

Management of Spatial Components of Situational and Police Crime Prevention

By:

Javid Bahramzad¹

Abstract:

Doctrines associated with situational prevention considers "place of committing crime" as one of the fundamental elements of a crime. Meanwhile, with regard to causing or having effect on a crime situation, "place" can be one of the pivotal indices in situational prevention analyses. This study aims at examining the role of place in construction of a crime situation and explaining the relationship between "place" and situational preventive measures and procedures. Also, how to identify high-crime places, types of high-crime places and the factors influencing their creation are among the most important secondary objectives of this article. Concerning the purpose, it is a practical study whose material has been written through a documentary method using original sources (English), books and written and translated articles etc. This article is written in two main parts. In the first section, cognitive-conceptual issues about "place" as one of the main causes of crime situation, and its effective interaction with situational preventive measures will be reviewed. The second part of this paper will focus on criminological examination of places and critical locations of crime and provide situational preventive measures to deal with the situation. "Crime displacement" and "geographical distribution of benefits" are also considered as the possible consequences of implementing preventive strategies. The results of the study suggest that the inventory of offenses is distributed according to the spatial characteristics. Moreover, according to the criminological characteristics governing region or location, offenders choose the place of crime based on a logical calculation. Therefore, some locations, regions or neighborhoods are permanent places of occurring lots of crimes. As a result, considering "place", preventive measures and procedures can be systematically directed, and using the most effective ways, limited preventive resources are utilized in the most critical places. Finally, some suggestions for further research and application are provided in line with more favorable promotion of situational preventive measures.

Keywords:

Crime, situational crime prevention, place

Introduction:

Crime can be considered as a "spatial phenomenon", which means where there is only one place, occurrence of a crime was expected. According to the teachings of situational criminology, crime is the resulted of an offender's well-timed choice that is opted for at an appropriate opportunity. Accordingly, that would reasonable to consider committing crime at an appropriate opportunity, due to a suitable place, as a reasonable profit hunt. Hence, place plays a significant role in creation of a crime situation and it can be a "stable and permanent foundation" of a crime situation.

On the one hand, situational prevention which is a situation-based approach intends to eliminate crime situation by disrupting the constituent elements of the condition. Consequently, place can

¹ Faculty member of the IRI Police University

be one of the key considerations in any arrangement for situational prevention. Until a few decades ago, most of the preventive sources were devoted the offender and the victim, but situational prevention brought about this opportunity to pay attention to the "crime habitat", because there is a habitat (place) where a hunter (offenders) goes for hunting. In this regard, one of the practical results of focusing on place in preventive measures is identification of high-crime areas, i.e. certain regions with high crime rates.

Studies have shown that through various ways occurrence of a crime can be attributed to a particular place. Meanwhile, crime prevention resources not only in Iran but also throughout the world are very limited. Hence, in this modern world, allocation of crime prevention resources and specialization in this regard is of utmost importance. Due to specialized and technical dealing with the phenomenon of delinquency, situational crime prevention aims at efficient use of limited prevention resources. Therefore, by identification and systematic analysis of "place" as one of the causative factors of the situation and one of the preventive criminological criteria, optimum allocation of resources, effective selection of preventive strategies, its efficient implementation, and maximum reduction of crime can be ensured.

The main purpose of this paper is to investigate the criminological-preventive characteristics of "place" of crime occurrence and to describe the logical and constant relationship between crime and "place", through preventive situational measures and strategies.

This article consists of two parts. The nature of "place" as one of the main causes of crime and the way it is being studied in situational prevention will be examined in the first part. In line with preventive dealing with crime, spatial classification of crimes, the effect of place and its especial characteristics on crime, the way a place is used by offenders, its causative relationship with the crime situation, crime distribution in any place and its measurement method are among the most important considerations regarding place which are explained in this section.

The second part of this paper introduces and describes critical places and locations of crime and its criminological features. Why the places and high-crime locations are critical, properties and features governing each high-crime site, region or neighborhood and the method of analysis and choosing preventive situational solutions for each of the neighborhoods or regions are presented in this part of the article. "Crime displacement" and "geographical distribution of benefits" as the most common issues that may occur after the purposeful implementation of situational preventive measures are explained. Finally, some suggestions for research and application of preventive measures are provided in order to promote their more favorable development.

