behavior can be occurred by threat and force or absolute divestment of freedom, apparently or in privacy. The violence of husbands against women in the families is one of the major issues in today’s societies including developed or developing.

Domestic violence or violence against women in families is the most common form of violence against them. The results of investigations suggest that, the probability of beatings, raping and murdering the women by their husbands is higher than anyone else [11].

About three decades before, sociologists considered the violence at home as an exceptional task but, the results of researches despite the common thought showed that, the violence exists in all families and usually the victims are children and women. Due to numerous reasons, family violence is different with other forms of violence; first, the violence in family occurs in privacy while, other violence occur in public environment. Second, when the violence occurs in public environment, there are some factors that interfere or finish the conflict but, violence at home is a private matter and does not any witness except the children.

Emotional-ethical, financial – legal and especially emotional dependence of the family to each other, terms of the family violence and private nature of the family distinguish the family violence from the violence in other places.

According to National Assembly against Domestic Violence report, a woman is beaten by her husband per minute (Canada Statistics Centre, 1993).

It is obvious that, in Iran also, the violence of husbands against women in the family occurs in its various aspects (physical, sexual, psychological and economic), even the violence which lead to murder by husbands or women suicide. But, most of women do not report their problems due to different reasons including Facing with poverty, lack of acceptance of the family, bad reputation, people's attitude about them, fear of losing children, etc.

In many countries including our country (Iran), Failure to provide diagnosis and supportive services for victim women of domestic violence is evident; hence, women who need help refer to the neighbors and relatives and do not refer to the police or health centers. Since providers of supportive services such as police or Welfare Organization are not able to identify victim women or to respond their needs properly, decrease of the women’s vulnerability against such violence is possible through expansion of neighbor relationships in neighborhoods and creation of sanctuaries and rehabilitation and counseling services for the womenwhose husbands have violated them or are at risk [2].

In this regard the experiences of other countries show that, existence of the supportive groups in which women can share their experiences is an effective way to help women in order to end the problems related to violent relationship or coping with that in England, Argentina, Australia, Costa Rica, India, Japan, Liberia and other countries.
Involving of local societies with reporting and reprehending the violent husbands in India and among Canadian natives has been successful. In Latin America and some Asian countries women police stations have been established to provide an appropriate response to the crime committed against women.

Training courses for parents and legal information programs and free counseling to encourage the victim women of violence to complain and prosecute the offenders have begun in Canada, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Uganda. In Egypt, Paraguay, El Salvador, Malaysia, UK, Canada and other countries, safe houses and shelters have been established for the women who live with their violent husband.

5. The role of neighborhood groups in decreasing the vulnerability of women:

As it was mentioned, security is a social production and is based on what the people want and act as the social defense organism. Existence of strong women groups not only has been effective on their vulnerability but also, has been extremely important in securitization of residential neighborhoods.

Because of frequent vulnerability spheres of the women, the important issue in securitization of them is, understanding the risk of each of the spheres. The starting point should be the knowledge and judgment of vulnerability and women’s groups should also seek to protect themselves against violence, crime and generally, social turmoil.

Basically, the type of crime which the women afraid them are different with the men and the levels of their fear are also higher. Considering that the fear is able to disturb the human life, the strategies of security extension without understanding the type of women’s fear of crime and violence against them will be inefficient and unsuitable. Therefore, we need to design projects which have appropriate strategies as below:

A) A livable neighborhood is a neighborhood where all members feel safe.
B) Develops strategies which decrease the fear and eliminate opportunities for crime.
C) A society that is safe for women is safe for all.

Effective security strategy needs identification of the women’s issues. The women are the most important information sources about their security cases and they are able to identify insecure public places and neighborhoods. So, the women are able to eliminate environmental factors when they can identify the factors properly.

Sexual nature of crime, adverse experiences, experiences of physical violence from men and lack of awareness on violence against women due to the lack of reporting by the women, cause the women have more fear of crime and insecurity. So, if the violence against women is not reported, decrease of threats will not occur in programs of the society.

