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VOICES FROM THE STREET: THE PERCEPTION OF CRIME, DISORDER, AND POLICE IN CHICAGO NEIGHBORHOODS

Courtney Boyce
courtney.boyce@siu.edu

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NEIGHBORHOODS

by

Courtney Boyce

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A Research Paper
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
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in the Graduate School
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RESEARCH PAPER APPROVAL

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for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in the field of Sociology

Approved by:

Rachel B. Whaley, Chair

Raymund E. Narag

Graduate School

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Courtney Boyce, for the Master of Arts degree in Sociology, presented on July 10th, 2023, at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

TITLE: VOICES FROM THE STREET: THE PERCEPTION OF CRIME, DISORDER, AND
      POLICE IN CHICAGO NEIGHBORHOODS

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. Rachel Bridges Whaley

How do Chicago residents feel about police, crime, and disorder? Using qualitative interviews with 20 Chicago residents, this study examines the ways Chicago residents perceive and feel about police, crime, and disorder in their neighborhoods. The relationship between perceptions of police, crime, and disorder is compared to the way it is framed in the broken windows theory by Wilson and Kelling (1982). The first research question addresses how residents understand the relationship between police officers, policing, and crime in their Chicago neighborhoods. The second research question focuses on how residents understand the relationship between disorder, other neighborhood characteristics, and crime. Results suggest that participants feel police are of no help and cause them anxiety. Also relating to police and crime, participants felt very neutral on their opinion of police, while showing that they are also desensitized to the crime around them. Results also show that perceptions of disorder vary, and that gentrification and residential instability influence perceptions of disorder and crime.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Imagine driving through an unknown neighborhood and seeing a house on the side of the road with a broken window. What do you think about the rest of the neighborhood? Do you feel safe? Do you think crime happens here? Do you think the police are present and are doing a good job? The way people perceive police, crime, and neighborhood disorder is extremely important and can help show how residents feel about certain social issues. This can also shine a light on critical social issues within the city of Chicago and can spark social change toward policing, crime, and disorder. This study will be looking at the ways Chicago residents perceive and feel about police, crime, and disorder in their neighborhoods. Secondarily, I will explore the perceived connections between crime, disorder, and policing to see if residents make the connections as they are framed in broken windows theory.

Broken windows, from the perspective of Wilson and Kelling (1982), are the first signs of disorder in a neighborhood. Broken windows theory posits that neighborhoods with high levels of disorder cause citizens to withdraw from the communities in fear of crime and thus attracts high-level offenders to commit crimes in those areas (Wilson and Kelling, 1982). This theory states that residents who view high levels of disorder will start to become fearful, so order-maintenance policing becomes implemented to reduce disorder and improve residents' perceptions of their area. Perceiving high levels of disorder can cause the same response as seeing high levels of disorder, causing residents to retreat inside due to fear, which explains why perceptions are just as important as actual rates of disorder. Therefore, this research project explores the overall perceptions and themes of crime, disorder, and police while keeping in mind the framework stated from Wilson and Kelling's (1982) broken windows theory.

The reason broken windows theory is being used to guide this study is that it explains the relationship between disorder and crime, as well as policing tactics (order-maintenance policing). Broken windows theory posits that disorder is the independent variable, with fear of crime and community withdrawal from public as the intervening variables, and the dependent variable of crime. Broken windows theory also hypothesizes that police are seen in a positive manner, with the goal of order-maintenance policing being to reduce disorder (Hinkle, 2008). It is important to understand if broken windows theory is still relevant today and if policy implications should be directed in another direction.

Perceptions play an important role in community reactions to crime and disorder. Communities that perceive higher disorder can have more fear of crime, even if disorder and crime are not present at high levels. Sampson (2001) explained that rates of crime and physical/social disorder never match the actual rates, so perceptions can help explain the different levels of reaction to disorder and crime. Perceptions of crime can be different from actual crime rates within an area due to the social stigma of a neighborhood, unfamiliarity, and other preconceived notions (Lopez, 2010). Perceptions of disorder can arise from fear of crime and quality of life, showing that low quality of life and more fear of crime can increase perceptions of disorder (Taylor, 2001; Sampson 2001). Race is an important factor that affects the perception of crime, disorder, and police. Stereotypes about race and poverty together can also affect why people perceive more disorder in certain areas (Sampson and Raudenbush, 2004). This study will be looking at the perceptions of police, crime, and neighborhood disorder from Chicago citizens and how those perceptions may align or not align with broken windows theory.

