

Research paper: crime prevention strategies

[Law](#), [Crime](#)



Contents Page Executive

Summary.....

4 Research Question (or hypothesis)...

..... 4 Research (including methodology)..... 4

Literature Review..... 4

Findings..... 6

..... 7

Discussion.....

..... 7

Conclusion.....

..... 8 Reference List.....9

Executive Summary

The focus of this paper will be based upon different crime prevention strategies implemented by members of the communities, local and government authorities. It will focus mainly on those practices involving community cooperation and portray how they are successful or unsuccessful in reducing criminality in high crime areas. Firstly, the topic of this research report is clearly stated below. The methods used to acquire the information contained in this research report are also described below.

The literature review discusses the three main themes found in the allocated articles relating to community crime prevention. These include techniques to reduce juvenile crime; fear of crime between the community members and

the social divides that are created by implementing community crime prevention strategies. The findings discuss, in depth, the effects on the three themes mentioned above once these prevention strategies were implemented. It gives examples of peoples experiences with crime and crime prevention. Finally the discussion presents the outcomes achieved, that are shown by the various uthors. It also touches on the government's involvement and how it can be improved. The conclusion sums up all the findings in this report and gives an idea of future hope for less crime. Research Question (or hypothesis) ' What are the leading practices in the field of community crime prevention? You can choose to either research and discuss a wide range of different community crime prevention strategies, or focus on an example of a particular technique and research its successes, limitations and applications. ' The topic of this paper discusses community crime prevention.

It talks about a range of different types of prevention strategies that are used to reduce or minimise crime targeted areas or fields. The various effects of these strategies are shown throughout the report. Research (including methodologies) Before composing this research report, the methodology exercised for this task was content analysis. Content analysis demands for the reader to read 'in between the lines'. Its main requirement is to draw conclusions from the information presented and apply it to the point being made.

The requirements of this methodology are to research and locate a range of reliable secondary resources, applying them to strengthen the argument of crime prevention. Primary research was not conducted as that would have

been a more advanced project and is not part of the academic requirement for an undergraduate level. Many different databases were used such as the internet, university databases, academic libraries and Google Scholar. Access to libraries and the internet were vital in achieving this task.

The scholarly articles were beneficial to this task as the composers of these articles had conducted detailed research themselves, allowing their information to support the point being made in this task. Literature Review Many areas are now trying to implement community crime prevention in order to get citizens more involved in reducing or preventing crime in their neighbourhoods. The articles discuss the different techniques being used to implement this change. One main strategy is connecting the citizens to the criminals.

By doing so the citizens are able to see the results that occur when people become criminals. The three main themes explored in these articles are: 1. Youth/ juvenile violence, 2. Social divide created between communities, and 3. Reducing fear of crime The philosophy of Robert Peel that "the police are the public and the public are the police", is one that perfectly sums up the relationship between the police and the rest of the community (Lentz & Chaires 2007). This quote suggests that law enforcement needs approval from citizens and residents of neighbourhoods to perform their duties correctly.

Meaning, this requires the police to maintain an informed relationship with the community. By doing so they are reducing the reoccurrence of the themes in crime prevention mentioned above. Previously, there was not enough knowledge or resources amongst communities to raise awareness or <https://assignbuster.com/research-paper-crime-prevention-strategies/>

organise crime prevention programs for juveniles. Today, schools together with police and community-based workers are aiming to provide the expertise to help create crime prevention programs for juveniles.

It is believed that that one of the most active crime prevention strategies is effective intervention programs. A substantial number of crimes amongst adolescence are detected from anti-social behaviours. Youth need to be more involved in their community activities such as church associated groups, sports clubs, recreation centres (Dodington et al 2012, p. 1026). Other school organisations such as 'Links to Learning' helps adolescences engage in activities that will teach worthy skills for future work and careers.

All these extracurricular activities will give youth less time to consider committing crimes and more time to become involved in the community. The National Crime Prevention 1999 quotes " an improved understanding of the earlychildhoodorigins of juvenile delinquency highlights the opportunities for prevention programs" (Bor et al 2001, p. 5). One of the limitations of creating community based crime prevention and linking the citizens to crime and criminal is that it creates social divisions between citizens.

Usually the higher and middle class citizens are involved in community project and the lower class citizens are left out. This makes the lower class citizens inferior and targeted for being the ones who are expected to commit acts of crime. This creates a division of ' us' (higher class) and ' them' (lower class). Ward (1997, p. 4) suggests " situational crime prevention approach may displace crime, tends to benefit middle and upper classes at the expense of the poor people, and may increase the fear of crime. It also may create a siege mentality, isolating individuals and families. He then further

<https://assignbuster.com/research-paper-crime-prevention-strategies/>

states that complaints, of disturbances, made to the police are not always filed. Firstly, the police are given the authority to decide whether the complaint is serious enough, secondly if the victim and criminal have met before and finally judging by the victims social class (Ward 1997, p. 5). In order to effectively reduce crime, relationships between communities and local authorities need to be addressed. The presence of police may be quite contradictory to residents, it can be comforting for some but disturbing for others.

If residents are not aware of measures being taken by police to help prevent crime, they cannot assume their presence is positive but rather understand that more crime is occurring (Mesko et al 2007, p. 70). This will further increase the fear in residents caused by the occurrence of criminal activity in their neighbourhoods'. One resident of Hyde Park describes her lifestyle to have become based upon fear. Since her home was broken into 3 years ago, a gun is always present beside her through the night; the TV is on the entire time she is at home and an alarm system has been installed.

The extreme fear is shown in these extra precautions, " When I come home late at night, I always blow my horn before I get out of the car, so I make sure that a neighbour is looking out. When I sleep at night, there are at least three lights on. " (Ward 1997, p. 5). Complaints have been made to the police, however not knowing the severity of the case; no serious action has been taken. This, again, clearly shows a lack of communication between authorities and their neighbourhoods. Findings It is very clear from the above review that great measures are being taken to try and reduce or even eliminate crime within communities.

Law enforcement authorities originally would address crime; however, today citizens are becoming more active and involved in keeping their own communities safe. The results of the first theme, youth/juvenile violence, found that this violence originated from childhood behaviours and therefore should be addressed at these early stages. In doing so crimes committed by youth should be minimised. The main notion believed to reduce youth violence is 'diversion'. Creating a distraction or alternative for youth is the only way to keep them from winding up face to face with the criminal justice system.

This idea argued that juvenile offenders who are placed before the justice system are done more harm than good and are more likely to reoffend. On the other hand, diversions such as sporting activities or after school programs need to be created. These diversions will keep the minds of these 'adults in the making' off negative thoughts to commit crimes (Tilley 2005, p. 356). Detective Sergeant Heslop (1991), agreeing with the notion of diversion, states "Often there is little point in punishing an offender, as the punishment can be shown to be counterproductive. ...] By charging them we are often condemning them to further and deeper involvement in the juvenile justice system, which is, it is submitted, a failure." He also goes on to say that diversion is the greatest prevention tool and if used appropriately law enforcement can battle juvenile crime more efficiently. The next discussion was the social divide created within the communities when trying to implement crime prevention. Not all citizens were eager to work side by side with police to manage criminal activity.

Studies show that people with higher levels of wealth and quality of life are more likely to cooperate with police as they have more to lose. However the rest of the general public, those classified to have lower levels of wealth and standards of living, were reluctant to become involved as they didn't have much to lose and were viewed as those more likely to commit crimes (Mesko 2007, p. 84). This divide within the community allowed citizens of the higher class to feel a sense of empowerment through their involvement with the police and once again created isolation for those individuals classified as a part of the lower social class.

However the people of the lower social class can also be to blame. It is asserted by Podolefsky (1983) that generally when crimes are committed and no action is taken, liability is placed upon the police. Community members prefer to abuse authorities rather than cooperate and help put criminals away (cited in Ward 1997, p. 5). The final theme discussed is reducing the fear of crime in citizens. Findings show that people are afraid for their safety and do not want to be victims of crime. As a result of this fear, rates of crimes are increasing.

In order to relieve this fear people started using different methods to defend themselves such as carrying guns, knives and other protective weapons (Mesko 2007, p. 75). Ward (1997, p. 5) also proves this as "(a)lmost all residents and business owners interviewed either formally or informally owned guns and kept them nearby, ready for use. " Police are given the primary role of fighting crime and are expected to " eliminate all evil in society so that the ' good citizen' can live in freedom without living fear" (Mesko 2007 p. 81).

But to give this role to police solely and not have community crime prevention programs will not guarantee reducing crime within communities and furthermore not reduce fear of crime. Discussion The main point for discussion in this research paper is that community development is a necessary approach to addressing crime and promoting justice in our nation (Acosta & Chavis 2007, p. 653). Over the years, police were given the main responsibility to deal with crime; however the development of a community approach will allow members to engage in addressing social issues such as crime. This approach also gives member a responsibility to help maintain a safe living location. As pointed out in Acosta and Chavis (2007, p. 654) " In the community development approach, community members are responsible for solving community problems; to meet this responsibility, community members are given a voice and collective power to influence decisions and social outcomes that will affect their lives. " Some authors argue the effectiveness of an approach involving community crime prevention.

The National Crime prevention Framework (Australian Institute of Criminology 2011) believes this approach has proved to be effective, with outcomes such as:

- Reducing crime and other concerning problems within the community,
- Increased safety and unity leading to less victimisation,
- More emotional and psychological support for those who have been victims of crime, and
- Reducing crimes by those who have previously offended or been engaged in antisocial behaviour.

The efficiency of allowing the public to participate in the decision making related to crime, is also shown through the great outcomes achieved in the youth discipline.

Partnerships were created with local universities that resulted in service learning programs and continuous student internships which were important in establishing students' careers by putting them on the right path. Another great accomplishment was that students were achieving better results in school and their behaviours and negative attitudes were definitely improving (Pickens 2011, p. 19-21). An important outcome as clarified by Pickens (2011, p. 20) was " increasing youth's awareness about risky behaviour, violence, weapons, drugs, and alcohol", which was said to be the major motivation for all the other improvements.

A topic that has been mentioned by various authors is the amount of government involvement in community crime prevention. It is suggested by Australian Institute of Criminology (2011) that first and foremost the government can help to minimise crime, " Governments can address factors that influence the opportunities for crime to occur through its various responsibilities in areas such as managing public space and building design, providing community recreational services and developing policies that affect local businesses and urban development processes. Furthermore, Greenberg and Rohe (1984) indicate "(t)he physical design and appearance of a community (i. e. , structural assets) affect criminal access"(cited in Acosta & Chavis 2007, p. 654). Consequently, through developing safer public places governments can begin to create safer public environments. The articles and supporting documents used to assemble this research report were generally discussing very similar aspects of community crime prevention.

Topics included juvenile crime prevention, the fear of crime that has been developing in citizens and the community crime prevention strategies that were being used to reduce and prevent crime within neighbourhoods. To increase the effectiveness of these approaches further research should be conducted in the areas of government participation. To take community crime prevention to the next level, local government should consider formalising or enforcing requirements that must be met by all citizens.

All citizens should be expected to be involved in creating a safer and combined community. Conclusion Summing up, the involvement of community members in crime prevention is an effective technique. With the help of schools, police, and citizens crime has been reduced in youth, fear of crime has been minimised and social relationships strengthened. More communities should be encouraged to implement more strategies involving their citizens. A final thought is whether governments should consider enforcing community crime prevention in all areas to enable safer living environments.