The Effect of Place on Situational Prevention Measures:

Most of the criminological theories are going to discover the factors causing a person to become an offender. They consider remote factors of delinquency, such as early childhood education, genetic structure, psychological and social factors, as the cause of this occurrence. But, some of the modern approaches to criminology, ignoring the process an individual getting an offender, focus on the "physical process of committing crime". Situational prevention is an example of this approach which seeks immediate, maximum and cost-effective reduction of crime by eliminating "close and immediate causes" of crime.

Broadly speaking, crime factors can be divided into two categories, including internal (personal) and external (situational and spatial) ones. Situational prevention is approach that regardless of the character of the offender, trying to correct it or eradicate criminal tendencies, just intends to remove the external causes of crime and reduce the potential chances of committing crime. Unlike social prevention which is based on criminality etiology, situational prevention focuses

on the role of pre-delinquency state in the transition process from idea to criminal offense and on the material procedure of committing crime.

"Situation" as one of the "causes of crime occurrence" generates intent, motivation, temptation and desire to violate the law. Situations are the pre-status of a criminal offense which encourage and strengthen the decision to commit crime and influence the risk assessment and degree of difficulty of crime (Ibrahimi, 1387, p 131). Accordingly, the focus of situational prevention is on temporal and spatial conditions which bring about opportunities to commit crime and not on the perpetrator of a crime. Through the analysis of the situations which cause committing crime, this type of prevention means to change management and environment in order to make committing crime more difficult, more dangerous, less profitable and less justifiable.

Development of a criminal phenomenon requires an act of human factor at a time and place. Regardless of the causes or factors contributing to the occurrence of a crime, existence of a temporal and spatial ground is integral to occurrence of a criminal phenomenon. Spatial factor of a criminal phenomenon like temporal and human factors can possess a unique feature that makes the occurrence of the phenomenon possible and sometimes easy or difficult. Therefore, the characteristics of a place can distinguish it from other places with respect to occurrence of a criminal phenomenon. Accordingly, paying attention to the spatial characteristics of a criminal phenomenon, as one of the most accessible and obvious factors of delinquency can provide a specific criterion for implementation of situational preventive measures.

Of course, in many of the traditional theories of criminology such as geographical school of crime which was the result of the ideas of Cotle and Gary (Nurbaha, 1386, p. 49), some of the positivist theories including ecological content (Danesh, 1366, p. 271), or some of the ideas of Montesquieu on the basis that the geographical environment can be a focal point for various crimes (Keinia, 1370, p. 468), place has been considered as the basis crime analysis and explanations.

Environment and issues related to that, in this paper, do not refer to the natural environment and climatic effects on people's behavior. In fact, before being a fatalist phenomenon and the result of a definite and unchanging natural environment, crime is a social phenomenon affected by social conditions and place of occurrence (Rahmat, 1388, p 70). On this basis, potential criminals "choose the most appropriate place" to commit crime.

By a professional view of "place", all crimes can be analyzed through a single criterion. Taking the factor of place into consideration in situational prevention, criminologists and practitioners are kept away from being limited to abstract concepts or macro-discussions about social class, race, IQ etc. Situational Prevention with regard to the situation and consequently place as one of the main causes of crime, investigates the characteristics governing behavioral patterns and influential in making choices, decisions and so on. In general, setting place as the criterion, we can take advantage of the following benefits:

- 1) Sources of situational prevention can be specially assigned to high-crime areas with the highest rates of victimization.
- 2) Situational preventive measures are implemented in places with the same characteristics.
- 3) Limited preventive resources are spent according to the needs of any place or area; because any of the offenses are committed to a certain level in a place. Therefore, in order to optimize using the resources, the implementation of preventive strategies should also be proportionate to the share of any place from the crimes committed there.
- 4) Perpetrators of serious crimes and dangerous offenders are identified.

- 5) Authorities of criminal justice system are provided with a practical and evaluative tool to record crimes and it reveals restrictions of information and preventive practices.
- 6) Using spatial information of crimes, we can set a pattern to reduce problems of crime recurrence.

In this case, place of crime occurrence is closely associated with situational crime prevention and can be considered as one of the relatively stable measures of planning in this field. Then, for spatial identification and analysis of crime, three essential points are describe including "spatial classification of crimes", "departure for committing crimes" and "20-80 rule".

Spatial Classification of Crimes

Situational prevention is based on the idea that passing from a criminal thought to an act, depends not only on the motivation of the perpetrator, but also on situational characteristics. Therefore, environmental management can prevent occurrence of some crimes (Ibrahimi, 1387, p 68).

To define, analyze and segregate seemingly similar crimes, they should be put into a classification. The classification makes it possible to compare a certain crime and identified crimes, and recognizes their most important characteristics. Through classification of crimes the most appropriate and effective solutions and strategies to reduce these crimes can be found. Meanwhile, the analysis and strategies to reduce a certain crime can be distinguished from the analysis and strategies of other types of crimes. There are various ways to classify crimes. The method presented below is based on two criminological criteria of "environment" and "behavior". Categorization based on these two criteria help identify important aspects of damage, bad intention, and the relationship between crime and the offender (Eck and Clarke 2003, 4-213). "Environments" due to the activities of the individuals there and the people who manage them provide access to crime targets. Identifying the type of environment, we can distinguish high-crime environments from the other ones and compare their characteristics with each other. Meanwhile, the distinctive feature of any place or environment is that it has got an owner or operator who that will play an important role in reducing crime. In general, the following 10 types of environment are related to criminological issues (Goldstein and Susmilch, 2006, 322):

Residential environment: such as houses, apartments and hotel rooms. Although most of them are fixed in place, but some like recreational vehicles are moving.

Entertainment venues: such as restaurants, movie theaters, play grounds, harbors and parks.

Offices: place of performing official tasks characterized by close and face to face interaction between the staff and clientele. These are often less accessible places, such as governmental and public places.

Business places and markets: places that individuals can walk or drive and make trade, such as shops and banks.

Industrial sites: the places where various products are manufactured. Cash transactions are not highly important activities and there is low turnout of customers in these places. Factories, warehouses and goods packing offices are few examples of these places.

Agricultural environments: places to grow crops, livestock and poultry.

Educational and religious places: places that have been devoted to studying or learning, such as welfare centers, schools, universities, libraries and religious places.

Centers of public services: places that people refer to in case a problem comes up, such as prisons, police departments, hospitals and addiction centers.

Public places: all paths that connect places together, such as roads and sidewalks.

Vehicles and transportation terminals: places where massive numbers of people are carried from one place to another, including buses, terminals, aircrafts, airports, trains, train stations, boats, docks and so on.

Unclaimed places: areas without clear or preset applications such as abandoned buildings and unclaimed properties.

Since places are considered as contexts of occurring (criminal) behaviors, inevitably, behaviors will be examined as the second criterion in the crime classification. Totally, there are six types of behaviors associated with criminological issues:

Predatory behavior: In this kind of behavior, there is no relationship between the offender and the victim. Most of the common crimes such as robbery, burglary, child abuse, etc are examples of this behavior.

Consensual behavior: Behaviors that the parties attempt to do knowingly and willingly, such as selling drugs, stolen property transaction, etc. (Sherman, 2007, 408).

Conflicts: Violent behaviors by both parties (conflict) which is caused by previous records. Some types of family violence among adults are examples of this kind of behavior, but domestic violence between children and adults is of predatory type.

Incivilities: In this type of behavior, criminals can be distinguished from the victims, but the damage is not serious and severe and many people are victimized. Many of the issues that are tormenting, offensive, or accompany sound pollution but does not cause serious damage to people and their property do not enter into this category, e.g. noisy parties.

Endangerment: In this type of behavior, either the victim and the offender are the same person or, basically, the criminal does not intend to harm the victim; examples of this case are committing suicide, drug overdoses and traffic accidents.

Misuse of police: undefined and unjustifiable pleas and requests for using policing services, untrue reports and repeated calls about the issues that people can take care of by themselves are in this category. This behavioral branch is used in the cases that the damage is the result of a behavior that requires police resources to be dealt with.

Departure for Committing Crime:

Everyone's behavior is usually the product of interaction between the individual and environment. Many theories of criminology consider only the first case (by posing the question of why certain people tend to delinquency more or less than others). This will neglect the latter case, i.e. the factor of place (important features of the environment which foster changing criminal tendencies from potentiality to actuality).

Of course, in a crowded place or neighborhood, crime does not happen every time or everywhere. The fact that people and properties are scattered throughout the city, does not mean that the opportunities to commit crime are equally distributed. Excluding a few exceptions, crimes does not happen by accident because criminals prefer a target to other targets. The most appropriate targets are considered as the most favorable opportunity to commit a crime, which is derived from the environment (Kolkohon / Rayejjiyan Asli et al, 1387, p 109). In addition, due to the following reasons, opportunities to commit crime are differently distributed in proportion to the time and place (Mohammad Nasl, 1387, pp. 414 and 415):

- Many places are unsuitable for crime occurrence.
- Lots of people and properties are not suitable targets for criminal attacks
- A certain location may be ideal for committing crime at a specific time and not the other.
- Potential offenders cannot be present everywhere.

In this regard, the studies of situational prevention manifest that criminals choose their victims or targets through one of the following three ways: prior familiarity with the target, job and area of activity (Scott and Goldstein, 2010, 259). Similarity between the areas of activity possesses more criminological effects than the other two ways (prior familiarity with the target and job). The concept of activity area is the main element of crime pattern theory put forward by the Canadian criminologists, Pat and Paul Brantingham (Cornish and Clarke, 2008, 132). According to this theory, offenders choose the targets during daily activities. It is based on the rational logic that committing crime is easier, according to the daily routine; otherwise, great hardships should be undergone due to that.

Many studies based on the theory of routine activity suggest that the distance that is travelled to commit crime is often short. Offenders generally commit crimes near their homes. A study which was conducted by a crime prevention specialist within two years on 258074 cases of criminals' departures in West Midland Police Department, as one of the largest departments in England, found that:

- About half of the distances traveled were less than a mile (in most of the studies conducted in less crowded countries or regions, like many areas of the United States of America, departures were a little longer due to less population density and more access to vehicles).
- Length of the path varies according to the type of crime. For example, shoplifters have travelled longer distances than other offenders.
- Women have travelled longer distances than men, possibly this is because most of them have pilfered.
- In departure to commit a crime offenders are very different from each other. Some of them committed crimes in their neighborhood, and some have travelled longer distances, especially when they have cooperated with other offenders in committing a crime.
- Juvenile offenders commit crimes in areas very close to their home, while criminals who are 20 years of age or over that travel longer distances (Clarke and Newman, 2008, 239).

To make the findings purposeful, at first it should be explored where the offenders come together. Through considering the theory of crime pattern and delving into the reasons of presence or absence of offenders, good results will be achieved. It should be noted that there may be crime-free streets and places in areas with high rates of crime, yet there may be places where most of the crimes are committed. Residents may also know that a street is safe for walking and another one is not; even, they may choose one side of the street to the other side. These findings ultimately show the geographical distribution of crime.

Rule "20-80":

One of the most important rules of situational prevention is that crimes are committed to a great extent toward certain people, places and things. According to this rule, 20% of something brings about 80% of the results. This phenomenon is customarily called rule "20-80". In practice, this

ratio is seldom exactly 20-80. But, a small percentage of cases or groups always give rise to a large percentage of results (Tilley, 2005, 211). According to this rule if prevention resources are used in place that most crimes are committed, prevention will be the most effective. This point will be just followed about places, locations or sites where crimes are committed.

In some countries, crime patterns in many residential areas show that the reasons for the issues arising from crime are a small number of chronic offenders who live nearby. On this basis it can be said that (Kolkohon / Rayejjiyan Asli et al, 1387, pp. 7-31):

- There is a dynamic interaction between the physical environment and delinquents' behavior.
- Most criminals are in fact those who think wisely and make informed choices at the time of committing a crime.
- Opportunities for committing a crime depend on place and time. Significant differences can be found from address to address in a high-crime area. Offenses are displaced at any hour of the day, and every day of the week, which reflects the opportunities to commit crimes.

The following three-step process shows whether the rule "20-80" is right about a certain crime in a place or not:

- 1) A list should be made of the places, including crimes related to each of them and then they should be ranked them according to the number of offenses.
- 2) Crime percentage of each place should be calculated and added together; it is better to start with the most stricken places.
- 3) Overall percentages of total places should be compared with crime rates. The results will indicate how much the most stricken places are affected by the crime.

The second part of this paper provides a technical and criminological analysis of places, locations, paths and critical areas. Then, through combining these features with the analysis and general understanding derived from a place which was described in the first part, situational preventive patterns, strategies and solutions are provided for dealing with the situation.

Critical Areas:

Places are areas with certain functions and are classified into different types. Some places are frequently used as a location of committing crime and causing social order. In fact, these places are more critical compared to other ones in terms of crime occurrence. These places in which the highest rate of crimes and offenses are committed are known as *critical* or *risky places*.

In a summary of the existing evidence on this issue, "The National Survey of Crime" in several countries, including America, Britain and the Netherlands in 2000 shows that 65% of all robberies, more than 50% of the calls related to abandoning a car used by a thief to commit burglary and drug offenses, 50% of violent crimes reported during the academic year 1999, more than 40% of property destruction cases, 25% (103 cases) of 415 cases of different types of crimes reported, respectively, happened in 6% of food stores of Danvers, Massachusetts, 10% of petrol pumps in Austin, Texas, 8% of schools in Stockholm, 9% of bus stops in Liverpool, United Kingdom and a storied parking lot in Nottingham City, Britain (Brown, 2006, 211).

Analysis of considerable number of studies (Scott, 2009, 49) shows at least eight critical reasons for this kind of places to be in crisis:

1) Random difference: A few places may be randomly found where the majority of the crimes are committed. This is mostly true when crimes are examined in only a few places with low crime rates be. Therefore, it is better to control these places in other periods too. If the sequence of events is similar in both periods, the difference will be random.

2) Rate of reporting crimes: Possibly, authorities in some places constantly report crimes committed to the police, while in other places with the same rate of events, a much lower rate is reported. It is difficult to control this matter, therefore, initiatives such as interview with police personnel can manifest whether crime rates recorded are consistent with their observations of the crimes committed in these places or not.

3) Number of crime targets: One of the reasons of higher crime rate in one place compared to another place is the existence of higher number of crime targets in the former place. Therefore, in many stores, the size of the stores is not the reason for being too risky, but it is due to the presence of many targets. By studying the rates, it can be determined whether the number of targets has got any given effect on the offense or not. The rate signifies the number of offenses toward crime targets over a time period. The number of crime targets can be counted through the following method:

- 1) Identification of the type of offense or offenses (e.g. theft from vehicles).
- 2) Identification of the population subject to risk (e.g. vehicles).
- 3) Determining the places and time periods (e.g. downtown parking lots within a year).
- 4) Finding information sources that can provide the number of offense or offenses and crime targets in a place. (For example, crimes reported to the police).
- 5) For each site, the number of crimes or offenses is divided into the target number. The number which is obtained shows the crime rate.

4) Products subject to risk: There may be places which include eye-catching and attractive targets instead of having a large number of crime targets. According to the findings of situational prevention including prevention rule "20-80", all goods are not equally subject to crime risk. For example, cash is the most common stolen property in ordinary thefts, robberies and burglaries. Five criteria for considering goods as attractive and salient are being able to be hidden, movable, accessible, valuable, interesting and spendable (Eck and Spelman 2009, 198).

5) Spatial situation: places located in high-crime areas, like the residential areas of many delinquents are habitually prone to at higher risk. Since criminals prefer not to travel much distance to commit a crime.

6) Repeat victimization: repetition of victimization refers to the total number of crimes which have been experienced by a victim or target from the first to the last one. Most of the people in society are not usually victimized or in case of being victimized the number of their victimization is small. However, a small number of people experience most of the crime victimizations. Some places attract people who are more vulnerable to crimes. In this regard, victims of safe and unsafe places should be compared with each other. If the number of victimizations differs between the two places, victimization frequency will be due to high risk of unsafe areas compared to safe ones.

7) Crime absorbents: places that attract many criminals to themselves are called crime absorbents. In absorbent places, frequent crimes are committed and crime rate is high.

8) Weak management: Once the owner or manager does not manage his or her premises efficiently and properly, risk is exacerbated in those places. Facilitation of natural surveillance, establishment of a formal monitoring and curator and guardian deployment, etc. are among the promotion strategies of preventive management.

Each of the critical areas enjoys one of the following criminological features in preventive analyses:

Crime raising: places where lots of people are gathered for reasons not related to criminal motives. Providing numerous opportunities for committing crime and a gathering of crime targets in a place can promote social disorders. Instances of crime raising places include shopping centers, transport terminals, festivals and sports stadiums... so the main cause of high crime rates and social irregularities in these places is availability of a large number of crime targets and people who use these places rather than criminal motives.

Crime absorbent: Places which provide numerous opportunities for committing crime. Those who have criminal intentions are attracted to such places. Drug dealing places and areas where prostitution is common fall into this category. Some of the recreational areas are also known for committing criminal activities. At the beginning, these areas may be only known to the locals, but when the number of offenders who go to these areas increases, crime and disorder rates also increase. Therefore, regardless of the people who refer to these places, the characteristics and nature provide motives for committing crimes.

Crime accelerating: It is realized when behavioral regulations are absent or rare or not observed in a place. Management gets sometimes exhausted over time, and this eventually leads to increase in problems. Crime accelerating places may come into existence by elimination of a protection and monitoring factor (Pease, 2008, 122). For example, if parents accompany their children on a playground, they will both protect their children (protection), and stop children misbehaving (close supervision). If parents' behavioral conduct gradually changes so that the children are left to their own, the risk of being victimized or becoming delinquent will increase.

Some criminologists believe that places can be neutral in terms of crime raising, i.e. they absorb neither any crime nor any target, and monitoring behaviors is appropriate in those places. These places usually have low rates of crime and the crimes committed there do not follow any particular pattern (Laycock and Tilley, 2009, 302). Therefore, neutral places seldom attract police's and officials' attention. Despite the fact that crime analysis does not seem to be necessary in these places, it is of particular importance since crime analysis enables effective comparison with other places. Comparison between the neutral and critical areas helps identify differences that create crisis in crime raising, adsorbent, or accelerating areas.

Criminological explanation of crisis in a place leads at least to the following three issues: the number of crime targets, the number of offenders who exploit these places and the amount of monitoring in those places. Sometimes, all three issues work together to create crisis in a place (Pease, 2006, 311). For example, by launching new routes, the number of customers will increase and the developed opportunities may be used by criminals to commit criminal acts. Increase in the number of Offenses may reduce the number of customers which will eliminate the protection factor. Another effect is that the reduction of business resources is accompanied by decline in the management of the place. Consequently, it can be imagined that an issue starts to grow as the cause of a crime; then, it is converted to crime absorbent and eventually to crime accelerating factor. These cases are summarized in the following diagram.

Critical Areas:

Critical areas are places with unusual or high rates of crime. On the while, concerning crime occurrence, various factors have been cited as the reason for the difference between these places including higher pecuniary outcome, higher density of potential victims, lower risk of getting

arrested, availability of more residential facilities and motives etc (Winter/Samadi et al, 1389, pp. 8-247).

The current critical places show unusual gaps in crimes. Therefore, distinguishing current and precedented critical places can be helpful. The critical places suffer from higher and more constant rates of crime than other places and reduction in these places is not expected unless some measures are taken there. Criticality of these places is the result of the availability of crime raising sites, paths or locations in these areas:

- Critical areas: places where there are high levels of crime. These points show that crime is focused on the places or addresses of repeated victims.
- Critical paths: these are streets where crime is concentrated in them. These pathways are formed if, for example, a high rate of vehicle glass damage and entering the vehicles parked along certain streets occurs.
- Critical areas: these are regions where crime is concentrated in them. Characteristics of each area may increase crime in these areas (Laycock, 2007, 233). A critical region may include a large number of independent and distinct offenses. Jerry Ratcliff as one of the theorists of the field differentiates between two types of regional crisis points:
 - Those having an interrelated and group model of crimes.
 - Those having a uniform and proportionate distribution of crimes in the critical area.

Through clarification of the nature of the critical points, a narrow view of preventive measures is found out as follows:

- Critical points indicate the need for a change in the physical location of certain places or in their management. They also indicate the necessity for intervention and action concerning the victims who are at high risk.
- Critical paths signify the need for environmental changing and modifying the streets, roads and other paths or just their internal environment.
- Critical areas point out the need for broad cooperation of all organizations and citizens so that the neighborhoods would be changed (Eck, 2007, 98).

Analysis of the critical places is preferred to start with the examination of points and followed by streets and finally areas. For example, the following criteria should be considered in the analysis of the unclaimed and abandoned vehicles: are they frequently found in specific addresses? If the answer is yes, then it should be tried to understand why these places are preferred to other nearby ones? If the answer is no, it is better to examine the streets. If the focus is on the street, the streets can be compared with each other to find out why some streets are places for this kind of vehicles while others are not. If the concentration is on a low level as streets (i.e. crime is distributed proportionately and constantly over a large number of cities), focus on the areas and comparison between high and low concentration areas will be preferred. Adopting this approach ensures the strategy that is most likely to reduce crime.

Analysis of the critical places can be initially a valuable instrument for situational preventive process; however, to recognize the critical places, it should be clarified why some places are critical while some others are not. If geographical element is not involved in the offense in question, the mapping of critical areas will have little efficacy and other analytical approaches should be used.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

This study examines the most important spatial components in the field of situational prevention criminology. Place can be considered as one of the most important and effective criteria in situational prevention. Hence, through considering place we can direct the preventive strategies and measures, deal with crimes through a single criterion, and spend limited preventive resources on the most critical places associated with the crime via the most effective method.

In general, crime is a spatial phenomenon, that is, where there is a place occurrence of a crime can be expected. Studies have shown that various crimes can be attributed to certain places in different ways. Therefore, spatial classification of crimes can effectively help identify proportion between crimes and certain places. Moreover, delinquents make rational calculations in choosing a place or the location of committing a crime. Examination of these calculations in different aspects shows that the offender, firstly, does not step in unknown places and secondly, often commits crime near his or her residence or establishment. In the meantime, some places areas or neighborhoods are permanent sites of occurring lots of crimes. Therefore, three criteria were put forward in the first section of this paper which understanding them can help recognize critical places, areas and locations and choose the most appropriate preventive measure. These three parameters include spatial classification of crimes, departure of criminals to commit a crime and rule "20-80."

The second part of the paper, after proposing the aforementioned analytic parameters, is followed by precise and focused analysis of critical places, locations, directions and addresses. Examination of criminological factors and properties of each of these places in regard to being absorbent, accelerating or neutral toward crime, puts forward the idea that any of the places, areas or neighborhoods can be considered critical due to the existence of a cause and effect or a combination of reasons. Therefore, having conducted the analysis, we can suggest the most appropriate solution or preventive solution package including its methodology and lead time.

Crime displacement and distribution of benefits are discussed and illustrated as the unexpected feedback during the implementation of preventive strategies. Although, few studies have been carried out in line with these two issues, based on the current findings it can be concluded that crime displacement is not certain and in case of occurrence the practice method of the solutions can be changed in a way that the compatibility of criminals or crime displacement is minimized.

Accordingly, it is suggested that:

- 1) Despite lots of theoretical studies on situational crime prevention, it still seems not to have a codified framework and base in many countries to distinguish between efficient and inefficient strategies. This point is highly represented when firstly, preventive solutions and strategies are changing and improving unbelievably fast and secondly, in cases efficiency or inefficiency of a solution is sporadically referred to and is devoid of any strong and convincing scientific basis and is solely based on experience or temporary practice. Moreover, as "aforementioned solutions or measures' being native" is considered as one of the most important criteria for its success or failure in implementation, references based on observation, interviews, statistics, etc lack

required scientific standards for raising or being used in other places. Therefore, as a research area, it is recommended to those interested to systematically examine efficient and inefficient preventive solutions and strategies in critical areas through a macro research project in the form of a meta-analysis and considering scientific and practical criteria governing preventive solutions and strategies.

2) Another recommendation of this paper is that in line with the research for the reasons of crisis in some places in comparison with the other places and areas, and regions, case studies should be conducted using the following criteria:

- Critical places, neighborhoods and areas should be accurately defined and determined. This can be done using any history or analytic process.
- A sample should be selected from critical places, neighborhoods and areas. This can be done by choosing a critical apartment building, a street or a neighborhood.
- A sample should be selected from other adjacent non-critical places, neighborhoods and areas or similar sites as a control. Controlled place, neighborhood or area should be free from crime or offenses in question.
- A sample should be selected from non-critical places, neighborhoods and areas. This can be done by choosing a non-critical apartment building, a street or a neighborhood.
- The control sample should be compared with the critical samples. This can be done by comparing criminological characteristics of the two samples.

The purpose of this study was to obtain the components, characteristics and criteria that make such places, neighborhoods and areas critical compared to similar cases. The main advantage of this type of study which is being native can be helpful in the analysis and finding the reasons of the aforementioned issues.

3) An essential step should be taken in identifying critical places, locations, directions, and neighborhoods. Scientific identification of this issue requires a systematic analysis and interpretation. In this regard, analytic strategies presented in this paper are the key measures. However, as the ecological and temporal elements of any place or region has an important role in this field, one of the best possible ways to implement this relatively macro strategies is designing a comprehensive system of prevent information. In fact, a system should be designed which contains local information from diverse sources associated with a variety of offenses. In this system, all the information contained in organizations and governmental and nongovernmental institutions such as insurance companies, and hospital emergencies, unions or stewards of second hand goods shop, criminals, victims and particularly citizens should be used.

This information system is preferred to be established and developed by the crime analyzers and in the police organization because police is the first organization facing crime across the country. Establishment of the comprehensive system of information can help analyze crime accurately and scientifically in any place, site or area and identify high crime places, sites and areas.

4) Crime mapping should be used productively. Drawing this crime map usually result in obtaining information that cannot be found in intelligence systems or crime analysis softwares. For application of this proposal, the following points should be taken into consideration in drawing the crime map offenses:

- Only the most important and useful information should be used to.
- It should be drawn simply.
- Drawing the general information of all crimes should not be avoided. But rather, only information of the crime in question should be mentioned in details.
- The map should have a scale and geographical direction.

- It is better to use table and figure beside the map.

References:

- Boba, R. (2008). *Crime Analysis and Crime Mapping*. Thousand Oaks (California): Sage.
- Brown, R. (2006). "The Role of Project Management in Implementing Community Safety Initiatives." In J. Knuttson and R. Clarke (eds.), *Putting Theory to Work: Implementing Situational Crime Prevention and Problem-Oriented Policing*. Crime Prevention Studies, Vol. 20. Monsey (New York): Criminal Justice Press.
- Central London Partnership (2006). "A Safer Central London? Business Improvement Districts and Police Reform." *CLP Briefing Paper*, July.
- Clarke, R., and J. Eck (2009). *Crime Analysis for Problem-Solvers: In 60 Small Steps*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.
- Clarke, R.V. and G.R. Newman (2008). *Designing Out Crime from Products and Systems: Crime Prevention Studies*, Vol. 18. Monsey (New York): Criminal Justice Press.
- Clarke, R., and D. Weisburd (2010). "Diffusion of Crime Control Benefits: Observations on the Reverse of Displacement." In R. Clarke (ed.), *Crime Prevention Studies*, Vol. 54. Monsey, N.Y.: Criminal Justice Press.
- Cornish, D., and R. Clarke (2009). "Situational Prevention, Displacement of Crime and Rational Choice Theory." In K. Heal and G. Laycock (eds.), *Situational Crime Prevention: From Theory Into Practice*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
- Cornish, D., and R. Clarke (2008). *The Reasoning Criminal: Rational-Choice Perspectives on Offending*. New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Eck, J. (2007). "Preventing Crime at Places." In L. W. Sherman, D. Farrington, and B. Welsh (eds.), *Evidence-Based Crime Prevention*. New York: Routledge.
- Eck, J., and W. Spelman (2008). *Problem-Solving: Problem-Oriented Policing in Newport News*. Washington, D.C.: Police Executive Research Forum.
- Goldstein, H., and C. Susmilch (2006). *Experimenting With the Problem-Oriented Approach to Improving Police Service: A Report and Some Reflections on Two Case Studies*. Vol. 4 of the Project on Development of a Problem-Oriented Approach to Improving Police Service. Madison: University of Wisconsin Law School. Retrieved May 25, 2008, from Center for Problem-Oriented Policing.
- Hesseling, R. (2007). "Displacement: A Review of the Empirical Literature." In R. Clarke (ed.), *Crime Prevention Studies*, Vol. 3. Monsey, N.Y.: Criminal Justice Press.
- Institute for Law and Justice; Science Applications International Corporation, Hallcrest Division (2008). *Operation Cooperation: Guidelines for Partnerships Between Law Enforcement & Private Security Organizations*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Bureau of Justice Assistance.
- Laycock, G. (2007). "Rights, Roles and Responsibilities in the Prevention of Crime." In T. Bennett (ed.), *Preventing Crime and Disorder: Targeting Strategies and Responsibilities*. Cambridge (United Kingdom): University of Cambridge.
- Laycock, G., and N. Tilley (2009). "Implementing Crime Prevention." In M. Tonry and D. Farrington (eds.), *Building a Safer Society: Strategic Approaches to Crime Prevention*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Pease, K. (2006). "A Review of Street Lighting Evaluations: Crime Reduction Effects." In K. Painter and N. Tilley (eds.), *Surveillance of Public Space: CCTV, Street Lighting and Crime Prevention*. Monsey (New York): Criminal Justice Press.
- Pease, K. (2008). *Cracking Crime Through Design*. London: Design Council.
- Scott, M. (2009). "Implementing Crime Prevention: Lessons Learned From Problem-Oriented Policing Projects." In J. Knuttson and R. Clarke (eds.), *Putting Theory to Work: Implementing Situational Crime Prevention and Problem-Oriented Policing*. Crime Prevention Studies, Vol. 20. Monsey (New York): Criminal Justice Press.
- Scott, M.S. and H. Goldstein (2010). *Shifting and Sharing Responsibility for Public Safety Problems. Response Guide No. 3*. Problem-Oriented Guides for Police Series. Washington, D.C.: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice.
- Sherman, L., D. Gottfredson, D. MacKenzie, J. Eck, P. Reuter, and S. Bushway. 2007. *Preventing Crime: What Works, What Doesn't, What's Promising*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice. NCJ 165366.
- Tilley, N. (2005). "The Prevention of Crime Against Small Businesses: The Safer Cities Experience." *Crime Prevention Unit Series*, Paper 45. London: Home Office.