Problem Statement

An exploration of the perceptions of police, crime, and disorder among Chicago residents can allow a better understanding of their social impact. Policy changes do not often represent the direct concerns of residents within the specific area, so it is important to see how residents are perceiving important issues such as policing, crime, and disorder. Residents having issues or unresolved feelings about police officers, police tactics, crime, or disorder should be put at the forefront of political change in order to support the neighborhood's well-being.

Broken windows theory influences policing to adhere strictly to maintenance-order policing to stop disorder in hopes to control any increase in crime (Wilson and Kelling, 1982). However, scholars find that this leads to an increase in violent policing which has struck communities of color and poor communities (Sampson and Cohen, 1998). This calls for a need to understand how Chicago community members truly perceive and feel about their neighborhood policing, crime, and disorder. Therefore, more research is needed to fully understand how citizens understand disorder and crime, and if community members' perceptions can highlight any important issues or problems.

Research Questions

This research project has two main research questions. The first question is looking specifically at perceptions of the police and crime together, how police officers are perceived, and perceptions of police on fear of crime. The second question is looking specifically at perceptions of disorder and crime and their relationship. Since this study is inductive, themes emerge that answer these two questions, which are general guiding questions that construct the overall purpose and goal of the study.

1. How do residents understand the relationship between police crime and disorder in their

Chicago neighborhoods?

2. How do residents understand the relationship between disorder, neighborhood

characteristics, and crime?

Scope and Delimitations

The study includes only Chicago residents who are currently living in the city and have

lived there for at least one year. These residents are all over the age of 18. Delimitations include

only looking at perceptions of police, crime, and disorder as well as only asking questions about

neighborhood participants who live in or have lived in Chicago.

Significance of the Study

This study is exploratory and works to move beyond extant literature on perceptions of

police, crime, and disorder. This study can help provide a more in-depth understanding of how

Chicago residents feel about their neighborhoods' police, crime and disorder. The relationships

between perceptions of police, crime and disorder revealed in this study will be compared to the

way they are explained in broken windows theory in order to understand if Wilson and Kelling's

(1982) theoretical expectation of police, and the causal relationship between crime and disorder

resonate with Chicago residents.

This study can also help influence future policy recommendations for policing by seeing

how citizens view policing in their current neighborhoods. Policy direction under broken

windows theory has caused more police to enter into neighborhoods, causing fear of crime and

fear of the police, which is not theoretically predicted by broken windows theory and is an

unintended consequence of this theory.

Wilson and Kelling's broken windows theory directed order-maintenance policing, which

was first piloted in New York in the early 1990's by George Kelling and William Bratton,

consisting of subway clean up (graffiti, loitering) which resulted in a drop in serious subway-related crime (Gau and Pratt, 2008). This initiative led Bratton into his position as police commissioner and implemented the start of order-maintenance policing, which has left long-lasting effects on American policing practices (Gau and Pratt, 2008). Therefore, this has resulted in the practice of policing poverty, because this theory frames physical/social disorder in low-income communities as indicators of crime (Gau and Pratt, 2008). Therefore, it is quite clear that a better understanding of current views about the police and policing among Chicago residents can help further policy change.

This paper will contribute to the literature on perceptions of crime and disorder, as well as how this study's results of perceptions compare to the way they are framed in broken windows theory. The next chapter will include a more in-depth literature review followed by a discussion of methods, results, and a conclusion.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Since my study is looking at the perceptions of crime, disorder, and police, it is important

to understand previous literature on perceptions and overall literature related to crime and

disorder. The relationships among perceptions of Chicago residents will be compared to the way

Wilson and Kelling (1982) frame perceptions, therefore, the history and use of the broken

windows theory is relevant. The definition of disorder must be fully understood in order to look

at how it is perceived. Konkel and Ratkowski (2019) comprised a list of traditional measures

used for both physical and social disorders. Measures of physical disorder include graffiti, piles

of trash, broken glass on street/sidewalk, peeling paint, overgrown lawns, houses with

broken/boarded windows, and houses with untended fire damage (Konkel & Ratkowski, 2019).

Measures of social disorder include loitering, public intoxication, buying/selling drugs, physical

fights, and unsupervised minors (Konkel & Ratkowski, 2019).

Perceptions

Scholars have found that perceptions of crime, disorder, and police varied for different

reasons including pre-conceived notions, such as stereotypes or generalized ideas about areas

created through media (Sampson, 2001; Sampson, 2009; Hinkle & Yang, 2014; Konkel, 2019).

Perceptions of crime and disorder almost never matched the actual rates of disorder or crime,

thus showing that perceptions were influenced by other factors (Sampson, 2001). This section of

the literature review focuses firstly on perceptions of disorder, fear of crime, and lastly

perceptions that can be affected through stereotypes about race and social class.