In order to achieve the goals above, creation of the groups and public institutes to establish a system of social work become necessary which is responsible for awareness, education and support and leads to decrease insecurity and fear of insecurity.

Some of considerations that should be met in formation of the women security groups in the neighborhood are as below:
- The group members should be women. These women are selected from the neighborhood residents who have common interests about women’s security.
- Experiences have shown that, there is no need that the group to be large, in fact, if the group is small, its management and conduct is easier (Law link plan it safe).
- In other words, if there are a large number of people in a neighborhood who are interested in securitization of places for the women, they should be divided to some groups and their purpose should be determined.
- The group members should support each other and these supports should be long-time and continuous since, every change needs time.
- The group members bring a range of experiences, skills, attitudes and communications.
- This group emphasizes on the women’s security issue. The group can create a framework for discussion, exchanges and reflection of views and research and can discuss about the cases that affect security.
- Since the women in the neighborhoods may be eager to exchange their experiences about security with the women groups instead of governmental ministries or offices, therefore, the groups can diagnose the points of views and be a connector between the women and governmental institutes.
- The women’s security group can form in the neighborhood council subset and discusses about the strategies about securitization of the neighborhood which are proposed in the councils in order to ensure about complete covering of the women.
- Experts of preventing the domestic violence can provide some information and helps to create a safer community. They can help local networks and can plan measures to fight with violence against women through adaptation of local conditions; also there will be a worthy relationship between neighborhood creativities and societies and senior government staff. Continued participation in the exchange of information and experiences helps the women to participate in the activities related to securitization of the neighborhood and to ensure that, the considered issues of the women have been noted.
The project of women’s security in Liverpool is an experience that has been performed in this regard. The project consists of two principals including:
1. Decrease of the women’s fear of harassment and attacks in the streets and other public places.
2. Increase of the women’s security while using the public places. This group follows the improvement of women’s security status through cooperation between the participants who are involved with the women’s issues as well as through the institutes such as local councils, police, society managers and managers of urban transportation which are in charge of management and supervision of urban neighborhoods. The project women’s security acted to understand the factors which have affected the increase of fear and decrease of women’s security considering that, the strategies of security extension without understanding the type of women’s fear of crime and violence against them will be inefficient and unsuitable. So, it established information record system that, the main emphasis has been on following cases:
- Identifies and predicates the effective factors on women’s fear as an important phase of achieving a safe neighborhood.
- Depicts the methods through which fear of crime and experiences of harassments and attacks can affect women and their participation in social life.
- Producing a list of effective factors on women’s security which is the first step to create a safe society.

Since the designers of this project believe that the women are best information sources about violence and crime against them and best sources to provide solution, information about the place that have been reported as secure or insecure y the women and communication with local council and involved institutes have high importance; also, telephone consultation line has been established to help the women who are involved with violence at home or public places.

Generally in England, informal measures about supporting the women against violent and sexual crime are in two overall and main fronts, and the other measures are placed within one of the sets including:

Movement of supporting the victims was established in 1974 in Bristol city. This project received financial support from the Interior Ministry from 1979 and consequently, a national forum was established to manage the protection of supporting the victims. Among activities of the movement; to meet the victims, indirect assistance via telephone or letter, support for victims of family crime, providing emotional and material support, information and facilities for them in the courts can be mentioned. Also, independence from political parties, avoiding the campaigns to prevent the victims’ discomfort and close relationship with police is the traits of this movement [12].

B) Movement of supporting the victim women

Although the workmanship and types of support measures may be same in these two movements, the work topic, ideological features and policy of the recent are radical and is different with the movement of supporting the victims.

Rape Crisis Center, Women’s Refugees, Incest Survivor group and Women against Rape group are the groups acting in the form of this movement. All these groups note specific victimization of women related to violent and sexual crime. Since this movement reveals major flaws in the justice penal system, so is not able to cooperate with official sectors. Poor relationship with police and even hostility between them are the characteristics of this movement.

