

## Residential neighbourhood security challenges: Assessing crime prevention concepts and techniques

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### Abstract

There had been extensive research work published on neighbourhood crime and the need to wipe out crime, at least, within the residential neighbourhood for the purpose of achieving environmental sustainability but the worrisome fact is its unabated trend. This article attempts to concisely but critically dwell on identifying the various neighbourhood crime prevention initiatives and concepts through review of related literature. The study reveals that most nations, especially developing economies of the world believe majorly in the penal system as their major neighbourhood crime prevention initiative more than situational crime prevention and consideration of social factors. These traditional approaches, many researchers, have found to be grossly inadequate. Hence, the article recommends that since the limitations of the penal system seem insurmountable, the option of the crime prevention through environmental design and social development should be supported by the government, researchers and policy makers. More research on the implementation of the concepts of crime prevention through environmental design and social development should be encouraged.

**Keywords:** Crime prevention strategies; penal system; residential neighbourhood crime; SEDeF Model

### 1. Introduction

Studies and government reports indicate overwhelming fear of security characterized in the neighbourhood crime which does lead to loss of lives and property. Globally, nations are beginning to express concern over the increasing trend of property crime and as such efforts are being geared towards tackling the menace by both private and public sectors. A United Nations (1990) <sup>[56]</sup> survey on crime, reported that while most countries in the developed world incur between 2 and 3 per cent of their annual budget on crime control, an average of 9-14 per cent were spent by the developing nations.

However, the seemingly exaggerated way at which crime cases are reported does not seem to dispel the fact that there had been increased cases of property offences and that its severe consequences abound. As a result of the external pressure and poor control of residents' surrounding, a good number of communities are becoming more and more fearful (Wilson, 1989) <sup>[61]</sup>. The unpleasant experience of insecurity through increased residential burglary is made worsen as there is the need to replace stolen household gadget and payment of rising insurance premium thereby increasing the budgetary expenditure of families. It is incredible to note that house owners, as well as renters, end up footing the bill for the crime. Most unfortunate, residential neighbourhoods prone to criminal activities are sometimes stigmatized thereby leading to loss of income or value.

The adequacy of housing in the area of security and safety of lives and properties is germane to this review. While the human environment is becoming less safe, their means of protecting it are becoming more expensive and in some respects, less effective. Fear often creates a knee-jerk reaction. One fears a burglary because one's neighbours or relatives have been burgled or having been burgled once, one is likely to perceive a second attempt. The reaction is often to go out

and buy more defensive structures- people tend to think the more, the better. Residents and housing developers are spending a far greater share of their budgets on security hardware ranging from electro-mechanical devices, to space movement detectors such as ultra-sonic, microwave or passive infra-red and close circuit television (CCTV) to mention a few. Then, to add to the worries of the residents is the need to also incur extra expenditure on the procurement of external security gadgets like video at the gates and grounds, intercoms, window keys, peepholes bars and grills among others which in most cases bring about the dilemma on the issues of quality and standard of the gadgets. (Wellings, 1989; Agbola, 1997) <sup>[60, 31]</sup>.

More often, there had been a clarion call for more police, more courts and more prisons as a result of these increases in residential property offences in the recent years. Inferably, this will give rise to an increase in government annual budget for policing, building and maintenance of prison and other judicial matters. The level of police protection will rise steadily regarding the proportion of police per some citizen (Aderinto and Omotoso, 2012; Koper, 2010) <sup>[2, 34]</sup>.

In terms of imprisonment, nations all over the world have been experiencing higher imprisonment rates due to global industrialization and urbanization. In some countries, especially the developing nations where poverty is prevalent, prison overcrowding is approaching catastrophic level (Jefferson, 2005; MacKenzie, 2006) <sup>[33, 38]</sup>. Wilson (1989) <sup>[61]</sup> however, doubted if doubling the rate of imprisonment and that of police would make a significant difference in the crime rate. This, however, does not undermine societies' need of adequate police number, prisons and relevant laws that take into account contemporary crime pattern. But, as it has been demonstrated in some places around the world, over and about a certain threshold, more resources poured into the penal