Perceptions of Disorder

Consistent with broken windows theory, Chappell et al. (2001) suggested that perceptions

of the disorder were found to affect someone's quality of life and how safe they feel in their

neighborhood. Quality of life can be explained as overall well-being and satisfaction with life

(Chappell et al., 2001). Therefore, as perceptions of disorder increased, quality of life decreased.

Chappell et al. (2001) found that neighborhoods with high levels of physical disorder

detrimentally affected residents' quality of life, causing them to retreat inside. As the perception

of physical disorder worsened, quality of life and likelihood to spend time outside both declined.

Therefore, perceptions of disorder are important to understand as they can greatly affect people's

livelihood,feelings of safety, and fear of crime.

Sampson (2001) found that perception of disorder in a neighborhood was created through

the psychological construct of fear. Therefore, the more someone feared their area, the worse

their perception of disorder. Hinkle and Yang (2014) found that perceptions of disorder resulted

from existing behavioral expectations people had for an area. Various studies found that the

origin of people's perceptions of physical and social disorder varied by their social position,

neighborhood racial composition and pre-conceived expectations for an area (implicit bias)

(Sampson, 2009; Hinkle & Yang, 2014; Konkel, 2019). Sampson (2009) found that whites,

Latinos, and Asians all perceived more disorder than Black people. Hinkle and Yang (2014)

found that perceptions of physical disorder were influenced by perceived levels of social

disorder. Perceived levels of social disorder also increased their level of fear; however,

perceptions of social disorder were found to derive from perceptions of victimization risk, and

the percentage of Black residents in the area (Hinkle and Yank, 2014). Therefore, views about

physical disorder and social disorder were affected by perceptions of victimization risk and the

percentage of Black residents in an area.

Perceptions of disorder were also affected by the amount of lifetime exposure to disorder.

People who experienced lower levels of disorder could not tell the difference between disorder and crime and saw disorder and crime as worse than they were objectively (Gau & Pratt, 2010). Exposure to disorder in relation to perceived levels of disorder has not been entirely looked at in comparison to broken windows theory. Therefore, perceptions of disorder have varied in the past, with it also being affected by individual identity, social position, and implicit bias.

Perceptions of Crime

Extant literature suggested that perceptions of crime and actual crime rates almost never matched (Lopez, 2010; Ambrey & Manning, 2014; Doering, 2017; Ogneva-Himmelberger et al., 2019). This research showed that perceiving high crime in a neighborhood had more to do with neighborhood characteristics that influenced people's feelings rather than the amount of actual crime. For example, high-crime areas that have private schools were perceived to have less criminal activity due to perceptions about wealth, safety, social stigma, and personal familiarity with the area (Lopez, 2010). Another study in Australia, found that perceptions of high crime areas were influenced by both perceived levels of victimization and perceptions of community socioeconomic status (Amber, 2014). This study also found that women were more likely to quickly perceive areas as more criminal, but this was found to be related to other factors such as victimization (Amber, 2014). Lastly, Ogneva-Himmelberger et al. (2019) reported that the length of residence played a role in perceptions of crime levels, because it affected the degree of familiarity and trustworthiness of the neighborhood. Overall, the extant literature suggested that perceptions of crime were influenced by many pre-conceived notions, thus unrelated to actual rates of crime.

Perception of Crime and Disorder: The Influence of Racial and Social Class Stereotypes

Perceptions of crime were affected by stereotypical views about racial groups and social

class stigmas. Teixeira (2016) found that racial stereotypes were often accompanied by stereotypes about social class or income, such that people saw disorder or crime as an embodiment of racial and/or economic stereotypes (Teixeira, 2016). Specifically, "youth noted that the intersectional link between race and environmental issues, touching on the notion that when outsiders see litter and disorder, they see it as an embodiment of negative stereotypes about [low-income] black neighborhoods" (Teixeira, 2016, p. 7-8). African American youth from disadvantaged neighborhoods who witnessed more violence and experienced more trauma, were more likely to perceive their neighborhoods as highly criminal and less safe, compared to those who live in the same area but have not witnessed as much violence or experienced as much trauma (Thomas, 2016). Therefore, exposure to violence and trauma played a role in the ways people perceived both disorder and crime within their neighborhood. Thomas (2016), exemplified that people of color, who lived in disadvantaged neighborhoods may be more susceptible to harsher perceptions of crime and safety due to their likeliness of exposure to violence and trauma. Perceptions of disorder has also been affected by the racial composition of a neighborhood and its historical racial context more than actual disorder (Drakulich, 2013). Social disorder (e.g., loitering) was often perceived through stereotypes about race and class. Hinkle and Yang (2014) defined social disorder as a social construct because people's perceptions of disorder completely relied on discrimination attached to low-income people of color.

