Street Crime and Physical Environment - From the Perception of Local People regarding Security Feelings

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Abstract: The occurrence of crime in an area cannot be separated from the community, which is a complex configuration of space, physical environment and people. The physical environment is always related to the risk of crime as the perception of security in a given environment is shaped by people’s everyday experience and movement within that environment. As a result, different elements of physical planning can be informed by the perception of local people regarding insecure spaces. People can assess which environments can impart the feelings of safety and which can induce fear in a given area. In this study the relationship between street crime occurrence and the physical environment is observed through the perception of local people in Dhaka city. For the research, four study areas are selected from Dhaka city according to different spatial layout and income characteristics. Different participatory methods are applied for the analysis based on focus group discussions with various types of people in the study area. From the perceptions of local people, different factors of physical environment and street crimes are identified and visualized as people-crime scenarios for each study area. Some factors, like people’s interaction with an area, are identified as important to improve the environment for a secure community. The suggestions of local people regarding their feelings of security can facilitate crime control scenarios for different neighbourhoods in an urban area.

Keywords: Street crime, ranking method, land use, escape route, time ranking chart

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Street Crime

Street crime is one of the most discussed issues and a predominant urban problem that occurs in each large city in the world. Street Crime (2009) defined as mugging and vehicle theft, which are actually committed in the outdoors, are considered to be most talked about street crimes in any urban life (UK Home Office 2009). The occurrence of any crime in an area cannot be separated from the community, which is a complex formation of space, physical environment and people.

According to Brantingham and Jeffery (1981), crime can be defined as a complex, multi-dimensional event that occurs when the law, offender and target (refers to a person in personal crimes and an object in property crimes) converge in time and place (such as a street corner, address, building or street segment (as cited in Henry and Bryan 2000).

From the psychological point of view, it can be said that behaviour is the product of the interaction between the person and the setting. So to put this in the language of criminology is to say that crime (a behaviour) is a product of the interaction between a criminal or delinquent propensity and a criminal opportunity (Clarke 2009). The criminal opportunity is related to the setting of crime occurrences, which is associated with the physical environment of a space and the target. A great portion of urban street crime is opportunistic in nature, reflecting the spontaneous reactions to opportunities that present themselves. This type of street crime is likely to be affected by spatial design or physical environment, and the informal surveillance it promotes (Faneck 1997).

A view given by Brunsdon et al. (1995) is termed “vulnerability” which is not identified in official figures of actual crime occurrence. Vulnerability would allow planners and policy makers to address such issues as; the criminal, the behaviour, non-reporting of crimes,
and other consequences informally associated with the official statistics. Vulnerability is defined in terms of an objective level of risk; it may be seen as spatial in nature, and probabilistic. The impact of fear on people’s lives broadly relates with the space and people’s sense of safety (Brunsdon et al. 1995). An understanding of the human-landscape interactions and their implications are essential for interpretations of vulnerability and crime problems which help in policy making and action (Brunsdon et al. 1995).

Crime has long been thought to be intimately associated with the physical environment. Different bodies of research focused on exploring the relationship between the physical environment and fear of crime or actual crime location (Long and Baran 2006). Many scholars acknowledge the existence of this relationship between the physical environment and crime (Fanek 1997).

Various literatures have shown that certain physical attributes such as “negative” land uses, street layouts that create multiple escape routes, environmental disrepair and desolation, and physical features that block visibility and natural surveillance can encourage higher incidence of crime (Liggett et al. 2004). According to Greenberg and Rohe (1984), the design of the built environment can affect crime through its effect on the degree of access, ease of entrance and exit, and surveillability (as cited in Liggett et al. 2004). The type of surrounding land uses has been found to have a major effect on the incidence of crime. The presence of physical features that increase the visibility of a site (such as open storefronts, unobstructed windows, and well-lit areas) and the absence of features that can block views (for example, blank walls, thick vegetation) can help ameliorate crime (Liggett et al. 2004).