system may not translate to less crime. As a matter of fact, many, unchanged from their behaviour and propensity to commit criminal acts. Laws and law reforms, though important, do not act as a deterrent for most offenders (Wilson, 1987) <sup>[62]</sup>. Hence, the needs for a model shift in crime prevention majorly within the residential neighbourhood. The threat to property, neighbourhoods and persons as a result of the incessant criminal offences have caused an intense effort due to developing crime prevention initiatives or techniques through researches, policies emanating from government among which is the judicial system with a view to reducing, controlling and as much as possible eliminating crime. The essence of this article therefore, is primarily to identify and critically discuss the various crime prevention concepts and techniques available to combat crime generally and residential neighbourhood crime in particular with a view to enhancing a safe, secured and sustainable environment. Hence, the remaining part of the article discusses conceptual definitions, the historical background of neighbourhood crime prevention, crime prevention concepts and techniques as well as conclusion and recommendation. The policy implication of the research is to reawakening researchers, government, urban planners, law enforcement agents, property managers and the general public, the need to prioritise issues of housing crime and its prevention.

## 2. Conceptual Definitions

Literature reveals that the definition of 'crime prevention' falls under three schools of thought. The first believes that policing, criminal justice and 'law and order' should be excluded from the definition while the second school of thought believes penal system should be included. The third category stands neutral.

First, Sutton, *et al* (2013) <sup>[51]</sup> dwell on the definition of Van Dijk and de Waard (1991, p. 483) <sup>[57]</sup> which sees crime prevention as "the total of all private initiatives and state policies, other than the enforcement of criminal law, aimed at the reduction of damage caused by acts defined as criminal by the state" by stressing that crime prevention should embrace both social prevention and environmental prevention and that they should so be embraced as an alternative to policing, criminal justice and 'law and order'. In their analysis Sutton, *et al* (2013) <sup>[51]</sup> believe the 'law and order' attracts people because it seems to tackle crime at its most direct and obvious source, the offender; but according to them, factors contributing to the occurrence of any single offence are multiple and complex. They identify an advantage of prevention policy in that it moves beyond a fixation with deviants and deviance and begin to address all the contributing elements. This, they acknowledge as the reason why governments would be well advised to spend more of their resources on prevention as they emphasize that democratic societies that devote excessive resources to the 'tough on crime' approach, risk more than wasting money but also risk damaging the social fabric. In their view, law and order's domination of contemporary policy and media discourses threatens a 21<sup>st</sup> century equivalent of the 'tragedy of the commons' fables: the tendency for 'rational choices' made by individuals in isolation combined to destroy invaluable and irreplaceable collective resources. Furthermore, in the crime policy case, the collective resource is social as well as physical as in many parts of the world where there is a growing

tendency of citizens to live in gated communities (Low, 2003) <sup>[36]</sup>, work in secured office block and find leisure and recreation in similarly controlled and patrolled enclaves (Davis, 1990); while their governments rely more and more on aggressive policing tactics to maintain order in what remains of the public domain (Sutton *at.al.*, 2013) <sup>[51]</sup>. Atkinson (2006) and Low (2003) <sup>[36]</sup> posited that the burgeoning of private security and increased emphasis on law and order in market-based- democracies characterized by significant levels of inequality can lead to heightened levels of both of unease, fear and of crime itself. Hence, Sutton *et al.*, (2013) <sup>[51]</sup> believe crime prevention through social development and environment design are capable of breaking the cycle.

Considering the second school of thought, which is seen as a more pragmatic level, researchers such as Ekblom (2011) <sup>[4]</sup> and Weatherbum (2002) point out that the Van Dijk and de Waard approach ignores research evidence that arrest, imprisonment and other criminal justice based initiatives also deter and reduce offending. In line with this position, crime prevention as outlined in the 2002 United Nations Guidelines for the prevention of crime "comprises strategies and measures that seek to reduce the risk of crimes occurring, and their potential harmful effect on individuals and society, including fear of crime, by intervening to influence their multiple causes". The Guideline agrees with many academics and policy makers that consider the activities of the penal system 'preventive' on the basis of its assumed 'deterrent' effect on potential offenders as well as containing and reducing the risk of offending through incapacitation while in prison. The Guideline concluded that crime prevention does not restrict its meaning to measure of 'crime reduction or 'crime control' since the objective of crime prevention extends beyond the absence of crime to the improvement of the quality of life.