Sampson and Raudenbush (2004) found that race and poverty were linked and suggested that "neighborhoods with a high concentration of minority and poor residents [were] stigmatized by historically correlated and structurally induced problems of crime and disorder" (p. 337). White people overestimated perceived criminality in areas that were more racially diverse in

Chicago (Doering, 2017). Findings such as these were detrimental because politicians used this tendency to drive voters into fear campaigns gaining votes by targeting more diverse areas for new ways to "solve crime" (Doering, 2014). This not only reinforced fear of crime in communities, but it affected people's personal perceptions of different racial populations. Therefore, perceptions of criminality and disorder were both influenced by larger societal conditions of race and poverty that affected not just the community members themselves but the perception of those communities (Skogan, 2008; Permentier et al., 2011). This caused the criminalization of neighborhoods based on social class and race, which then influenced policing tactics and policy directions; a cycle of disadvantage and bad perceptions were created.

Broken Windows Theory

The origin of the broken windows theory started with the incivilities thesis, which theorized the original relationship between disorder and levels of fear such that when disorder increased, so did fear of crime (Wilson, 1975). In 1979, Hunter coined it as "urban unease" which emphasized the connection between fear and crime. Hunter (1978) argued that fear of crime was influenced by the prevalence of both crime and disorder and that they influenced each other simultaneously. Emerging out of that literature was the broken windows theory, developed by Wilson and Kelling in 1982, which stated that incivilities (physical and social disorder) led to increased fear of crime, and led people to withdraw from society, which then created an environment for offenders to take over, and thus raise the crime rate. This theory looked at disorder as an exogenous construct with individual effects on how people feel. Lewis and Salem continued this research in 1986 with the book *Fear of Crime* which found that as crime and disorder rose within a community so did fear. But, when crime rose with no disorder, fear stayed low. This suggested that fear of crime was the intervening variable between disorder and crime,

as it was the only way to explain the relationship between disorder and crime. Although typical research methods made determining the causal order between crime and disorder difficult, it was theorized that disorder caused fear, which led to the withdrawal from public life, which attracted criminals in the area, which led to crime. This in turn led to more disorder, thus creating a cycle of decay.

Disorder versus Crime

After broken windows theory became a popular way of explaining urban disorder and crime, scholars debated on the tautological issues between crime and disorder (Gau & Pratt, 2008). One of the biggest methodological debates surrounding this theory was the difference between disorder and crime and if there even was a difference. The biggest issue was if people could tell the difference between crime and disorder. In some cases, research surrounding disorder and crime included indicators of disorder that were also small-level forms of crime such as prostitution, public drinking, and vandalism (Gau & Pratt 2010). The tautological issue of disorder and crime needs to be further investigated both methodologically and perceptually. The ways that community members understand the relationship between disorder and crime could point to the origin of fear of crime, withdrawal from community, high crime rates, and more. Overall, it is extremely important that the difference between crime and disorder is understood.

Fear of Crime

Wilson and Kelling's broken windows theory posited that actual or perceived disorder caused fear of crime to increase, which then could have led to withdrawal from public life, attracting criminals into the area (1982). Scholars developed many ways to explain how fear of crime developed, however, Taylor and Hale (1986) specifically looked at fear of crime in terms of crime and disorder. Taylor and Hale (1986) explained that fear of crime came from indirect

and direct victimization, community concern, or incivilities. More recently, fear of crime was linked to the environment, demographics, and neighborhood structures (Ogneva-Himmelberger, 2019). Many scholars reported support for the relationships between perceptions of crime and disorder with fear of crime (e.g., Hinkle, 2008, Hipp, 2010; Hinkle & Yang, 2014; Ambrey & Manning, 2014). Perceived disorder and fear of crime were strongly related suggesting that as perceived disorder increased, so did fear of crime (Hipp, 2010; Hinkle & Yang, 2014). As discussed above, fear of crime was theorized as an intervening relationship between disorder and crime. But broken windows theory was not fully supported because perceptions of disorder seemed to be more influenced by fear of crime than the actual disorder (Hipp, 2010).