Thus, it can be said that physical environmental features can influence the occurrence of crime in an area. This can be better understood from the perception of local people. As there has been no study done in Bangladesh regarding the spatial planning aspects of street crimes, it was necessary to elicit an overall scenario of the influence of physical environment on occurrence of street crime from local people’s perceptions.

This study attempts to reveal the crime-space relationship of the outdoors using the perception of local people about street crime and the physical environment of an area. The physical environment is always related to the risk of crime as the perception of security in a given environment is shaped by people’s everyday experience and movement within that environment. As a result, different elements of physical planning can be informed by the perception of local people regarding insecure spaces. People can assess which environments can impart the feelings of safety and which can induce fear in a given area.

In this study the relationship between street crime occurrence and the physical environment is observed through the perception of local people in Dhaka city, which is experiencing a worrying situation of street crime (Al-Mahmood 2009). Though it is a fast growing megacity, the overall development of Dhaka city has not kept pace with its rapid mass urban transformation. As a result, the city is characterised by the high levels of poverty and social vulnerability, shortage of housing, infrastructure and social services, poor quality of physical and social environment and inefficient urban management (Hossain 2006). A study revealed that social security is the number one problem being faced by the people of Dhaka city and more than fifty percent rated the condition of the city as “not safe” for living from different types of crime, including street crimes like mugging and theft of vehicles (Asian Development Bank 2007).

1.2 Community Safety Strategy by Bangladesh Police

Community safety is a broad concept which can focus on the individual (physical and emotional well-being), as well as the broader community (economic, environmental and social well-being). Policy and strategy issues regarding crime prevention and community safety require implementation at some stage. Although there is a need for a true partnership approach, the police are often in the best logistical position to coordinate crime prevention. As such, there is a recommendation for the establishment of Community Policing Officers in each of the police Stations. At the present time in Bangladesh, MOHA (Ministry of Home Affairs) and Bangladesh Police are taking the lead role in establishing a crime prevention and community safety programme through its efforts to implement the Community Policing Strategy (CPS) throughout the country. In time, other government ministries and NGO’s should also incorporate the principles and philosophies of crime prevention and community safety into their respective policies (Bangladesh Police 2009).

2 BRIEF PROFILE OF THE STUDY AREA

For the study, four Thana of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) areas are selected according to different spatial layout and income characteristics. Among the four Thana, two of them are selected from high-class, planned residential areas like Gulshan and Dhanmondi, developed for upper and upper-middle income group. The other two are inadequately planned residential Thana, Mohammadpur and Ramna, developed for middle or lower-middle income group. Figure 1 shows the location of the study area in DCC map.

The study is done in all four Thana and assessed the local people’s view about problems and suggestions of security feelings in the study areas. Different ranking methods were applied in focus group discussions, and interviews were taken from police and local peoples different social stratifications to attain perception.
Figure 1. Dhaka City Corporation Map showing location of study areas
2.1 Gulshan Thana

Gulshan Thana consists of an area of 10.29 sq. km. with a population of 0.19 million according to census 2001 (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics 2007) (as shown in Figure 2). It is bounded by Cantonment and Khilkhet thanas on the north, Tejgaon and Rampura thanas on the south, Badda thana on the east, Kafrul thana on the west (Ahmed 2008). Dhaka Improvement Trust (DIT) developed Gulshan Model Town in 1961, Banani in 1964, and Baridhara in 1962 as residential areas for the high income people (Islam 2007). Though it was developed as a posh residential area there is also an informal settlement where 18% of the total population of Gulshan Thana lives (Islam 2007). There is spontaneous development at the Mohakhali portion like Karail Bustee, which lacks utility services or connection roads and also suffers with a serious water logging problem (Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha 2004). Most foreign embassies and offices of diplomatic missions of Bangladesh are located in the Gulshan and Baridhara zone.

