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GUN VIOLENCE AND MASS SHOOTING

SİLAH ŞİDDETİ VE TOPLU CİNAYETLER

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### ABSTRACT

The invention of firearms provided the change in the balance of power and the abandonment of traditional methods used in wars. After the use of gunpowder as a weapon, it is observed that there is a positive correlation between the number of criminal cases and the rate of death. The gun market has emerged, especially with the firearms becoming the guns today and mass production. This gun market is getting bigger from past to present. The increase in weapon production every year brings individual armament and the problems related to this situation. For this reason, the issue of individual armament is applied by defining the legal framework in many countries, and the having and supply of illegal weapons is considered a crime. It is known that dozen of people lost their lives as a result of an attack carried out by a murder with firearms, especially in cases called mass murder and occurring in many countries of the world. For this reason, the issue of whether owning a gun is a right or a privilege occupies the agenda of many countries. In this study the damage caused by weapons, which are seen as a personal security element, as well as the benefits they provide, and the legal processes in this regard are examined.

**Key Words:** Firearm, Murder, Law, Mass Shooting, Human Rights.

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## ÖZ

Ateşli silahların icadı güç dengelerinin değişmesini ve savaşlarda kullanılan geleneksel yöntemlerin bırakılmasını da beraberinde getirmiştir. Barutun silah olarak kullanılmaya başlamasının ardından taşınabilir boyutta ve barut gücünden faydalanan silahların icadı ile birlikte kriminal vakaların sayısı ve ölümlerle sonuçlanma oranı arasında da pozitif korelasyon olduğu gözlenmektedir. Özellikle ateşli silahların günümüzde tabanca olarak adlandırdığımız silahlar haline gelmesi ve seri üretime geçilmesiyle beraber silah pazarı ortaya çıkmış ve o günden itibaren büyüyerek varlığını sürdüren bir pazar haline gelmiştir. Silah üretiminin her geçen yıl artması bireysel silahlanmayı ve bu duruma bağlı sorunları da yanında getirmektedir. Bu nedenle bireysel silahlanma konusu birçok ülkede yasal çerçeve belirlenerek uygulanmakta ve yasadışı silah bulundurma ve temin etmek suç sayılmaktadır. Başta Amerika Birleşik Devletleri olmak üzere dünyadaki birçok ülkede ateşli silahlara ulaşımın kolay olması nedeniyle yaşanan facialarda birçok kişi hayatını kaybetmiştir. Özellikle toplu cinayet olarak adlandırılan ve dünyanın birçok ülkesinde meydana gelen vakalarda ateşli silahlara sahip bir saldırgan gerçekleştirdiği bir saldırı sonucu onlarca kişinin hayatını kaybetmesine yol açtığı bilinmektedir. Bu nedenle silah sahibi olmanın bir hak mı yoksa bir ayrıcalık mı olduğu konusu birçok ülkenin gündemini meşgul etmektedir. Bu bağlamda yapılan çalışmada bir kişisel güvenlik unsuru olarak görülen silahların sağladıkları yararın yanında oluşturdukları zararlar ve bu konudaki yasal süreçler incelenmiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Ateşli Silah, Cinayet, Hukuk, Toplu Cinayetler, İnsan Hakları.

### A Short Story of Firearms

Gun can be considered as one of the first inventions of man. Human has started to use weapons long before the invention of fire and wheel, which are considered the most important inventions of human history. Weapons have always been an important part of human life to protect themselves from other self-powerful creatures and protect their own living space. Throughout human life, struggles have evolved from conflicts between the strong and the weak, in which physical power prevails, to fight in which intelligence

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participates and creative weapons are involved, in which different power balances are seen. (FESAC, 2009). With the invention of gunpowder, this limitation has lifted, and weapons started to work with chemical energy, not human muscle power. Gunpowder, which caused the beginning of a new era in terms of weapon production, also gained important role in terms of being a tool where energy can be stored and transported (Chase, 2003).

Gunpowder, which was used at that time and remained unchanged for about 600 years, consisted of a mixture of saltpeter, sulfur and wood. In the 14th century, cannons known as the first of the guns firing with gunpowder started to be used. Smaller caliber portable guns have serious disadvantages in terms of their usefulness because of their difficulty in aiming and low accuracy as they must hit more specific targets (FESAC, 2009).

In addition to this situation, wicks were been used first in firearms to make firing. This situation requires the person who will shoot each time to fire the wick manually with the help of a lighter or a match. In the following years, mechanisms that used flint instead of wicks began to be integrated into weapons to eliminate this problem. The drawings of this mechanism, which is also known as the cog mechanism, are similar to the works of Leonarda Da Vinci. Hence, it is thought that the inventor of the cog mechanism was Leonarda Da Vinci (McCrery, 2013).

While technological developments in the field of firearms continue, albeit slowly, the use of arrows and bows continued to be popular in battlefields. First produced firearms were seen as bulky, unreliable, and sometimes even a great danger for their users. Although technical problems were tried to be eliminated for several centuries following their emergence, this was not enough to provide advantages that would prevent the use of arrows and bows. There are many bows with different characteristics that are actively used in battles. It is thought that an experienced archer can make 4 or 5 accurate shots in the time that a soldier using a gunpowder weapon can make a single shot. In addition, the thought that arrows are more efficient than firearms because of some facilities such as simple mechanisms, easy to carry and not requiring maintenance. Firearms have a more complex structure compared to arrows and get out of order frequently. Thus, an argument arose that crossbows were more efficient than firearms (Chase, 2003).

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Henry Gustave Delvigne started to work on a new projectile design in 1842 to solve this problem and after a while he produced a new type of bullet (Ramsay, 2013). In the same years, another design similar to Delvigne's design but also eliminating the accuracy problems was made by French Captain Etienne Minie. The patent of this product, which we know today with its cone shape, was taken in 1949 and the bullet was named "Minie ball". This bullet to be used in firearms also offers convenience during the loading phase. Unlike previously used, it does not require the bullet to be dropped from the end of the barrel and pushed with the help of a mallet or stick, the bullet is ready for use by simply driving into the barrel (Shah, 2017). These developments were a great revolution for rifles used for military purposes, a progress that changed the fate of wars. However, beyond these developments in the technologies of the large military rifles used in wars, some studies have been carried out on portable sized pistols for a while.

In the first quarter of the 1800s, a young man named Samuel Colt designed a pistol with a 24-piece mechanism, a single barrel and a cylinder with multiple bullets that rotate with the action of the trigger. Being the first example of modern revolvers, this weapon became famous in a short time. However, due to the complexity of its mechanism, it still had some technical difficulties and these problems seriously affected the sale and reliability of the weapon. The Colt guns began to re-produce in 1842. This gun was consisting of a cylindrical chamber with a capacity of 6 rounds and only 5 movable parts, so it started to be sold. The start of mass production and the simplification of the mechanism were reflected in the price of the guns. With the price decrease, these new revolvers experienced a sales boom. The introduction of such affordable and effective weapons has attracted the attention of not only the defense and security forces, but also criminals. With the start of mass production and the decrease in costs, guns were no longer a hunting toy for the rich people and turned into crime machines of criminals (McCrery, 2013).

### **Guns and Gun Violence**

The underlying motivation of owning a gun initially is accepted as hunting and protecting one's own safety. After a while, the perception that the problems cannot be solved by laws and security forces and the justification of protecting their own property rights became the main reasons for armament. However, the reasons were not so innocent and

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included the reasons that served the crime and also the crime (Glaeser and Glandon, 1998). Although it seems reasonable to have weapons in order to protect their property rights, the fact that criminals who plan to violate these property rights can own weapons in line with their purposes brings along a paradox regarding the right to acquire weapons.

In nature, many species, including primates, birds, and reptiles, seek to establish dominance hierarchies based on fighting ability in identifying and maintaining food areas and nesting sites. Especially in cases where physical strength can be predicted depending on factors such as size and aggression, it is also understandable that people who are weaker may equalize the situation by using tools such as weapons or feel safer by having a gun (Donohue and Levitt, 1998). Attacks using firearms have a significantly higher mortality rate than attacks with other weapons. There are multiple reasons why firearms can have lethal effects. For example, bullets have more lethal effects than other types of weapons. With its long range, attacks can be carried out from afar in a way that can be deadly.

In most cases of homicide, it is seen that the violence of an attack without a main reason such as robbery or rape increased unpredictably, and the event resulted in murder. It is seen that the mortality rate is 7 times higher in crimes involving firearms compared to other crimes. When this comparison is made with the cases of murder using a knife, the rate of manslaughter with firearms is 5 times higher (Zimring, 2004). Examination of firearm death cases in terms of the number of deaths and the way the event occurred has led to different classifications. Accordingly, if the person shot and killed himself with a gun, this is considered suicide, whereas if the person shot and killed one or less than four people in a single incident, this situation is called murder. In addition, if the murderer kills three or more people at some intervals, this is called serial murder, whereas if the killer kills four or more people at the same time, this is considered a mass murder (Volkan, 2016). Considering this data that enables the distinction are obtained from frequent attacks that people lose their lives, individuals' desire to have a gun in order to survive and respond when necessary can be seen as a justified reason. While this rightfulness paves the way for individual armament, especially in the USA, having individual guns is seen as a personal right and when this is combined with the important role played by guns in American history, the concept called "Gun Culture" emerges.

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Although the high rate of firearm ownership in the USA is often explained with the concept of "Gun Culture", some studies show that the main reason that pushes individuals to have guns is fear. While examining the attitudes towards weapons and gun control laws in the USA, the reasons that push people to have guns are examined. While interpreting these studies, it would be an erroneous point of view to evaluate the decision of gun owners to purchase weapons because of a fear that does not exist, by attributing it to a pathological situation. Because the situations determined as motivation (fear) are the basic motivation in the decision-making process of both those who have guns and support individual armament, and those who fear individual armament and situations caused by guns (Pierre, 2019).

The influence of the media on violence is one of the issues that has caused long controversy. Especially children and young people are exposed to violent images in many of the movies they watch both on television and in movie theaters. It is thought that people who were exposed to guns and productions with violence at a young age are encouraged to own and use guns. Thus, many criticisms are made especially on the media and cinema to reduce the impact of violence (Brushman et al, 2013).

From this point of view, when a child finds out to use a gun at home, he is also affected by violent productions and has the potential to do anything. Therefore, the necessity of making arrangements in the field of individual armament becomes a vital situation.

### **Mass Shootings: New Level on Violence**

Actions that resulted in the deaths of many people in a simultaneous armed attack are called mass murder. However, since this concept can take place in many different fields and can be used to explain different situations, this phenomenon has been accepted as "mass murder". (Duwe, 2019). It has been observed that the prohibition of access to firearms by persons with a history of domestic violence has a positive effect on homicide rates. In this context, it is considered that a ban to be implemented will decrease both domestic violence and mass murder attacks outside the family. Incidents that can be qualified as mass murder are defined by the FBI as events that took place in public in 2013 and where at least three or more murders were committed in a single incident. This definition differs in some places as attacks in which at least four people except the person who carried out the attack were killed.

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In some regions, the fact that at least four people were killed, and shot is sufficient for these incidents to be evaluated in the category of mass murder (Gold, 2020).

Mass murders are events that create social fear. The special reasons underlying this can be explained as follows. First of all, many people can be victims at the same time. Secondly, there is no personal hostility between the aggressor and the person who died. In addition, individuals who lost their lives are seen as those who are in the wrong place at the wrong time. For these reasons, individuals empathize with the victims and fear is felt by everyone. Their striking nature, the difficulty of people making sense of deaths and the fact that they affect a large number of people cause these events to be covered by the media in a comprehensive way. Since these attacks, which continued to increase especially in the 1980s and 1990s, were carried out by ordinary citizens who have guns, it brought the need to question the right to own guns and the laws supporting individual armament (Duwe, 2019).

According to the definition made by the FBI, suspects of mass murder attacks are distinguished from murderers who committed serial murder. Mass murders are considered separately from serial murders. Because in serial killings consist that there are different regions, a time between two murders and the loss of a single individual with a single act. It makes it difficult to identify the people who committed mass murder attacks before the attacks and to predict the probability of committing crimes. The following can be said as the reason for this situation. First of all, attackers are often socially isolated people. These individuals often do not commit attacks for political, ideological, or profit-making reasons. People who were not involved in crime before the attacks and individuals whose mental illness was not detected can easily acquire weapons at any time. They can also attempt an attack with these weapons they have. (Lemieux, 2014).

### **Relation Between Mass Shootings and Mental Health**

In media reports or public conversations following tragic attacks, the assumption that the attacker has mental illnesses that lead to his actions is often encountered. Although some of the attackers who committed such acts have serious mental illness histories, it is known that most of them do not have any psychiatric history and at least there is no solid evidence on this matter (Knoll and Annas, 2016). Although surprising, most of the

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aggressors who cause mass murder do not have a psychiatric disorder. One of the reasons for this may be that the aggressors did not realize that they had psychiatric symptoms, or their psychiatric symptoms have not been realized by their environment. Also, after most cases of mass murder, the attacker eventually kills himself or is killed by officer to catch him. In this case, the opportunity to make a psychiatric evaluation after the attack disappears, and if he does not have a registered illness, he is not considered to have aggressive psychiatric diseases. A 41-year-old Vietnamese immigrant, who received American citizenship in 2009, killed 14 people and wounded 4 others, then committed suicide to end his own life. In the interviews with his father after the incident, it was learned that the attacker stopped eating and watching television in the two weeks before the attack and isolated himself from life. A few days later, a television station received a letter posted by the attacker on the day of the attack, and psychiatric analysis of the letter revealed that the attacker had been experiencing paranoia and delusions for a while, as well as hallucinations (Knoll and Annas, 2016). In some cases, although the attacker died, information about his/her mental illnesses of the aggressor can be obtained through the statements of his family and acquaintances, the notes he/she left, or the examination of the letters written as seen in this case. However, as a result of not obtaining such data in every case, there is no data about the mental state of most attackers.

When it comes to the concept of mass murder, one of the oldest and deadliest events in history stands out, the Bath School disaster. In the disaster, a gunman killed 38 primary school students and 6 adults and injured at least 58 people. After his business deteriorated and he lost an election for which he was a candidate, the angered attacker first killed his own wife and then bombed his own farm, then went to Beth Primary School and carried out a mass murder attack. He then committed suicide, as is generally seen in mass murder cases (Knoll, 2012). In a note he left on a board outside his home, he stated that “Criminals were not born guilty, they were made guilty”, stating that externalizing the crime, the responsibility actually lies in many factors other than himself (Knoll and Annas, 2016).

Following the mass murder attack that took place at Virginia Tech University, psychiatric investigations conducted by some institutions yielded some important data about the attacker who killed 33 people and injured 24 people. It was learned that the assailant had been accused of harassment before, and therefore it was determined that he met with the

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campus police several times. After the police said that this crime could have criminal consequences, it was revealed that the attacker sent the message "I can kill myself or someone else" to his roommate. After the attacker had a meeting with a social service worker, the social worker decided that he should be kept under surveillance and send him to a psychologist, while the psychologist decided that he did not pose any threat to the society and stated that such a situation was not necessary (Knoll, 2012).

### **The Reason Behind...**

Increasing and changing nature of such attacks in recent history makes it difficult to explain the attacks solely with mental illness. In addition, it is thought that it may be related to many different factors such as cultural changes, use of social media, normalization process of this resulting from the frequent and detailed examination of these and similar events in the media (Knoll and Annas, 2016). Always looking for a burst of anger behind collective events would be an approach that misleads the process of looking at these cases and identifying basic motivations. Although anger is accepted as a driving force, it is not possible to reduce mass murder to a single motivational level (Rocque and Duwe 2018).

For many reasons, it is not possible to precisely determine the cause of mass murder attacks or to say that they were attacks caused by a single motivation. Some researchers have developed some typologies to identify the motivations that led to mass murder cases and to examine their causes. Some researchers, on the other hand, thought that mass murders should be investigated and evaluated within different models, and some models were proposed. A study has gathered the reasons of anger-based attacks under 3 main items and led to the concept of Trinity of Violence:

- Having a weapon strong enough to attack (a weapon capable of killing many people in a short time)
- A motivated criminal
- A goal

In this theory, the criminal and mental illness, if any, are defined as the main factors of the attack, while anger is suggested as the accelerating factor. However, as stated before, although the way the event occurs seems to indicate a mental health disorder, the number of

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attacks where there is a definite diagnosis of mental illness and the event can be associated with this mental illness constitutes a very small cluster (Rocque, 2018).

In an article published in a seminar on mass and serial murder, Dietz described these attackers as "so-called commandos" and made some descriptions of the general characteristics of these so-called commandos (Knoll, 2012). These attackers, who can be called "so-called Commandos", usually commit suicide, or try to get themselves killed by law enforcement officers after the attack. These attackers can think and plan for a long time before taking action and carry out their attacks by arming heavily. These attackers, who often carry out their actions during the daytime and in public places, often do not make a plan for how to escape after the incident. Since they expect the attack to end in death, they end the incident either by committing suicide or by creating an environment where the security forces will carry out this work on their behalf (Dietz, 1986).

Another situation that is considered to be a risk factor in the occurrence of mass murders is that an incident has an incendiary effect on another person, leading to an attack. In such cases, which are called copycat crime, a search for identity or a desire for fame is the driving force. According to this concept, the person responsible for cheating is planning to come to the agenda with an attack similar to the witness. The predictable tragic consequences of this effect in the cases of mass murder have prevented the publication of the opening part of Stephen King's novel "Rage" in which he deals with a similar subject. It is thought that growing up in an environment with weapons and being exposed to written and visual broadcasts in which weapons are normalized, especially in childhood, will have negative effects on violence. Young people who watch such productions or are exposed to these images heroize some armed people in the movies or TV series they watch, have an idea about using weapons while watching them, and start to see violent scenes as normal because they internalize their experiences. This situation also strengthens the argument that similar productions can be effective in increasing aggression (Brushman et al, 2013).

Another issue that is being discussed in America, where armament and the problems it causes are discussed frequently, is whether a culture called "weapon culture" can be mentioned or not. There is an opinion that the past of the country and the periods full of conflict constitute the weapon culture. In addition, it is claimed that the "castle doctrine",

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which determines the boundaries of the concept of legitimate defense, is shown among the reasons that validate the formation and legitimacy of this culture. A large part of the American people also argue that having a gun in dangerous situations is a necessary action to prevent danger or to increase the probability of survival (Lemieux, 2014).

### **Deliberate Misconceptions on Laws & Doctrines**

The castle doctrine is a doctrine that refers to legal laws that defend and protect an individual's home and in situations where it is necessary to protect himself without hesitation from using force. It suggests that the person should be exempted from any lawsuit and criminal prosecution arising from the consequences of his actions if the circumstances in which the incident occurred coincide with the conditions in the law. The origin of the castle doctrine dates back to the Middle Ages England. In those years, the laws in England say that there should be a distinction between self-defense and protecting one's home. Because self-defense means that the person can withdraw first in order to avoid danger and be able to use violence as a last resort. However, when it comes to home defense, this is seen as a legal right and one can protect their home without the need for retreat (Wallace, 2014). The laws and legal doctrines in force should be texts that address current needs and contain sanctions for the solution of current problems. Security needs and security measures provided by the state have also changed over time and have become quite different from what we looked at centuries ago. For this reason, the requirements of the era should be taken into consideration while evaluating the "castle doctrine". It should not be overlooked that the doctrine may have a share in possible disasters rather than its contributions to the understanding of lifestyle and security in the age when it was introduced.

There is no scientific study or evidence that the castle doctrine increases the demand for individual armament or possession of weapons. However, considering the deterrence that weapons will provide and the advantage they will provide in case of defense, it is thought that the castle doctrine will increase the number of weapons in the houses (Wallace, 2014). Within the framework of the castle doctrine, having a weapon is a right of defense and rationalized as one of the factors that reinforce the sense of security does not have the power to eliminate the negative effects of armament. On the contrary, in some cases, individuals entitled to be armed by the same doctrine have become directly or indirectly components of

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the incident in realizing many tragic attacks. Regardless of its caliber and range, it has been painfully experienced many times that firearms turn into actors that killed dozens of lives in the hands of the wrong people, both as they were manufactured and with minor modifications made on them.

Although the incidents involving mass murders are quite random and they constitute a very small part of murders committed with guns, their effects are quite high. The phenomenon of mass murder brings along political debates, legal debates, and discussions on the taxes to be imposed on weapons. The attacks carried out in this way attract more attention in the media compared to other crimes and play an active role in determining the policies. From another point of view, mass murder attacks have a stronger effect on the decision-making mechanism in legal discussions and tax decisions than other criminal activities (Luca et al, 2020). In particular, mass murders have revealed in many cases that firearms in the hands of individuals who are incapable of judgment or perhaps have psychological problems are weapons that are much more dangerous than thought and that cause much greater problems than they are. Each mass murder has led to many legal discussions on access to arms and individual armament in the following period.

### **There Is No Safe Place: Anytime, Anywhere...**

Although similar incidents had occurred before, the first incident accepted as a case of mass murder by researchers was seen in 1966, and then these cases were examined in a certain typology. Each of the events that took place in Chicago and Austin in 1966 was evaluated as "the crime of the century". An attacker named Charles Whitman committed one of the deadliest mass murder cases in history, killing 16 people and injuring 30 others at the University of Texas in Austin (Rocque, 2018).

Although these attacks seem to have been carried out by individuals of different age groups, different educational levels, and having different opinions and thoughts, they were all committed by people who decided to resort to violence and had firearms. Hundreds of innocent people who were in the wrong place at the wrong time lost their lives and left great pain in these attacks, which can take place sometimes in a church, sometimes in a school, and sometimes in a concert area.

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### **Las Vegas Shooting**

The deadliest case of mass murder in the history of the United States occurred during an open-air concert in Las Vegas on October 1, 2017. A gunman, who climbed to the 32nd floor of a hotel overlooking the concert area attended by approximately 22,000 people, started firing on people in the concert area. Using the AR-15 and AR-10 weapons, the attacker fired more than a thousand bullets during the 10-minute attack, leaving a very heavy balance sheet in which 58 people died and 869 were injured after the attack (Lozada et al, 2019). As a result of a sudden burst of anger, a single attacker using semi-automatic weapons killed 58 concert audiences and later killed 59 people in total by his own suicide, becoming the actor in the bloodiest mass murder case in US history. After the attack, at least 500 people needed medical assistance, and that night, the surrounding hospitals mobilized all their means to treat the hundreds of wounded injured in the attack (Shultz et al., 2017).

### **San Diego McDonalds Massacre**

In 1984, in the attack that took place at McDonalds in San Diego, James Huberty shot and killed 22 people and injured 19 people. It is known that James Huberty gave a speech with his wife just before the attack, which included concepts such as manhunting and that society still had a chance. It could not find any information about his problem with McDonalds, and it was thought that the attack site was both a familiar area and a crowded place, considering it could kill the greatest number of people (Knoll, 2012).

### **Virginia Tech University Shooting**

In an incident at Virginia Tech University in 2007, a student named Seung Hui Cho shot 33 students and injured 24 people. As in most of the mass murder cases, the attacker committed suicide after this incident and ended his own life. Cho's 1800-word manifesto is contained in a CD that was delivered to NBC on the day of the attack. In one of the sentences in his manifesto, there is a statement that "you had a billion chances to prevent today from happening." Looking at the content of the manifesto, it is seen that the attack was a planned and long-term prepared attack (Knoll, 2012).

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### **Sandy Hook Elementary Shooting**

**TOBİDER**

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In December 2012, a 20-year-old boy named Adam Lanza shot dead his own mother at home, then took a rifle and two pistols to the nearby Sandy Hook Primary School and committed a massacre by totally killing 26 people, 6 adults and 20 children, died. After the incident, detectives investigating the incident determined that the weapons Lanza used were those of his family and that Lanza learned to use a weapon when he was a child. After this tragic attack in Sandy Hook Primary School, great debates started in the public opinion about the re-evaluation and regulation of the laws regarding gun control. As a result of these and similar events, many studies have been conducted to investigate the effects of gun ownership on violence, and in some of these studies, a positive correlation was found between homicide rates and gun ownership rates (Wallace, 2015).

### **Utoya Island Attack**

There were two important terrorist attacks in Norway on 22 July 2011. The first was the explosion of a bomb outside the main government building in central Oslo, and the other was an armed attack on the Norwegian Workers Party summer camp on Utoya Island (Dyb et al, 2013). While 10 people died in the bomb attack in Oslo, many injured, 8 of them seriously, were treated. During the chaos ensued and the rescue efforts in Oslo, the attacker started an armed attack on the camp on Utoya Island. During the attack, he randomly fired on the people he encountered in Utoya Island, where 564 people were located, causing 64 deaths and 56 injuries (Thoresen et al, 2012). There are also many victims who are in danger of drowning while trying to swim along the fjords to the mainland during the attack, which lasts for about 90 minutes. In addition, the statements of the witnesses were that the assailant continued to shoot at the people who were shot and fallen to the ground several times. It is also among the information that the attacker disguised as a police officer to reveal the young people who were hiding and tried to remove those who were hiding from their hiding places (Dyb et al, 2013).

### **South Korea**

One of the bloodiest mass murders in history was committed by a drunken police officer in South Korea in 1982. The 27-year-old police officer fought with his girlfriend and

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then inflicted brutality around him for 8 hours with stolen grenades. It was determined that at least 62 people died in the attack. The attacker, who started firing randomly while walking on the road, continued his killing actions while continuing his way and injured many people seriously. The attacker, who continued to shoot until the last moment before killing himself and innocent people living in that house with a grenade in a house he entered in the early hours of the morning, committed one of the bloodiest mass murder cases (NY Times, 1982).

### **Chicago Shooting**

In July 1966, 8 student nurses living in their residence in Chicago, Illinois, were brutally murdered by an assailant. After entering the house, the attacker threatened the students in the house with a gun and knife, stabbing and strangling each of the young women. It was learned that the name of the attacker, who was caught as a result of the story of a young woman who achieve success to survive by hiding under the bed during the attack, was Richard Speck. Richard Speck was an alcoholic criminal by the age of 25 with 20 different offenses on his record. The next day, it was learned that the attacker attempted suicide in the raid organized by the police teams to Speck's place where he lived. The attacker, who was arrested and sent to prison, was sentenced to death by the court. However, in 1972 the court converted the death penalty to 400 years of imprisonment (<https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/a-mass-murderer-leaves-eight-women-dead>).

### **Finland School Shootings**

An 18-year-old boy living in Jokela carried out a mass murder attack at his school, causing the deaths of 8 people. Six of the killed were students, one was the school nurse, and one was the school principal (Kiilakoski et al, 2014). A video posted on YouTube predicting the massacre a few hours before the massacre shows that the massacre was a highly planned attack. This attack, carried out by planning and uploading posts about the attack on the internet before it happens, is a shocking event both locally and nationally (Kiilakoski et al, 2014). A similar attack took place in Finland just 1 year after this tragic incident.

In 2008, a man who is 22 years old student carried out a mass murder attack at a university in Kauhajoki, Finland, causing the deaths of many people. 15 minutes before leaving the house, the attacker, who shared information about the attack on internet sharing

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sites and some chat rooms, went to the school and started shooting, killing nine of his classmates and a teacher, and then attempting to commit suicide. The attacker, whose suicide attempt failed, was taken to the hospital by the teams that came to the scene but died in the hospital about 8 hours later due to a gun injury. Following the attack, traces of many violent materials were found in the research on the internet history of the attacker (Sumiala, 2011).

### **Orlando Night Club Shooting**

In 2016, a 29-year-old named Omar Mateen enters the Pulse nightclub in Florida and starts shooting. Mateen's attack leaves behind one of the bloodiest acts of history, in which 49 people died and 53 were injured. (Walter, 2017). In the statement made by the security forces, it was reported that the attacker carried out the attack using an AR-15 type rifle and a 9mm pistol. This gun, which can fire multiple high-powered bullets, is among the guns that can be legally purchased in many states of the USA, including Florida. In 1994, a law that prohibited such rifles from using high-capacity magazines came into force. After this ban expired in 2004, high-capacity magazines were once again used in such weapons. It is understood from the sound recording that 20 bullets were fired consecutively in a video shot during the incident. The magazine restriction applied in this type of gun does not mean that the guns cannot fire more. These types of weapons can be easily used with high-capacity magazines by making minor changes (NY Times, 2016).

### **Netherlands (Rijn Shopping Mall Shooting)**

In 2011, a 24-year-old Dutchman (Tristan van der Vlist) went to a shopping mall in the town of Alphen aan den Rijn and shot people there at random. The attacker used an automatic weapon in the attack, injuring 10 people, 3 of them heavy, and causing 7 deaths. According to the information obtained by the security forces, the assailant, who left the house in the morning, got into his car, and went to the shopping center, had no known reason for the attack (NY Times, 2011).

### **CONCLUSION**

It is known that weapons have been used for purposes such as superiority, defense and attack since the beginning of human history. Technological developments from past to

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present have brought great innovations in the field of arms industry, as in every field. However, considering that my developments were aimed at facilitating life in general, developments on the arms front resulted in them becoming more deadly. Weapons have become an important instrument even in criminal activities called "ordinary crimes" after the decreasing costs due to the serial production of weapons and the technology making weapons portable. In terms of defense of the country and the use of security forces, weapons provide significant advantages in terms of defense and deterrence. However, the same weapons cause events that may result in the death of dozens of people at the hands of an attacker, a terrorist or a mentally ill.

With the development of portable and serial firearms such as pistols, the weapon industry has become a large market. In addition, it has caused weapons to become indispensable actors in terms of ensuring personal security. As a result of these developments and increasing demand, the cost of weapons produced in mass production has decreased and the interest in individual armament has increased. After a while, weapons became so important in terms of self-defense that some phrases like "God created man, Samuel Colt made them equal" emerged. Possessing a weapon has become a very common and necessary action, especially for those who are disadvantaged and in need of defense. However, this accessibility has resulted in the use of weapons for attack as well as for defense. The incidents experienced in armed attacks involving firearms generally ended in murders and the dose of the brutality experienced gradually increased. The phrase "God created man, Samuel Colt made them equal" is probably a defensive argument. However, it should be foreseen that in the event of an attack, weapons seriously disrupt equality and an attack by a gunman could have unforeseen tragic consequences.

Another expression suggests that people, not guns, create danger is "Guns don't kill people, people kill people". Here, it explains a statement supporting that weapons will only have fatal consequences in the hands of dangerous people, but other than that, weapons are reliable. There is a saying "Guns don't kill people, people kill people", which is frequently cited by individuals who advocate individual armament or support the free purchase of weapons. This statement can be seen as a technically irrefutable argument. It should not be forgotten that the argument that "people with guns can kill more people" is at least as valid,

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unfortunately, in many cases mentioned above, this situation has been painfully experienced many times.

Although the benefits and advantages that firearms can provide for defense purposes are counted as reasonable explanations, when people holding the gun will experience an explosion of anger and what firearms will cause in such a situation are among the unknown.

When we look at the cases of mass murder, we see that throughout our recent history, it has been experienced almost everywhere in the world and it is realized that many people lost their lives, as well as tragic consequences for their loved ones and their families. Although there are advocates who argue that mass murder cases are much rarer than other attacks and even some natural disasters cause this number of deaths, the deadly power provided by weapons is a force that must be kept under control. When a mass murder case occurs, this is not just the actions in which some people lost their lives, it causes the whole society to fear and lose faith in social life. For this reason, it is necessary to accept the existence of a problem that can be significantly reduced by taking measures instead of defending the events and their consequences beyond our control. In addition, taking the necessary legal measures as soon as possible will seriously reduce the likelihood of such tragedies.

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