Collective efficacy

The concept of collective efficacy was developed after broken windows theory. Skogan (1990) first started looking at how informal social control with high rates of the disorder affected "urban decline". Expanding on informal social control, collective efficacy, termed in 1997, was expected to depend on participation and social exchange and was significant in deterring crime (Sampson et al., 1997). Sampson et al.,(1997) showed collective efficacy was a more effective tool for curbing disorder and crime than fear of crime. Collective efficacy was defined as the ability of a community to work together and maintain itself (Sampson and Raudenbush 1999). Sampson et al. (1999) found collective efficacy to be the independent variable that explains the relationship between disorder and crime. Therefore, the higher collective efficacy, the lower disorder and crime. In 2008, Gault and Silver looked at Sampson and Raudenbush's (1999) model of collective efficacy and crime with Wilson and Kelling's broken windows theory model for crime (1982). Results showed that collective efficacy was negatively correlated with disorder and that fear of crime was not significantly related to collective efficacy; this suggested that fear

of crime may not be the intervening variable, but that collective efficacy could be (Gault and Silver, 2008). Therefore, collective efficacy may be an intervening variable or the main independent variable to explain the relationship between crime and disorder.

Police

The political goal of broken windows theory was to influence policing to focus on disorder as a precipitant to crime. Wilson and Kelling (1989) found that community-oriented policing, targeting low-level disorder, could keep a community from developing violent crime by reducing fear. This means that police targeted areas with "broken windows" and thus worked to stop disorder in that area, to prevent fear from rising, and violent crime from rising (Wilson and Kelling, 1989). However, when introduced, scholars offered three major caveats including that the police needed to stay in good standing with the community, that it only worked as a preventative measure, and that good police-community relations were not as effective once disorder and crime were extremely high (Wilson & Kelling, 1989). Although there were many caveats, broken windows policing was implemented quite quickly by politicians to adhere to worries of crime and fear within the community (Sampson, 2001). This form of policing has not worked to keep fear of crime down, nor has it been shown to prevent disorder either. This form of policing worked to directly target disorder and low-level crime, and often only worked to increase the probability of arrests for all crimes and did not deter crime (Sampson & Cohen, 1998).

Hinkle (2008) found that when police did not have a positive relationship with the community they were policing, fear of crime was not only spurred by crime but by the presence of police as well. The relationship that police had with the community was vital to the ability of police to keep fear down and not send signals to community members of the presence of crime

and disorder. Police damaged their reputation in communities with aggressive policing and acted more aggressively when they perceived a community had more disorder (Gau & Pratt, 2008; Konkel et al., 2019). This contradicted broken windows theory because police were not the solution, but the problem. This loss of police legitimacy caused policing to lose effectiveness, thus leading to a community "tipping point" where order-maintenance policing was no longer effective, and policing was no longer the solution (Gau & Pratt, 2010). Policing methods also lost legitimacy due to bad racial treatment towards communities. Communities of color did not trust the police due to mistreatment, which also undermined any community policing efforts (Drakulich, 2013).

Summary

Broken windows theory stated that as physical and social disorder rose, it led people to withdraw from society due to fear, which then created an environment for offenders to take over and the crime rate to increase. Subsequent research on perceptions of disorder found that they influenced quality of life and fear of crime. Other research found that perceptions of disorder were influenced by pre-conceived stereotypes about areas, racial groups, and social class. Perceptions of crime and disorder were affected also by stereotypes about race and social class. Lastly, policing tactics that came out of broken windows policing are still in use and therefore attitudes toward police are important in understanding if police have a positive relationship and can help support the community. Overall, the literature covered in this chapter will help further the understanding of participants' perceptions surrounding crime, disorder, and police. Methods are discussed next.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

This project explored the overall perceptions of crime, disorder, and police from Chicago residents. This research study used a qualitative approach, which was done through interviews with 20 Chicago residents, representing 25 Chicago neighborhoods. This research aimed to answer two specific questions through the study of perceptions. First, how did residents understand the relationship between police officers, policing, and crime in their Chicago neighborhoods? Second, how did residents understand the relationship between disorder, other neighborhood characteristics, and crime? Through these two questions, I was also interested in how these results aligned with the results from previous studies on broken window theory.

Research Approach

Past critical research on broken windows theory called for a need to understand how the relationship between perceptions of crime and disorder affected individuals, since perceptions of disorder did not reflect actual rates of disorder (Hinkle & Yang, 2014). Past research supported that fear of crime was psychologically constructed and therefore, was dependent on individuals' past experiences, and suggested that disorder and fear were best studied at the qualitative level (Sampson, 2001). Qualitative studies allow a deeper focus on attitudes, feelings, and emotions, which is essential when looking at perceptions and their relationships. Since topics such as crime, disorder, and police were being discussed, qualitative interviews were best for hearing stories, and full explanations of opinions and perceptions. Past qualitative studies that explored the relationship between perceptions of disorder and crime were successful in showing that perceptions were constructed in multiple ways and for different reasons, including personal identity and social position, quality of life, and fear,. (Sampson & Raudenbush, 2004; Doeing,

2017; Teixeira & Zuberi, 2016; Ogneva-Himmelberger et al., 2019). This study is unique as it looked at perceptions through qualitative interviews with members within different neighborhoods, and was able to reach different parts of one city in one study. Lastly, this study looked at overall perceptions of crime and disorder, while also including perceptions on police, which were not necessarily always included in crime and disorder studies.