2.2 Dhanmondi Thana

Dhanmondi Thana comprises an area of 2.9 sq. km. and population with around 46,000 (according to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics 2007, as shown in Figure 3). The present Dhanmondi Thana is bounded by Mohammadpur Thana on the north, New Market Thana on the south, Kalabagan and Tejgaon Thana on the east and Hazaribag and Mohammadpur Thana on the west. Dhanmondi residential area was planned and developed in the early fifties to provide residential accommodation for high and higher-middle income groups of population in Dhaka city. It is designed with large plots, wide roads and good environment. It is a site and service scheme with grid pattern of roads (Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha 2004). The initially designed Dhanmondi residential area for higher income group or class gradually changed its character after the Liberation war 1971, to a mixed land use area. The present Dhanmondi residential area is now proliferated with numerous schools, colleges, universities coupled with offices, clinics, shops and recent development, like malls. Different organizations, NGOs, and other voluntary organizations adopted Dhanmondi as their ideal place to have an office. Later on Dhanmondi, together with Gulshan and Banani has been chosen for apartment construction as a means for housing solution. As for recreation, there is provision for parks and playfields and Dhanmondi Lake situated in the midst of Dhanmondi residential area (Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha 2004). There are several markets and shopping centres developed in Mirpur Road, Sat Masjid Road, Road no. 27 and in Road no. 2.

2.3 Mohammadpur Thana

Mohammadpur Thana consists of an area of 10.48 sq. km. and population of 0.38 million (estimated from Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics 2007, as shown in Figure 4). This Thana is bounded by Adabar, Mirpur and Kafrul Thana on the north, Hazaribag and Dhanmondi Thana on the South, Sher-E-Bangla, Tejgaon and D-
Figure 3. Map of Dhanmondi Thana Area

Figure 4. Map of Mohammadpur Thana Area
hanmondi Thana on the east and Savar Upazila on the west. Mohammadpur area was previously developed by the government in the mid 1960’s to accommodate migrant Muslim people from Bihar, India (Tawhid 2004). Now this Thana is developed as a residential area for middle-income people with some minor commercial activities. There are informal settlements in the western fringe of Mohammadpur Thana and in Geneva camp area in the central part of this thana. 46% of the total population of Mohammadpur Thana live in informal settlements because a lot of Muslim refugees who came from India after 1947 are living in this thana (Islam 2007). Mixed residential and commercial development is occurring on both sides of Tajmahal road.

2.4 Ramna Thana

Ramna Thana consists of an area of 3.43 sq. km. and population of 0.18 million (estimated from Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics 2007, as shown in Figure 5). It is bounded by Tejgaon-Industrial and Khilgaon Thana at north, Shahbag and Paltan Thana at south, Motijheel and Khilgaon Thana at east and Tejgaon, Kalabagan and Shahbag Thana at west. Ramna Thana is a mix of different types of land use. The southern portion of Ramna Thana emerged during the British period as an adjacent development to the old core, in the form of a garden city with open spaces and curved roads (Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha 2004). It was developed for accommodating government offices and residences in the colonial period. The northern portion of Ramna Thana is developed for residential use with irregular curved land patterns mainly in the Moghbazar area, which has poor public services and infrastructure facilities. This Thana is a very important area of Dhaka City Corporation with many government, semi government, autonomous housings and private institutions (Sarkar 2008).

3 METHODOLOGY

A physical survey was carried out in the study areas to find the characteristics of physical planning attributes such as land use, road network, boundary wall features, building entry points, position of lamp posts, and other attributes of the study area.

Focus group discussions were conducted with different groups of people in the selected study areas. The purpose of these focus groups was to assess the vulnerable crime locations and to identify the perception of local people about street crimes in the context of the road layout, built space, land use, and other factors. The views of the residents on crime and space context were recorded from these focus group meetings. The process was repeated in each thana. Focus groups varied in size from three to eight participants, and included a diverse mix of people; including office workers, security guards, students, architects, and local tea sellers.