From another angle, Crime prevention has been defined as "the reduction of the future risk of crime" (Mayor's Task Force on Safer Cities, 1992, p. 7) <sup>[39]</sup>. However, crime prevention does not imply that all crime will be eradicated (Waller & Weiler, 1984) <sup>[58]</sup>. The definition of crime under this definition, they added, is usually limited to certain offences against persons (homicide, assault, sexual assault, dangerous driving) and property (robbery, theft, break-and-enter and vandalism).

The neighbourhood crime prevention concepts and/or initiatives are considered under the following headings and subheadings: penal system; crime prevention through environmental design; crime prevention through social development; gated community and property fencing; and crime opportunity theories (situational crime prevention, lifestyle theory, rational choice theory, routine activities theory, crime pattern theory, broken windows, defensible space and others).

## 3. Result and Discussion

In the course of this review, the neighbourhood crime prevention concepts and strategies are considered under the following headings and subheadings: penal system; crime prevention through environmental design; crime prevention through social development; gated community and property fencing; and crime opportunity theories (situational crime prevention, lifestyle theory, rational choice theory, routine

activities theory, crime pattern theory, broken windows, defensible space and so on).

### 3.1 The Penal System

One of the social ills of urbanization and industrialization is crime and social disorder. In response to this, police department has been created in different countries to recruit and train personnel to control or prevent crime as well as organized judiciary with the building of more prisons to ensure law and order and to reprimand offenders. Property or neighbourhood crime that comes in the form of burglary, vandalism, rape and even murder is being considered to be crucial due the physical, economic and health implication on the residents. Apart from this, residential neighbourhood is known to be susceptible to these forms of crime because most of the personal and family valuables are kept within the home and in most times, homes are deserted as residents would go to work, school, market, place of worship and even recreation thereby making their homes a target of attack for prospective offenders. In most developed countries like United States and United Kingdom special anti-crime police squad are trained to maintain peace within the housing estate (Skogan, 1997; Cordner, 2014; MacKenzie and Henry, 2013). This is often called community policing. In most developing countries, this special provision is not common probably due to the additional cost it would be on government budget as most of these nations experience high level of poverty; while some, as a result of ignorance and corruption (Fabiya, 2006). However, the concern here is even with the clamour for increase in the numerical strength of national police force, the soaring trend in property crime seems unabated (Weisburd and Eck, 2004; Ladicola, 1986). Globally, police are perceived to be the predominant custodian of security of life and properties both within and outside the home. However, this big expectation seems to be met with questionable effect. (Stephen-Dietz, 1997; Fallshore, *et al.*, 2007) <sup>[50, 25]</sup>

### 3.2 Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)

CPTED asserts that 'the proper design and effective use of the built environment can lead to a reduction in the fear and incidence of crime, and an improvement in quality of life (Crowe, 2000:46, Cozens, 2008). CPTED which cut across many disciplines with fundamental principle drawn from criminology, planning and environmental psychology, and is precisely located within the field of environmental criminology, deriving theoretical support from opportunity theory which is concerned with the modification of the physical and socio-environmental conditions that may enhance criminal opportunities (Brantingham and Faust, 1976; Cozens and Hillier, 2012).

Crime prevention through environmental design is not a new concept. The phrase was coined by Jeffery in 1971 <sup>[32]</sup> but record has it that a significant contributor to the concept was Crowe through his book 'Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design' (1991), is a primary resource for crime-prevention practitioners in the security industry to help them in better understanding the relationship between design and human behavior. CPTED, Perry (2013) saw as not a reactive discipline. Rather, he described it as a proactive approach to manipulating the physical environment and bring about the desired behavior of reduced criminal as well as

reduced fear of crime. However, Cozens (2008) saw the emergence of CPTED as a process as it took different forms and given different names but without much departure from the tenets of CPTED. Some of the contributors as enunciated by Cozens (2008) include: Jeffery (1971 and 1990) <sup>[32]</sup> – Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED); Newman (1973) <sup>[41]</sup> – Defensible Space; Wood (1961) – Housing Design: A Social Theory; Jacobs (1961) – The death and life of great American Cities; Angel (1968) – Discouraging Crime Through City Planning; Wilson and Kelling (1982) <sup>[63]</sup> – Broken windows; Coleman (1985, 1998) – Utopia on Trial: Vision and reality in planned housing; Poyner and Webb (1991) – Crime-free Housing; and Crowe (1991 and 2000).

