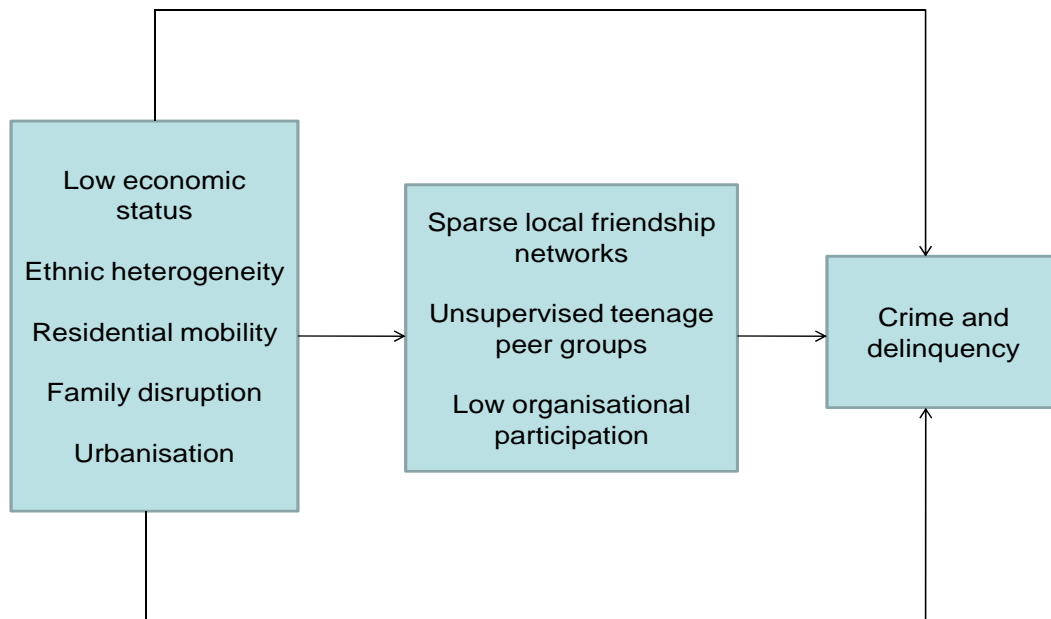


Crime Prevention – Social

1. Social crime prevention can be explained by the following:
 - a. “The social crime prevention model gives much needed attention to the **‘root causes’** of crime, especially the forces that contribute to delinquency, drug abuse, and a host of related adolescent problems. Based on the premise that crime is caused by the social ills of society, the **social crime prevention model focuses on developing programs and policies to improve the health, family life, education, housing, work opportunities and neighbourhood activities of potential offenders**” (Rosenbaum, D. P., Lurigio, A.J. and Davis, R. C. (1998) **The Prevention of Crime: Social and Situational Strategies**, West/Wadsworth, Belmont, page 201).
2. There are various ways of considering why some communities/neighbourhoods experience more crime than others. Some of the explanations include:
 - a. Spiral of Decline - “Crime from the spiral-of-decline perspective is understood as a consequence of multiple and overlapping social problems. Elisabeth Burney (1999) provides an effective summary: children below poverty line; unemployed and unemployable young adults; single parent households; single adults, especially those formerly in institutional care; ethnic minorities, including refugees. These areas become characterised by instability and change; rapid turnover of households, decline of labour market, loss of services and transportation, and visible deterioration of buildings as well as radical physical alteration, such as demolition and construction of housing stock” (Knepper, P. (2007) **Criminology and Social Policy**, Sage, Los Angeles, pages 60- 61).
 - b. Social disorganisation - “In general terms, **social disorganisation** refers to the **inability of a community structure to realise the common values of its residents** and maintain **effective social controls**. Empirically, the structural dimensions of community social disorganisation can be measured in terms of the prevalence and interdependence of social networks in a community – both informal (e.g. friendship ties) and formal (e.g. organisational participation) – and in the span of **collective supervision that the community directs toward local problems ... structural barriers impede development of the formal and informal ties that promote the ability to solve common problems** (see diagram on the following page). Social organisation and disorganisation are thus seen as different ends of the same continuum with respect to systematic networks of community social control” (Sampson, R.J. and Groves, W.B. (1989) ‘Community Structure and Crime: Testing Social-Disorganisation Theory’, *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 94, No. 4, page 777).
 - c. “Sampson and his coauthors then introduced the term **‘collective efficacy’**, which is defined in terms of the **neighbourhood’s ability to maintain order in public spaces** such as streets, sidewalks, and parks. **Collective efficacy is implemented when neighbourhood residents take over actions to maintain public order**, such as by complaining to the authorities or by organizing neighbourhood watch programs. The authors argued that **residents take such actions only when ‘cohesion and mutual trust’ in the neighbourhood is linked to ‘shared expectations for intervening in support of neighbourhood social control’**. If either the mutual trust or the shared expectations are absent, then residents will be unlikely to act when disorder invades public space” (Vold, G.S.; Bernard, T.J. and Snipes, J.B. (2002) **Theoretical Criminology**, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pages 131-132).
 - d. Housing tenure has been identified as a potential variable in elevated levels of crime in some areas: “Results from the mixed model also found that the proportion of renters was significant for explaining increases in serious assaults, armed robbery, unarmed robbery and unlawful entry (other premises). These results clearly show the enduring problems in districts with high concentrations of renters, independent of social disadvantage. The criminological literature is replete with using

proportion of renters as an important predictor of community crime problems” (Mazerolle, L.; McBroom, J. and Rombouts, S. (2011) ‘Compstat in Australia: An analysis of the spatial and temporal impact’, *Journal of Criminal Justice*, Vol. 39, Issue 2, page 134).



Causal model of extended version of Shaw and McKay's theory of community systemic structure and rates of crime and delinquency in (Sampson, R.J. and Groves, W.B. (1989) 'Community Structure and Crime: Testing Social-Disorganisation Theory', *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 94, No. 4, page 783)

3. Various authors caution against uncritical use of 'community':

- a. It is hardly novel to note that the assumption of communities being akin to 'ye olde idea of community' is both a wrong-headed and dangerous seduction, whether imagined as the bucolic village of a hierarchical but harmonious organic past, or as the homogenous 'high trust' working class community of industrial society yore. It is a myth to assume that actually existing communities today are commonly characterized by a 'relatively homogenous group of people, closely bound, sharing certain values, usually within a defined spatial locality' (Carson, 2004a: 13) ... the late modern realities of living together is that of both more open, mobile social arrangements for consumer-citizens and more closed, immobile relations, especially in the most deprived and least mobile 'communities of fate', left behind by the neo-liberal times of affluence and consumerism" (Hughes, G. (2007) **The Politics of Crime and Community**, Palgrave Macmillan, page 12).

4. The following are some of the programs and interventions that emanate from this model:

- a. Target hot spots
- b. Stop spiral of decay, by cleaning up rubbish, graffiti and so on
- c. Reduce residential mobility by enabling residents to buy their homes
- d. Scatter public housing in a broad range of neighbourhoods
- e. Promote community power through community organisations
- f. Encouraging community leadership and responses to community problems
- g. Empowering residents through vocational training and employment opportunities
- h. Getting young people back into school and/or to stay in school
- i. Helping young people make the transition to a working life (from school or unemployment)
- j. Improve residents knowledge of available public services and community support services
- k. Make client service staff more accessible and visible so they can respond to problems quickly
- l. Improve housing so it better meets contemporary standards so that residents want to stay

- m. Work with groups of residents so that they can develop new life and community management skills
 - n. Encourage a partnership approach between public, private, volunteer, charitable and community organisations to assist the community (Knepper, P. (2007) **Criminology and Social Policy**, Sage, Los Angeles, pages 22-23)
5. Some of the challenges of facing social crime prevention include:
- a. Political will for long-term investment
 - b. International trends with local consequences contrary to state-based initiatives / programs
 - c. Everyone's but no one's responsibility - "The crux of the problem is that in this new-found era of 'crime is everybody's problem', responsibility has become so diffused as to no longer reside anywhere in particular, with all the problems for funding to which that gives rise" (Crawford, A. (1998) **Crime Prevention and Community Safety: Politics, Policies and Practices**, Longman, Harlow, page 122)
 - d. Labelling and stigmatisation / net-widening
 - e. Victim blaming – tension between individual responsibilities and structural determinants
 - f. Difficulties of conducting quality evaluations
 - g. Implementation failure
 - h. 'Criminalisation of social policy'