

# e-Proceeding

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"SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT, RESILIENCE AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING"

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# THE FACTORS OF CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT FOR A HIGHER QUALITY OF LIFE

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## Abstract

Crime and crime prevention have recently become crucial issues that are increasingly being debated all across the globe. The occurrence of crime is a constraint towards a higher quality of life because it leads to a feeling of fear. In dealing with the crime issues, the most important thing that needs to be clarified is the root causes of crime incidence to ensure that crime can be understood in a comprehensive manner. The purpose of this paper is to provide an understanding through preliminary research on the key factors that contribute to crime prevention through social development approaches. These cover the kind of factors that can be employed to deter crime for a higher quality of life towards livable communities. A desk study was employed to gather all information needed and to explore the potential of community development strategies that lead to a higher quality of life. In line with the purpose, the objective of this study is to review the related scholarly articles and previous literature in order to identify the key factors that contribute to crime prevention through social development. The study also tries to assess the factors influencing the risks of crime and violence towards a better understanding of the whole context. The ATLAS.ti software was employed to analyze the body of information gathered. To understand the whole context, this paper also outlines the factors that influence the risks of crime and violence. Based on the review, the identified factors of social development crime prevention include preschool program, early school-leaver's program, parenting training, mentoring programs, family and school partnership, anti-bullying initiatives, self-esteem and empowerment, establishment of youth activities, health care assistant, job skills training, drug and alcohol control program and violence reduction campaign. This study is important to nourish the information and knowledge towards crime prevention through community development. At the same time, it will be a source of inspiration and aspiration to all related stakeholders to develop the most effective and comprehensive strategies towards a safer living environment and a higher quality of life based on social development crime prevention approaches.

**Keywords:** *social development; crime prevention; higher quality of life*

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

First and foremost, we need to clarify the meaning of crime, prevention, and social development to understand the whole context of the paper. Legally, crime is usually defined by previous researchers as an act or omission forbidden by law that can be punished by imprisonment and/or fine. Tatakura (2011) pointed out that crime is a public wrong and it can be defined as acts or omissions forbidden by law that can be punished by imprisonment or fine. In addition, Garland (2001) stated crime as an essential problem and is a prominent fact

of contemporary societies. The prevention of crime refers to certain actions that reduce the future risks of crime. It does not mean that all crime is eliminated.

The purpose of this paper is to provide an understanding through preliminary research on the key factors that contribute to crime prevention through social development approaches that will cover what kind of factors can be employed to deter crime for a higher quality of life towards livable communities. The objective of this study is to review the related scholarly articles and previous literature in order to identify the key factors that contribute to crime prevention through social development. The study also assesses the factors influencing the risks of crime and violence towards a better understanding of the whole context.

## **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

The increase in population may lead to the increase in crime rate. The occurrence of crimes recently and other social problems such as house break-in or burglary, murder, rape, drug addiction, snatch theft and many other types of crime have caused severe concern on security among communities worldwide. Safety is well known as an important aspect of daily life towards a more secure and higher quality of life. Having a safe environment is crucial to establish a quality neighbourhood area to ensure that society can live in peace and harmony free from fear of crime and risk of crime. The incidence of crime recently is disturbing because the incidents are increasingly violent and criminals are becoming increasingly inhumane thus threatening the safety of the population and affecting the quality of life. The security issues have become a serious concern among residents and have become the focus of governments recently all over the globe which led to the concept of crime prevention. The UN Development Goals (SDGs) have outlined the strategic goals to be achieved by whole nations where one of the goals (3<sup>rd</sup> goal) focuses on promoting good health and wellbeing for all. The 11<sup>th</sup> Malaysia Plan under the EPU (2015) highlighted under the 3<sup>rd</sup> focus area which is "Creating Safer Living Environments for Thriving Communities" targets the confronting and overcoming of the obstacles towards safety. This is also in line with the 12<sup>th</sup> Malaysia Plan (2021-25) which is aligned with the collective wealth initiatives incorporating three dimensions, namely economic empowerment, environmental sustainability, and social re-engineering. The third strategic dimension outlined involves enhancing societal values, improving the purchasing power of the people, building resilient communities, strengthening social security networks, and improving the wellbeing of the people.

Waller and Weiler (1986) stated that social development crime prevention refers to actions which are intended to upturn the positive (reduce undesired) motivations, attitudes or behavior in individuals by influencing their experiences in areas such as family life, education, employment, housing or recreation. According to the Community Development Report (2001), previous research places low crime as the top factor that makes a place good to live. In addition, Parke (1999) also points out that neighborhoods that are unsafe are associated with high rates of infant mortality and low birthweight, juvenile delinquency, high school dropout, child abuse and neglect. These show that to have a secure and crime-free environment has become an aspiration of every layer of society. There are so many reasons why crime prevention through social development needs to be tackled with comprehensive and affective manners. Previous research outlined by Waller and Weiler (1986) has identified that the reduction of crime lessens the fear of crime among communities and also reduces the number of crime victims. In addition, social development crime prevention is important for the long term.

## **3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This section elaborates on the research methodology for this paper. This paper focuses on the contributing factors in social development crime prevention. The first section reviews the introductory part in understanding the crime occurrence and crime prevention, while the second part includes the review focused on the key contributors of crime prevention factors through the social development aspect. Relevant references are gathered through respected

sources including journals, books, other scholarly sources such as research papers, theses, websites, guidelines and reports. In order to obtain an extensive literature review, this study has collected significant references to achieve the purpose of the study. The technique employed in assessing the relevant references for this paper is desk study. ATLAS.ti has been applied for data analysis.

#### **4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Crime prevention strategies can be distinguished into three approaches, primary, secondary and tertiary (Brantingham & Faust, 1976; Edelman & Rowe, 1983). Waller, and Weiler (1986) highlighted that the focus of primary prevention entails the influences of general conditions in the social life context to reduce the incidence of undesired behavior such as having parenting courses in high schools or showing less violence on television. Secondary prevention measures are associated with the groups or individuals who have high risks of developing some undesired behavior through programs that prevent the risks to be worse. For example, children developmental programs that might include enriching care for the children of battered wives or remedial programs in schools for students identified as troublesome (Waller & Weiler, 1986). Walter and Weiler (1986) discussed that tertiary prevention is directed at preventing recidivism among identified offenders. The discussion will just cover the social development crime prevention measures that are generally associated with the primary and secondary crime prevention.

Crime prevention through social development encourages protective elements such as family support which eventually reduce the risks that lead to crime. The risk of harm also appears to be minimized by the protective elements (Hastings, 2008). Olajide and Lizam (2017) in their study show that by applying this approach, good outcomes were identified which are value appreciation within the residential neighborhoods, increased labor productivity, increased gross domestic product, housing sustainability, civil society, a reduction in government annual budget on crime control, and reduction in the psychological fear of crime. Apart from that, Crime Prevention through Social Development can significantly improve child development, educational achievement, and social adjustment (National Crime Prevention Centre, 2001).

It is very important that every community have their own strategies on crime prevention. This can be done through individual level strategies, family level strategies, and community level strategies. Individual strategies focus on addressing existing deficits that may place individuals at risk of involvement in crime. Family-oriented strategies seek to strengthen family capacity, such as parenting programs while community-level strategies seek to strengthen the local capacity to prevent crime (Vallée, 2010).

There is clear evidence that well-planned crime prevention strategies not only prevent crime and victimization, but also promote community safety and contribute to the sustainable development of countries. Effective, responsible crime prevention enhances the quality of life of all societies. It has long-term benefits in terms of reducing the costs associated with the formal criminal justice system, as well as other social costs that result from crime. Crime prevention offers opportunities for a humane and more cost-effective approach to the problems of crime.

However, social development approaches require a significant amount of human and financial resources from both within and outside the community. These include building active partnerships throughout the community, ensuring the roles and responsibilities of all players and especially the police, putting in place a sound governance structure to help in decision-making (Hawkins, Catalano, & Arthur, 2002). Hence, it is crucial to give enough education and information about the advantages of these kinds of programs to the local community. In conclusion, the implementation of Crime Prevention through Social Development will ensure the increase of happiness index in the society and makes the neighborhood a livable place.

#### 4.1 Factors of Crime Prevention through Social Development

Among the factors of social development crime prevention that have been identified are:

- Parenting training
- Preschool Programs
- Addressing violence reduction
- Multi-component programs
- Self -esteem and empowerment
- Job skills training
- Family and school partnerships
- Drug and alcohol control programs
- Establishment of youth activities
- Health care assistance

#### 5.0 CONCLUSIONS

Although the whole world is recently striving to become well-developed nations by 2020, such progress will also bring about many problems in society. These problems need to be considered by the policymakers, scholars and thinkers all across the globe to execute the best possible solutions to address the prevalent issues and problems. The growth of crime incidences such as burglaries or house break-ins, murders, robberies, domestic violence, drug, rape, addiction, snatching, and many other types of crime cause critical concern among societies regarding the rise of issues in security and safety. Without comprehensive and inclusive elucidation, the world will be a dreaded place to occupy. In line with the previous statement, our policy-makers with government support need to realise their major role towards embodying and advancing the role of crime prevention through social development approaches to cultivate the nature of safer living environments. By setting up a comprehensive design of social development crime prevention approaches and strengthening the communities, it may lead towards a higher quality of life while at the same time fulfilling the aspirations of the whole nation. The key findings on crime prevention through social development must be taken to the commitment of all policymakers, legislators, media, and concerned citizens. It is their responsibility in developing programs or strategies that can give significant influence to the environment of family, children and youth, housing, education and work to ensure that crime occurrence can be reduced. Hence, the communities can have better living and a higher quality of life.

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*Setuju.*

*27.1.2023*

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