According to Clarke (1989), the theory of CPTED dwells more on the premise that crime results as a result of opportunities presented by physical environment, hence, it is no impossible to alter the physical environment in order that crime can be reduced or even prevented. This being the case, it should be possible to change the physical environment so that crime is less likely to occur". The three major components of CPTED, as identified by Crowe (1991), include territorial reinforcement, natural surveillance and natural access control. However, refinement of CPTED has added several other strategies including activity support, image/ space management, and target hardening.

Apparently, Crowe (2000) posited that some related concepts have become confused with CPTED operation theories and applications. Although some of these concepts according to him overlap with CPTED, others are very different in that they attempt to repackage and redefine the common-sense approach of CPTED. Some of these related concepts include: a CPTED-organised and mechanical approach versus a natural approach; defensible space; environmental security; security by design; natural crime prevention; safer cities; situational crime prevention; place-specific crime prevention and second-generation CPTED. A good understanding of these concepts as well as they relate to or distinct from CPTED is required. Commenting on the popularity, development and acceptability of CPTED, there are enough evidence that CPTED despite criticisms had been accepted by governments of different nations, its agencies like Police and Practitioners alike (Adams, 1973; Hilliers, 1973; Labs, 1989; Smith 1987; Cozens, 2008; Armitage 2013).

### 3.3 Crime Prevention through Social Development (CPSD)

CPSD is a concept that acknowledges the underlying complex social, economic and cultural processes that contribute to crime and victimization. By preventing the factors that contribute to crime and victimization, CPSD thereby attempt to bridge the gap between criminal justice programme and social support for individuals, families and communities, and are amendable to change (Attorney General and Justice, NSW, 2011).

Social development according to Waller and Weiler (1985) refers to any programme designed to address the root cause of crime like homelessness, poverty and unhealthy family influences. In other words, crime prevention through social development operates from the premise that there exist a causative relationship between crime and socio- economic factors. This relationship suggests prevention programmes that transcend traditional opportunity reduction approaches to

crime prevention (Mayor's Task Force, 1992). Targeted social programmes are keys to the implementation of CPSD.

Successful CPSD programmes will include a variety of programmes targeted at social problems such as ineffective parenting, unemployment, inadequate housing and domestic violence (The John Howard Society of Alberta, 1995). CPSD seeks to foster protective factors such as positive family support that may discourage every opportunity to offend.

By way of grouping, CPSD programmes can be divided into three main headings, namely; individual, family and community -level strategies. Individual level strategy focuses on addressing opportunities that may put individual at risk to offend; family-oriented policies which centres on ensuring family integration and blocking every opportunity for the children to offend; and community-Level Strategies which works towards community integration against crime.

The philosophy of CPSD is that every criminal act has tripod consequences- to the victim, immediate environment and the entire community. The most effective way- and the least expensive- of preventing crime is to intervene early to assist those risk becoming offenders or victims. (Attorney General and Justice, NSW, 2011; Hastings, 2007).

Internationally, crime prevention through social development (CPSD) according to Waller and Weiler (1985) is not a new idea. In 1967, the United States Presidential Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Criminal Justice concluded that "a dollar for housing, a dollar for schools..... were dollars for crime prevention". Earlier, the work of criminologists such as the Gluecks (1962), Cloward and Ohlin (1960), Hawkins and Weis (1985), Hawkins and Catalano (1986), Moffitt (1993) inspired special programmes of opportunities for youth. In the last few decades, there has been a renewed interest in crime prevention through social development in France, Britain U.S.A, Canada and other developing economies like Malaysia, China, Scotland and Republic of Slovenia to mention a few. Interest has also been shown in international comparisons aimed at understanding why some countries have a low official crime rate while some are rated high. CPSD has also been recommended and proven for housing crime prevention (The John Howard Society Of Alberta, 1995; Sherman, 1997; Scottish Government Communities Analytical Services, 2010) <sup>[52, 47, 42]</sup>.

### 3.4 Gated communities and property fencing

Over the years, security challenges within the residential neighbourhoods have been an issue of global discourse and one of the crime preventive strategies popularly used is gated community and property fencing. The concept of gated community has been variously but relatedly defined by different authors and scholars. Blakely (2006) <sup>[8]</sup> describes gated communities as a new form of residential space with restricted access such that normally public spaces have been privatized. According to him they are intentionally designed security communities with designated perimeters, usually walls or fences, and entrances controlled by gates and sometimes guards. Blakely (2006) <sup>[8]</sup> added that they include both new suburban housing arrangements and older inner-city areas retrofitted with barricades and fences.

Lister, *et al.* (2003) <sup>[35]</sup> affirmed that gated communities are walled or fenced housing developments to which public access is restricted, often guarded with CCTV and/or security personnel, and usually characterized by tenancy or leasehold

agreements (legal) which tie the residents to a common code of conduct.

In the words of Grant and Mittelsteadt (2004) <sup>[30]</sup>, gated community is seen as "a housing development on private roads closed to general traffic by a gate across the primary access; the developments may be surrounded by fences, walls and other natural barriers that further limit public access". According to them, this definition includes projects that gates across roadways, but would exclude "barricade perches", as Blakely and Snyder (1997) <sup>[9]</sup> describe them, where some street are closed off for traffic calming while others remain open. Hence, from the previous, the key element of gating represents an effort to control access to the settlement because gated developments have an inside and an outside.

Though it may make sense to assert that there is paucity of concrete data to support or oppose that gated communities and/or property fencing provide higher degree of security or reduce crime rate, nevertheless, there are strong positions. From the two points of view, the upper side consists of those who believe that crime rate can be significantly reduced through gated communities and property fencing (Addington and Rennison, 2015; Plaut, 2011; Low, 2001) <sup>[1, 44, 31]</sup>. It seldom makes sense to believe that since gated communities and property fencing restrict strangers' access, that the crime rate will be less. Gated communities do not only act as a psychological deterrent for would-be criminal, but also provides a solid physical barrier (Helsley and Strange, 1999) <sup>[31]</sup>. However, moving into a neighbourhood solely because it is gated is not wise security decision. It is desirable for any intending occupier before buying or leasing a place within a given community to first of all make necessary investigation about the security situation, especially in gated community.

Essentially, the integrity of a gated community is only as strong as the integrity of the people that live within it. It may be wrong just to assume that because a complex or neighbourhood is surrounded by a security fence and gate that only law abiding people live among the property. Burglars and other criminals can as well reside within gated communities (Breetzke and Cohn, 2013; Breetzke and Landman, 2014; Atkinson and Smith, 2012) <sup>[12, 13, 6]</sup>. Visitors of other residents can as well create fear. It is because of this and others that it is sometimes believed that gated communities are no safer than non-gated communities. Some studies show that by separating apartment complexes and entire neighbourhood with fences, it prevents the neighbourhood from coming together as a whole, which is believed to prevent crime. Fences and gates can also create a wrong impression of security for the occupants living within them to have feeling that there is no need to keep an eagle eye on suspicious people and activity, thereby making them and their neighbourhood's easy target for burglars and other criminals. Agbola (1997) <sup>[3]</sup> in his study interpreted construction of high fences/walls and gates around the building or/and neighbourhood as an 'architecture of fear' which paradoxically invite offenders rather than deterring them in that when high fences are built, it inferably means valuable things are kept within which may by and large attract a prospective offender.

However, while gated communities are prohibited from claiming that the secured gates and fences round their properties offer a higher level of security and safety, the implication certainly exists. Property owners and managers usually understand the psychological effects that the word

“gated communities” have on the general uncommon. Addington and Rennison (2005) found support for the hypothesis that housing units in gated communities experience less burglary than their non-gated counterparts. Their findings also emphasised the diversity of gated communities and their residents, which is in stark contrast to commonly held perceptions of these areas as affluent enclaves. How safe a property is depends a lot on whether residents look out for each other- whether it is a rental or owner-occupied community and whether the property is professionally managed. For rental, it is desirable to do a criminal background check on the applicants, ensuring the access codes of the entry gate are changed from time to time is also important. Gated community concept is expected to meet up with the desired expectations in the area of crime prevention if these and other essential precautions are taken.

### 3.5 Crime opportunity theories

These are theories that premise on the fact that offenders’ intention to victimize could be reduced or deterred if the opportunity is blocked (Felson and Clarke, 1998) [28]. Most of these theories also cut across human behaviour and different theories in this respect have been propounded by various scholars.

Özkan (2011) [43] in his effort to expatiate on the role of opportunity for crime protection concluded that routine activities theory, rational choice theory, crime pattern theory

and defensible space theory are the theoretical basis for situational crime prevention. He added that, this is so because they make clear causal template of crime or how to prevent crime regarding immediate situations of opportunities, and that assumptions of these theories stand as gadgets to develop different crime prevention interventions. He agrees with other researchers that displacement and diffusion of benefits are potential threats for opportunity crime prevention interventions (Eck, 1993; Sutton, et al., 2013; Freilich and Newman, 2014; Wortley and Tilley, 2014) [29, 23, 51]. Özkan however recommends that approaching a crime prevention project with an understanding of displacement and diffusion of benefits effects will allow performers to more carefully assess the impact of their crime prevention efforts and considering opportunity theories as a veritable tool for crime prevention. Sherman, et al. (1997) [47] asserted that scientific techniques are commonly used to evaluate the study that is implemented. Cozens (2014) [22] agreeing with the concepts and definitions of crime opportunity theories as a useful tool for crime prevention identified the following sub divisions: Crime pattern theory (Brantingham and Brantingham, 1981) [11], Routine activities theory (Cohen and Felson, 1979), Rational choice theory (Cornish and Clarke, 1986) [21], Lifestyle theory (Fattah, 1993), Situational Crime Prevention Theory (Clarke, 1980) [17], and Broken windows theory (Wilson and Kelling, 1982) [63]. See Table 1

**Table 1:** Crime Opportunity Theories

| S/N | Type Name                    | Thrust of The Theory   | Author & Year                                      | Usefulness  | Criticism  |
|-----|------------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| 1.  | Situational Crime Prevention | Situational prevention is an opportunity-reducing measures that are directed at highly specific forms of crime, involve the management, design or manipulation of the immediate environment in as systematic and permanent way as possible, and make crime more difficult and risky, or less rewarding and excusable as judged by a wide range of offenders  | Clarke, 1980                                       | Available studies show that this theory had been proved to be useful in residential neighbourhood crime prevention. | It is overly simplistic atheoretical, problem of crime displacement, diversion of attention from underlying causes of crime, restriction of personal freedom, conservative and managerial approach to crime  |
| 2.  | Lifestyle Theory             | Fattah’s study affirms that person’s work and leisure activities that increase exposure to potential offenders (such as alcohol consumption in public places, late night use of public transport or the kind of car or quality of wears) tend to increase the risks of victimization.  | Fattah, 1993                                       | This is quite relevant to residential neighbourhood security  | It attempts to modify the people’s lifestyle thereby limiting their freedom.   |
| 3.  | Rational Choice Theory       | The theory basically argues that crime is a result of rational choices based on analyses of anticipated costs and benefits. It relates to the perceived risk, reward and effort associated with the offence and environmental factors within the built/natural environment are an integral part of the decision-making process.  | Clarke and Cornish, 1985; Cornish and Clarke, 1986 | This is relevant in relation to offenders’ behaviour to housing crime   | The development of the ‘bounded rationality model’ tends to puncture the tenet of the theory and secondly better protected areas will simply displace crime.   |
| 4   | Routine Activities Theory    | The theory dwells on the premise that, predatory crime is a product of a likely offender’s, a suitable target’s convergence in time and space with the absence of a capable guardianship.  | Cohen and Felson, 1979                             | There are empirical studies to support its relevance in residential burglary.                                       | RAT tells who is more likely to be victimized. But who are the offenders? There is a correlation between criminal victims and offenders. Also, crime rates are generally proportional to the number of motivated offenders.  |
| 5.  | Crime Pattern Theory         | The theory highlights how specific crimes occur in specific locations and at specific times. Crime pattern theory examines differing scales, from patterns of crime at a meso level (city) to macro level (neighbourhood) to the micro level (building envelop). It also focuses on the offender and target as they converge in space and time with a particular emphasis on the place of the criminal event. Activity nodes, paths and edges are also important in the patterning of different types of crimes. | Brantingham and Brantingham, 1981                  | There are empirical studies to support its relevance in residential burglary and other violent crimes.              | As an offshoot of situational crime prevention, it has been criticized by social crime prevention for being ‘anti-social’ because it does little to help individuals prone to committing crime. It has also been faulted to be individual-focused while statistics prove a large amount of crime is committed in groups. |

Source: Authors’ compilation.

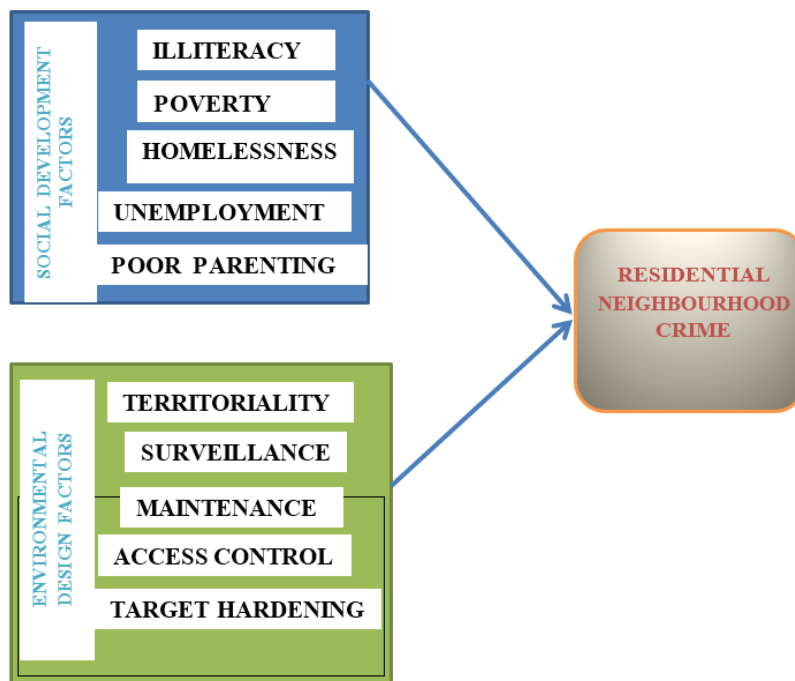


Fig 1: Conceptual Framework of Socio-Environmental Factor (Sedef) Model (Components)

#### 4. Conclusion and Recommendation

From the foregoing, it can be summarised that the neighbourhood crime prevention techniques fall under three (3) main headings- penal system, crime prevention through environmental planning and crime prevention through social development. Penal system, over the years, had been described as the traditional method as it has existed over decades but researchers have argued that notwithstanding its long existence, it has not achieved the primary objective of crime prevention –crime elimination/reduction, as nations instead of witnessing crime reduction are daily complaining of prison overcrowding, need to employ more police and procurement of more judges as neighbourhood crimes continue to soar. Other shortcomings identified against the penal system include high rate of recidivism (re-offending) ranging between 50 and 80 per cent globally, police brutality and imprisonment being seen as hatred than correction, high cost of maintenance, frequent loss of lives, damage on the fabric of a democratic setting and the likes. However, crime prevention through environmental planning or design and crime prevention through social development are not completely perfect (Sutton, *et al*, 2013) <sup>[51]</sup> but considered by researchers to be preferred (See Table 2).