With regard to the experiences in other countries including Liverpool project, it should be mentioned that, most of recent creativities about security have preserved the role of leadership for local governments. The neighborhood councils also have an important role in preventing the crime. The experiences resulted from throughout the world show that, the neighborhood council can make a safer neighborhood; this task is possible through creativity, support and application of the programs of crime prevention. Therefore creating the security groups requires coordination between a number of public and private companies which are able to coordinate (Lawlink NSW).

Security of the family and neighborhood is very important for all people. Although we are dependent to legal authorities for support and security creation, but we are able to have an efficient partnership with governmental organizations and neighborhood council in preserving the security, therefore, increase of security and decrease of fear of crime need an inter-institutional activity which is responsible for training and informing about dealing with hazardous situations.

Since good and intimate relationships with the neighbors causes improvement of the life quality and peace in the neighborhood, therefore an arrangement should be conducted that, the neighbors know each other well and establish intimate relationship. So, in order to improve the security level of the neighborhood, the following cases should be considered:
- Set a team with supportive and informing and educative aim in the neighborhood and set up regular training sessions.
- Select a connector group from the group members to cooperate and communicate with police, for instance a person who has lived for longer time in the neighborhood.
- By getting the approval of different organizations’ supporters, install some signs or tags on the walls and post boxes, and for the cases which should be considered by the neighbors, an announcement should be considered.
- The group members should have the telephone number of the neighbors and each other along with their specific information. The information relies on the followings:
  - The name of adults and kids
  - Telephone number of home, work and school
  - Normal hours at home/work
  - The skills that the members have such as nursing / first aid, trade and marketing
- Also in order to decrease the crime in the neighborhood, the neighbors should:
  - Identify any sign of crime and suspected persons
  - Have programs to inform police or each other
  - Train the kids

6. The role of neighborhood measures in decreasing the domestic violence:

As previously it was mentioned, the violence of husbands against the women is one of the most common types of violence against the women especially in our society. Such conditions cause the home becomes an insecure place for women; hence, one of the most important operational spheres of the neighborhood women’s security groups can be to empower the women for dealing with hazardous conditions or prevention of such conditions and ultimately, the group can measure about supporting the victim women of violence. The group can identify the main issues of the women and help them in struggling with the violent men by the help of counselors and psychiatrists and telephone consultation lines.

Training sessions setting up for the women who live with their violent husbands is one of the most important measures of the group. For instance, they are trained by the following security measures:
- To understand the characteristics of violent men, and how to deal with them.
- To avoid arguing in inappropriate conditions.
- To avoid debating from the kitchen and places where have hazardous instruments.
- Key of the home and work, car ignition key, important documents and some money should be available to be taken when it is necessary and exiting time.
- The means of the children should be prepared in advance to leave their children with them away from the scene.
- Ask their neighbors to inform police.
- The network members are required to have contact number of each other in order to help each other in necessary times.

Ultimately considering that in our cities there are mosques almost in all neighborhoods and considering that the mosques have potential to extend social function more than a mere worship function, so it is suggested that, the main core of women’s groups forms in the mosques, also family counseling offices can be created in the mosques in addition to help the women who are at risk or injured by telephone. Also, considering that one of the most important reasons of the women not to flee from dangerous situations at home is the lack of any other shelter and refuge and sometimes it is seen that they die, so it seems that, the mosques have capacity to make secure refuges for injured women and these places in the neighborhood can save the lives of women in certain situations.

7. Improvement of the security levels according to the women’s requirements:

Decrease of violence against women and improving their security is one of the government’s obligations in different levels, and securitization for the women will cause more sense of security which is the right of everyone. This task leads to improve equal access to resources and provides more opportunities for the women for social participation. In other words, it let the women to participate in the decisions which affect their life. Decreasing the sense of insecurity is the first step to improve the women’s security.