Procedures

After this study received IRB approval, recruitment for participants began on social media via social media posts on Facebook (see Appendix A & B for IRB approval). The recruitment post explained I was seeking participants for a study looking at perceptions surrounding crime, disorder and police (see Appendix D for social media post). Once participants expressed interest in being interviewed, they provided their email and a certain time to meet on Zoom. The day and time of the zoom meeting was confirmed in the email and participants were emailed a Zoom link. Consent forms were either collected as a signed PDF or as a signed survey monkey (surveymonkey.com) form. The consent form depended on the participant's access to printing and scanning, if they were not able to then they were sent the survey monkey link to sign (see Appendix C). This ensured consent forms were collected in an efficient and responsible manner before interviews were conducted. Interviews were recorded via Zoom and ranged from 20-60 minutes and were uploaded to a specific folder on my password-protected computer that held all recorded interviews. I scheduled about 1-3 interviews a week for about 10 weeks between March and May of 2022. The interview schedule and interviewee information were kept in a Word document that kept track of personal information, contact information, and demographic information.

All Zoom interviews took place in a quiet empty room, in which the participant and I

could talk freely. Participants had no restrictions in choosing a location in which to zoom, so environments ranged from offices to bedrooms and living rooms. When interviewees joined zoom, I greeted them and asked how they were doing. The Zoom recording started after greetings, and although the consent form included both video and audio, only the audio was recorded and kept. After making sure they could hear me and I could hear them I asked for their name, age, gender, race/ethnicity, education, which Chicago neighborhood they currently lived in, and if they had lived in any other neighborhood in the past. All of the demographic questions were open-ended questions and respondents were free to skip questions or answer in any way. After the interview started, I used the interview question guide to ask questions.

Data Collection and Instruments

Data were collected with individual interviews conducted via Zoom. Individual interviews worked best so the interviewees felt comfortable enough to talk about their personal experiences and opinions.

Interview Protocol

The interview protocol included two different interview guides. The first four interviews received my initial interview guide which was submitted and approved by the IRB. The following 16 interviews were completed with a revised set of questions that was also approved by the IRB (See Appendix E & F for both versions). The interviewees were asked a total of 28 different questions, 7 about crime, 7 about police, 9 about neighborhoods, and 5 about collective efficacy and informal/social control. First, questions about crime were asked, including how they defined crime, how much crime they thought was in their neighborhood, how their neighborhood compared to other neighborhoods around them, and how their area may have reflected the amount of crime. Questions about police were asked next including, frequency of

seeing police and seeing them interact with others, feelings about police presence, feelings about police effectiveness, and the impact of police on the community. Subsequently, I asked about their perceptions of their neighborhoods including how they felt about their neighborhoods, how it looked structurally and socially, and whether it was well-maintained. Lastly, questions designed to indicate perceptions of collective efficacy included how they felt about going outside at night, how often they talked to their neighbors, and if they trusted or attended group events in their area.

Participants

After IRB approval and posting on social media, willing participants direct messaged me. After discussing which time and day worked best for the interview, interviewees sent their preferred email and a consent form and zoom link were emailed directly to them. Consent forms were either signed as a PDF signed and emailed back to me or as an online signature through surveymonkey.com.

To participate in this study, participants had to be over the age of 18 and from Chicago, and currently living in Chicago. There was no specific requirement for how long they had lived in the city. As explained above, participants were recruited via a social media post on my personal Facebook. Facebook is an online social media outlet used to communicate both with personal friends and publicly. This post was made public and therefore able to be seen by anyone. I also used snowball sampling and asked interviewees if they knew of anyone who would also be interested in being interviewed. If participants said yes, they provided me with their constituent's email address and they were contacted to set up a time and date and then emailed a consent form.

