

Community Policing Philosophy: Insight from a Sociological Perspective

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Abstract

A sociological understanding of crime can adequately respond to criminal challenges through practical engagement with society. Community policing is a proactive strategy that uses problem-solving methods and strategic partnerships to solve problems related to public safety, including crime and social disturbance. The core of this policing system is a flexible organizational structure and decentralized power, in which the officer decides how best to preserve security and order in line with local needs. Decentralized administration at both the command and decision-making levels has been used as an approach to promote the effectiveness of community policy. Consequently, police officers could independently interact with communities, identifying problems and developing feasible solutions. However, this idea has variations, particularly in the debate on how community policy can construct a social system to create better strategies against criminal acts. It is essential to analyze the sociological perspective to understand the main objective of the community-oriented policing strategy. Mainly, a theory that focuses on reducing crime and crime fear enhances the conditions of life for law enforcement personnel and members of society. Hence, this article analyses each strategy component using pertinent and specific sociological theories and criminological concepts, highlighting the significant contribution of sociologists in shaping the community policing strategy. Therefore, based on sociological perspectives, this article argues that community policy can create an inclusive social system within social actors' collaboration.

Keywords: community-oriented, crime, neighborhood, sociological perspective, partnerships



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I. INTRODUCTION

In general terms, community policing is a law enforcement philosophy that systematically applies community partnerships and problem-solving techniques to address factors that cause safety concerns, such as criminal activity, disorder in society, and fear of crime.¹ This strategy depends on solid ties between the police and the public, attained through two complementary core components: (1) targeted partnerships between the police and the community.² And (2) problem-solving as a technique of identifying and solving community-level crime and disturbance issues.³

Targeted partnerships are a standard method of applying the problem-solving approach.⁴ These partnerships are created systematically, focusing more on community work than traditional policing. More police officers "walking to the beat" rather than driving around in police cars is often part of this procedure. The basic idea is to build a trusting relationship between law enforcement and the population. Community members should work together to identify problems and establish standard solutions.⁵

The neighborhood residents now serve as problem solvers, guards, informal social control agents, and community organizers. They are no longer merely suspects, witnesses, and possible victims.⁶ *Problem-solving* is a strategy for addressing delinquency and deviance in the community. Several methods include patrols, intelligence gathering, victim counseling, assistance, community organizing and counseling, education, strolling and door-to-door initiatives, and quick response to emergency service requests. It focuses on information sharing between patrol officers and detectives to develop effective crime-fighting strategies.⁷

Although community policing has gained more attention recently, especially in the domains of criminology and criminal justice, it is still a peripheral topic for

¹ Mohammad Mujahed Hassan and Abdullah Aldrin, 'An Evaluation of Community Oriented Policing (COP) Mechanism: Partnership and Problem Solving. Case Study: Bandar Baru Sri Pinang, Pulau Pinang. Part I: Literature Review & Methodology', *The International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Invention* 5, no. 04 (1 April 2018), <https://doi.org/10.18535/ijsshi/v5i4.03>.

² Mary Mangai, Tyanai Masiya, and Galaletsang Masemola, 'Engaging Communities as Partners: Policing Strategies in Johannesburg', *Safer Communities* 23, no. 1 (6 October 2023): 86, <https://doi.org/10.1108/SC-04-2023-0012>.

³ Prayugo Widodo and Baharudin Baharudin, 'Implementation of Community Policing Program Using Problem-Solving Approach by Bhabinkamtibmas', *Amsir Law Journal* 4, no. 1 (26 October 2022): 32; Karen Bullock et al., 'Problem-Oriented Policing in England and Wales: Barriers and Facilitators', *Policing and Society* 32, no. 9 (21 October 2022): 1099.

⁴ Lorraine Mazerolle, 'Partnership Approaches in Policing: An Analysis of Different Types of Partnerships and How They Work to Reduce Crime and Disorder', *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice* 17, no. 1 (1 January 2023), <https://doi.org/10.1093/police/paad075>.

⁵ Mary Mangai et al., 'The Importance of a Police-Community Partnership (Co-Production): A Study of the City of Johannesburg', *IJICC* 16, no. 1 (27 May 2022): 924.

⁶ Abie Longstaff et al., *Neighbourhood Policing: Past, Present and Future a Review of the Literature* (London: Police Foundation, 2015).

⁷ Aiden Sidebottom et al., *Successful Police Problem-Solving: A Practice Guide* (London: UCL Jill Dando Institute of Security and Crime Science, 2020).

sociological research.⁸ This study seeks to fill this void by providing readers with a sociological explanation of community-based policing, whose philosophy is to improve the quality of social life by fostering partnerships between police departments, their officers, and the communities they serve, including reducing crime and public fear of crime.⁹ Social scientists think social well-being and quality of life (QOL) are inextricably linked. Therefore, enhancing one's quality of life contributes to an individual's and societal well-being, which encompasses creating and sustaining positive relationships and genuine, meaningful interactions with others. Thus, QOL plays a role in an objective and unbiased evaluation of social well-being.¹⁰

Hot spot policing is a place-based tactic that tries to lower crime by directing scarce police resources to regions with higher concentrations of crimes.¹¹ In support of this strategy, the New York City Police Department (NYPD) created CompStat policing in the 1990s. This essential tool collects and analyzes crime data and statistics so that police chiefs can regularly assess the performance and efficacy of the police force.¹² However, in recent years, there has been an exponential increase in statistical techniques and methods that go well beyond these methods.¹³

Current socio-criminological theory and research supported by the best statistical social science software packages can help better understand community-oriented police strategy and its two fundamental components: policy-community links and problem-solving methodologies.¹⁴ Based on the analysis conducted so far, the author can conclude that this article aims to investigate how community-oriented policing strategy components can be examined using relevant sociological theories and criminological constructs to create and carry out operational plans that successfully

⁸ Katy Hancock, 'Community Policing within Campus Law Enforcement Agencies', *Police Practice and Research* 17, no. 5 (23 November 2015): 456; Charlotte Gill et al., 'PROTOCOL: Community-Oriented Policing to Reduce Crime, Disorder, and Fear and Improve Legitimacy and Satisfaction with Police: A Systematic Review', *Campbell Systematic Reviews* 13, no. 1 (2017): 1.

⁹ Allison T. Chappell and Lonn Lanza-Kaduce, 'Integrating Sociological Research and Theory with Community-Oriented Policing: Bridging the Gap between Academics and Practice', *Journal of Applied Sociology* 21, no. 2 (1 September 2004): 80.

¹⁰ Kulwinder Singh, 'Social Well-Being and Quality of Life', *Pan Geography*, 18 November 2022, <https://pangeography.com/social-well-being-and-quality-of-life>.

¹¹ Natalia Lazzati and Amilcar A. Menichini, 'Hot Spot Policing: A Study of Place-Based Strategies for Crime Prevention', *Southern Economic Journal* 82, no. 3 (2016): 893.

¹² Hyunseok Jang, Larry T. Hoover, and Hee-Jong Joo, 'An Evaluation of Compstat's Effect on Crime: The Fort Worth Experience', *Police Quarterly* 13, no. 4 (1 December 2010): 387.

¹³ Ryan Prox and Curt Taylor Griffiths, 'Introduction to the Special Issue', *Police Practice and Research* 16, no. 2 (4 March 2015): 99.

¹⁴ Karen Lumsden and Jackie Goode, 'Policing Research and the Rise of the "Evidence-Base": Police Officer and Staff Understandings of Research, Its Implementation and "What Works"', *Sociology* 52, no. 4 (1 August 2018): 813; David Canter, 'Social Science Is Changing How to View Policing', *Social Science Space* (blog), 6 March 2012, <https://www.socialsciencespace.com/2012/03/social-science-is-changing-how-to-view-policing/>.

reduce crime and crime-related fear, ultimately enhancing the quality of life for both police officers and the community at large.¹⁵

II. COOPERATIVE APPROACH TO COMMUNITY POLICING

Organized communities are necessary for the police to form targeted partnerships with neighborhood residents. Neighborhoods have distinct organizational structures, as sociologists have long understood. These specific geographic areas share similar social issues, including crime. The theories and research concepts that analyzed the rapidly changing city of Chicago in the early 20th century still inform sociological thinking about social organization and disorganization. To understand how sociology applies to the philosophy and practice of community-oriented policing, it is fundamental first to explain several aspects of the Chicago experience.¹⁶

The City, a book by American urban sociologists Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess, was published in 1925. They discussed in this book how fast and chaotic urbanization impacted social control and community development. They have explicitly developed an idea of urbanization, defined as the “concentric zone theory,” which holds that the modern city spreads out entirely from its center into several concentric zones. Each concentric zone reflected a different degree of social organization or disorganization. In the case of Chicago, there were five major concentric zones, including a central business district surrounded by a transition zone; a poor neighborhood inhabited mainly by immigrants, which in turn was surrounded by workers' and bourgeois housing districts; and finally, the wealthy suburbs.¹⁷

Research sociologists Shaw and McKay began studying the origins of juvenile delinquency in the 1920s while employed by the University of Chicago's Institute for Juvenile Research. They vehemently argued that juvenile delinquency and adult criminality are both rooted in the social structure of neighborhood life and that Park and Burgess's systemic model greatly influenced their thinking.¹⁸ They demonstrated that juvenile delinquency was highest in transitional areas where community ties were lost, shared traditional values were compromised, and transience and instability were highest.

Formally, it achieved this by analyzing Chicago's juvenile delinquency using the concentric zone theory. Basic social institutions were deteriorating, resulting in chaotic urban areas (social disarray) and, eventually, high criminal activity and deviance rates.

¹⁵ Shai André Divon, ‘Police, Policing, and the Community: Community Policing in Theory and Practice in Gulu, Uganda’, *Journal of Human Security (JHS)* 16, no. 2 (2021): 149, <https://doi.org/10.12924/johs2021.16020149>.

¹⁶ Andrew Abbott, ‘The Chicago School and City Planning’, *Civic Sociology* 1, no. 1 (27 August 2020): 14106.

¹⁷ Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess, *The City*, 1st ed (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1925).

¹⁸ Paul Bellair, *Social Disorganization Theory* (Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Criminology, 2017), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264079.013.253>.

After adopting this crucial stance, the writers contend that socially disorganized neighborhoods support the spread of criminal behavior on a cultural level.¹⁹

The philosophy of community policing, which calls for neighbors' involvement in detecting and resolving safety issues, can be better understood by analyzing the theory of concentric zones. A sense of community can be developed to come to a broad agreement on what must be done to make the community safer. There is no sense of community in areas of extreme unrest (such as transition zones), and many locals experience property degradation and disrespectful behaviors (such as trash, public intoxication, graffiti, and crime).²⁰ In these areas, local police must work to restore social consensus and resolve conflicts between citizens and regional institutions.²¹

In addition, community policing initiatives targeting youth should be implemented to integrate youth into communities and provide alternatives to crime and substance use disorders, thereby reducing crime, disorder, and fear.²² This community-based collaboration recognizes the importance of developing community-led responses to community-based crime problems²³, including addressing deviant youth subcultures.²⁴ According to the Chicago School's social disorganization theory, social variations in crime rates can be explained by structural and cultural factors that influence how cities are organized.²⁵

In 1989, Sampson and Groves suggested a model for social disorganization. According to this model, neighborhoods with poor socioeconomic levels, significant residence movement, ethnic diversity, and disintegrating families would have fewer local friendship networks, reduced institutional involvement, and unsupervised groups of young people. It was expected that this would increase local crime rates. Sampson and Groves' work, the most comprehensive model of social disorganization to date, has only been tested twice, using the same data set each time.²⁶

Bursik and Grasmick reformulated the social disorganization model into a broader, systemic approach that explains efforts by local communities to build and sustain neighborhood-based crime prevention initiatives based on empirical research

¹⁹ Clifford Robe Shaw and Henry Donald McKay, *Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Areas: A Study of Rates of Delinquents in Relation to Differential Characteristics of Local Communities in American Cities* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1942).

²⁰ Steven P. Lab, *Crime Prevention: Approaches, Practices, and Evaluations*, 4th ed (Cincinnati, OH: Anderson Publishing Company, 2000).

²¹ Thomas C O'Brien and Tom R Tyler, 'Rebuilding Trust between Police & Communities through Procedural Justice & Reconciliation', *Behavioral Science* 5, no. 1 (2019): 35, <https://doi.org/10.1353/bsp.2019.0003>.

²² Stephen A. Anderson, Ronald M. Sabatelli, and Jennifer Trachtenberg, 'Community Police and Youth Programs as a Context for Positive Youth Development', *Police Quarterly* 10, no. 1 (1 March 2007): 23.

²³ Linda Nubani et al., 'Community Engagement in Crime Reduction Strategies: A Tale of Three Cities', *Journal of Participatory Research Methods* 4, no. 1 (2 February 2023), <https://doi.org/10.35844/001c.57526>.

²⁴ Jeffrey S Debies-Carl, 'Are the Kids Alright? A Critique and Agenda for Taking Youth Cultures Seriously', *Social Science Information* 52, no. 1 (1 March 2013): 110.

²⁵ Sunghoon Roh and Tae Choo, 'Looking Inside Zone V: Testing Social Disorganization Theory in Suburban Areas', *Western Criminology Review* 9, no. 1 (1 January 2008): 1.

²⁶ Robert J. Sampson and W. Byron Groves, 'Community Structure and Crime: Testing Social-Disorganization Theory', *American Journal of Sociology* 94, no. 4 (1989): 774.

and a literature study. According to the authors, social disorganization theory has overlooked the formal and informal networks of association that influence neighborhood life. As a result, they broaden the model to consider the role of networks of neighborhood residents, as well as schools, churches, and other community institutions and agencies.

The analysis concentrates on the causes of why some communities' residents commit more crimes than other communities' residents do and why some neighborhood residents experience victimization at higher rates than other neighborhoods. It also uses neighborhood residents as the analytical unit to examine the systemic causes of fear of crime. The implications of the systemic control approach for comprehending gang behavior and creating successful neighborhood crime control programs are another vital area of focus for their work.²⁷

Veysey and Messner conclude that advances in statistical theory and software allow for a closer look at Sampson and Groves' comprehensive theory of neighborhood social disorganization. Their analysis, which employed covariance structure modeling (LISREL), reveals that: (1) There is insufficient evidence to support Sampson and Groves' claim that social disorganization variables have a mediating effect; (2) social disorganization is a set of strategies used by communities to preserve order rather than a singular concept; and (3) the resulting model could be seen as endorsing several alternative theories of crime, including peer affiliation theories, in addition to social disorganization theory.²⁸

Sun, Triplett, and Gained used data from 36 communities across seven American cities to investigate extensions of Sampson and Groves' model based on earlier research. The findings indicate that the evidence only sporadically supports Sampson and Groves' theory. Compared to robbery, social disorganization variables are more helpful in illustrating the structural effects of the assault on the neighborhood.²⁹

Social disorganization theory is a legitimate approach to explaining macro-level fluctuations in crime rates. The study of social disorganization has taught us, among other things, that any strategy for deterring crime must be customized to the "nature" of each locality. Initiatives that are top-down and based on erroneous assumptions run the risk of producing biased results. When attempting to address issues with crime and disorder, it is best to start by understanding the social dynamics of the community from the inside out.³⁰

Academics developed the disorganization theory at what became known as the Chicago School, using Durkheimian concepts of social disruption and social solidarity to

²⁷ Robert Bursik and Harold G. Grasmick, *Neighborhoods and Crime: The Dimensions of Effective Community Control* (New York, NY: Lexington Books, 1993).

²⁸ Bonita M. Veysey and Steven F. Messner, 'Further Testing of Social Disorganization Theory: An Elaboration of Sampson and Groves's "Community Structure and Crime"', *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 36, no. 2 (1 May 1999): 156.

²⁹ Ivan Sun, Ruth Triplett, and Randy Gainey, 'Neighborhood Characteristics and Crime: A Test of Sampson and Groves' Model of Social Disorganization', *Western Criminology Review* 5, no. 1 (1 January 2004): 1, https://www.westerncriminology.org/documents/WCR/v05n1/article_pdfs/sun.pdf.

³⁰ Robert J. Sampson and Stephen W. Raudenbush, 'Seeing Disorder: Neighborhood Stigma and the Social Construction of "Broken Windows"', *Social Psychology Quarterly* 67, no. 4 (1 December 2004): 319.

explain changes occurring in the city around them.³¹ According to Sampson and Bean, concentrated areas of disadvantage weaken social control within communities and contribute to raising crime rates.³² David S. Kirk and Andrew V. Papachristos researched neighborhood effects from a cultural perspective by analyzing the impact of legal cynicism. Legal cynicism is a cultural idea that perceives the legal system as unfair, unresponsive, and inadequate to protect individuals.³³

The theory of social disorganization has recently seen a resurgence. Given the growing deindustrialization of cities, rising middle-class mobility, growing poverty, social marginalization, and exclusion, and the increase in immigrant populations in most Western cities, the theory's applicability may be even more significant now than when it was first proposed many decades ago. These factors may disrupt or revitalize neighborhood subcultures, social networks, cohesiveness within the community, and social control.³⁴

Current social disorganization issues suggest that community-oriented policing strategies might encounter difficulties when addressing residents' requests. Suppose individuals believe that street prostitution is the most serious issue in their town. Community policing officers should alter their priorities to address that issue and operate following citizens' perspectives.³⁵ However, it is ideal for the police and academics to always impose their priorities over those established by the community. Prioritization can be a complex process that requires specific knowledge. Community policing officers may need leadership, communication, interpersonal interactions, and multicultural awareness skills to inform the public and forge new consensus.³⁶

As a result, in some neighborhoods, inhabitants will leave the officers to shoulder more of the burden, while, in others, locals will help them devise and pursue solutions. Not all officers will be able to perform their duties effectively. Different communities will require different talents from their community policing officers. This fact has implications for hiring, educating, and assigning community policing officers.³⁷

³¹ April Fernandes, Suzanna Ramirez, and Robert D. Crutchfield, 'Race and Ethnicity in Social Disorganization Theory', ed. Gerben Bruinsma and David Weisburd (New York, NY: Springer, 2014), 4245, <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-5690-2>.