Recently it has been found that, urban area (including neighborhood structure, urban management and services and access to facilities) has positive and negative effects on our life. In other words it seems that, urban design as a potential factor affects the occurrence of some crime and the managers of public places are required to measure properly for prevention of any opportunity for crime occurrence. In this regard, various projects have been developed and performed throughout the world including the performed projects in England, United States and Canada. Sense of insecurity is an important part of women’s security projects, so it is necessary that the fear of various crimes to be identified and its levels should be determined.

Some factors affect decrease of neighborhoods’ security including:
- Difference in solidarity and the neighborhood identity and lack of local regulator and healing institutes.
- Increase of opportunities for crime in urban space and the citizens’ conflicts due to: discrimination and inflations, speculation, dramatic gap between revenues and expenditures of households, particularly tenants, failures and breakdowns.

- Existence of increasing processes of potential for violence and aggression and agitation trade, ethnic, and sexual cortical (1 fuw- saap human security).

Each neighborhood is managed by a region of municipality. Historically, the main role of the municipalities is to provide services and infrastructures for real states and land use. As the cities are being developed, the needs and priorities of the citizens vary. It is expected that, the local governmental ministries adapt their role in order to meet the new demands. The first understandable points is that, the security of neighborhoods is not provided by the police at the first stage but also, the volunteer supervisory groups network and the norms between people cause supervision on the security and not police does. On the other hand, the managers of some places such as train stations, buses and parking lots are responsible to preserve the security.

Numerous groups of people are interested to preserve the security of public places but, some groups are needed which cooperate together in order to improve security. The most important participants in the women’s security in neighborhoods include:

- The women
- Some places where some services are presented for the women
- The neighborhood council
- Police
- Local organizations, shopkeepers and hoteliers
- Local buses and transportation agencies
- Real state agencies

The women are the best information sources in the neighborhood and their experiences related to fear of crime or murder or security help to propose and defining the issues of social health of the neighborhood and participation of the people in social practical activities (Lawlink nsw: plan it safe aguide).

Many women live in conditions that have feelings of fear, specific to certain hours of the day or certain places. Therefore, a project should be designed that is responsible to find the issue in order to identify the factors affecting the fear or insecurity of women. The goals of this project are how the issue of women’s security becomes related to the public places or the neighborhood or how its level can be improved by the institutes such as councils and police.

The data give very little information about this matter that different people use differently the public places according to the factors such as gender, age, social and economic fields and etc.

The first measure of the women’s security project in Liverpool in 1994 has been the creation of a consultation line. Achieved information was the beginning point. By reviewing the points mentioned by the women and the stories about their experiences, a clear image was drawn about women’s security in neighborhoods and public places. When the women are asked about the places where they have more feeling of fear, they are able to determine those properly, also when they are asked about the factors which cause the fear, they emphasized on some certain factors. Experiences of Liverpool, Australia and Toronto Canada showed common factors and experiences (Lawlink nsw: plan it safe).

The women’s report suggests that, they have more fear of crime in far-flung and dark places, where the vision is poor and it is quiet.

In these projects, in order to avoid fear and hazard, the respondent women had pursued some strategies including not leaving the house after sunset, not going outside alone, using the public transport more, especially taxis, changing their direction in order to avoid dangerous places and special people. In a study conducted about immigrants and refugees among English women in 1996, the women avoided the hazards by limiting their occupations which need more traveling at night due to the fear at night (Law link plan it safe).

What places do the women feel safer in? There are some places where the women stated have more security. For instance the places where have proper skylight, and are under the supervision of police or security monitors, crowded places, shopping centers during the day due to having all the conditions above.

Being in local societies and within the neighbor relationships, familiarity with the people who are in the streets and neighborhoods and history of residence in the neighborhood are the factors which make the feeling of security. However, the women have mentioned that, the feeling of security in the neighborhood can decrease by certain conditions, such as darkness or gathering a group of intruders in the neighborhood. Therefore, in understanding the characteristics of the neighborhood for creation or reduction of the feelings of insecurity, the followings should be emphasized:

- All public places and neighborhoods do not make fear feeling for women.
- The sense of security in public places and neighborhoods varies in some courses of the day, certain times and certain users can be a part of issue.
- Fear of insecurity is higher at night.
Public places and neighborhoods that make sense of insecurity are usually more vulnerable to the crime. Many women have more fear of sexual crimes particularly. The public places where the women have the sense of fear, have often common characteristics which usually:

- Do not have proper lighting
- Are far-flung and isolated
- Closed environments that cannot be seen by passers-by
- Are hidden and winding places
- Locations that have been identified as crime hotspots
- Places which have poor management and monitoring.

Since, insecure places differ from a point to another point, so, local knowledge of the secure and insecure points is effective and hence, dealing with such issues is required to create a network which begins with asking the women about identification of insecure places and neighborhoods.

In addition, asking them is necessary for identification of their special issues. Listening to their experiences and talking is very important for goal setting and finding effective solutions which can help to reduce the women’s fear and improve their security. Considering all the above, creating a network consisting of women’s groups is one of the primary essentials for informing, training, promoting and measuring to securitize along with all the involved organizations in the security of neighborhoods.

8. Interaction between the organizations to improve women’s security:

One of the matters that are noted by informal organizations in most of countries is the interaction between organizations (including official or non-official); the theoretical basis of this activity is collaboration approach. This approach mentions to a kind of collaboration between criminal justice, social services and health organization and some other organizations related to the crime. The philosophy of collaboration approach is based on a task that mentions, when the existent institutes in the society act actively, they would be effective in prevention of crime and care for victims [12].

Another method of this approach is preservation of local discipline. This variation is related to the concept of prevention of crime and insecurity through coordinated attempts, and is being developed as a new concept which is applies by two methods of informal policies and modern policies. The first method is found in the areas where the official policy of discipline preservation is poor and lets various groups of strength to attempt for having a kind of informal control. In the modern policy method, all the existent factors in the society (official and non-official) believe shared prosperity and combine to each other in order to make a social atmosphere and an environment with appropriate discipline and comfort. This kind of policy gives the police, the preservation of discipline and legal establishment of the discipline and relies on social measures for its guarantee and success.

The third matter of collaboration approach is the approach of interaction between the courts. In the cases in which the criminal and victim persons are relative, coordination between criminal and civil courts is very important, for instance in Florida, there is an expert court for the records pertaining to violence against women.

Conclusion:

Although, women’s security is not separate from the security of the other groups of society, but due to a number of reasons has a significant importance. Hence, securitization of the women is important considering two aspects including decrease of the women’s vulnerability and increase of security levels of the neighborhood. Although, achieving the objectives above is required that the intersect oral cooperation of all the organizations and institutes involved in security and management issues of the city and country to be existent, but primarily is the duty of society. Therefore, creation of the women’s security groups to informing, training and supporting the women can be effective in expansion of neighborhood solidarity and decreasing the harms. So, identification of the places where are specially threatened is necessary. In addition, the followings are emphasized in securitization of the places and decrease of the women’s vulnerability:

- Increase of awareness about the issues and approaches which affect the women.
- Prevention of crime to the women and children through training, designing the programs and establishing the telephone consultation lines and creating some centers to support injured women and girls… launches(Social security).
- Facilitating and conducting the local mosques to create the primary focus of security groups for women and safe havens for victims of domestic violence in these places.
- Improvement of the women’s security level through eliminating the weakening factors of security.
- Creation and development of the programs for training the citizens and respect to others and especially in the mixed cultural communities.
- Teaching self-defense techniques for women and girls
- Considering any kind of violence against women as crime, and developing some rules and punishments to prevent such crimes in order to achieve social justice.
- Providing some services to support women and children who are offended or threatened.
- Development of anti-violence programs and teaching it in the schools and community.

REFERENCES