Hence, a contribution through this research would be to recommend a model known as Socio-Environmental Design Factors (SEDeF) as a complement if not a substitute to the penal system in order to drastically reduce the soaring trend (Olajide and Lizam, 2015) <sup>[42]</sup>. The proposed model as shown in Figure 1, dwells on the fact that a combination of the social risk factors and environmental design strategies would go a long way in checkmating residential neighbourhood crime

(Sutton, *et al.*, 2013) <sup>[51]</sup>. SEDeF is derived from two theories known as Crime Prevention through Social Development (CPSD) which is premised on the belief that crime can be drastically reduced if the fundamental social root causes of crime like poverty, homelessness, illiteracy, unemployment, family disunity, delinquencies and the likes are tenaciously tackled; and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) which is focused on purposeful manipulation of the environmental neighbourhood design in such a way that it will discourage potential offenders to commit crime. This, which is otherwise called virtual building, is meant to systematically apply concepts like territorial reinforcement, natural surveillance, natural access control, activity support, image/space management and target hardening (Crowe, 2000, Cozens, 2008).

The writers are of the view that if the penal system has been in operation for these years without remarkable results in the area of neighbourhood crime prevention, the concepts of CPTED and CPSD should be better embraced (Sutton, *et. al*, 2013; Tilley, 2014) <sup>[51, 64, 53]</sup>. Crime prevention through environmental design seeks to block the offender's opportunity to commit a crime through environmental design and behaviour. While the crime prevention through social development aims at preventing property crime by finding a solution to all the social risk factors. These include poverty, homelessness, illiteracy, corruption, family accidents and bad peer group, etc. that tempt one to commit a crime. Further studies are required on the two approaches (crime prevention through environmental design and social development) with a view to working out their workability towards environmental sustainability.

**Table 2:** Analysis of the Strengths and Weaknesses of CPTED and CPSD and Strength in their Merger

| Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)  |  | Crime Prevention Through Social Development (CPSD)   |  | Crime Prevention Through Social and Environmental Development (CPSED)  |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| Strengths  | Weaknesses   | Strength   | Weaknesses   | Benefits of the Merger   |
| *Widely tested and proven  | *CPTED mostly results in crime displacement, hence can only reduce crime for a short period of time.                                   | *Ability to address root causes of crime.  | *It is not good for short term policies and implementations  | *It brings to the fore the role of both the private and Public in crime prevention                                       |
| *The impact can be felt within short period of time.   | *Absence of social cohesion  | *Many factors linked to crime by longitudinal studies are influenced by social development         | *Structures needed for its sustainability like integrity, trust and unity are not easy to come by.   | *It enjoys the strength of both thereby discarding their weaknesses  |
| *It has recorded high level of research and government support                                     | *Confident use of terms like ‘defensible Space’, ‘natural surveillance’, and ‘symbolic barrier’ – as if they are scientifically proven | *United Nations scoring it high as a reliable crime prevention approach for community integration. | *Time needed to educate the public about the programme for it to yield result is considerably long.  | *A search into the literature reveals that no study has been done in this direction, hence a gap in knowledge is bridged |
| *The mechanism is simple and direct.   | *It required huge capital outlay by the developer.   | *It is relatively cheaper to implement.  | *Its elasticity makes it becoming too diffused or too dominant – within social policies              |  |
| *If fully implemented, it will reduce government spending in policing, and other judicial matters. | *Only applicable to a newly planned neighborhood(s).   | *It enhances community integration   | *The need for inter-sectorial or interdisciplinary partnerships which may be difficult to establish. |  |
|  | *Its resistance to change.   | *Wider coverage of application. It can be applied to both developed and planned neighborhoods      | *Difficulty involved in measuring some risk factors like poverty, unemployment, etc.                 |  |
|  | *Individualizing security makes the approach more of vigilantism.  |  | *Socio-Cultural factors peculiar to different communities  |  |
|  | *Danger in overstating its impact and slipping into a design determinist philosophy.   |  |  |  |
|  | *Introduction of nodes, paths edges can serve as route to other crimes.  |  |  |  |
|  | &Sociologists believe that crime has its root from sociology and not architecture or planning.   |  |  |  |

Source: Authors’ compilation

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