³² Robert J. Sampson and Lydia Bean, 'Cultural Mechanisms and Killing Fields: A Revised Theory of Community-Level Racial Inequality', in *The Many Colors of Crime: Inequalities of Race, Ethnicity, and Crime in America*, ed. Ruth D. Peterson, Lauren J. Krivo, and John Hagan (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2006), 36.

³³ David S. Kirk and Andrew V. Papachristos, 'Cultural Mechanisms and the Persistence of Neighborhood Violence', *American Journal of Sociology* 116, no. 4 (2011): 1190, <https://doi.org/10.1086/655754>.

³⁴ Charis E. Kubrin and Ronald Weitzer, 'New Directions in Social Disorganization Theory', *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 40, no. 4 (1 November 2003): 397.

³⁵ Mehmet Odabasi, 'Linking Community Policing Activities with Social Disorganization Theory: Examples from Turkish National Police', *International Journal of Human Sciences / Uluslararası İnsan Bilimleri Dergisi* 11, no. 1 (22 May 2014): 1149.

³⁶ John Liederbach et al., 'Exploring the Limits of Collaboration in Community Policing: A Direct Comparison of Police and Citizen Views', *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management* 31, no. 2 (30 May 2008): 271.

³⁷ Demetrios Matheou, 'Pioneers of Community Policing', *UNISON Magazine*, 20 May 2022, <https://magazine.unison.org.uk/2022/05/20/pioneers-of-community-policing/>.

Additionally, police psychologists' contributions to community policing are now officially acknowledged.³⁸ Sociologists may also be helpful.³⁹

III. PROBLEM-SOLVING AS STRATEGY

Any concept of neighborhood or community policing that relates this idea to problem-solving can be referred to as a police strategy.⁴⁰ Although other policing models (such as problem-oriented policing) emphasize problem-solving methods, community policing is the only one that actively involves the entire community in resolving issues with crime and disorder.⁴¹ Community policing widely supports the SARA (scanning, analysis, response, and assessment) problem-solving model. During the first step, scanning, officers must be impartial, open-minded, and attentive to the community's issues and concerns. Even if they disagree with the complainant's point of view, officers should try to understand the problem. Police officers must build positive relationships with community members to jointly describe the issue with sufficient specificity and obtain reliable data to measure it.⁴²

During the second phase of analysis, officers collect data from various community sources, their departments, and other law enforcement organizations to fully understand each community's current crime dynamics.⁴³ Numerous strategies can be used to increase citizen participation. Some police departments regularly survey the local population to get insightful feedback.⁴⁴ Countless other departments employ techniques

³⁸ Curt B. Bartol, 'Police Psychology: A Profession with a Promising Future', in *Critical Issues in Policing: Contemporary Readings*, ed. Roger G. Dunham and Geoffrey P. Alpert, 4th ed (Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press, 2001), 81.

³⁹ Aminu Musa Audu, 'It Is Time to Go Public: Public Sociology and Community Policing in Nigeria', *International Journal of Public Sociology and Socioterapy* 2, no. 1 (25 November 2022): 1; James J. Nolan, Joshua C. Hinkle, and Zsolt Molnar, 'Changing the Game: A Sociological Perspective on Police Reform', in *Policing in an Age of Reform: An Agenda for Research and Practice*, ed. James Nolan, Frank Crispino, and Timothy Parsons (Cham, CH: Springer Nature Switzerland AG, 2021), 32.

⁴⁰ Anthony Lewis, 'Implementing a Problem Solving Approach to Neighbourhood Policing: The Camden Experience', *The Police Journal* 84, no. 1 (1 March 2011): 35; Niyazi Ekici et al., 'A Meta-Analysis of the Impact of Community Policing on Crime Reduction', *Journal of Community Safety and Well-Being* 7, no. 3 (15 September 2022): 111.

⁴¹ Michael D. Schlosser, 'Community Relations and Community-Oriented Policing', in *POWER: Police Officer Wellness, Ethics, and Resilience*, ed. Daniel M. Blumberg and Konstantinos Papazoglou (Cambridge, MA: Academic Press, 2020), 236.

⁴² John E. Eck and William Spelman, *Police Executive Research Forum, Problem Solving: Problem-Oriented Policing in Newport News* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 1987); Richard L. Arrington, *Crime Prevention: The Law Enforcement Officer's Practical Guide* (Sudbury, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning, 2007), 14–15; Steve Burton and Mandy McGregor, 'Enhancing SARA: A New Approach in an Increasingly Complex World', *Crime Science* 7, no. 1 (1 March 2018): 1.

⁴³ Joshua Lee, 'Making Big Data Small: The Importance of Relevant Data Collection for Crime-Fighting', *Police1* (blog), 26 March 2019, <https://www.police1.com/police-products/investigation/investigative-software/articles/making-big-data-small-the-importance-of-relevant-data-collection-for-crime-fighting-oJhlz9TsRnMuH5vV>.

⁴⁴ Jasko Mahmutovic, 'How Police Surveys Can Improve Community Relations + Sample Questions', *SurveyLegend* (blog), 15 March 2021, <https://www.surveylegend.com/customer-insight/police-surveys>.

open to all segments and groups within the community, including call-in radio and television programs, town hall-style meetings, targeted focus groups, and open forums.⁴⁵

For example, the New York Police Department (NYPD) regularly hosts neighbourhood safety meetings known as “Build the Block,” which are strategic sessions between local police officers and residents to identify the most significant public safety problems facing their neighbourhood and examine potential remedies.⁴⁶ Furthermore, crime mapping techniques and statistical software packages can be essential tools for problem-solving. Due to their complexity, community police officers need solid training in qualitative and quantitative research techniques to conduct adequate analysis.⁴⁷ However, offering this kind of training to all community policing officers within a jurisdiction is challenging due to a persistent lack of sufficient funding.⁴⁸

*The third stage, the response, is where potential solutions to the problems that have been identified are developed and put into action using the knowledge gained in the previous stage.*⁴⁹ The response stage aims to establish an accountability system to ensure each response member is fulfilling their assigned obligations while developing a plan to mitigate the problem.⁵⁰ *The response involves considering various theoretical perspectives on crime to implement a practical and effective solution.*

Finally, during the assessment, the community-policing officer assesses the effectiveness of the response (i.e., did the problem get worse or disappear?) and offers findings that assist him in deciding whether they should go back to earlier stages, gather more information, or use different problem-solving techniques. This process of assessment and adaptation is crucial, as it requires a well-trained officer who can neutrally interpret data. Community policing officers would

⁴⁵ Gene I Katz, ‘A Guide to More Effective Police-Community Relations Through Media, Personal Engagement, and Collaborative Events’, *US-China Law Review* 19, no. 8 (1 August 2022): 344; Juan J. Barthelemy et al., ‘Law Enforcement Perceptions of Their Relationship with Community: Law Enforcement Surveys and Community Focus Groups’, *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment* 26, no. 3–4 (18 May 2016): 1; Siyanda Dlamini, ‘A Comparative Analysis of the Quality of Community Police Forums in Local Cato Manor & Glenwood Communities, South Africa’, ed. Kar-wai Tong, *Cogent Social Sciences* 6, no. 1 (1 January 2020): 1809141.

⁴⁶ NYC Government, ‘“Build the Block” Neighborhood Safety Meetings’, NYC Government, 3 April 2024, <https://www.nyc.gov/site/nypd/bureaus/patrol/buildtheblock.page>.

⁴⁷ Spencer Chainey and Jerry Ratcliffe, *GIS and Crime Mapping* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2005).

⁴⁸ Emma Brown and Dale Ballucci, ‘Specialized Knowledge: Understanding Crime Analyst’s Roles and Responsibilities and the Impact of Their Work’, *Criminology & Criminal Justice* 24, no. 1 (1 February 2024): 15.

⁴⁹ Cody W. Telep and Julie Hibdon, *Understanding and Responding to Crime and Disorder Hot Spots (Problem-Oriented Guides for Police, Problem-Solving Tool Guide No. 14)* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Service, 2019).

⁵⁰ John E Eck, *Assessing Responses to Problems: Did It Work? An Introduction for Police Problem-Solvers (Problem-Oriented Guides for Police, Problem-Solving Tool Guide No. 1)*, 2nd ed (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2017).

benefit from studying research methodology to enhance their ability to assess outcomes and refine tactics, making them feel more adaptable and responsive in their roles.⁵¹

As part of their comprehensive training, community policing officers should be equipped with practical problem-solving techniques, strategies, and social interaction skills. These skills are crucial in fostering positive relationships with the community and gaining their trust, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of community policing.⁵² Community policing officers are not just responders to problems but proactive problem identifiers and solution creators. They are encouraged to take the initiative in identifying issues, devising original solutions, and independently assessing the outcomes, showcasing their proactive and independent nature in community policing.⁵³ Furthermore, community policing theory and the broken windows theory are often discussed.⁵⁴

The broken window theory holds that unattended disorderly behaviors like panhandling, public drinking, prostitution, loud music, and graffiti suggest that no one is concerned, which leads to more chaos and serious crime, just as an unfixed broken window indicates that no one is concerned and invites further damage. Broken windows are a metaphor for how various violations of social norms (disorders) incite fear. As a result of this fear, law-abiding citizens isolate themselves from their neighborhoods and permit further disorder, which undermines informal social control and promotes crime and urban decay.⁵⁵

Jane Jacobs was the first to propose a connection between crime prevention, urban design, and human interactions. She suggested that increased surveillance and intervention make densely populated areas safer. Oscar Newman expanded on this, asserting that private spaces are safer than public ones, supporting Jacobs' observation. Both Newman and Jacobs agree that surveillance, prompted by spatial features, is crucial for creating a defensible space.⁵⁶

There are significant similarities between Newman's defensible area concept and the Broken Windows model concerning his image, territoriality, and natural surveillance factors. Communities with a physical layout that might elicit an external feeling of security are less likely to experience criminal activity (image). Communities that

⁵¹ Markel Hutchins, 'A Look Inside Strategies Contributing Towards Community Policing: SARA Model', *Movement Forward* (blog), 11 March 2020, <https://movementforward.org/a-look-inside-strategies-contributing-towards-community-policing-sara-model>.

⁵² Samantha A. Moul, 'Law Enforcement Social Interaction Training: A Review of the Research', *EBP Society* (blog), 17 January 2021, <https://www.ebpsociety.org/blog/education/460-law-enforcement-social-interaction-training-research>; Sylvester Amara Lamin and Consoler Teboh, 'Police Social Work and Community Policing', ed. John Martyn Chamberlain, *Cogent Social Sciences* 2, no. 1 (31 December 2016): 11, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2016.1212636>.

⁵³ Jenny Coquilhat, *Community Policing: An International Literature Review* (Wellington: New Zealand Police Association Incorporated, 2008), 28.

⁵⁴ George L. Kelling and James Q. Wilson, 'The Police and Neighborhood Safety: Broken Windows', *The Atlantic*, 1982, 29.

⁵⁵ George L. Kelling and Catherine M. Coles, *Fixing Broken Windows: Restoring Order And Reducing Crime In Our Communities*, 1st ed (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1997).

⁵⁶ Oscar Newman, *Defensible Space; Crime Prevention Through Urban Design* (New York, NY: Macmillan, 1972).

separate residential areas into spheres of influence can readily assert their territoriality. The concept of territoriality, which designates specific settings for distinct resident groups based on factors including family structures, ages, lifestyles, and backgrounds, makes it possible to encourage natural surveillance. This emphasis on natural surveillance should reassure the audience of the effectiveness of the discussed theories in promoting safety.⁵⁷

The concepts of defensible space are not rigid, but rather adaptable to the principles of crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) by Lab Steven. CPTED, with its focus on territoriality and access control, can be tailored to fit the unique needs of various neighborhoods. By utilizing the CPTED model, defensible space approach, and broken window theory, communities can take control of their safety and strengthen police-community relations through a concerted effort.⁵⁸

The routine activity theory is another relevant social theory of crime that could help solve crime problems. The authors contend that for most crimes to happen, there needs to be a concentration of motivated criminals, appropriate targets, and a *lack of effective oversight to prevent crime* in both space and time.⁵⁹ One of the key benefits of the routine activity theory for community policing is that it places the community at the forefront of crime prevention. Any of the three components-motivated criminals, suitable targets, and lack of oversight-can be altered or eliminated by the community to prevent crime effectively. This empowers the community to increase guardianship, reduce target suitability, and defend itself against crime, whether it originates from outside or within.⁶⁰

Since the area of crime prediction has emerged, researchers have discovered that crime shows geographical patterns. These patterns enable authorities to take preventative action by helping to anticipate crimes before they occur. Hotspot analysis, predictive policing, and geographic profiling are a few uses for crime prediction. Crime is influenced by time, place, climatic conditions, and census data, such as the community's annual income and literacy rate. These all function as predictors of criminal activity.⁶¹

Identifying “hot spots,” or small areas with high crime rates, is a significant focus of crime mapping. Using hot spot analysis, police can pinpoint high-crime areas, the crimes committed, and the most effective course of action.⁶² Law enforcement,

⁵⁷ Danielle M. Reynald, ‘Environmental Design and Crime Events’, *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice* 31, no. 1 (1 February 2015): 71.

⁵⁸ Lab, *Crime Prevention: Approaches, Practices, and Evaluations*.

⁵⁹ Lawrence E. Cohen and Marcus Felson, ‘Social Change and Crime Rate Trends: A Routine Activity Approach’, *American Sociological Review* 44, no. 4 (1979): 588.

⁶⁰ Chris Drew, ‘Routine Activities Theory: Definition and Examples’, *Helpful Professor* (blog), 21 April 2023, <https://helpfulprofessor.com/routine-activities-theory>.

⁶¹ Gaurav Hajela, Meenu Chawla, and Akhtar Rasool, ‘A Clustering Based Hotspot Identification Approach For Crime Prediction’, *Procedia Computer Science* 167 (1 January 2020): 1462; Jessica Karpilo, ‘Crime Mapping and Analysis: Law Enforcement Agencies Look to Maps and Geographic Technologies’, ThoughtCo, 27 August 2020, <https://www.thoughtco.com/crime-mapping-and-analysis-1435686>.

⁶² Gohar Sargsyan and Ryan Prox, ‘Augmenting Crime Predictions with Engagement: Synergy of Predictive Policing and Community Policing Paradigms: A Comparative Approach’, in *Synergy of Community Policing and*

particularly community policing officers, should pay close attention to hot spots because a jurisdiction's problems with crime and disorder are frequently concentrated in a limited number of high-activity areas.⁶³

Predictive policing uses analytical techniques, particularly quantitative ones, to identify potential targets for police intervention and deter crime through statistical predictions. It can be used as an affordable approach to community policing. Highlighting the likelihood and timing of crimes grants police discretion in determining when to patrol a particular area and reduces the need for round-the-clock coverage.⁶⁴

Crime hotspots are crucial indicators in environmental criminology. They identify high-risk areas for intervention and reveal influencing factors of crime concentration. They can be determined using methods like hotspot mapping and clustering, requiring the clustering tendency of crimes and significant concentration. The significance of these clusters can be measured using spatial statistics, aiding in resource allocation and policy formulation.⁶⁵

The routine activity theory states that crime occurs when three factors come together: a motivated offender, an appropriate target, and a lack of capable guardians. This theory considers both the victim's and the offender's regular behaviors. To prevent a crime successfully, it is advised that this convergence be broken by taking appropriate action for at least one of these factors.⁶⁶ For instance, rising fuel prices increase petrol drive-offs, a theft in which drivers intentionally leave a convenience store or gas station without paying.⁶⁷

In most cases, an effective strategy to reduce opportunities for this crime will involve taking several measures. For instance, such as ensuring that the pump area is well-lit by improving natural surveillance and dissuading would-be petrol thieves (discouraging likely offenders), installing pay-at-the-pump equipment by reducing petrol thefts since fuel is not dispensed until cash, debit, or credit cards are placed into the pump (unsuitable target). Then, security officers should be positioned at strategic points around the facility at times of the most significant risk (the presence of skilled

Technology: A Comparative Approach, ed. Georgios Leventakis and Maria R. Haberfeld (Cham, CH: Springer, 2019), 40.

⁶³ Telep and Hibdon, *Understanding and Responding to Crime and Disorder Hot Spots (Problem-Oriented Guides for Police, Problem-Solving Tool Guide No. 14)*, 4.

⁶⁴ Walter L. Perry et al., *Predictive Policing: The Role of Crime Forecasting in Law Enforcement Operations* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2013); Ishmael Mugari and Emeka E. Obioha, 'Predictive Policing and Crime Control in The United States of America and Europe: Trends in a Decade of Research and the Future of Predictive Policing', *Social Sciences* 10, no. 6 (June 2021): 234.

⁶⁵ Zhanjun He et al., 'Comparative Study of Approaches for Detecting Crime Hotspots with Considering Concentration and Shape Characteristics', *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 19, no. 21 (2 November 2022): 14350.

⁶⁶ Marcus Felson, 'Routine Activities and Crime Prevention: Armchair Concepts and Practical Action', *Studies on Crime and Crime Prevention* 1 (1992): 30.

⁶⁷ Rob Hull, 'Fuel Thefts Rise 362% Compared to Pre-Pandemic as Petrol Stations Suffer Increase in Crime Similar to Shoplifting Spike', *This is Money*, 7 November 2023, <https://www.thisismoney.co.uk/money/cars/article-12716483/Huge-rise-fuel-thefts.html>.

guards).⁶⁸

As was previously seen, the routine activity theory is a well-known sociological theory concerning criminal behavior. It maintains that nonrandom convergences of three factors in time and space lead to criminal events.⁶⁹ This theory, however, indicates that displacement may happen, but only if other criminal opportunities provide similar rewards without putting the offender at greater risk.⁷⁰

The routine activity theory is also one of the main theories of environmental criminology, a newly emerging field within criminal justice and criminology. It examines how motivated people interact with their social, economic, legal, and physical surroundings in real-world criminal incidents.⁷¹ Environmental criminologists look for trends in criminal activity and try to link those to environmental stimuli. These explanations generate rules that allow predictions about emerging criminal issues, which in turn help formulate feasible preventative measures.⁷²

Crime distribution is uneven across maps, causing people to avoid certain areas and seek out others, influencing their choices in neighborhoods, schools, stores, streets, and recreational places. The knowledge gained is put to daily use by the police. Where there is the most significant and lowest demand for police is a factor in decisions about how to allocate limited resources. Law enforcement officers are instructed to pay close attention to certain behaviors in specific areas but are not given any guidance about areas where these behaviors are rare. Because residents of high-crime neighborhoods find it extremely difficult to impose social rules, community policing officers pay special attention to these areas.⁷³

Theories of neighborhood disorder and crime, rooted in the Chicago School of Urban Sociology, suggest that neighborhood structural factors like poverty, residential instability, and ethnic diversity can weaken social order, encourage criminal activity, and undermine the quality of life. Researchers differentiate between physical and social forms of neighborhood disorder. While the latter includes activities like drug dealing, conflict, street prostitution, and additional indicators like stepped-up police presence, the former includes vacant or abandoned housing, vandalism, and litter in the streets.⁷⁴

⁶⁸ Bruno Meini and Ronald V. Clarke, *Gasoline Drive-Offs (Problem-Oriented Guides for Police, Problem-Specific Guide No. 67)* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2012), 31.

⁶⁹ Lawrence W. Sherman, Patrick R. Gartin, and Michael E. Buerger, 'Hot Spots of Predatory Crime: Routine Activities and the Criminology of Place', *Criminology* 27, no. 1 (1989): 27.

⁷⁰ Ronald V. Clarke, 'Introduction', in *Situational Crime Prevention: Successful Case Studies*, 2nd Ed (Guilderland, NY: Harrow & Heston, 1997), 45.

⁷¹ P. Brantingham and P. Brantingham, 'Environmental Criminology: From Theory to Urban Planning Practice', *Studies on Crime and Crime Prevention* 7, no. 1 (1998): 31.

⁷² Kathryn Wuschke, Joseph Clare, and Len Garis, 'Temporal and Geographic Clustering of Residential Structure Fires: A Theoretical Platform for Targeted Fire Prevention', *Fire Safety Journal*, Special Issue on Spatial Analytical Approaches in Urban Fire Management, 62, no. Part A (1 November 2013): 3.

⁷³ John E. Eck, 'Crime Hot Spots: What They Are, Why We Have Them, and How to Map Them', in *Mapping Crime: Understanding Hot Spots*, ed. John Eck et al. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice, 2005), 1.

⁷⁴ Enrique Gracia and Filomena Maggino, 'Neighborhood Disorder', in *Encyclopedia of Quality of Life and Well-Being Research* (Cham, CH: Springer Nature Switzerland AG, 2021), 1.

Neighborhood disorder and crime theories encompass significant areas. Analysts desire to know, for example, "What areas are claimed by gangs and what areas are not?". There is a wide range of suitable units of analysis, some examples of which are communities, census tracts,⁷⁵ and square blocks.⁷⁶ At this level, maps depict crime phenomena using two-dimensional shapes like rectangles, ellipses, and other polygons. Moreover, in this stage, the territories are usually too large for concentrated, effective patrolling; therefore, police intervention is significantly less precise.⁷⁷

Depending on neighborhood characteristics, relevant action may involve mobilizing residents to take collective action against disorder and crime.⁷⁸ Deterrent actions should presumably also occur if offenders are scattered throughout the area instead of concentrated in a few places (hot spots).⁷⁹ However, a "hot spot" approach can improve community policing by investing resources in specific areas with high unsafety levels. This can prevent crime and foster a sense of confidence among residents.⁸⁰

IV. CONSTRUCTING ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE PRINCIPLES

Organizations can have a long history, rigid bureaucratic structure, and well-defined customs, traditions, and norms. Sociologists have investigated organizations by categorizing them according to their features, behavior, and structure, and they have analyzed the implications of organizational structures by examining how they operate and their effect on society.⁸¹ Organizational sociology is a branch of sociology that studies organizations.

Criminology focuses on internal structures like administrative hierarchy and external structures like strategic alliances to understand social structures within and between organizations. The police force is an organization that can be an instrument of

⁷⁵ For the purposes of specific statistical programmes, census tracts are small, geographically permanent subdivisions of a county or statistically equivalent unit. Tract boundaries typically follow physical features, though they can also follow administrative boundaries or other nonphysical elements. GIS Dictionary, 'Sub Verbo "Census Tract"', accessed 8 March 2024, <https://support.esri.com/en-us/gis-dictionary/search?q=census+tract>.

⁷⁶ Square block means the physical area of land enclosed by a block of streets, making up one whole city block. A square block would normally comprise several distinct properties and be bounded by four city streets. Law Insider Dictionary, 'Sub Verbo "Square Block"', accessed 6 March 2024, <https://www.lawinsider.com/dictionary/square-block>.

⁷⁷ Eck, 'Crime Hot Spots: What They Are, Why We Have Them, and How to Map Them', 3–4; Murat Dağlar and Uğur Argun, 'Crime Mapping and Geographical Information Systems in Crime Analysis', *Journal of Human Sciences* 13, no. 1 (23 April 2016): 2208–21.

⁷⁸ Abasiama G. Akpan and Fergus U. Onu, 'Crime Mapping Software: A Tool for Effective Crime Detection and Control in Nigeria', *International Journal of Research* 6, no. 10 (28 September 2019): 1270.

⁷⁹ Dennis P. Rosenbaum, 'Critic The Limits of Hot Spots Policing', in *Police Innovation: Contrasting Perspectives*, ed. Anthony A. Braga and David Weisburd, 2nd ed, Cambridge Studies in Criminology (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 344.

⁸⁰ Josiah Bates, 'Police Are Turning to an Old Tactic to Fight the Surge in Violence', *Time USA*, 2 November 2022, <https://time.com/6227552/hotspot-policing-crime-effectiveness/>.

⁸¹ W. Richard Scott, 'Reflections on a Half-Century of Organizational Sociology', *Annu. Rev. Sociol* 30, no. 1 (1 August 2004): 1.

change, stability, or a combination of the two.⁸² Criminologists use conceptual tools from organizational sociology to analyze different types of formal and informal organizations, including the police.⁸³

Throughout the 1980s, police throughout the industrialized democratic world began to reassess their role, operational techniques, structure, and administration due to growing concerns about the effectiveness of traditional law enforcement policies in keeping people safe from crime.⁸⁴ Changes in the police occurred as they became conscious of their limits in preventing crime and could not respond to the harsh competition from the private security sector, whose policies heavily favored prevention over discovery and punishment.⁸⁵ Today's central question is: How can the police become more effective in preventing local crime?⁸⁶ The response is through an organizational model capable of ensuring the well-being and safety of each resident's neighborhood.⁸⁷

The fundamental principle behind community policing is that effective solutions to crime and disorder can only be devised and implemented via reciprocal cooperation between law enforcement and the community. The belief that police alone cannot develop or sustain safe communities is an underlying incentive for citizen participation.⁸⁸ Nonetheless, the police might be able to assist community-based voluntary initiatives aimed at averting chaos and criminal activity.⁸⁹ In this capacity, the police enhance community initiatives such as neighborhood watch programs and youth and economic development initiatives.⁹⁰

⁸² Zachary Oberfield, 'Motivation, Change, and Stability: Findings From an Urban Police Department', *The American Review of Public Administration* 44, no. 2 (1 March 2014): 210.

⁸³ Diane Vaughan, 'Criminology and the Sociology of Organizations', *Crime, Law and Social Change* 37, no. 2 (1 March 2002): 117.

⁸⁴ David H. Bayley and Christine Nixon, *The Changing Environment for Policing, 1985-2008, New Perspectives in Policing* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Kennedy School Program in Criminal Justice Policy and Management, 2010).

⁸⁵ Barak Ariel, Matthew Bland, and Alex Sutherland, "Lowering the Threshold of Effective Deterrence"—Testing the Effect of Private Security Agents in Public Spaces on Crime: A Randomized Controlled Trial in a Mass Transit System', *PLoS ONE* 12, no. 12 (Dec 2017): e0187392.

⁸⁶ Philipp M. Dau et al., 'Policing Directions: A Systematic Review on the Effectiveness of Quantitative Police Presence', *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research* 29, no. 6 (4 March 2021): 1, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10610-021-09500-8>.

⁸⁷ Nicole Bent, 'How Community Policing Is Improving Public Safety Management', *Rave Mobile Safety* (blog), 6 December 2022, <https://www.ravemobilesafety.com/blog/how-community-policing-improving-public-safety-management>.

⁸⁸ Elaine K. Denny et al., 'Citizen Cooperation with the Police: Evidence from Contemporary Guatemala', *Comparative Political Studies* 56, no. 7 (2023): 1072, <https://doi.org/10.1177/00104140221139379>.

⁸⁹ Sara Uhnöo and Cecilia Hansen Lofstrand, 'Voluntary Policing in Sweden: Media Reports of Contemporary Forms of Police-Citizen Partnerships', *Journal of Scandinavian Studies in Criminology and Crime Prevention* 19, no. 1 (2 January 2018): 41.

⁹⁰ Fei-Lin Chen, 'A Community Policing Project in Taiwan: The Developments, Challenges, and Prospects of Neighborhood Watch', *Chinese Public Administration Review* 12, no. 2 (1 December 2021): 99; Tullio Caputo and Michel Vallée, 'Creating Safer Communities for Children and Youth: The Role of the Police in Crime Prevention', *International Journal of Child, Youth and Family Studies* 1, no. 1 (4 January 2010): 78; Otwin Marenin, 'Styles of Policing and Economic Development in African States', *Public Administration and Development* 34, no. 3 (1 August 2014): 149, <https://doi.org/10.1002/pad.1683>.

Community policing strategies should involve citizen input on police interventions, fostering informal social control.⁹¹ Conventional police tactics, which aim to reduce crime, might not meet the community's expectations. Residents should collaborate closely with police departments and actively participate in solving problems.⁹² Police-community collaboration strategies are most effective when calibrated to maintain informal social control in underprivileged, crime-ridden neighborhoods, as suppressive tactics may appear intrusive and unfairly targeted to residents.⁹³

It is important to emphasize that leadership, management, and supervision philosophies that emphasize organizational culture and values over formal, written rules and discipline are closely linked to community-oriented policing from a managerial perspective. This concept means managers only resort to formal regulations when necessary to maintain control over subordinates.⁹⁴ The literature on organizational sociology facilitates the examination of the organizational models that allow community policing to achieve its objectives, including reducing crime rates and enhancing public safety.⁹⁵

The successful transition of policing from a highly bureaucratic, centralized structure to a cooperative problem-solving method involving community members and police officers is well known as community policing. The community strategy's success measures include neighborhood quality of life, problem-solving, decreased crime and public fear of crime, enhanced order, resident satisfaction with police services, and crime control.⁹⁶ The community, not just a select few, may have the answers to reduce crime. Public safety is improved when law enforcement officers establish a welcoming and cooperative presence in the community. This makes them more capable of performing their duties and gaining the citizenry's trust. Thus, in comparison to other policing approaches, community policing might be considered the most successful approach overall.⁹⁷

The idea that crime is an intricate and challenging social issue that requires a multidisciplinary team to address forms the basis of this strategy. Although community

⁹¹ Robert Lombardo & Christopher M. Donner, "Can Community Policing Increase Residents' Informal Social Control? Testing the Impact of the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy" (2017) 19: 2 *Police Pract. Res.* 1, DOI: <10.1080/15614263.2017.1405265>.

⁹² Tim Booker, 'Empowering Community-Police Relations with Resident Engagement', *Zencity* (blog), 7 November 2023, <https://blog.zencity.io/resources/empowering-community-police-relations-with-resident-engagement>.

⁹³ Bruno Meini, 'Community Policing and Vigilantism: Two Alternative Strategies for Fighting Neighborhood Crime', in *Global Perspective on Crime Prevention and Community Resilience*, ed. Diana Scharff Peterson and Dilip K. Das (New York, NY: Routledge, 2018), 106.

⁹⁴ Petter Gottschalk and Rune Glomseth, 'Attitudes of Police Managers to Different Leadership Roles in Their Jobs: An Empirical Study in Norway', *Journal of Leadership Studies* 6, no. 1 (2012): 23.

⁹⁵ Audu, 'It Is Time to Go Public: Public Sociology and Community Policing in Nigeria', 1.

⁹⁶ Charlotte Gill et al., 'Community-Oriented Policing to Reduce Crime, Disorder and Fear and Increase Satisfaction and Legitimacy among Citizens: A Systematic Review', *Journal of Experimental Criminology* 10, no. 4 (1 December 2014): 399.

⁹⁷ Annabelle Dias Felix and Tina Hilgers, 'Community Oriented Policing Theory and Practice: Global Policy Diffusion or Local Appropriation?', *Policing and Society*, 2020, 1.

policing theory is moderately complicated, it is simple to implement once understood.⁹⁸ The concept of community policing suggests different images for each of us. Nonetheless, it is frequently perceived as a policing tactic wherein the same officer consistently works and patrols the same area to establish proactive connections with the community to identify and solve crimes.

Community policing has specific characteristics because it is based on a philosophy, involves citizenship partnerships, is personalized, and incorporates problem-solving techniques.⁹⁹ Any organization's structure should reflect its objectives and the types of tasks its members perform. Some aspects of the conventional police organization appear more appropriate for repetitive, bureaucratic duties than for the professional judgment and creativeness required for community-focused policing. This final law enforcement strategy is usually associated with restructuring along the lines of *decentralization, flattening, despecialization, teamwork, and civilianization*.¹⁰⁰

The different definitions of decentralization in the literature highlight multiple perspectives, which prevent the term from being defined in a way that makes it both semantically and universally valid. Sociologists define decentralization as the decentralization of structures, and this definition is more pertinent than ever here.¹⁰¹ The philosophy of community policing, which prioritizes power decentralization, opposes the principle of power centralization.

Community policing requires the police to delegate some of their authority to neighborhood residents and make crucial decisions at the community level instead of police stations. The goal of community policing is to distribute police decision-making power. Community partnership, cooperative problem-solving, and organizational change management are three essential and complementary elements, or operational methods, that must be successfully implemented to achieve this goal.¹⁰² These three components aid in decentralizing police operations as the only feasible proactive approach and increase community accountability for law enforcement.¹⁰³

Based on the decentralization principle, community policing expands its operations into smaller geographic areas. It is a close-quarters approach to prevent neighborhood residents and municipalities from becoming increasingly separated from

⁹⁸ Aziz Huq, Tom Tyler, and Stephen Schulhofer, 'Why Does the Public Cooperate with Law Enforcement? The Influence of the Purposes and Targets of Policing', *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law* 17, no. 3 (4 April 2011): 419, <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0023367>.

⁹⁹ David M. Allender and Irma Deljkić, 'Community Policing - Exploring the Philosophy', *Kriminalističke Teme* 4, no. 3-4 (25 October 2004): 18.

¹⁰⁰ Gary W. Cordner, 'Community Policing: Elements and Effects', in *Community Policing: Contemporary Readings*, ed. Geoffrey P. Alpert and Alex R. Piquero, 1st ed (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 1998), 443.

¹⁰¹ Balázs Bodó, Jaya Klara Brekke, and Jaap-Henk Hoepman, 'Decentralisation: A Multidisciplinary Perspective', *Internet Policy Review* 10, no. 2 (16 June 2021): 1, <https://doi.org/10.14763/2021.2.1563>.

¹⁰² Ogochukwu Nebo and Oko Ndukwe, 'Insecurity in Nigeria and the Need for Community Policing in Nigeria', *International Journal of Business Systems and Economics* 13, no. 7 (2022): 219, <https://doi.org/27264527313714>.

¹⁰³ Julia Tasiopoulos, 'Exploring Community Policing', *Rave Mobile Safety* (blog), 3 August 2022, <https://www.ravemobilesafety.com/blog/exploring-community-policing/>.

the police. The typical outcomes of this policing approach, which can harm police accountability, include organizational decentralization, a rise in the degree of familiarity between community police officers and citizens, and an increase in the use of discretion by police officers.¹⁰⁴

Decentralization in policing means that power and authority to regulate the police force are distributed among multiple government levels rather than concentrated in a few hands. Police departments may tailor their strategies and assets to address their communities' needs and difficulties. Beyond potential inconsistencies in law enforcement activities, decentralization may generate greater confidence than before, as well as collaboration between police officers and communities, which is crucial for effective community policing.¹⁰⁵ The decentralization of police services facilitates public participation in decision-making concerning local issues and helps to bring these services closer to the people.¹⁰⁶ In applying the decentralization principle, local police officers must be empowered to act locally and effectively respond to public demands.¹⁰⁷ This has also enabled the police to accurately predict criminogenic conditions by penetrating deeper into society and obtaining necessary information on the individuals and circumstances that lead to criminal activity.¹⁰⁸

Simply put, many community policing programs encourage decentralization by assigning officers to certain geographic areas and leaving them there for the rest of the workday. These programs aim to move authority and responsibility down the organizational chart to enable timely and efficient decision-making in response to changing local conditions. On the other hand, these programs also promote administrative decentralization, which addresses neighborhood issues locally, supports community-focused initiatives, and facilitates dialogue between residents and police officers by reducing department ranks and enhancing internal communication and decision-making.¹⁰⁹

The decentralization idea of transferring power and responsibility down in the organizational structure is generally fully implemented in authorized departments capable of promoting the creation of relevant solutions to local problems and enabling

¹⁰⁴ Jan Terpstra, 'Governance and Accountability in Community Policing', *Crime, Law and Social Change* 55, no. 2-3 (1 April 2011): 87.

¹⁰⁵ Sungil Han, Jennifer LaPrade, and EuiGab Hwang, 'Is a Decentralized Police Organization a Better Option in a Modern Democratic Society? A Case Study From South Korea', *Police Quarterly* 25, no. 3 (1 September 2022): 364.

¹⁰⁶ Wendy Schreurs et al., 'Citizen Participation in the Police Domain: The Role of Citizens' Attitude and Morality', *Journal of Community Psychology* 46, no. 6 (2018): 775.

¹⁰⁷ Julian Laufs et al., 'Understanding the Concept of "Demand" in Policing: A Scoping Review and Resulting Implications for Demand Management', *Policing and Society* 31, no. 8 (14 September 2021): 895.

¹⁰⁸ Jarmal Singh, 'Community Policing in the Context of Singapore', No. 56 Resource Material Series (112th UNAFEI International Training Course, "Participation of the Public and Victims for More Fair and Effective Criminal Justice," Fuchu, Tokyo, Japan, 2000), https://www.unafei.or.jp/publications/pdf/RS_No56/No56_14VE_Singh1.pdf.

¹⁰⁹ Wesley G. Skogan and Jeffrey A. Roth, 'Introduction', in *Community Policing: Can It Work?*, ed. Wesley G. Skogan (Belmont: CA: Wadsworth Thomson Learning, 2004), XXIV.

quick decision-making in response to local circumstances.¹¹⁰ The police are comparable to the rest of society since big public and private organizations know that decentralization can lead to decision-making flexibility at the customer contact level. In the police organization, efforts may be made to flatten the organizational structure by compressing the rank structure and cutting down on bureaucrats to improve communication and decision-making and minimize waste and rigidity.¹¹¹ This flattening of the organization is necessary for the organizational change required for community policing.¹¹²

The leveling down of advancement toward generality means flattening every individual, including police officers.¹¹³ Two common instances of flattening include extending the areas of influence of police managers and removing layers from a law enforcement agency's organizational structure. The primary source of the alleged benefits is the downward pressure on decisions to increase police responsiveness, accountability, and morale.¹¹⁴

The specialized nature of community-oriented policing presents an additional challenge to the program's effectiveness. While community-oriented policing should be the department's overall strategy, many police agencies see it as the domain of a minor, specialized unit where only a select few officers enforce the law in this manner. The effectiveness of community-oriented policing depends on implementing it department-wide and offering training.¹¹⁵

To meet the objectives of community policing, police officers must be capable of carrying out various tasks and applying a team approach to cooperative problem-solving and community partnerships. The entire organization, not only special units, promotes using this strategy. However, some units could be requested to identify and address particularly tough cases or manage complex collaborations.¹¹⁶

There may be enduring challenges or minor understandings of how these specialist units work on community policing programs. This increases the likelihood that minor concerns may be overlooked because specialized units may believe that more significant issues should take priority. Law enforcement agencies should train officers in community policing techniques to increase the number of generalists with expertise in

¹¹⁰ Rémi Boivin and Silas Nogueira de Melo, 'Do Police Stations Deter Crime?', *Crime Science* 12, no. 1 (11 September 2023): 15.

¹¹¹ Wesley Skogan, 'An Overview of Community Policing: Origins, Concepts and Implementation', in *The Handbook of Knowledge-Based Policing: Current Conceptions and Future Directions*, ed. Tom Williamson (Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley, 2008), 52.

¹¹² Baltimore Police Department, 'Community Policing Plan', 1 April 2020, <https://public.powerdms.com/BALTIMOREMD/documents/435325>.

¹¹³ Bruce McTague, 'The Flattening of People and Society', *LinkedIn* (blog), 17 September 2023, <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/flattening-people-society-bruce-mctague>.

¹¹⁴ Julie Wulf, 'The Flattened Firm: Not as Advertised', *California Management Review* 55, no. 1 (1 October 2012): 5.

¹¹⁵ James Wyatt Roberts, 'The Perception of Community Oriented Policing from a Law Enforcement Organization's Perspective' (PhD Dissertation in Education, FL, USA, Southeastern University, 2018), 64, <https://firescholars.seu.edu/coe/27>.

¹¹⁶ Hyon Namgung, 'How Can Police Agencies Implement Community Policing? Create Specialized Units!', *International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice* 52 (1 March 2018): 144.

problem-solving. This helps address the underlying causes of crime and reduce the number of inbound calls, even during austerity measures.¹¹⁷

Decentralization and despecialization in police organizations require more self-control to reverse specialization and subordination. Despecialized community police officers must manage complex interdependencies, balancing apprehensive and disciplined conduct with relaxed, informal behavior, indicating a move towards self-regulation.¹¹⁸ Despecialization allows line officers to be generalists who can tackle various community issues.¹¹⁹

Theoretically, despecialization allows beat officers to become multitasking experts capable of handling any criminal or disruptive behavior, which allows for flexibility in community policing. Issues may arise within a given community, so community policing thus encourages flexibility among districts. According to this model, officers must always stay on their beats to learn about the neighborhood, its resources, and its challenges. This restricts a department's capacity to move resources between other districts.¹²⁰

Teams, not individuals, are increasingly seen as the fundamental building blocks of organizations. This is especially true of police organizations, where teamwork is the norm.¹²¹ The process of describing interactions between team members who pool their resources to complete tasks is known as teamwork.¹²² This correctly captures the essence of public safety and the police's dedication to protecting and serving their communities.

Police officers rely on more than simply their fellow officers to support them in their work. They focus solely on fire, EMS, prisons, dispatch, and other resources with similar goals and purposes to fulfill their mission.¹²³ Police departments use teamwork to connect significant skills, use internal resources, and communicate with other departments and agencies to address and eradicate crimes. When they implement team-building strategies to strengthen their unity against crime, police departments can more

¹¹⁷ Victor E. Kappeler and Larry K. Gaines, *Community Policing: A Contemporary Perspective*, 7th ed (Routledge, 2015), 194.

¹¹⁸ Stewart Clegg and Ad van Iterson, 'The Effects of Liquefying Place, Time, and Organizational Boundaries on Employee Behavior: Lessons of Classical Sociology', *M@n@gement* 16, no. 5 (2013): 629.

¹¹⁹ Hancock, 'Community Policing within Campus Law Enforcement Agencies', 456; Gill et al., 'PROTOCOL: Community-Oriented Policing to Reduce Crime, Disorder, and Fear and Improve Legitimacy and Satisfaction with Police: A Systematic Review', 1.

¹²⁰ James J. Willis, Stephen D. Mastrofski, and Tammy Rinehart Kochel, 'The Co-Implementation of Compstat and Community Policing', *Journal of Criminal Justice* 38, no. 5 (2010): 973.

¹²¹ Roar Espevik, Bjørn Helge Johnsen, and Sigurd W. Hystad, 'Police Dyads Within an Operational Simulation: An Empirical Test of the Research Propositions Made in the "Big Five" Teamwork Approach', *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology* 37, no. 4 (1 December 2022): 1.

¹²² Jan B. Schmutz, Lauren L. Meier, and Tanja Manser, 'How Effective Is Teamwork Really? The Relationship between Teamwork and Performance in Healthcare Teams: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis', *BMJ Open* 9, no. 9 (1 September 2019), <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/9/9/e028280>.

¹²³ Rex M. Scism, 'Teamwork in Public Safety: Key Attributes and Strategies for Success', EMSI, 16 February 2024, <https://www.emsl.com/paramedic-chief/teamwork-in-public-safety-key-attributes-and-strategies-for-success>.

effectively use their resources to keep the community safe.¹²⁴

Community policing is crucial because it facilitates information exchange between the police and the people in this context.¹²⁵ For example, the Canton Police Department in Canton Township, Michigan, US, has been adopting the community policing strategy since 1993, offering that same advantage to its residents and business owners. Canton is structurally organized in four community policing areas.

Every area is managed by a lieutenant who leads a community policing team and shares with them the power to identify possible problems in their neighborhood and address them before they get out of hand. Teams can also tailor their operations to fit the necessities of local businesses and residents by using community policing. The department encourages All Canton residents to get to know their community policing officers.¹²⁶

The increasing employment of civilians in law enforcement agencies has been defined as “civilianization,” including hiring civilian investigators, commanders, and leaders from various backgrounds. This aims to fill personnel gaps, cut expenses, and improve community service.¹²⁷ A profound mental shift and institutional changes within the police force are necessary for the civilianization process, which has also assumed relevance in military sociology to explain how military organizations are becoming increasingly similar to civilian organizations.¹²⁸ It appears that community policing is the best approach to operationalizing the civilianization of law enforcement and advancing the notion of the “ideal” police force as protectors of the people.¹²⁹ To increase the number of community police officers on the street for neighborhood patrols, the San Francisco Police Department, for example, started a long-term plan to civilianize dozens of non-public safety positions in the mid-2000s.¹³⁰

Finally, it's critical to remember that sworn officers may oppose civilianization if they believe it will negatively impact their ability to perform their duties.¹³¹ Police officers may resent civilians who take on oversight duties because they think these people could

¹²⁴ Asif Yar Khan, ‘It’S All about Teamwork for Telangana Cops in Solving Cases’, *Telangana Today* (blog), 26 June 2022, <https://telanganatoday.com/its-all-about-teamwork-for-telangana-cops-in-solving-cases>.

¹²⁵ Ronta Hill-Morton, ‘Why Community Policing Is Important’, *Sandusky Register*, 16 March 2021, <https://sanduskyregister.com/news/309423/why-community-policing-is-important>.

¹²⁶ Canton Police Department, ‘Community Policing: Working Together to Keep the Canton Community Safe’, *Canton 1834 Police* (blog), 4 April 2024, <https://www.cantonmi.gov/264/Community-Policing>.

¹²⁷ Megan Alderden and Wesley G. Skogan, ‘The Place of Civilians in Policing’, *Policing* 37, no. 2 (May 2014): 259.

¹²⁸ Ryan Kelty and Richard Niemeyer, ‘Integrating Civilians into Military Organizations: Linking Micro and Macro Levels of Analysis’, *Journal of Military, Veteran and Family Health* 8, no. s1 (5 February 2022): 5, <https://doi.org/10.3138/jmvfh-2021-0078>.

¹²⁹ Kwan Choi and Ju-lak Lee, ‘Citizen Participation in Community Safety: A Comparative Study of Community Policing in South Korea and the UK’, *Policing and Society* 26, no. 2 (17 February 2016): 165.

¹³⁰ San Francisco Police Department, ‘San Francisco Community Policing: A Report on Current Affairs’ (San Francisco: SFPD, 2006), 23, <https://www.sanfranciscopolice.org/sites/default/files/FileCenter/Documents/14702-REPORT%20ON%20COMMUNITY%20POLICING.pdf>.

¹³¹ Chad Whelan and Diarmaid Harkin, ‘Civilianising Specialist Units: Reflections on the Policing of Cyber-Crime’, *Criminology & Criminal Justice* 21, no. 4 (1 September 2021): 529.

compromise sensitive data, interfere with the exercise of discretion, or harm operations.¹³² This resentment can escalate into rivalries and antagonism, with police unions frequently opposing civilian oversight bodies.¹³³

Community policing, seen from a sociological perspective, is an alternative that ensures collaboration among social actors. Its proactive strategy to crime and disorder offers a promising shift from traditional policing's reactive approach. This change can significantly improve law enforcement outcomes and community relations.¹³⁴

Community policing makes police officers more accountable by building a solid foundation of transparency, communication, and cooperation with their communities. By getting to know the neighborhood residents, police officers must consider how their actions may affect the individuals they protect. Officers who develop a personal rapport with the neighborhood residents look out for their best interests and focus on keeping them safe and out of trouble.¹³⁵

The philosophical approach to community policing promotes cooperation and gives citizens a sense of empowerment. Through their active participation in crime prevention initiatives such as volunteer units, crisis intervention teams, neighborhood watch groups, or police community support officers, citizens become integral to the process and contribute to improving their community's quality of life.¹³⁶ The principles and procedures that support community-oriented policing are fundamental to sociology.¹³⁷ Community policing has been examined from the standpoint of social organization and disorganization to underscore the role of sociology in local crime and disorder issues.¹³⁸ Furthermore, problem-solving strategies should be supported by applying quantitative and qualitative sociological research techniques.¹³⁹ The systematic gathering and examination of social data is necessary for the effective implementation of community policing, which includes the use of geographic information systems (GIS).¹⁴⁰

¹³² Vance Keyes and Latocia Keyes, 'A Scoping Review of Police Civilian Oversight Literature 1992-2022', *Policing An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management* 46, no. 4 (28 June 2023): 601, <https://doi.org/10.1108/PIJPSM-02-2023-0027>.

¹³³ Abdul Nasser Rad, David S. Kirk, and William P. Jones, 'Police Unionism, Accountability, and Misconduct', *Annual Review of Criminology* 6 (27 January 2023): 181.

¹³⁴ Christine N. Famega, 'Proactive Policing by Post and Community Officers', *Crime & Delinquency* 55, no. 1 (1 January 2009): 78.

¹³⁵ Jadwiga Stawnicka and Iwona Klonowska, 'The Role of a Community Police Officer in Shaping the Security of Local Communities — Considerations in the Context of the First National Surveys of Community Police Officers (2017)', *Internal Security* 10, no. 1 (27 November 2018): 15.

¹³⁶ E. Amadi, 'A Qualitative Analysis of Community Policing in the United States', *American International Journal of Contemporary Research* 4, no. 1 (2014): 19,23.

¹³⁷ Ross Deuchar et al., 'Social Capital in Scottish and Danish Neighbourhoods: Paradoxes of a Police–Community Nexus at the Front Line', *Journal of Scandinavian Studies in Criminology and Crime Prevention* 19, no. 2 (3 July 2018): 187.

¹³⁸ Kimberly S. Przeszlowski and Vaughn J. Crichlow, 'An Exploratory Assessment of Community-Oriented Policing Implementation, Social Disorganization and Crime in America', *Social Sciences* 7, no. 3 (March 2018): 35, <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci7030035>.

¹³⁹ Monica Prasad, 'Problem-Solving Sociology', *Contemporary Sociology* 47, no. 4 (1 July 2018): 393.

¹⁴⁰ Fahui Wang, 'Why Police and Policing Need GIS: An Overview', *Annals of GIS* 18, no. 3 (1 September 2012): 159.

The three last points about community-oriented policing deserve further examination. First, strategic partnerships between the police and the public aim to stimulate civic engagement and active citizenship, improve social cohesion, and positively impact neighbourhood security and safety levels.¹⁴¹ Communities can be significant as informal social control agents against crime and other deviant behaviors.¹⁴² Crime prevention is significantly impacted by the community's willingness to report crimes and work with the police. The police can use community members' expertise because of their solid and focused relationships with the community, which also boosts police credibility in the community's eyes.¹⁴³

Second, community policing emphasizes proactive problem-solving on a regular and systematic basis. This approach promotes proactive problem-solving, encouraging police agencies to identify timely solutions to public safety issues rather than reacting to crimes. It considers arrests just one option. By using the SARA (scanning, analysis, reaction, and assessment) problem-solving model, an essential conceptual tool, officers can approach problem-solving in a strictly controlled manner.¹⁴⁴

Finally, to draw more participants to community policing initiatives, most police departments are spending more money to use social media platforms as digital support tools. Community engagement is made possible by social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Nextdoor, YouTube, Snapchat, Neighbors, GroupMe, Mobile PD, and others that reach neighborhood residents more quickly and affordably than traditional policing techniques like knocking on doors.¹⁴⁵ This new strategy, "digital community policing," curates an online presence and ensures police are visible and approachable to their communities. Following and interacting with these communities helps police stay informed and conscious of prevalent issues. However, the negative aspects depend on how digital platforms are utilized. For example, police agencies risk fostering filter bubbles, encouraging overactive crime, disorder, and safety debates, and intensifying racial profiling in residential areas.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴¹ Schreurs et al., 'Citizen Participation in the Police Domain: The Role of Citizens' Attitude and Morality', 775.

¹⁴² Ben Bradford and Jonathan Jackson, 'Cooperating with the Police as an Act of Social Control - Trust and Neighbourhood Concerns as Predictors of Public Assistance', *Nordisk Politiforskning* 3, no. 2 (8 November 2016): 111.

¹⁴³ Michael C. Gearhart, 'Social Cohesion, Mutual Efficacy and Informal Social Control: Collective Efficacy and Community-Based Crime Prevention', *International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice* 71 (1 December 2022): 100548.

¹⁴⁴ Dr Modise, 'Community Policing Strategies Include Community Patrols, Neighborhood Watch and Community Policing', *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology* 8, no. 7 (1 July 2023): 3463, <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.8251400>.

¹⁴⁵ Lauren Mayes, 'Social Media and Community-Oriented Policing: Examining the Organizational Image Construction of Municipal Police on Twitter and Facebook', *Police Practice and Research* 22, no. 1 (15 January 2021): 903.

¹⁴⁶ Kona Shen, 'Digital Community Policing: The New Frontiers in Civilian Engagement', *Community Policing Dispatch*, 2018, https://cops.usdoj.gov/html/dispatch/08-2018/digital_community_policing.html; Kira Vrist Rønn, 'Mediated Proximity: Community Policing in the Digital Age', *Nordic Journal of Studies in Policing* 10, no. 1 (25 August 2023): 1, <https://doi.org/10.18261/njsp.10.1.8>.

V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, community policing, as analyzed through a sociological perspective, offers a compelling framework for addressing crime and enhancing public safety. This approach fosters closer ties between law enforcement and the public needs as inclusive and participation in sustainable social systems. Mainly through decentralizing decision-making and empowering officers to respond directly to their communities' unique needs. This relationship facilitates the identification of local issues and enables the development of practical solutions. The proactive nature of community policing, grounded in problem-solving and strategic partnerships, makes it a potent tool for reducing crime and the fear of crime, ultimately improving the quality of life for all involved.

The challenge to overcome is the effectiveness of community policing, which should encourage collaboration among social actors. Decentralization and officer autonomy are critical components; the success of these strategies depends on the consistent application of sociological theories and criminological concepts that emphasize the importance of social cohesion and mutual support. Integrating these perspectives, community policing can transcend crime prevention, catalyzing broader social change. Thus, a holistic approach not only strengthens the social fabric but also ensures that the rights and needs of all community members, particularly the most vulnerable, are respected and addressed.

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