



ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION

# The Perspective of X and Y Generations on Deterrence of Death Penalty: The Case of Women Murders in Turkey

Yeliz Yazan <sup>1</sup>, Betül Solmaz <sup>2\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dİstanbul University, Istanbul, Turkey

<sup>2</sup> Bandırma Onyedi Eylül University, Bandırma-Balıkesir, Turkey

**Abstract**— Although the deterrence and the deterrence theory in the 21st century are associated with crises and nuclear weapons in international relations, the first phase of the concept is human-focused. The relationship between deterrence and death penalty has been a subject of study from Thucydides’ Peloponnesian Wars to present. In literature, dozens of study related to the relationship between death penalty and deterrent effect can be categorized into three types: reports no deterrent effect, deterrent effect and mixed. This study aims to assess the deterrent effect of death penalty, which is discussed to apply in Turkey, in women murders by conducting a survey. To this aim, the target audience of survey is determined as X and Y generations and Chi-Square analysis is used in the obtained data. It is expected that this study will include mixed result.

**Index Terms**— Deterrence, Death Penalty, Generations, Women Murders, Turkey

**Received:** 9 April 2018; **Accepted:** 23 May 2018; **Published:** 15 June 2018



## Introduction

Statistics shows that the number of women killed is increasing in every passing year. This “tragedy” is deepening and almost 2000 women were killed in past eight years in Turkey. 237 women were killed in 2013, 294 in 2014, 303 in 2015 and 328 in 2016. The number increased 25% in 2017 and rise from 328 to 409. When who killed the women is questioned, we face different answers as seen in the table.

Table 1  
Who killed the women?

Undetectable	26%
Husband	18%
Boyfriend	15%
Someone they know or a relative	13%
Father	8%
Ex-Husband	8%
Brother	6%
Son	6%

Source: <https://bit.ly/1L0htw0>

According to article 81 and 82 of Turkish Criminal Code, “Any person who unlawfully kills a person is sentenced to life imprisonment (Turkish Criminal Code, 2004; Subasinghe, 2016).” Moreover, the qualified form of murder which includes;

a) Willfully,

- b) Ferociously or brutality,
- c) By use of nuclear, biological or chemical weapons which cause explosion or result with fire, flood, destruction, sinking etc.
- d) Against any one of the antecedents or descendents, or spouse or brother/sister, or
- e) Against a child or a person who cannot protect himself due to corporal or spiritual disability, or
- f) Against a pregnant woman, or
- g) By virtue of public office, or
- i) Blood feud,
- j) Ethical reasons is sentenced to heavy life imprisonment (Turkish Criminal Code, 2004). Despite life sentence punishment, increasing women murders brings to mind the question that the punishment for murder in Turkey is deterrent?

At this point, death penalty which abolished constitutionally in 2004 as part of Turkey’s EU membership and harmonization process is publicly debated to reinstate. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan declared “death penalty return if people demand it (Gatpandan & Ambat, 2017; Girit, 2016).” The researches put forward that the public believed the deterrent effect of death penalty in states of US where death penalty have. The research also indicates that support for death penalty is dramatically decreasing without deterrent effect. This study will address death penalty in context of crime and punishment and evaluate the impact of restate of death penalty on women murders in Turkey by examining opinion of gen-

\*Email: [solmazbetul@hotmail.com](mailto:solmazbetul@hotmail.com)

erations. The study aims to analyze not only the deterrent effect of death penalty but also different viewpoints of generations regarding this topic.

*Deterrence concept in context of crime and punishment*

Although deterrence is clearly related to crises and nuclear weapons, the concept is multidimensional and intrinsic all spheres of life. Deterrence can be seen in family relations and judicial affairs as well as relationship between states. Deterrence theory of punishment is based on the study of Thucydides and developed by the first studies of social contract philosophers such as Thomas Hobbes, Cesare Beccaria and Jeremy Bentham. Thus, the criminology has provided basis for modern deterrence.

The deterrence concept takes its etymologic roots from “dēterreō” which means “scare away” in Latin. Deterrence is a kind of strategic force based on the potential to persuade an adversary to not use armed forces by convincing them a cost to be more than its potential gains (Danilovic, 2001; ?). Although deterrence theory initially began to mention by the name after the Second Great War, the first nucleus of the concept is largely human content and based on criminology. In essence, deterrence will be intrinsic human lives as long as humanity exists. One of the most favorable examples of human focused nucleus of deterrence is Mytilene Debate. Mytilene Debate should be read in political context (Kupperschmidt, 2000; Prasad, 2017).

Mytilene debate represents a discussion between Diodotus and Cleon’s different views on the question of death penalty will be deterrent or not. Initially, the Athenians decided to kill all adult the Mytilene male as a “deterrent” measure to prevent them from repeating their challenge experience to Athenians. Then, in the Assembly of Athens the decision was reconsidered. Discussions were held in context of two different views. While Cleon believed that only way to deter revolt again was to impose death penalty; Diodotus based on the assumption that the death penalty would have an encouraging effect on them to leave, as opposed to having a deterrent effect on the separation of allies. Cleon expressed his views with the following words;

“I have the same opinion I had before (kill the Mytilenians), a delay only helps the wrongdoer. The victim’s anger is allayed. Right after a crime, the victim metes out a harsher penalty. No one should be opposing me. We already decreed to kill them. The Mytilenians have done us a greater harm than any other city. Cities which rebel because they are forced to are understandable. Cities that rebel because they are forced to are understandable. But the Mytilenians were not forced to rebel and they had sweet conditions. Therefore, they are worse than others who rebel. It is not even a rebellion. Rebellions can only come from oppressed people. The Mytilenians were not repressed. But they have joined our worst enemies. Therefore, they are guilty not of rebellion but of betrayal. Their action is far worse than if they had rebelled simply to increase their power. They should be punished as they deserve. We must not give our allies any reason to be hopeful about rebellion. We must punish the Mytilenians!! We must not let them think that they can rebel, then if they lose, bribe us into letting

them off easy nor must we let them think that we are soft and forgiving of human error. They conspired against us of their own free will. Only involuntary wrongs are to be pardoned Thucydides (2010)”

As we see the passage above, according to Cleon Athenians should stick to previous decision to kill them all. As opposed to Cleon, Diodotus has believed that t the death penalty will not have a deterrent effect on the separation of other allies. He underpinned his argument with some reasons as bellowed;

“Haste and anger are inimical to good judgement. Discussion is necessary for action. Not killing the Mitylenians is to Athens’ advantage in the future. The death penalty has been handed down for lesser crimes than the Mytilenians’ current crime. As time goes on, more and more crimes are punished by the death penalty. Because people continued violating the laws, the penalties will have gotten stiffer but people still commit crimes. Thus, the death penalty does not work to deter crimes. Motives for crime are passions: desire and hope. Poverty compels people to be daring Fortune also contributes by tempting people to take risks. Cities are especially susceptible to these motives. Acting with others leads people to have greater hope. Therefore cities will always be tempted to rebel, and it is foolish to think we can deter them. Given that cities will inevitably rebel anyway. The death penalty will only make rebellions harder to put down. if we kill them, we will lose revenue from Mytilene. if we punish them all, in the future the democrats of other cities will not support us once there has been a rebellion, because they know they will be punished along with the oligarchs who started it all. Even if the democrats are guilty, we should pretend they are not, so that they can perhaps support us in the future (Thucydides, 2010)”

At the end of debate, Diodotus’ view was prevailed. Thus, Mytilene debate became a starting point for the practice of deterrence in foreseeable future. General deterrence is designed to prevent general crimes in general population. The state’s punishment for criminals serves as an example for those who have not yet committed crime in the general population.

*The concept of generation and generation taxonomies*

Generation concept is defined as a group sharing the birth year and place of birth, as well as critical social event (Kupperschmidt, 2000). Generations are categorized into four groups in accordance with birth date: Silent Generation (1925-1944), Baby Boomer Generation (1945-1964), X Generation (1965-1979) and Y Generation (1980-2000) (De Cooman & Dries, 2012). In addition to these four generations, “Z Generation,” which is called today’s generation, is named for 2000 and beyond. However, generation’s classification in Turkey is different from the other countries because classification in Turkey is depending on many socio-economic and politic factors that society has. Generation’s classification in Turkey is as follows: Silent Generation (1925-1945), Baby Boomer Generation (1946-1964), X Generation (1965-1979), Y Generation (1980-1995) and Z Generation (1995).

Table II  
Features of generations

Baby Boomer Generation	Rule based, self scricificies, idealits optimist, and alturist
X generation	Result oriented , problem solver; interrogate the authority , manage uncertain situations
Y generation	Process oriented, weakness in perseverance, prone to depression, open communication, high self confidence, family focused and complaintive
Z generation	Highly self confidence, independent, dissatisfied and introverted, they know what exactly they want. They also want to keep control

As Table II represents, individuals of Baby Boomer generation are ruled based, self-sacrifice, idealist, optimist and altruist. Next generation, individuals of X generation, are result oriented and problem solver. They can

interrogate the authority and also successful to manage uncertain situations. Other than these, Turkey is a country with a young population. Indeed, the population of Turkey is composed of mostly Y and Z gen-

eration. The characteristic features of the Y and Z generations are also different from the previous generations. Process oriented, weakness in perseverance, prone to depression, open communication, individualistic, high self-confident, family focused and complaintive are the main characteristics of Y generation in Turkey. On the other side, Individuals of Z generations are highly self-confident, independent, dissatisfied and introverted. They know what exactly they want. They also want to keep control (Solmaz, 2017).

**Methodology**

As mentioned above, the relationship between deterrence and death penalty is still one of the most intensified issues in different fields especially in criminology. In literature, it is possible to list dozens of the studies related to this relationship. While some of the empirical studies have found no deterrent effect of death penalty, others found strong deterrent effect. For example, criminologist J. T. Sellin found no deterrent effect in her study in titled "Death Penalty" (Sellin, 1959). Hans Jurgen Eysenck also reported no deterrent effect in his empirical study that titled "Crime and Personality" (Eysenck, 1970). On other side, J. A. Yunker's study titled "Is the death penalty a deterrent to homicide?" (Yunker et al., 1976), Ehrlich and Gibbons' study titled "on the measurement of the deterrent effect of capital punishment and the theory of deterrence" (Ehrlich & Gibbons, 1977), and P.R. Zimmerman's study titled "estimates of deterrent effect of alternative execution methods in United States:1978-2000" etc (Zimmerman, 2006). included deterrent effect. The studies related to this issue do not have clear cut distinction whether they reports deterrent effect or not. Most recently, studies include mixed results that include T. Black and T. Orsagh study titled "new evidence on the efficacy of sanctions as a deterrent to homicide" (Black & Orsagh, 1978). One of the study which reported mixed results is belong to Radalet and Akers. In fact this study has been benefited from the survey questions in the study titled "Deterrence and the Death Penalty: The Views of the Experts" by Michael L. Radelet Ronald L. Akers. This study underlined the fact that public support for death penalty is increasing in case public strongly believes deterrent effect. However, public support is dramatically decreasing when it is accepted that there is no deterrent effect of death penalty. Therefore, this study cannot report us exactly whether there is deterrent effect or not.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the view of the X and Y generations about the deterrence effect of death penalty on women murders in Turkey. For this purpose, a questionnaire was made through social media for 460 people composed of X and Y generations who have various education levels. Chi- Square analysis is used in the obtained data.

**Findings**

According to the results of the survey, 75.7% of the respondents are male, 24.3% are female. In addition to this, it is seen that the majority of respondents are on the Y generation. Although this study aims to evaluate

the views of X and Y generations, other generations are also included in the survey to make comparison. According to the age groups of the respondents, the baby boomer generation is 20.9%, X generation is 32.6%, Y generation is 37.4% and Z-age is 9.1%. The educational level of the participants is 65.2% with license, 20% with master's degree, 8.3% with doctorate and others in primary and secondary school.

According to the responses to the survey questions, scale questions consist of 11 questions that interrogate whether death penalty will deter women's murders. While there is a difference between the generations in the analysis of the answers that the participants gave to the 5 questions, the answers of the participants in the other 6 questions are very close to each other and there was no difference between the generations.

At this point, the first question is 'Death penalty is a deterrent to crimes of murder and will significantly reduce the rate of women murders'. 78% of men of X generation answered this question as "I strongly agree". Likewise, 78% of X generation's women was strongly agreed to this question. It is seen that the X-generation's women and men have the same idea.

Table III  
Death penalty is a deterrent to crimes of murder and will significantly reduce the rate of women murders

X Generation	Y Generation
78% of Men- Strongly Agree	48% of Men- Strongly Agree
78% of Women- Strongly Agree	47% of Women- Strongly Agree
Z Generation	Baby Boomer Generation
62% of Men- Strongly Agree	42% of Men- Strongly Agree
50% of Women- Strongly Agree	67% of Women- Strongly Disagree

In the same question, the percentage of men answering I strongly agree in the Y generation is 48% and percentage of women is 47%. It is seen that the ratios of the Y generation's men and women are close to each other. It is noteworthy that the percentage of individuals of x generation who give the answer that I strongly agree is more than the Y generation's individuals. On the Z generation, this rate is 62% in males, while it is 50% relatively lower in females. 42% of the men of the Baby Boomer generation answered this question as "I strongly agree" while 67% of women in Baby Boomer generation answered that "I strongly disagree".

The second question was that "Death penalty significantly reduces the number of women murders". While rate of X generation's men who responded "I strongly agree" is 68% , rate of women with the same response is 78%. In this question, the rate of X generation's women who responded "I have no opinion" is 11% while this rate is less and only 2% for men of X generation. This question was responded by 40% of X generation's men as "I strongly disagree". The rate of men of this generation who responded "I have no idea" is 6%. While the rate of women who agree is 50%, 3% women have no idea. It should be underlined that the rate of Baby Boomer generations' men, who strongly agree this question, is higher than women of this generation. 54% of Z generation's men responded as I strongly agree while rate of women who strongly agree is 50%.

Table IV  
Death penalty significantly reduces the number of women murders

X Generation	Y Generation	Z Generation
68% of Men- Strongly Agree	40% of Men -Strongly disagree	40% of Men -Strongly disagree
78% of Women- Strongly Agree	50% Of Women- Agree	50% Of Women- Agree
2% of Men- No idea	6% of Men- No idea	6% of Men- No idea
11% of Women- No idea	11% of Women- No idea	11% of Women- No idea

The third question is that "Restate of death penalty in Turkey will be more effective to deter commit murder than life imprisonment". Although the rate of X generation's men who strongly agree with this question is 70%, the rate of men who responded strongly disagree, disagree and no opinion is equal. In women, the rate saying that strongly agree is 56% and the rate of no idea is 11%. In Y generation, the rate of strongly agree in

men is 58% and lower with 47% in women. The rate of men who strongly agree with this question is at the highest level in Baby Boomer generation while rate of women who strongly disagree is at the highest level in that generation. In Z generation, majority of men is strongly agreed with this question and majority of women is agreed.

Table V  
Restate of death penalty in Turkey will be more effective to deter commit murder than life imprisonment

X Generation	Y Generation
70% of Men- Strongly agree	58% of Men -Strongly disagree
56% of Women- Strongly Agree	47% of Women- Agree
11% of Women- No idea	
Z and Baby Boomer Generations- the rate of men who strongly agree is higher than Women strongly agree.	

The fourth question is that "In Turkey, the death penalty is an important factor to prevent the women murders". In X generation, rate of men who strongly agree is 62% and 56% in women. Likewise, in Y generation,

the rate of men strongly agree is 44% and 47% in women. In Baby Boomer generation, the rate of women who responded strongly agrees is higher than rate of men with the same reply.

Table VI  
In Turkey, the death penalty is an important factor to prevent the women murders

X Generation	Y Generation
62% of Men- Strongly agree	44% of Men -Strongly disagree
56% of Women- Strongly Agree	47% of Women- Agree
In Baby Boomer generation, the rate of women who responded strongly agrees is higher than rate of men with the same reply.	

The last question which is differentiated in accordance with generation's responses is that "to restate the death penalty in Turkey, the referendum must be made". While 54% of men and 44% of women were strongly agree with this question in X generation, 56% men and 50% women in Y

generation responded this question as "I strongly agree". In Baby Boomer generation, majority of men are strongly agree and women are only agree. In the youngest generation, Z generation, the majority of women and men supported this question by responding strongly agree.

Table VII  
To restate the death penalty in Turkey, the referendum must be made?

X Generation	Y Generation
54% of Men- Strongly agree	56% of Men -Strongly disagree
44% of Women- Strongly Agree	50% of Women- Agree
In Baby Boomer generation, majority of men are strongly agree and women are only agree.	
Z generation, the majority of women and men supported this question by responding strongly agree	

**Conclusion**

The characteristics of the generations in the literature are different from each other. It is known today that especially y and z generation individuals are more sensitive to the issues that are closely related to the society than the generations before them. This study interrogates the role of death penalty in preventing to women murders in Turkey. According to results, it should be emphasized that responses of men is more clear and precise than women by considering all generations. It was expected that women would give more specific answers in order to prevent women murders. According to the results, this situation is quite surprising. The majority of the perpetrators of the women murders in Turkey is composed of men. The fact that the vast majority of men who responded to the survey expressed that the death penalty had a deterrent role in preventing women's murders could be related to their being educated. It can also be seen as a reason those people who participate in the survey are mostly university graduates. Another noteworthy issue is that X generation's men

and women give clearer and more accurate answers to questions than men and women in Y generation. According to the results of the answers given by those who participated in the survey, individuals should be conscious and education levels should be increased in order to prevent women murders. This study points out that the views of not only X and Y but also rests of them support the idea of restating death penalty. According to them, referendum should be made for death penalty.

**References**

Black, T., & Orsagh, T. (1978). New evidence on the efficacy of sanctions as a deterrent to homicide. *Social Science Quarterly*, 58(4), 616-631.

Danilovic, V. (2001). Conceptual and selection bias issues in deterrence. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 45(1), 97-125. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002701045001005>

- De Cooman, R., & Dries, N. (2012). Attracting generation y: How work values predict organizational attraction in graduating students in Belgium. *Managing the New Workforce: International Perspectives on the Millennial Generation*, 4(6), 42-63. doi:<https://doi.org/10.4337/9780857933010.00008>
- Ehrlich, I., & Gibbons, J. C. (1977). On the measurement of the deterrent effect of capital punishment and the theory of deterrence. *The Journal of Legal Studies*, 6(1), 35-50. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1086/467561>
- Eysenck, H. J. (1970). *Crime and personality*. London, UK: Paladin Ltd.
- Gatpandan, M. P., & Ambat, S. C. (2017). Mining crime instance records of philippine national police District Vi Province of Cavite, Philippines: An exploratory study to enhance crime prevention programs. *Journal of Advanced Research in Social Sciences and Humanities*, 2(4), 176-187. doi:<https://doi.org/10.26500/jarssh-02-2017-0303>
- Girit, S. (2016). *Will Turkey's failed coup mean a return to the death penalty?* Retrieved from <https://bbc.in/2GPpaQA> (accessed on 13 July, 2017)
- Kupperschmidt, B. R. (2000). Multigeneration employees: Strategies for effective management. *The Health Care Manager*, 19(1), 65-76. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1097/00126450-200019010-00011>
- Prasad, L. S. (2017). Political network can more influential than other networks for economic awareness: A case study of Nepalese village. *International Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences*, 3(6), 249-263. doi:<https://doi.org/10.20469/ijhss.3.20002-6>
- Sellin, J. T. (1959). *The death penalty: A report for the model penal code project of the American law institute*. Philadelphia, PA: Executive Office, American Law Institute.
- Solmaz, B. (2017). *Generations and working values: An overview of the working values of the x and y generation academic staff* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Social Science Institute, Istanbul University, Istanbul, Turkey.
- Subasinghe, W. (2016). Sociological analysis on prisoners; with special reference to prisoners of death penalty and life imprisonment in Sri Lanka. *Journal of Advances in Humanities and Social Sciences*, 1(2), 24-35. doi:<https://doi.org/10.20474/jahss2.1.3>
- Thucydides, A. (2010). *History of peloponnesian war*. Grange, Australia: Grange Library.
- Turkish Criminal Code. (2004). *Basic principles, definitions and field of application*. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/2GTAFq1> (accessed on 14 August, 2017)
- Yunker, J. A., et al. (1976). Is the death penalty a deterrent to homicide? some time series evidence. *Journal of Behavioral Economics*, 5(1), 45-81. doi:[https://doi.org/10.1016/s0090-5720\(77\)80016-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0090-5720(77)80016-8)
- Zimmerman, P. R. (2006). Estimates of the deterrent effect of alternative execution methods in the United States: 1978-2000. *American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, 65(4), 909-941. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1536-7150.2006.00482.x>