Figure 5. Map of Ramna Thana Area
The pair wise matrix and ranking were two of the participatory methods applied in the focus group discussions. The steps of procedure of the methods are discussed later in the application level. Semi-structured interviews were taken from the Police and local peoples from different social stratifications to attain the perception.

3.1 The Pair Wise Matrix Method

Pair-wise ranking is a popular participatory method with wide application which helps in arriving at people’s priorities and preferences. It also leads to developing insights into people’s decision-making processes and criteria used by them to arrive at their preferences. In pair-wise ranking method two items, attributes, factors, etc compared at a time. This process of comparing two at a time is carried on till each item has been compared with the other. The frequency if how many times each of the items has been preferred is ascertained. The more the frequency, the higher the preference for that item (Kumar 2002).

According to Kumar (2002), the possible applications of the pair-wise ranking method are too numerous to list out. It is used to understand decision-making processes and the factors that influence the people’s decisions. Planning of new products and concepts that will be more acceptable to the local people is another area of its application. The extensive uses of this method were found in the examples of community participation in India and Nigeria (Kumar 2002).

3.2 Factors that Impact the Study

A significant proportion of local people were less aware of the relationship between their physical environment and the incidence of crime. In this case, the facilitator need to make them realize the context of the scenario of crime and physical environment to derive the proper output.

Sometimes there was disparity between the people’s perception of crime areas and the reported crime areas. Some insecure places identified by the people did not have an elevated incidence of crime. However, those places might be identified as vulnerable places for crime occurrence, and people felt fear and/or discomfort in moving through those places for security reasons.

3.3 Insecure Places: Identified by Local People

It was necessary to identify the insecure places, which local people considered unsafe, because some of those places were not identified as crime spots according to police data. Nevertheless, the local people sometimes try to avoid those places due to feelings of insecurity. These insecure places were identified by the local people in each thanas through focus group discussions. Maps of the thana were provided to the people in several group discussions and they were asked to identify the location of places or streets where they feel insecure or unsafe. The identified insecure places were plotted on the thana maps. Local people often have knowledge about the reported offenses that took places. In some cases they were even the victims. Figure 6 shows the area of insecure places with point location in the map of each Thana.

4 DIFFERENT ASPECTS IDENTIFIED FROM THE LOCAL PEOPLE REGARDING SECURITY FEELINGS

The respondents were asked to identify the reasons for crime prone area. The points recognized from different groups are listed for each Thana.

4.1 Factors Identified in Gulshan Thana relating Crime Prone Areas

Students and office workers identified crime prone locations near commercial areas, such as bus counters, under flyover, and hotels. The office workers identified those areas because they are potential stations for criminals and have easy escape routes near lakes, open space and surrounding areas. Figure 7(a) and Figure 7(b) show examples of crime-prone areas in Gulshan Thana identified by local people.

Security guards identified some residential areas as crime-prone due to low traffic, less movement of people and poor condition of street lighting.

Other people identified crime-prone areas as those adjacent to the slum in the T&T (Telephone and Telegraph) area because those areas have poor infrastructure, such as roads and lighting. Criminals find easy escape routes in those areas.

4.2 Factors Identified in Dhanmondi Thana relating Crime Prone Areas

Poor lighting condition was identified as an important factor from different respondents.

Some land uses with low activity (such as exhibition space in road no.4) were reported as quiet and insecure most of the time.

The lake frontages, which are segregated spaces, served as easy escape routes and hiding spaces for criminals. Figure 8(a) and Figure 8(b) show examples of quiet and segregated locations identified by the local people as crime-prone areas in Dhanmondi Thana.

Parks and playfields have low activity most of the time (like playfield in Road no.4, Road no. 8 and Kalabagan field).

Some areas near commercial, public activity spaces like bus counters, hospitals and clinics, schools were also identified as crime prone locations because of potential sources of criminals with easy escape routes.
4.3 Factors Identified in Mohammadpur Thana regarding Crime Prone Areas

Land use was identified as one of the important factors in Mohammadpur Thana. Some unused or illegally occupied land identified by the local people may be considered vulnerable spaces. The underdeveloped land use near the fringe area at Beri Badh road was identified as highly crime-prone according to local people and police.

The Geneva camp area occupied by the neglected Stateless Bihari Community in Bangladesh (Farzana 2008) was identified as a potential source of criminals according to local people and police. The Geneva camp area near the Residential Model School and College

Figure 6. Insecure Places Identified by local people in each Thana
Figure 7. Crime-prone areas in Gulshan Thana identified by local people

Figure 8. Crime-prone areas in Dhanmondi Thana

Figure 9. Crime-prone areas in Mohammadpur Thana
was recognized as one of the causes of criminal activity in Mohammadpur Thana in people’s perception. The people identified all spaces near the Geneva camp area as insecure places. Figure 9(a) and Figure 9(b) show the Beri Badh and Geneva Camp area of Mohammadpur Thana, which the local people identified as crime prone areas.

Some people felt insecure in the dead-end roads of Mohamamdia Housing Society and Mohammadia Housing Limited because of low movement of people. The service roads (locally named as “Methor Goli”) of the previously planned housing area in Mohammadpur Thana was recognised as a hiding place and escape route for criminals. The maintenance of those service roads is very poor, and some of them were consumed for newly constructed housing by developers and individual homeowners. These service areas are sometimes used by drug peddlers, who sometimes commit related offences such as muggings and vehicle theft. Figure 10 shows a service road (locally named as “Methor Goli”) of Mohammadpur Thana.

Some respondents in the neighbourhood area identified solid boundary walls as barriers for streets and buildings, which contributed to the absence of informal interaction places for young and local people on the street. This contributes to crime because perforated boundary walls and interaction spaces in the neighbourhood area can allow natural surveillance of the streets, thereby discouraging criminals from committing any kind of offences there.

Poor lighting conditions is a factor for crime-prone area in different streets.

Some office workers at Mohammadpur Thana identified the connecting roads near bus counters, cinema hall etc. as insecure places.

### 5 FOCUS GROUP PERCEPTION OF TIME OF OCCURRENCE OF STREET CRIMES DURING A 24-HOURS DAY

This study used a ranking method to represent the time distribution of the incidence street crimes in a 24-hour period as perceived by members of the focus groups.

**Step 1** A time chart was prepared dividing into 12, two-hour segments covering a 24-hour day.

**Step 2** The respondents were then asked to indicate the rate of crime occurrence in the time chart using multiple lines or dots. The number of lines or dots represents the relative incidence of street crimes for a given time period.

**Step 3** Researchers then ranked the time periods based on the responses, using dots to represent the relative incidence of street crime in a given time period.

#### 5.1 Time ranking chart for Gulshan Thana

The time ranking chart for street crime in Gulshan Thana is shown in Figure 12(a). From the time line chart it was found that the maximum incidence of street crimes occurred in this area immediately after the office hour in the evening, between 6:00 PM and 8:00PM. The next highest incidence occurred immediately before office hours between 6:00 and 8:00AM. No street crimes were reported by respondents between 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM. This suggests that the times of highest street crime occurrence in Gulshan Thana mainly relate to commercial activity and office hour. Some street crimes may also be associated with the early morning walk time as people use Gulshan and Banani Lakes for this purpose.

#### 5.2 Time Ranking Chart for Dhanmondi Thana

The time ranking chart for the occurrence of street crime in Dhanmondi Thana is shown in Figure 12(b). The chart shows that the maximum rate of street crimes occurred in this area during early morning walk time of 4:00 to 6:00 AM and immediately after office hours, between 6:00 and 8:00 PM. The next highest incidence occurred between 8:00 AM and 10:00 AM after school going time. This suggests that the incidence of street crimes in this area is related to commercial activity, office hour, because of lots of schools in Dhanmondi area, and due to morning walk activity surrounding the Dhanmondi Lake.

#### 5.3 Time Ranking Chart for Mohammadpur Thana

The time ranking chart for the incidence of street crime in Mohammadpur Thana is shown in Figure 12(c). In case of Mohammadpur Thana the time line chart show that there was mugging happening in every time
period. Like other Thanas the maximum crime rate occurred after office hours, between 6:00 and 8:00 P-M. This was followed by a high incidence in the 8:00 -10:00 AM period. Mohammadpur Thana has a more continuous distribution of street crime occurrences as it has a mainly residential use with variation of spatial planning. So in Mohammadpur Thana the crime occurrences mainly relates with the residential activity along with commercial activity.

5.4 Time Ranking Chart for Ramna Thana

The time ranking chart for the incidence of street crime in Ramna Thana is shown in Figure 12(d). This chart shows that the maximum rate of street crime occurred in this area right after office hours, between 6:00 and 8:00PM, again between 10:00 PM and midnight, then during the early morning walk time of 4:00 - 6:00AM. Early morning walks occur at the adjacent Ramna Park. In this area crime occurred at night time because some major roads (Outer Circular Road, DIT Road etc.) of Dhaka city across this Thana, and have high public activities in the late evening till late night. Thus, criminals can target potential victims during the late night.

5.5 Pair-Wise Matrix Method: Ranking different Factors for Street Crimes

A Pair-Wise Ranking Method was applied in all four Thana for ranking different elements of the physical environment related to the occurrence of street crimes considering spatial planning.

Steps:

1. First identified different elements of the physical environment that can be related to spatial planning and street crime from different literature review.
2. Next prepared a matrix chart to display the relationship between the identified factors.
3. In the next step respondents were asked to perform a pairwise comparison between factors related to the occurrence of street crimes. Then recorded the expressed preference for each pair of factors in the matrix chart.
4. In the next step counted how many times each factor was preferred. The higher the frequency of preferences the higher its impact on street crimes from people’s perception.

Tables 1, 2, 3, and 4 show the pairwise Matrix chart for Gulshan, Dhanmondi, Mohammadpur and Ramna respectively. The rankings found from the Pair-Wise Matrix method of different factors perceived as being related to street crimes are listed according to their highest to lowest expressed preference ranking. The priority frequency represents the number of times the listed factor was ranked higher than the other factors with which it was compared in the pairwise question about relevance to street crime.

6 INTERVIEW WITH THE LOCAL POLICE AUTHORITY

To determine the security conditions in Dhaka city interviews were taken from different law enforcement authorities in the selected study Thana. Different police officers, including the officer in charge of four study

Figure 10. Service Road (Methor Goli) at Mohammadpur Thana
Figure 11. Narrow and poorly aligned roads in Moghbazar area at Ramna Thana

(a) Dhanmondi Thana  
(b) Mohammadpur Thana

(c) Gulshan Thana  
(d) Ramna Thana

Figure 12. Time ranking chart for crime occurrence in each Thana
Thana and other senior officers in the police headquarters, were interviewed for the purpose.

Almost all police officer’s suggested that it is necessary to increase manpower for all thana because it is difficult for them to cover the crimes in the entire Thana with existing manpower.

The police authority needed enough equipment and service facilities to conduct surveillance and control the area of individual Thana.

The condition of underdeveloped slum areas, mainly in Mohammadpur, Gulshan and some parts of Ramna Thana needed to improve, as those areas are sources of different types of crime. The crimes involve mainly the selling of narcotics, which is an important contributor to street crimes.

According to Gulshan Thana Police the maximum street crimes occurred mainly in the first week of each month. At that time monetary movement is higher.
in the commercial zone due to salary withdrawals and distribution.

The Mohammadpur Thana identified the Beri Badh areas near Hazaribag Tannery as highly crime prone due to very poor infrastructure like roads and street lights. According to them the land use of Mohammadpur Thana should be properly planned near the fringe area and Geneva camp in the main Mohammadpur mahalla.

The police authority suggested increasing the number of checkposts in the study areas to enhance the crime control of each Thana.

Community Police Service is an idea developed by the Bangladesh Police to involve the community in anti-crime administration and traffic control. DMP trains a good number of local youths in order to guard the locality at night combined with police and to assist the traffic police for the smooth movement of vehicles. It is necessary to increase and upgrade the Community police service in all Thana of Dhaka City in order to control crime at the micro level.

7 LOCAL LEVEL AUTHORITIES, GROUPS AND PEOPLES IN CONTROLLING STREET CRIMES

According to the local people’s perception there are some individuals, groups, and authorities in each study Thana that can influence the control of local-level street crime.

They can directly control or can play important roles in controlling or reducing crimes in the neighbourhood. These groups are identified totally from the local people’s viewpoint. The ranks are given respectively from most significant to less significant.

7.1 Influential Authorities or Groups Identified in Gulshan Thana

Gulshan Thana Police: Directly controls street crime in Gulshan Thana area as a law enforcement authority.

Gulshan Community Police: Can influence the control of local level crimes in Gulshan area by helping the police authority in Gulshan Thana.

Community guards in Gulshan Residential area: Can control the crimes in individual housing area at Gulshan Model town under the coverage.

Mohakhali Community Police: Can influence the control of local level crimes in Mohakhali area by helping the police authority in Gulshan Thana.

Gulshan Club members: The powerful influential members of Gulshan club can play an active role in upgrading the crime control situation by taking different crime control initiatives in the neighbourhood.

7.2 Influential Authorities or Groups Identified in Dhanmondi Thana

Dhanmondi Thana Police: Directly control street crime in Dhanmondi Thana area as a law enforcement authority.

Dhanmondi Community Police: Can influence the control of local level crimes in Dhanmondi residential area by helping the police authority in Dhanmondi Thana.

Community night guards in Dhanmondi Residential area: They have an important role in surveillance of streets at night to control the crimes in individual housing areas under their coverage.

Police Guards at Dhanmondi Road no:11 (old 32): The special police guards assigned near Bangabandhu museum acts as an indirect authority in controlling street crimes in the vicinity of Road no:11 (old 32).

BDR Guards near the Pilkhana Area: They indirectly control crime in Dhanmondi area near BDR headquarters.

7.3 Influential Authorities or Groups Identified in Mohammadpur Thana

Mohammadpur Thana Police: Directly plays an active role in controlling street crime in Mohammadpur Thana area as a law enforcement authority.

Rapid Action Batellion (RAB): As the office of RAB-2 situated in the Mohammadpur Area they have a direct influence in Mohammadpur area in controlling street crimes.

Mohammadpur Community Police: Can influence the control of local level crimes throughout Mohammadpur by helping the police authority in Mohammadpur Thana.

Ward Commissioner: The ward commissioners of each ward can act as a community builder and authority in upgrading the secured environment of Mohammadpur Thana.

Local MP and other political leaders: According to local people of Mohammadpur Thana the local MP and political leaders have influence in controlling the criminals of the area.

Senior and Young people of the neighbourhood area: They can help in communicating with each other and can raise awareness of local people about crime prevention with different local level strategies.

7.4 Influential Authorities or Groups Identified in Ramna Thana

Ramna Thana Police: Directly controls street crime in Ramna Thana area as a law enforcement authority.

Rapid Action Batellion (RAB): RAB office situated in the Boro Moghbazar Area in Ramna Thana has direct influence in controlling street crime in the designated area.

Baily Road Community Guards: Can influence the
control of local level crimes near the Baily Road area by helping the police authority in Ramna Thana.

Rampura Community Police: Can indirectly control crime in the Noyatola area of Moghbazar near Rampura region.

Community Police of Paribagh Quarters: Can control crime in the vicinity of the administrative quarters in Paribagh area of Ramna Thana.

Landlords of individual housing: The landlords can play active roles in upgrading the physical environment of irregularly planned portions of Ramna Thana to make a safer community.

8 SUGGESTION REGARDING SAFER AND SECURE COMMUNITY FROM LOCAL PEOPLE’S PERCEPTION

Different suggestions and opinions came out from the participants of the study areas regarding their feelings about security and a safer community.

8.1 Suggestions and Opinions of Local Peoples at Gulshan Thana

i Upgrade the street lighting condition in the neighbourhood.
ii Remove or upgrade the slum area, which is a potential source of criminals dealing in narcotics and street crimes.
iii Increase police check posts in the crime prone areas.
iv Repairing roads to maintain a safer community by increasing public mobility.
v Increase the usability of two lakes of Gulshan Thana to increase the sense of security for people moving around the lakeside area.
vvi Enough lighting required near different playgrounds and open space area for a secure community.

8.2 Suggestions and Opinions of Local Peoples at Dhanmondi Thana

i Increase activities or provide security at different playgrounds, fields and open space areas (like playground at Road no. 4 and Road no. 8) which become quiet and can act as hiding places for criminals when there are not in use.
ii Increase the community or neighbourhood interactions which become degraded as with the continuous changing of land use of Dhanmondi from residential to commercial and institutional and changing of neighbourhood scale.
iii There should be variation of land use with people’s activity in the places which were identified as quiet and insecure for making a safer community.
iv Modify the solid boundary walls into perforated boundary walls to increase natural surveillance and provide lighting from inside buildings to make a safer community.
v Increase the number of light posts and police check posts for better security of the community.

8.3 Suggestions and Opinions of Local Peoples at Mohammadpur Thana

i Need proper land use and a slum upgrade programme throughout Mohammadpur Thana area.
ii Remove or upgrade the Geneva camp area, which is a source of criminals linked with narcotics dealings and street crimes.
iii The local leaders should control local criminals involved with different street crimes.
iv Enhance community security by increasing police forces, community police, check posts, and other activities directly related to security.
v Improve proper lighting condition of the neighbourhood area to increase the sense of security.
vi Increase use of vacant land.

8.4 Suggestions and Opinions of Local Peoples at Ramna Thana

i Develop strong interaction within the community to improve local surveillance of crimes in the neighbourhood.
ii Enhance the police forces to increase security in the community.
iii Widen the roads to increase visibility.
iv Upgrade and provide proper street lighting systems, including the use of generators for street lighting in case of electricity power outages.
v If possible change the location of building entry to break the blank wall which can increase the natural surveillance by the guard within the community and add lighting to the adjacent streets.
vi Provide paid guards in parking areas to control vehicles theft.

9 CONCLUSIONS

Community participation is necessary for the successful crime analysis in any city. There are many high-crime areas in any locality that are not officially known, but are recognised by local members of the community. People fear crime in their community so they should be incorporated in the awareness and process of crime prevention planning.

This study used surveys to determine the perceptions of local people on the different factors that influence crime in their community. The most prevalent time periods for street crime incidence was identified from community perception surveys and were related
to other issues and factors, such as land use and activity patterns, that affect street crime incidence. Factors like the level of community interaction in an area are identified as important factor for improving the environment for a secure community. The role of influential people and official authorities in different neighbourhoods are identified as important factors in controlling street crime in each thana. Participation of local community members, and inclusion of their sense of security can facilitate crime control scenarios for different neighbourhoods of each thana with the proper implementation of community policing strategy developed by the Ministry of Home Affairs) and Bangladesh Police.

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REFERENCES