In total 20 people were interviewed for this research project via online zoom interviews

that were recorded. The sample was evenly split by gender with 10 women and 10 men (see Table 1). Nineteen of the twenty participants were between the ages of 20 and 29 while one person was 48. Out of all the participants, 8 identified as Black, 6 identified as Hispanic, 2 as white, and 4 identified as being of multiple races/ethnicities. In terms of education, 3 had a completed master's degree, 12 had a completed bachelor's degree, 1 had a completed associate degree, and 4 were currently in progress of their bachelor's or associate degree. The sample was diverse racially but more educated than the average person in Chicago. Currently in Chicago, 41.7% of the population has a completed bachelor's degree or higher, whereas in this sample, 80% of the sample has a completed bachelor's degree or higher (U.S. census, N.d.)

Saturation was partially achieved in the study. While saturation was achieved on topics of policing and crime, saturation was not achieved on the topics of disorder and crime. I was not able to reach saturation on the topics of disorder and crime, as themes were difficult to identity, with little to no similarity between participants (Young & Casey, 2018). Saturation not being achieved could be due to unclear and confusing questions or because I did not include enough people in the study.

The participants in this study currently or previously lived in a total of 25 of the 77 neighborhoods in Chicago. The list of neighborhoods that were discussed includes Englewood, Washington Heights, Wrigleyville, Auburn Gresham, North Center, Beverly, Oak Lawn, Hermosa, Humboldt Park, Lansing, East Chicago, Calumet City, Hegwisch, Little Village, Irving Park, Logan Square, East Garfield Park, Chattom, Avondale, Bronzeville, Albany Park, Lakeview, South Austin, Belmont Craigan, and River North. These neighborhoods represent almost every corner of Chicago showing the diversity of neighborhoods being represented in the sample.

Table 1. Sample Description.

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Race/Ethnicity	Education
Sarah	Female	20	Black	Some college
William	Male	25	Black	Bachelors
Mark	Male	21	Black	Some College
Kassie	Female	21	White	Some College
Kent	Male	22	Black	Bachelors
Jack	Male	24	Hispanic	Bachelors
Edwin	Male	29	Hispanic	Bachelors
Carmen	Female	23	Black	Bachelors
Jackson	Male	21	Black	Some College
Vivian	Female	24	White/Hispanic	Bachelors
Anthony	Male	26	Black	Associates
Isaac	Male	22	Black/Hispanic	Bachelors
Mina	Female	25	Hispanic	Bachelors
Harrison	Male	26	Black	Bachelors
Emily	Female	23	Hispanic	Bachelors
Kiev	Male	22	Hispanic	Bachelors
Jamie	Female	48	White	Masters
Marissa	Female	22	White/Hispanic	Bachelors
Layla	Female	27	White/Hispanic	Masters
Erin	Female	28	Hispanic	Masters

Coding and Analysis

After the Zoom interviews ended, the MP3 was uploaded to a specific folder on my password-protected computer. I transcribed all interviews in Microsoft Word with the assistance of an express scribe software program that came with a foot pedal that helped to slow down and pause audio files easily. All Microsoft Word transcription files were saved under the name of the interviewee pseudonym.

Transcribed files were then uploaded to the qualitative data analysis software, NVivo for analysis. After reading through all interview transcripts multiple times, I listed every theme I saw and wrote it down as an NVivo code. This process of coding was inductive, and I re-read transcripts multiple times before coming up with my initial codes. I coded all transcripts through

these codes. After coding, I compressed similar codes into themes and came up with 5 main themes including feelings towards crime, police opinions, gentrification/residential instability, crime and disorder as the same, and crime and disorder as different. Coding was done using grounded theory by Charmaz (2006), in which I took my initial codes after reviewing transcripts and turned them into more focused codes using the NVivo codebook. Some quotes exhibited multiple meanings and were coded into multiple categories.

Ethical Considerations

As explained above, every participant signed a consent form that stated participation is voluntary and that participants withdraw or stop participation at any point. The questions involved in this study were not likely to cause harm or distress in any way. Interviewees were reminded at the beginning of every interview that they could skip or not answer any of the questions. All documents related to the study were filed in a specific folder on my password-protected computer. I am the only person that knows the password and has access to the information.

Positionality and Potential Research Bias

My approach to the research comes from my position as a critical sociologist. I decided to do interviews as the best form of data collection to gain in-depth knowledge as well as understand people's tones, attitudes, and manners over these specific topics. The goal of my research was motivated by my interest in social change and bringing light to social issues and inequalities.

As a resident of Chicago for the first 18 years of my life, I entered each interview with an insider perspective because I could visualize and understand what and where my participants described. During the interviews, I refrained from agreeing or providing any personal

experiences to remain objective. I focused on nodding, saying things like "Okay, great" or "Thanks for answering, the next question is.." which also helped to improve objectivity in the study.

Due to my insider positionality and my method of recruitment, the participants I gained were mostly from my personal social network and through referrals from my personal social network. My passion for the well-being of Chicago and a lot of my academic research stem from problems in the Chicago area but I managed any potential bias by sticking directly to the interview questions. I also have an outsider perspective through my academic position and was able to use my academic position to keep myself objective. The interpretation of my data was also supported by my literature review, which kept bias down and improved the trustworthiness of my data. My personal opinions on the topics in this research project were irrelevant but stemmed from my personal interest in social justice and supporting a more just city. My personal interest did not affect any of the data I analyzed and did not change the interpretation of the results.

Lastly, due to my participants knowing me and my position as a critical sociologist, I made it clear that participants should explain how they specifically feel. I emphasized that any type of response is welcome in this study, and I never shared my opinion on any of these issues with them. In general, I do not often portray my feelings on social issues on social media sites, so participants generally know that I am just a critical sociologist focusing on issues of crime. I refrained from posting or sharing anything on social media that related to anything about this study.

Strengths and Limitations

Strengths of qualitative data included being able to converse with participants, asking

them to explain more, or asking another question if they explain a new idea. Some of the strengths of the research design included meeting with participants on Zoom, which helped to curb any meeting or traveling issues. I was also able to record audio through Zoom for easy data collection and transcription. Lastly, I also knew most of my participants through my social network, so participants felt quite comfortable talking to me and opening up about their feelings.

Some limitations included technological issues such as bad internet-breaking up the conversation, or background noise through other participants' Zoom. These issues were easily remedied by moving to another location for better internet or less noise. Another limitation included not representing all 77 Chicago neighborhoods with the participants in this study. Participants were also spread out throughout the city so there was not an opportunity to compare multiple people in one neighborhood. I also would have included in my analysis, race as a variable affecting perceptions, but more participants would have been needed and more questions involving a deeper analysis of participants' opinions on race.

Another limitation includes the questions I asked, as they were not open ended and detailed enough. These questions, especially when trying to answer the second question, failed to help bring out major themes from participants. This weakened the study and limited the major themes I was able to gather from the data.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This research paper aimed to inductively study the perceptions of crime, disorder, and police from Chicago residents. My first research question was, how did residents understand the relationship between police officers, policing, and crime in their Chicago neighborhoods? My second research question was, how did residents understand the relationship between disorder, other neighborhood characteristics, and crime? To explore the first question, I asked questions about perceptions of policing including the presence of police in neighborhoods, their visibility and interactions with other residents, and their effectiveness. The primary themes that emerged include police being no help, experiencing anxiety due to the police, understanding both sides, and desensitization to crime. To explore the second question, I asked questions about how they felt about their neighborhood, how they felt about the crime or disorder in their area, the structure of their neighborhood in terms of cleanliness, and more. Pertaining to the second question, two categories of responses are presented including perceptions of disorder and gentrification/residential instability.

Police and Crime

Police Are No Help: "I'm not a fan"

When talking to participants about police, six agreed that police were not helping with crime or were contributing to systemic issues of aggressive policing, among other problems. These participants also either felt disdain toward the police or felt that the police were not helping to better their relationship with their neighborhood. For example, Erin, a 28 year old Hispanic woman answered that she sees "them as uneducated and untalented," while Kassie a 21-year-old white women answer she is "not a fan" and explains that they do "more harm than

good."

Other negative views were evident. When asking Anthony, a Black 26 year old male, if the police have made a visible difference, he explained that

"In my area, especially, no, police presence has not made a difference. Thus, you know still as I mentioned [criminal] activity still going on everyday. You know I got the apps they let me know everything. Even in Inglewod, Austin, anything like East Garfield Park, not too much police activities. And that's just something that needs to change."

Anthony pointed out that in high crime areas where police were needed, they were not seen often enough. Other participants explained their issues with the police by directly pointing to systematic issues. Layla, a 27-year-old white and Hispanic woman, thought that police "are like causing more trauma, I guess within society and like doing all these things," pointing out the repercussions of harsh policing practices. When Layla started talking about police and crime in her area, she discussed the type of policing she saw and answered with the following:

"I think that there is not as much necessarily in my neighborhood, but like across the city, there's such hyper policing. That when you look at like why police were created, where police are predominantly at, and like just the systemic issues there's. They're doing what they were created to do, which isn't to serve and protect and help people. It's just more so to. I don't know. Go with what they were made to do if that makes. That's like they're not in my personal opinion, they're not helping or protecting or serving the community. They're making things worse."

Mina, a 25-year-old Hispanic woman also shared the same sentiment,

"Police happen to be aggressors 99% of the time. