

American University of Central Asia

Sociology Department

**The gender differences in fear of crime and the use of space  
in Bishkek among AUCA students**

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts  
in Sociology at the American University of Central Asia

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## **Abstract**

This study focuses on the gender differences in fear of crime as well as the use of space in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan in regard to the times of darkness. With the rise of crime rate around the world, more and more people are becoming indirect victims of crime. The fear of crime and the consequences of crime, such as the avoidance of certain places, staying at home after dark, greatly affect people, and the population of capital city Bishkek is not an exception. The quantitative research was conducted with the students of American University of Central Asia. The results show that the level of the fear of crime is higher among women than men, and men are more active in the use of space in Bishkek rather than women.

## **Introduction**

Every day people are bombarded by the immense information about the crime on TV, mass media, in crime-based movies and television programs, they are constantly informed about the crime that is happening around the world, and these crime rates remind us that wherever we go and no matter what time of the day we go, the world is not a safe place. The crime itself is a very important issue to address, however the impact of crime on the psychological, social, spatial condition of people is no less important than the crime rate itself. Criminologists started to investigate not just the direct victims of crime, but also those people who fall under “indirect” victimization of crime, one of which is the fear of crime (Warr, 2000, p. 452).

In the following research, I address the questions of fear of crime as well as the use of space in Bishkek; particularly I focus on the following 2 questions: 1) Is the level of the fear of crime higher among women than men? 2) Are there gender differences in the use of space in Bishkek in regard to the times of darkness? Since this study is focused on how people use the space within the city, I find it important to address the general situation of Bishkek city itself.

Bishkek is the capital city of Kyrgyzstan. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, many changes occurred such as massive privatization, marketization, which also reduced the role of the state in the economy of Kyrgyzstan (McMann, 2007; Sanghera, 2010). The state no longer provided people with employment. The instability of economical situation within the country and the lack of formal employment opportunities as well as other factors such as low incomes, poverty in rural areas, political instability, made both external and internal migration one of the main economic resources. The economic crisis of 1990’s led many people from different rural regions of Kyrgyzstan seek for income opportunities in Bishkek city (Nasritdinov, 2008). According to Sanghera (2010), Bishkek has become a “dumping ground” for internal labor migrants from rural regions, most of whom live in the outskirts of the city as well as in such market places as Osh, Dordoi, and Alamedin bazaars (Nasritdinov, 2008). Today, almost every Kyrgyz family has at least one person from the family working abroad and sending remittances

back home. With the transition from post-Soviet state, good medical treatment in hospitals, quality education and security now became an expansive access. The streets of Bishkek as well as outskirts of the city are very dark and have no lights, which make the residents of Bishkek afraid to go out after dark. The following factors listed above influence on the rate of criminality in Bishkek. Due to the lack of relevant scholarly studies on the topic of the fear of crime and spatial use in Bishkek, this research is based on broader literature, where such studies have been conducted.

The hypotheses are: the level of the fear of crime is higher among women than among men, and the use of space among men and women are different in regard to the times of darkness: men are more active in the use of space in Bishkek in the evening/night than women. In total of 225 AUCA students participated in this research and the quantitative analysis was applied. Proceeding from the empirical data, the hypotheses which were raised above had been positively proven and the Socialization Theory has been used to explain the gender differences in the fear of crime and the use of space.

Among all the social characteristics such as age or socioeconomic status, gender is the most significant predictor in the fear of crime. Many researchers were perplexed by the “fear victimization paradox” (Fetchenhauer & Buunk, 2005, p. 98), which states that women are generally more fearful of any crime than men, although they are much less victimized than men (Warr, 1985; Reid & Konrad, 2004).

The fear of crime and violence is an important topic to investigate, because it has social implications, in particular on spatial mobility in the city. The socialization is important in regard to the level of fear and the use of space. It may explain that even though women are less victimized than men, they still have higher levels of fear of crime due to the constant reminder from parent’s side that it is not safe for them to go out alone, that they are vulnerable or just they have to stay at home as “good” girls do (Valentine, 1989).

People use different strategies to control their fear of crime and minimize their risk to be victimized. If we are afraid of the certain crime we use coping strategies such as: to be in “safe places” at certain times of day, to avoid “criminal” areas, to make sure to inform our parents or anybody who cares, where we are and so forth. In contrast with women, men tend to be more fearless, partly because of their socialization as to be assertive, fearless and risk-taking. Women try to avoid certain places in the city or try not to go out at night in order not to get in trouble (Koskela. 1999), and in most cases if she got in trouble, she is the one who is blamed for the criminal incident and not the perpetrator.

This research is significant because first, we do not have any research on the fear of crime in Bishkek; secondly, the fear of crime is not an individual problem, but a social problem, because it impacts a large scale of the behavior of women as well as men; and thirdly I am as a citizen of Bishkek also concerned about this problem and it impacts me as well. Because of the large scholarly studies done on the fear of crime encompasses only America or Europe, my purpose was to replicate the same studies and apply it to the context of Bishkek and to see whether we have the same gender dynamics in the use of space and the fear of crime, and whether Bishkek context discovers other new factors in the fear of crime and the use of space.

This thesis is organized as follows: Chapter 1 provides the literature review on the representation of crime, its impact on the use of space, how the gender aspect interrelates with the fear of crime and the use of space and discusses theoretical framework. Chapter 2 discusses the methodological approach used in this study. Chapter 3 presents the findings and discussion.

## **Chapter 1: Literature Review**

In the subsequent chapter I would like to touch the key concepts relevant to the topic on the fear of crime and its influence on the use of space in Bishkek. Because there is no current scholarly research done on crime, particularly on fear of crime in Kyrgyzstan, I find my research valuable and important to explore, because it shows not only the level of fear of crime among

men and women, but also has social implications on the community at large. My topic of study deals with women and men, the fear of crime and the use of space in regard to the times of darkness. My literature review consists of six sections. The first section provides short background on the fear of crime, how the topic on fear of crime has emerged and why it became an important topic to investigate. The Second part is about the representation of crime where I talk about what sources impact on our fear of crime, how we become to fear crime and how does it affect the use of space. The third part talks about the gender aspect in regard to the use of space and the fear of crime. The fourth part touches the impact of fear crime on the use of space. It tells how negatively the fear of crime affects people and what consequences it bears. The fifth part discusses the socialization theory which serves as an analytic framework for my research. The last section includes the conceptualization of main concepts.

## **1.1 Background**

Until the late 1960s, the issue of crime has been studied by many scholars, mainly questioning why criminals engage themselves in violation of laws. (Lewis and Salem, 1986). Such theorist as Robert Merton (1938) tried to explain why criminals do what they do and why crime happens. He explains crime through cultural goals and institutionalized means: he stated that everybody in the society share the same values, however people use different means (for example stealing) to achieve these values or goals (Merton, 1938). Crime has long been a very sensitive, problematic and serious issue; however by the late 1960s the fear of crime became very serious problem as crime and it has even increased since rapidly than the crime rate (Liska, Lawrence, and Sanchirico, 1982; Lewis and Salem, 1986). Instead of investigating the reasons of the criminal who committed the crime, the scholars started to examine how crime affects the victim and what kind of impact it leaves on the community at large (Lewis and Salem, 1986). Much of the studies and research on the fear of crime started to appear in the middle of the 70's due to the availability of needed data from a very large nationwide sample and most of the studies on the fear of crime included variables and questions from such surveys as the General

Social Survey (1972) and the National Crime Survey (1972) which measured the fear of crime as well. The fear of crime is an important measurement for the quality of life of all residents of a particular city or country. Jennie McIntyre (1967) states "...fear [of crime] is impoverishing the lives of Americans. People stay behind the locked doors of their homes... The general level of sociability is diminished...Society is suffering from what economists label opportunity costs... [people] are not enjoying the opportunities of their communities... they ignore jobs in some neighborhoods... meetings are poorly attended... library use is decreasing and recreation facilities remain unused" (p.41, cited in Clemente and Kleiman, 1977, p. 520). The fear of crime became a social problem which affects most of the society and it has negative implications on the lives of people.

## **1.2 Representation of Crime**

It is important for the reader first to understand how people define the environment or space as dangerous and where does the fear of crime come from in order to understand the use of space among females and males. Valentine (1992) is one of the scholars who investigated in her study of "Women's Sources of Information about the Spatial Distribution of Male Violence" the four main information sources which influence women's feelings of danger. The first one is "*the ideology of the family and the gender division of space*" which has an implicit message that public space for women is not safe. Historically women were associated with the house as the private space while men were characterized with public spaces. During the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century especially, with the rise of industrialism: where industry was "appropriate" only for men and homework only for women, certain roles and appropriate spaces for men and women started to impose (Valentine, 1992, p. 23; Bondi and Christie, 2008). Consequently, woman sitting at home and a man earning money was a sign of a stable family. In sum, the concept of womanhood was constructed and reconstructed around the house and domestic "values", whereas men were related to providing the family financially and consequently with the use of public space. With the urbanization, when the big cities and suburbs had a clear border, the gender division of space

strengthened even more: women were at home in the suburbs and men were at work in the city (Valentine, 1989; Bondi and Christie, 2008).

The second argument brought by Valentine is “*women's common experiences of public space*” which refers to the women who see or read about attacks on women and it affects them very much because they put themselves in the place of the attacked person. The socialization of children in regard to space is also important. When children are at age of 10 or 11, they have the similar experience of not going out by themselves alone, but after the age of 11-13; the gender division of space is vivid: parents let boys go out alone, whereas girls are more limited because of physical vulnerability. Because of the intense warnings from parents’ side about vulnerability, it has influence on behavior of girls and their use of space (Valentine, 1989).

The third argument is the “*the media: 'placing' crime in the news*”: media not only shows the quantity of crimes but it also portrays the spatial context of the attacks: where the crime happened. As a result of such portrayal of crime, many women feel insecure to be in that place and afraid of victimization. It is also important to note how the media shows where the actual crime happened, and if the crime happened outside the house, in public space, very often police as well as media emphasize that she also bore the responsibility of being involved in this crime, that it is her fault that she were there and not at home, therefore it warns other women to avoid such places too (Valentine, 1989; Clemente and Kleiman, 1977; Reid and Konrad, 2004; Warr 1993).

And the last one, is “*social contact: friends, neighbors and work associates*” which is also the important source about crime. Women discuss between each other about the crime showed in the media and pass the rumors about their own experiences of fear or of those whom they personally know. Usually such rumors are about safety in public space and avoidance of strangers, and much of these rumors reinforce the idea that public space is a place of danger (Valentine, 1989). Through the stereotypes of the gender division of space, the women’s common experiences of space, the media and social contact – women develop the images of

male violence in particular time and space. Because fear information is a very sensitive topic and if crime happened nearby, it leaves a very strong message about dangerous environmental context (Valentine, 1989).

As we can see, the representation of crime in all four cases greatly affects the use of space. The crime became every day issue of which we are constantly reminded of either through media, friends or parents, and consequently the sense of fear for ourselves and our close people increases to the level where parents do not let their children (especially girls) to go out at evening.

### **1.3 The Fear of Crime and Gender**

There is a lot of research done to determine who is more fearful and why they are fearful. Such groups as the elderly, individuals of low socioeconomic status, minorities, and urbanites as well as women are considered to be more fearful of crime than any other groups in the society. The level of fear of crime is two or three times higher among women than among men (Hilinski et al, 2011; Clemente & Kleiman, 1977; Reid and Konrad, 2004; Ferraro, 1996). Taking into consideration that women have less chances to be victimized than men (except sexual offences), some researchers see their fear of crime as “unreasonable” and irrational (Reid and Konrad, 2004, p. 400; Clemente and Kleiman, 1977), but it is also interesting that men who are at the higher risk to be victimized by criminals and show lower levels of fear of crime, have never been claimed as “irrational” (Reid and Konrad, 2004, p. 421), due to the acceptable belief that men should not be afraid of anything because simply they are men. Reid and Konrad (2004) also argue that it is even more irrational for men not to fear crime, taking into account that they have higher risk to be victimized by crime. Dozens of research points out that most crimes happened against men rather than to women, and still the fear of crime is greater among women. Many women have a stereotype – home as the “safe zone”, even though most of the sexual assaults happen in closed buildings and at home (Warr, 1985; Wesely and Gaarder, 2004). Women are for the most part are the victims of sexual assault, whereas men are more likely to be the victims

of robbery or physical assault. The gap in the fear of crime between the females and males are explained through the hypothesis that women are more vulnerable to crime and have the harder time manage and recover from physical, psychological and economic losses in comparison with men (Reid and Konrad, 2004). This fear of crime enhances and strengthens the socially constructed idea of women's weakness, passivity and vulnerability. Women in some period of their lives are socialized as they could become the victims of crime, whereas men are socialized as not to be fearful of crime (Reid and Konrad, 2004). Warr (1985) also talked about the fear of rape and he concludes that rape has greater impact of fear on women than any other crimes. He also concluded: to have a high sense of fear, "an offense must be perceived as both serious *and* likely to occur" (Warr, 2000, p.458). In Warr's research, he found out that men's spatial mobility at night is more active, whereas women's mobility is more restricted due to fear (1985). It is also interesting, that the level of the fear of rape among women is changing when she becomes older (Warr, 1985). Fetchenhauer and Buunk (2005) declared that in comparison with men, women are afraid of every single crime which involves physical offense in general, which means that the fear of rape is not an "isolated phenomenon" (p.96).

Women are afraid to go out because of different reasons and if something happens to them, usually it is she who is blamed, because she was not in the right place or was wearing inappropriate dress. As some criminologist found out, women who went out after a certain hour, continuously perceive themselves in danger and more likely to be attacked by offender (Condon et al, 2007). Women are expected to be fearful when they are outside at night and showing their "boldness" is becoming a taboo (Koskela, 2005, p. 6). If women will overcome their fear and get more confident and courageous, they could "routinize" the space and confidently use the space at any time and anywhere (Koskela, 2005), and there would not be any division of usage of space between men and women and everybody could equally participate in everyday social activity they want.

#### **1.4 The Impact of crime on the use of space**

Liska et al (1982; Liska et al, 1988) stated that the fear of crime greatly affects our quality of life and it has the negative impact on our social life as well as on our health. Starting from psychological effects such as feelings of anxiety and mistrust, avoiding certain places and not participating in social activities, protecting yourself and loved ones through different devices and watch dogs are just only few that come with fear of crime. Fear of crime became a social problem affecting the psychological as well as the social behavior of people.

The fear of violence has an influence on our spatial movements and it even excludes women especially from the public spaces. The fear of violence among women is the form of gendered power relations and that fear is the result of women's unequal status (Warr, 1985, 1993; Pain, 1997; Koskela, 1999). Due to the fear of violence, women's lives are more restricted in comparison with men. Women's fear of violence can be taken as a behavioral problem, which refers to their mobility: "Living a spatially restricted life because of fear constantly reminds women of their relatively powerless position" (Koskela, 1999, p. 112; Pain, 1997). Koskela (1999) states that women divide the space into two categories, especially at night: one which is "masculine" areas, where you can hardly see women and the other one is "feminine", which is supposedly to be using a safer route. She also argues that women who restricts their mobility because of the fear of violence, constantly reproduces "the masculine domination over space" (Koskela, 1999, p.113). Pain (1997) also emphasized the fact that daytime is very rarely viewed as frightening, which tell us that time and space is important indicators of women's fear of space. Koskela (1999) asserts that it not about the amount of light that people are becoming more careful, but the "social night – what is going on, how people behave, and how women expect and have experienced men to behave" (p. 115).

Liska et al (1988) proposed that the fear of crime affect on the two types of constrained behaviour: avoidance and defensive behaviour. Avoidance behaviour is used due to the fear of violence and that is trying to avoid certain places, they try to find safer routes to get home, avoid

unsafe areas. Some people even become prisoners of their home. Defensive or protective behaviour are those that buy different devices to protect themselves, people who do sports such as wrestling or boxing and go to self-defensive trainings, not walking alone, but with somebody, or using taxis. Liska et al (1988) also found out that actually constrained behavior make people fear more than if they did not protect themselves.

### **1.5 Theoretical Framework**

In the analysis of my data, I will use the socialization theory which could possibly explain the gender differences in fear of crime and the use of space. Above, I partly told how socialization influenced on the use of space and the fear of crime. From the moment of birth, gender plays a crucial part in the influencing our experiences in life, and in fact it also does affect the use of space. The gender beliefs and cultural norms are transformed and reconstructed through families, peers, the media, and schools. Socialization theory can explain why there is high rate of engagement in criminal activities among men as well as higher fear of crime among women (Fetchenhauer and Buunk, 2005). Already from our childhood, if you are a boy, you are raised by certain “rules” of how should real man act. Masculinity, as part of socialization process, is socially constructed expectations from man, some kind of “fixed” behavior (Kimmel, 1994). Men are afraid to be seen as sissy, too feminine, they are afraid to show their fear of something, because it would say that they are not real man and it would humiliate them. Power is very important factor of manhood. It can be consider as power over women or over other men “What men need is men’s approval” (Kimmel, 1994, p.214). Manhood of men is very often evaluated, ranked and watched by other men rather than women. Even though men are more often victimized in comparison with women, (and they still have low level of fear of crime and very actively use the space in the times of darkness), is because men reinforce and express their masculine behavior according to cultural and social context. This theory claims that men are socialized to be fearless and risk taking whereas females are taught to be fearful and avoid risky situations (Fetchenhauer and Buunk, 2005).

Such social-structural factor as patriarchy play big role in the perception of space. Patriarchal families give more freedom to boys to prepare them for traditional male roles whereas girls socialized as to be assertive and “domesticated” (Walsh, 2011). Baxter and Kane’s survey indicated high correlation between traditional attitudes and women’s degree of dependence on men (1995, in Leaper & Friedman, 2007). One of the means of patriarchy is private/public spaces, where these spaces constructed as forbidden or permitted by men in different cultural contexts (Fenster, 2005). As I already told above, “home” perceived as “private”, as woman’s space, and “public” as male-dominated space. The practices of these symbolic spaces as private/public reinforce the gender belonging to particular space. Koskela (1999) claims that the fear among women is due to unequal status of females in the society.

“Woman as victim” is internalized and reconstructed through media, gender roles and socialization. It puts woman into position of a weak and vulnerable actor, whereas man is perceived as either protector or offender (Reid and Konrad, 2004). By not being socialized to fear of violence, men consequently feel more safe and free to explore the public space at any time, compared to women, who at one point in their lives socialized as to be fearful, even though their actual victimization is low (except sexual offences).

## **1.6 Conceptualization**

Fear – is a reaction to the perceived environment. It is an emotion, a feeling of alarm or dread caused by an awareness or expectation of danger (Warr, 2000).

Crime – is a deviant behaviour, recognized as violating expected rules and norms (not all forms of deviance are criminal) (Livesey, 2008).

Public spaces includes different types of spaces such as streets, sidewalks, plazas, parks, playgrounds, city halls, city square, commercial centers, community center, markets, shopping precincts, beaches, neighborhood spaces and other forms of gathering places (Shrestha, 2011).

Use of space – is the spatial behavior and the mobility of people. It is how public space is occupied and used by different people at different times.

Times of Darkness – the time after the sunset, the evening/night time.

## **Chapter 2: Methodology**

For my data collection for the research I chose to do the quantitative research: in particular I decided to conduct the survey among the students of American University of Central Asia (AUCA). The first reason to use the survey method was because I wanted to test my hypotheses whether the level of fear of certain crime is higher among female students than among male students and whether the use of space among female and male are different. The second reason, the survey method was good to see students' spatial behavior and beliefs: it was interesting to see how students behave in regard to the times of darkness. And finally it was effective method in terms of getting more precise evidence of my hypotheses and show the charts and tables where can be seen the vivid differences between the two groups. The questions were designed to reveal the information concerning the use of space in Bishkek, the level of the fear of crime, the perceptions of dangerous places in Bishkek as well as different strategies to cope with fear of crime.

### **2.1 Data Collection**

The first basic step was creating the questionnaire which was based on certain readings and theories about the fear of crime and the use of space. It was the process of clarifying my hypotheses as well as my variables. Talking with the teachers and my advisor, the survey revised certain points and had pilot tests on some representative people of my research in January 2014 to ensure that the questions were clear and unambiguous to respondents. The next step was sampling procedures, which I will talk more deeply below. All the questionnaires were sent via e-mail, it had closed-ended and open-ended questions. The surveys were conducted between the 25<sup>th</sup> of January and 7<sup>th</sup> of February. Sorting and Coding took me three days and three more days for entering to the SPSS program. Following this, I analyzed the data and tried to explain the gender differences in the level of fear of crime and the use of space in Bishkek and the use of certain phenomena through the Socialization theory.

## 2.2 Sampling

This study is based on a survey method using stratified random sampling and probability random sampling among students of AUCA, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. The population from which I draw the sample was the full-time students of AUCA. First I used stratified random sampling – dividing the whole population into two units/subgroups (female and male students) and next, I did random sampling using computer program<sup>1</sup> that can generate random numbers or in my case names, to eliminate bias. A total of 400 randomly selected male and female students were invited, via e-mail, to complete the survey; of these students, a total of 225 completed the survey, which focused on the influence of the fear of crime on the use of space in Bishkek. Of those 225 students: 102 – males and 123 – females. The target population is limited only to AUCA students due to the time limits. Other variables such as age, economic situation, race, nationality or ethnicity was not the focus of my study as it was gender, because I wanted to concentrate on the gender differences, however, it might be included in the further researches for more comprehensive analysis.

## 2.3 Research Questions

Most of the analysis that follows rests on the two research questions:

1. Is the level of the fear of crime higher among women than men?
2. Are there gender differences in the use of space in Bishkek in regard to the times of darkness?

*My hypotheses:*

1. The level of the fear of crime is higher among women than among men.
2. The use of space among men and women are different in regard to the times of darkness: men are more active in the use of space in Bishkek in the evening/night time than women.

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<sup>1</sup> Random.org

## 2.4 Measurement

First hypothesis: The level of the fear of crime is higher among women than among men. Gender is the key independent variable in my analysis. It was coded as (0) – male and (1) – female. The five dependent variables are fear of physical assault, fear of robbery, fear of sexual assault, fear of kidnapping and fear of homicide. They were operationalized as to what extent they were afraid of certain crime using Likert scale and the answers were coded as (1) – very frightening, (2) – frightening, (3) – neutral, (4) – not frightening, (5) – not frightening at all.

Second Hypothesis: The use of space among men and women are different in regard to the times of darkness: men are more active in the use of space in Bishkek in the evening/night time than women. Gender is independent variable ((0) – male and (1) – female). The use of space is dependent variable and measured by two questions: “Do you often go out after dark” ((1) – yes and (0) – no) and “were there situations when you wanted to do something in the evening/night (outside the home), but you were afraid of going because it was unsafe” ((1) – yes and (0) – no).

It was also interesting to see what places students perceive as dangerous and unsafe, and it was operationalized as “What places in Bishkek do you usually try to avoid in the evening” and coded as (1) – parks, (2) – Osh bazaar, (3) – micro regions, (4) – novostroikas, (5) – unpopulated and dark placed, (6) – Ala too Square, (7) – near/under bridges and why students perceive these places as dangerous.

The fear of crime was operationalized as “Are you afraid of walking alone after dark”, coded as (1) – yes and (0) – no and the sub – question was “*why Yes/No?*” and the answers for *Yes* were coded as (1) – because I am a female, (2) – because of crime, (3) – because of drunk, homeless and strange people, (4) – because of darkness; the answers for *No* were coded as (1) – because I am a man, (2) –because I am fearless, (3) – because I am not alone or use taxi/car, (4) – because it is not dangerous in Bishkek, (5) – because it became habitual, (6) – I can defend myself, (7) – because I use familiar routes. Time was also important measurement and was operationalized as “What time of the day do you consider the most frightening and dangerous”.

It was coded as (1) – 1pm - 5pm, (2) – 6pm - 10 pm, (3) – 11 pm - 5 am. I also asked respondents what strategies students use to cope with fear of crime and vulnerability.

## 2.5 Ethical consideration

All the surveys were randomly e-mailed to the personal accounts of AUCA students, with the letter of explaining the goals and objectives of the research. The choice to fill out the questionnaire was made by themselves, no coercion whatsoever was implied. Questionnaires did not have to include the names of the respondents, so everything was anonymous.

## 2.6 The limitations of the research

The one limitation of the research was the passive participation of students in the research. As I was planning to have at least 400 students, I sent personal letters to each student in my sample, unfortunately the half of these students never replied me back. Consequently, the sample is not big enough to generalize with certainty to the AUCA community.

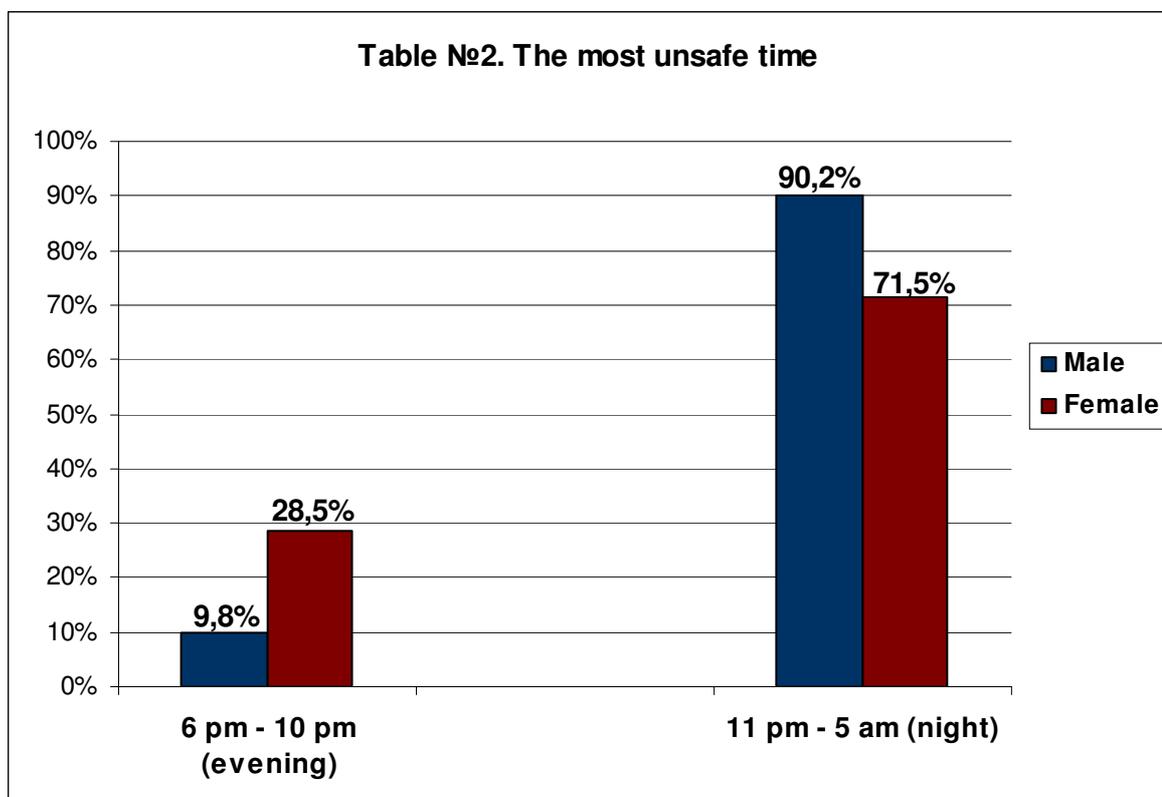
## Chapter 3: Findings and Discussion

The findings of this research based on the surveys of 225 students of two different gender groups. The findings will cover such topics as fear of crime and the use of space in Bishkek among the students of AUCA. The analysis was conducted using cross tabs and graphic tables for the convenience purpose and in order to better understand the findings.

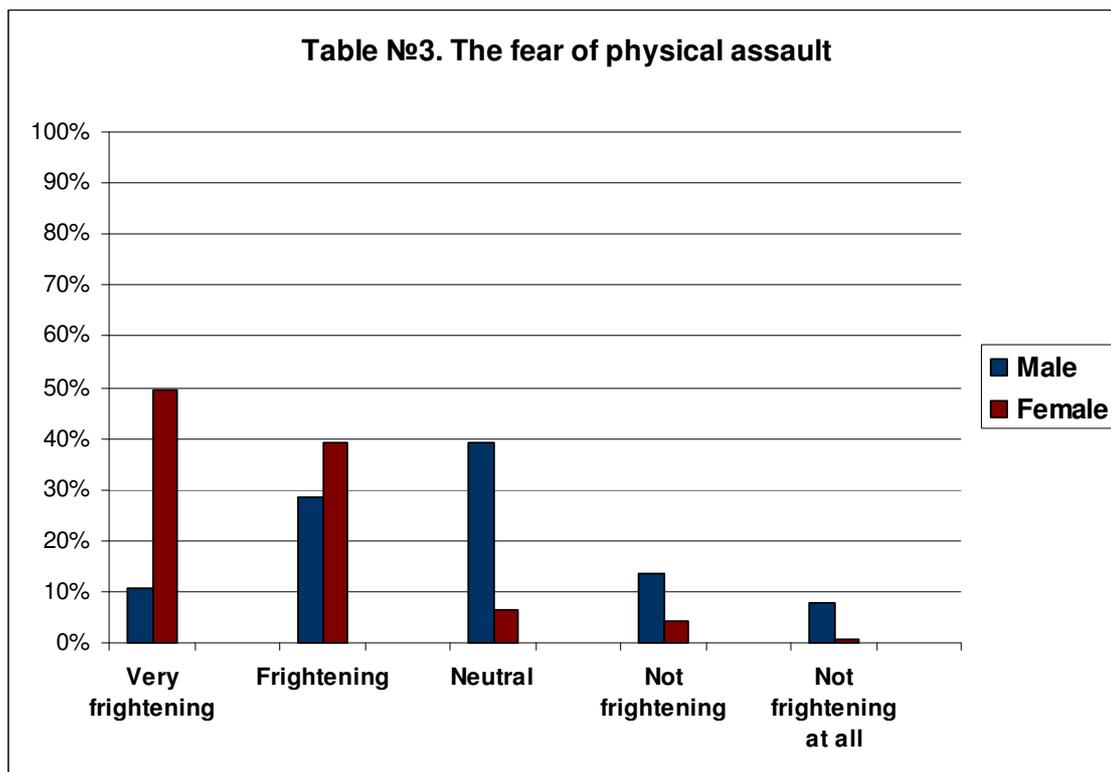
<b>Table № 1. Students by Gender</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	102	45,3%	45,3%	45,3
	Female	123	54,7%	54,7%	100,0
	Total	225	100,0%	100,0%	

### 3.1 The fear of crime among female and male students of AUCA

But before moving on the level of the fear of crime, I would like to bring the issue of time in regard to the use of space and fear of criminality. Proceeding from the literature review, time is an important factor when it comes to the distribution of space. The public space is divided through time according to different factors such as gender, age or lifestyles. In this research, time-space factor is brought up in order to see what time of the day is the most dangerous and frightening for the respondents. Overall, 20% of all respondents indicated that the evening is unsafe time, whereas 80% indicated that night is the dangerous time (Table №2). There is a slight variation between females and males in the perceptions of time as unsafe, but overall the night time is the most unsafe time according to my respondents. We also can see that 28.5% of female respondents indicated that evening is dangerous and frightening, which shows us that females are more exposed to fear when it becomes dark, whereas 90.2% of male respondents consider the night as dangerous time, which shows that men are afraid not just because of darkness, but because of the other reasons associated with night.

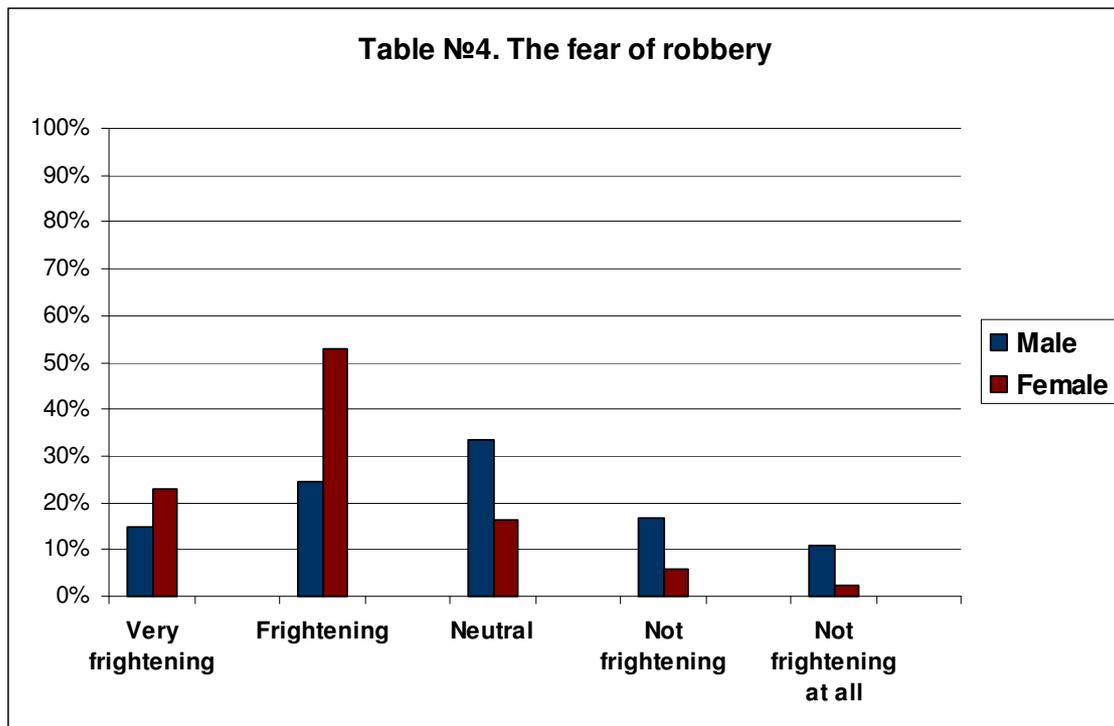


The first research question that was raised “Is the level of the fear of crime higher among women than men?” and my hypothesis was that “the level of fear of crime is higher among women than among men”. Obtained results proved my hypothesis. The level of fear of crime was measured using the Likert scale and included 5 different crimes that are quite often happening in Bishkek. The first one is the fear of physical assault. As the Table №3 shows, almost 50% of females are very afraid and 39% are afraid of physical assault, whereas for men there is a moderate distribution of fear: 39.2% of male students have neutral response to the fear of physical assault and 10.8% are very frightened and 28.4% said it is frightening type of crime (see also Appendix B, Table I). It is interesting to note that men are usually the ones who are exposed to this sort of crime rather than women and yet, they are less frightened.



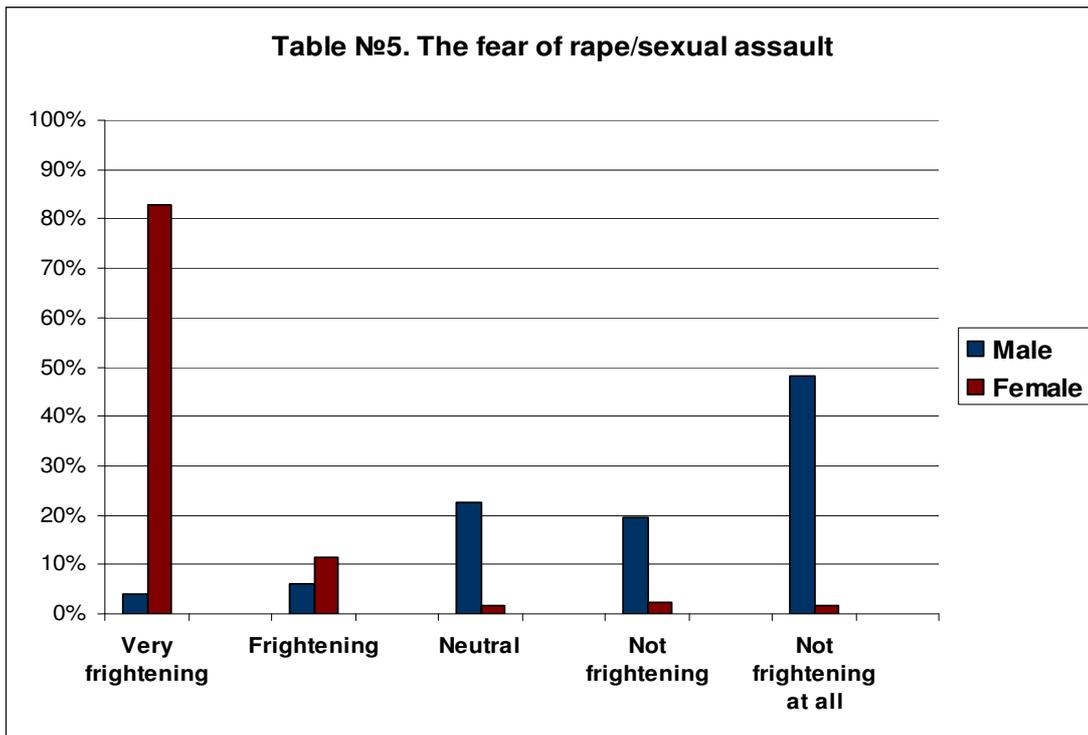
The other type of crime is fear of robbery. This type of crime just like physical assault most frequently happens to men in comparison with women. Table №4 also shows us that female respondents are more fearful of this type of crime than men: 52.8% of women said they are

frightened and 22.8% very frightened by the robbery, whereas the most percentage of men's answers (33.3%) were neutral (See also Appendix B, Table II).

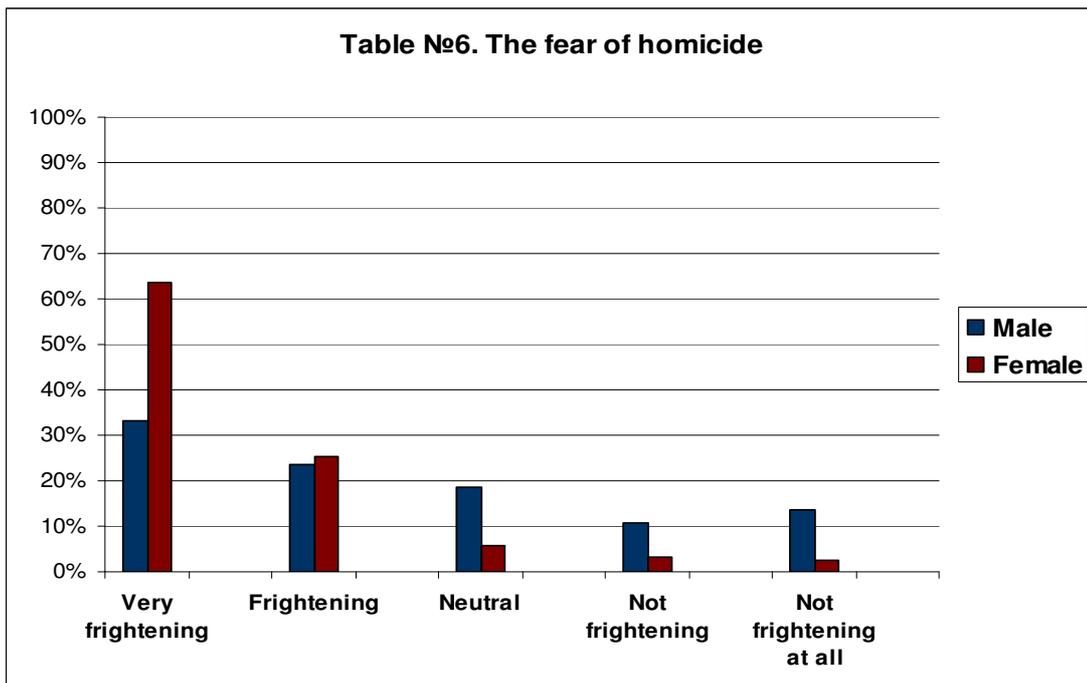


However we can see that 24.5 percent of men are frightened by this crime, nevertheless the level of fear of robbery is higher among women than men. In both cases of robbery and physical assault, the level of fear among men indicate the neutral feelings, whether they are afraid or not afraid, which makes me suppose that men were afraid to show their true feeling of fear.

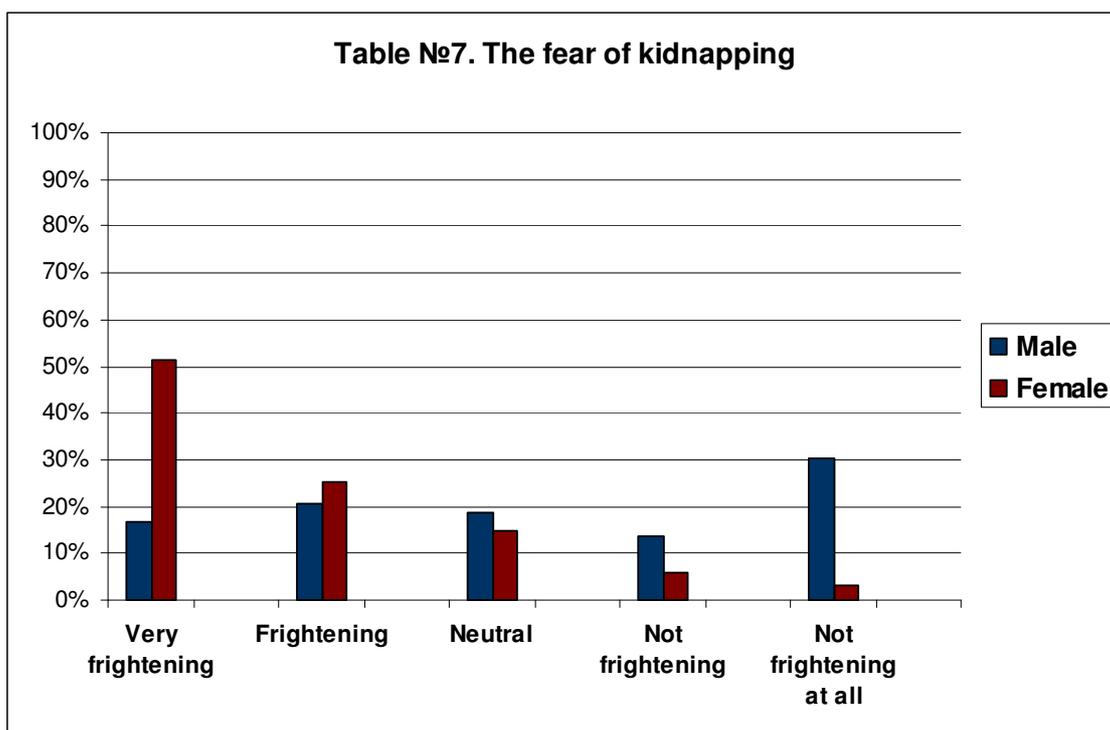
The third type of crime is rape/sexual assault and this crime mostly affects women, and therefore there is a big difference in the level of fear of rape or sexual assault among females and males. As you can see in Table № 5 below, women are very afraid of this type of crime and consequently the level of fear of this type of crime is higher among women rather than men. Almost 83% of all females indicated that they are very frightened and 11.4% frightened of rape in comparison with 48% and 19.6% of male respondents who indicated that they are not afraid of this crime. (See Appendix B, Table III).



Fear of Homicide was also included as one of the crimes in order to compare the level of fear among female and male respondents. Table №6 shows us that there is moderate difference in the level of fear of homicide. 63.4% of female students said they are very afraid of homicide and the other 25.2% are moderately afraid. As for men, 33.3% said that they are very afraid of homicide, 23.5% moderately afraid and 18.6% have neutral response to fear of homicide (See Appendix B, Table IV).



The last type of crime was fear of kidnapping. Table №7 shows that 51.2 % of all women are very afraid, whereas 30.4% of all men said they are not afraid at all of kidnapping. We can also see that the answers of male students are distributed somewhat evenly in comparison with other types of crime (see Appendix B, Table V).

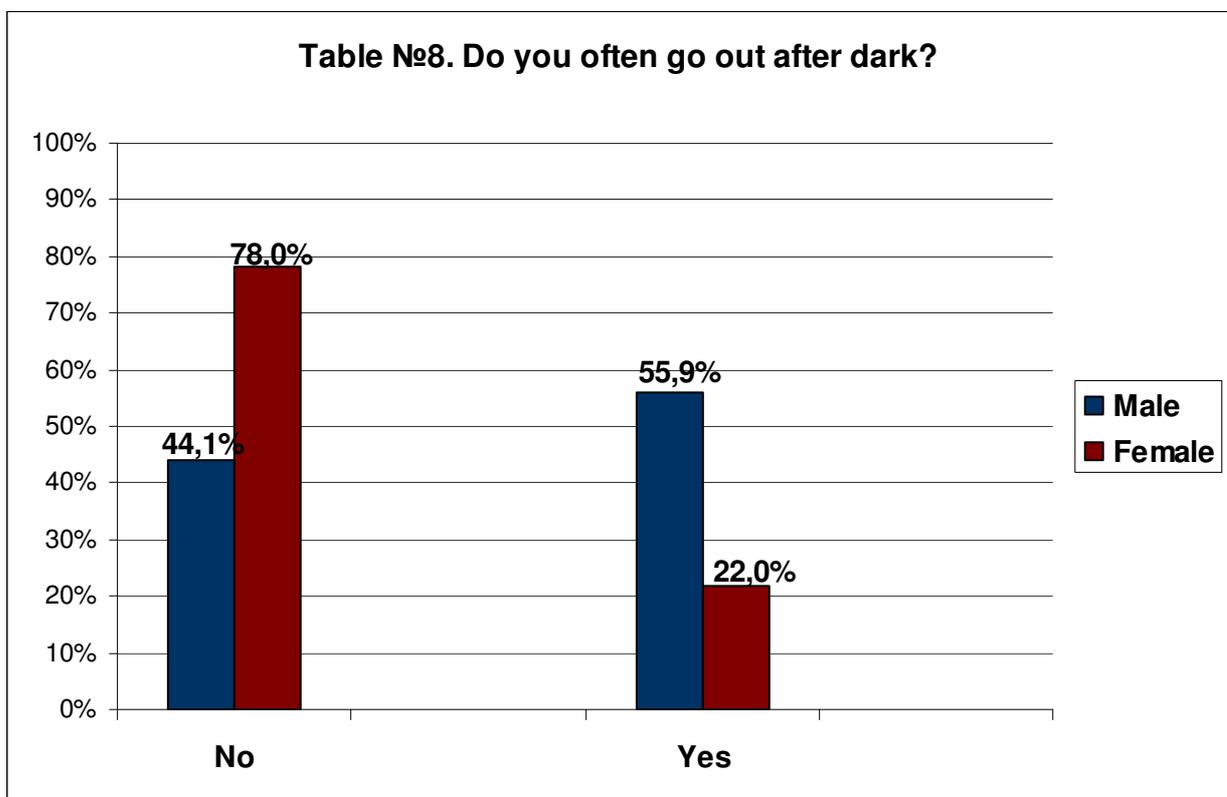


The main findings in this section, with respect to all types of crimes included here, female respondents are more fearful of every event compared to men. As we could see the fear of robbery and the fear of physical assault among men had the highest neutral response. For fear of rape/sexual assault men do not consider this type of crime as frightening as it is for women. And the fear of homicide and kidnapping show a moderate variation of answers among female as well as male respondents, yet, female respondents are still more afraid of these types of crime. I support my hypothesis that the level of fear of crime is higher among women than among men.

### **3.2 Spatial distribution among female and male students of AUCA.**

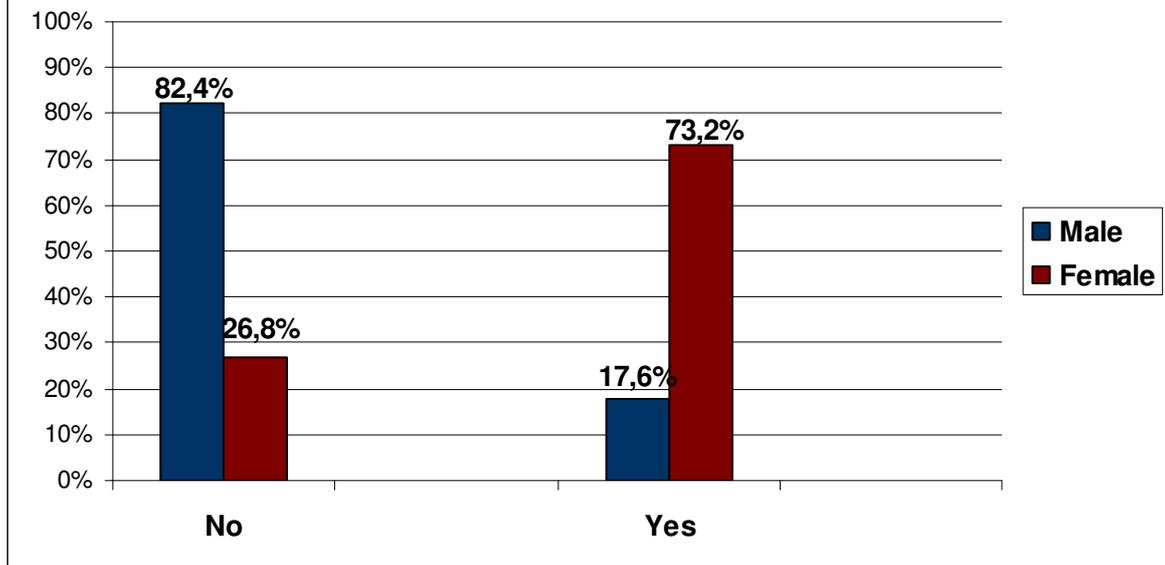
This section will discuss the use of space in Bishkek among AUCA students during the evening and night time.

The second main research question raised was “Is there gender differences in the use of space in Bishkek during the times of darkness?” and my hypothesis states that “the use of space among males and females are different: men are more active in the use of space in Bishkek in the evening/night time than women” and as we will see the results support this hypothesis. The use of space was measured by the mobility of the students as well as the possibility doing different activities during the dark. According to the table №8, 78% percent of females said that they do not go out often after dark, whereas 22% of females do.



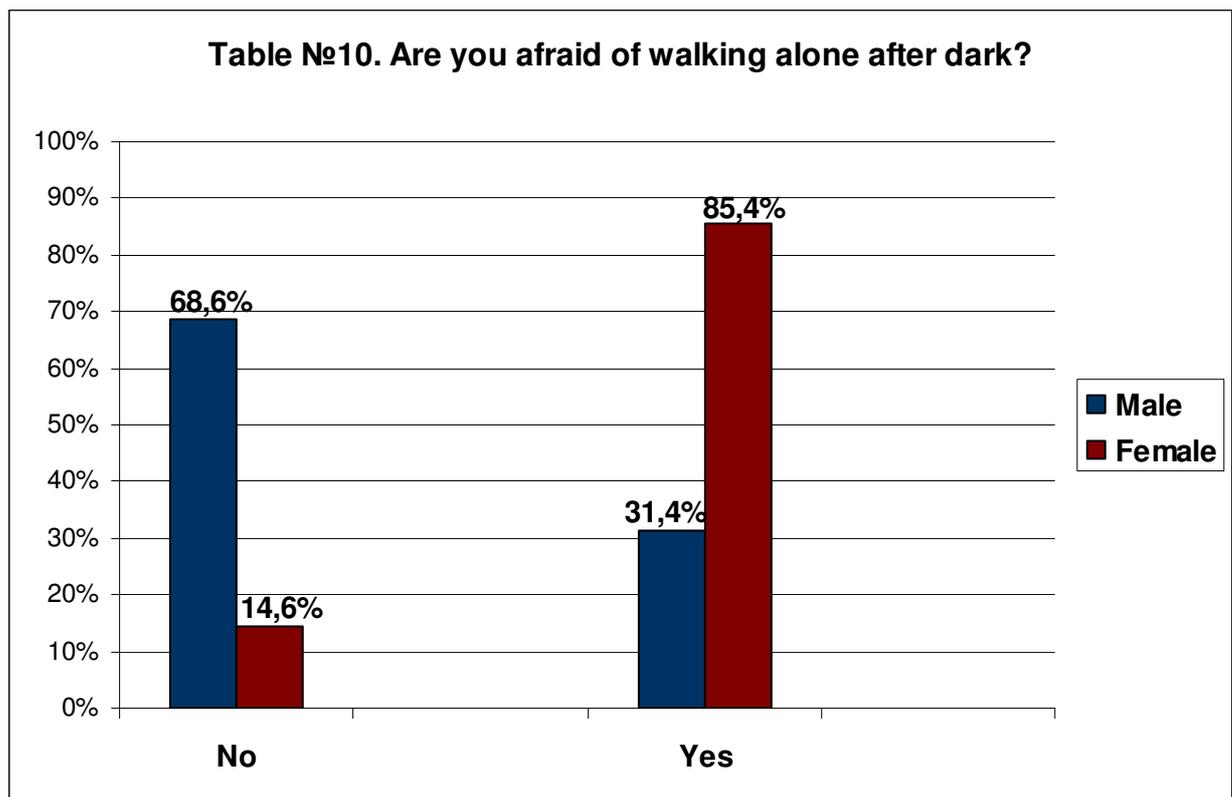
In comparison with women, 55.9% of men indicated that they go out pretty often, whereas 44.1% do not. There is the slight difference (11.8%) between all male students in the use of space in Bishkek during the times of darkness. Of course, it also depends on different lifestyles and time-space routines, however we can clearly see that gender is one of the factors that impacts going out after dark. As Table №9 shows, women are more exposed to fear of insecurity and therefore they are more limited in their desires to go out and to do different activities during night, whereas for men there is no such problem.

**Table №9. Were there situations when you wanted to do something in the evening/night (outside the home), but you were afraid of going out because it was unsafe?**



73.2% of females indicated that due to the fear of unsafety during evening/night they are restricted to stay at home and not fully enjoying the opportunities of night life, whereas 82.4% of male respondents said that the time of the day as well as unsafety is not the obstacles to realize their activities evening/night activities. Proceeding from these two tables, we can conclude that the use of space among males and females are different: men are more active in the use of space in Bishkek despite the sense of insecurity and darkness in the evening/night time than women.

I also asked my respondents whether they are you afraid of walking alone after dark and if the answer was “Yes” or “No”, to tell me the reason why the person is afraid to walk alone after dark. Overall, 60.9 percent of all respondents (of whom mostly were females – 105 and 32 males) answered that they are afraid of walking alone after dark, and the rest 39.1 percent answered that they are not. As Table № 10 shows, 85.4% of female students indicated that they are afraid to walk alone after dark, as opposed to 68.6% of male students who said that they are not afraid to walk alone during the dark.



Proceeding from the answers of students, who answered that they are afraid to go out alone after dark, they gave several reasons why that is the case. 19.7% of all respondents who answered “Yes” said “because they are females”, 55.5% said “because of crime that is happening around”, 16.8% “because of drunk, homeless, strange and inadequate people” and the last 8% said “because of darkness”. We can clearly state that those people who are afraid to walk alone after dark or to go out, is the reason of crime that is happening around Bishkek (see Appendix B, Table VI). The other group of students (18 female students and 70 male students) informs that they are not afraid to walk alone after dark because of certain reasons. The most frequent answer was “because I am fearless” (36.4%), “because I can defend myself” (20.5%), “because I am a man” (12.5%), “because I use familiar routes” (12.5%), “because it became habitual” (9.1%), “because it is not dangerous in Bishkek” (4.5%) and “because I am not alone or use taxi/car” (4.5%) (see Appendix B, Table VII). As you can see these answers are mostly based on men’s answers rather than women. Concluding from these results, I can say that for women the fear of crime is an important factor in the use of space in Bishkek. I consider my hypothesis proved, but not generalizable to the whole population.

### **3.3 The most frightening districts in Bishkek**

This small chapter is dedicated to the perception of students of places that are the most frightening and which students usually try to avoid. It was also interesting to understand the reasons why people try to avoid these places. Through coding, I determined 7 districts which people try to avoid in the evening time and that is: near/under bridges, Alatoo Square, unpopulated and dark places, Novostroikas, Microregions, Osh Bazar and Parks. Almost 50% of all respondents told that they try avoid these places because of criminality. Almost 30% of respondents said they try avoiding certain places because of because of drunk, strange and inadequate people and 11.1% because there are no people to help in case of danger. The other factors such as novelty, darkness got the least answers in comparison with other factors. Alatoo Square has the most answers for avoiding this place because of strange and inadequate people. Those people also perceived as “myrks” or internal migrants who came from rural areas. Almost each place is avoided because of criminality, except Alatoo Square (See Appendix B, Table IX).

### **3.4 Discussion and Conclusion**

In summary, my finding support previous research done on fear of crime and the use of space. There have been a lot of research done on fear of crime among females and males, and all of them indicated that women are more fearful of any crime in comparison with men, even though they have fewer chances to be victimized, except of sexual crimes (Ferraro, 1996; Reid & Konrad, 2004; Warr, 1985). There have been several explanations why the level of fear among women is higher than among men and there is no such explanation that can fully explain why women are more afraid than men. Nevertheless, I used socialization theory, which I think best explains why women are more fearful than men. In all 5 types of crime, we can clearly see that the level of fear of crime is higher among women. Several of my female respondents said that they are afraid of walking alone after dark because they are “young women”, underlying the fact that they are perfect victims for criminals. Women usually portrayed as helpless victims who can not defend themselves, and such portrayal of women is taught from the childhood. As Reid and

Konrad (2004) pointed out “gender roles, internalized via socialization and reinforced through media representations and other ideological tools, leave men and women with distinct ideas about typical victims and perpetrators of crime” (p. 420). Being socialized differently, men have a greater sense of safety and more independence in the use of space, whereas women, who socialized as helpless and vulnerable, have less confidence to go out alone. In addition, men are more active than women in the use of space during the times of darkness, even though they are more often victimized, is because men were socialized to engage in high-risk behaviors and reinforce their masculinity.

As Warr (2000) said, fear is a normal and common emotion: in some situations, fear is favorable to help us in life-threatening situations, whereas in other situations, the emotion of fear constrains behavior, restricts fully fulfill personal opportunities and even “threaten the foundation of communities” (p.482). The fear of crime greatly influences the behavior of people such as buying different defensive arms or avoiding certain places to minimize the fear of crime. Women, even though they are less victimized than men, have the greater fear of any crime, and to reduce and break certain stereotypes such as the home as a “safe” zone, there should be done several steps: first, to educate and give the proper information on the actual victimization risk; second, to engage the police officers more actively during the night patrolling and work on the subject of safety in the city; and last, but not least, to work on the light system within the city, so to make streets brighter. These are just a few steps to reduce the fear of crime and encourage women to be more active in the use of space in Bishkek.

### **3.5 Suggestion for further research**

Firstly, future researchers can take more variables such as age, socioeconomic status, and ethnicity and incorporate into analysis in regard to fear of crime and the use of space. Secondly, it will be also interesting to do a comparative analysis between two universities, because it feels like AUCA community is more aware about the criminality of Bishkek in whole.

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## Appendix A

### Social Research Questionnaire

Thank you for participating in the *Social Research* which is aimed to find out the use of space in Bishkek among students of AUCA. My name is Begaiym Turdalieva. I am a senior student at Sociology Department, AUCA. Your participation in this survey is very important and valuable. All the information will be kept confidential. It will take from 5 to 10 minutes. If you have any questions regarding the completion of this questionnaire please contact me by phone (0702907906) or via email ([turdalievab@gmail.com](mailto:turdalievab@gmail.com)).

1. Please check your gender

Male

Female

2. What time of the day do you consider the most frightening and dangerous? (Please write the actual time) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Are you afraid of walking alone after dark?

Yes

If Yes, please explain why \_\_\_\_\_

No

If No, please explain why \_\_\_\_\_

4. Do you often go out after dark?

Yes

No

5. Were there situations when you wanted to do something in the evening or night (outside the home), but you were afraid of going because it was unsafe?

Yes

No

6. What places in Bishkek do you usually try to avoid in the evening?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Why do you try to avoid such places?

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Please indicate the extent to which you are afraid of certain crime?

	1 Very frightening	2 Frightening	3 neutral	4 Not frightening	5 Not Frightening at all
Physical Assault					
Robbery					
Rape, Sexual Assault, or other offences of sexual nature					
Homicide					
Kidnapping					

9. What strategies do you use to cope with fear and vulnerability? (i.e. taxi, going out with somebody, calling somebody, etc.)\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your help!**

## Appendix B

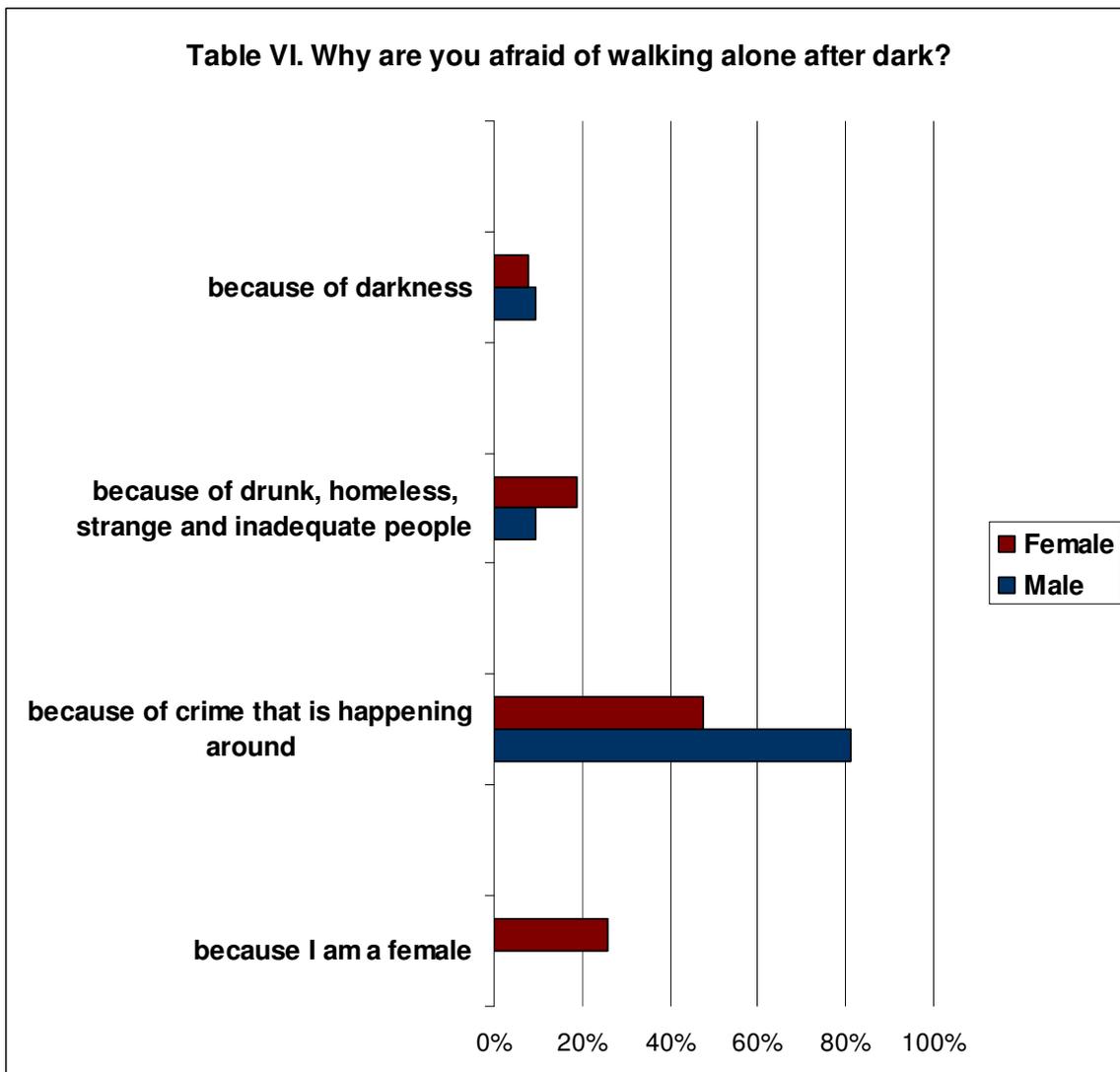
Table I. The level of fear of physical assault	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Very frightening	11	61	72
	10,8%	49,6%	32,0%
Frightening	29	48	77
	28,4%	39,0%	34,2%
Neutral	40	8	48
	39,2%	6,5%	21,3%
Not frightening	14	5	19
	13,7%	4,1%	8,4%
Not frightening at all	8	1	9
	7,8%	,8%	4,0%
Total	102	123	225
	100%	100%	100%

Table II. The level of fear of robbery	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Very frightening	15	28	43
	14,7%	22,8%	19,1%
Frightening	25	65	90
	24,5%	52,8%	40,0%
Neutral	34	20	54
	33,3%	16,3%	24,0%
Not frightening	17	7	24
	16,7%	5,7%	10,7%
Not frightening at all	11	3	14
	10,8%	2,4%	6,2%
Total	102	123	225
	100%	100%	100%

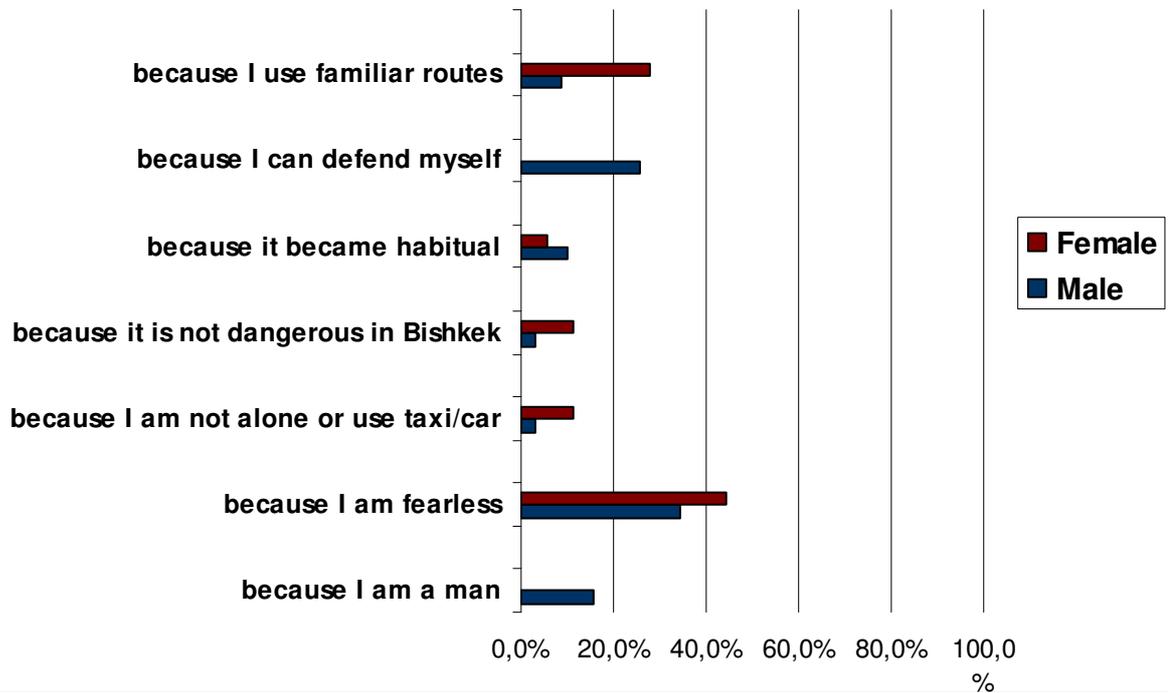
Table III. The level of fear of rape/sexual assault	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Very frightening	4	102	106
	3,9%	82,9%	47,1%
Frightening	6	14	20
	5,9%	11,4%	8,9%
Neutral	23	2	25
	22,5%	1,6%	11,1%
Not frightening	20	3	23
	19,6%	2,4%	10,2%
Not frightening at all	49	2	51
	48,0%	1,6%	22,7%
Total	102	123	225
	100%	100%	100%

Table IV. The level of fear of homicide	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Very frightening	34	78	112
	33,3%	63,4%	49,8%
Frightening	24	31	55
	23,5%	25,2%	24,4%
Neutral	19	7	26
	18,6%	5,7%	11,6%
Not frightening	11	4	15
	10,8%	3,3%	6,7%
Not frightening at all	14	3	17
	13,7%	2,4%	7,6%
Total	102	123	225
	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Table V. The level of fear of kidnapping	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Very frightening	17	63	80
	16,7%	51,2%	35,6%
Frightening	21	31	52
	20,6%	25,2%	23,1%
Neutral	19	18	37
	18,6%	14,6%	16,4%
Not frightening	14	7	21
	13,7%	5,7%	9,3%
Not frightening at all	31	4	35
	30,4%	3,3%	15,6%
Total	102	123	225
	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%



**Table VII. Why are you not afraid of walking alone after dark?**



**Table VIII. The strategies to cope with fear of crime**

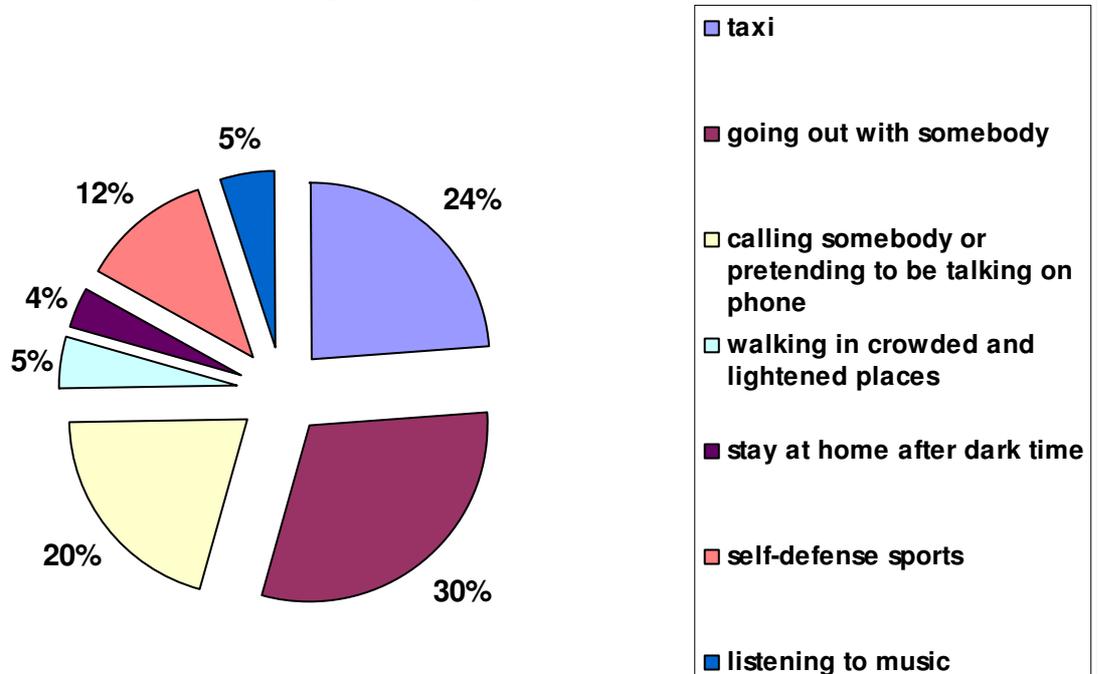


Table IX		What places in Bishkek do you usually try to avoid in the evening?							Total
		Parks	Osh Bazar	Micro regions	Novostroiikas	unpopulated and dark places	Alatoo Square	near/under bridges	
Why do you try to avoid such places?	criminality	14	11	27	11	37	1	11	112
		41,2%	52,4%	64,3%	64,7%	49,3%	5,6%	61,1%	49,8%
	darkness	2	0	3	2	11	0	2	20
		5,9%	,0%	7,1%	11,8%	14,7%	,0%	11,1%	8,9%
	novelty	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	4
		,0%	,0%	4,8%	5,9%	1,3%	,0%	,0%	1,8%
	because of drunk, strange and inadequate people	9	10	8	1	11	17	2	58
		26,5%	47,6%	19,0%	5,9%	14,7%	94,4%	11,1%	25,8%
	because there are no people to help in case of danger	5	0	2	2	13	0	3	25
		14,7%	,0%	4,8%	11,8%	17,3%	,0%	16,7%	11,1%
	because I can be raped	4	0	0	0	2	0	0	6
		11,8%	,0%	,0%	,0%	2,7%	,0%	,0%	2,7%
Total		34	21	42	17	75	18	18	225
		100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%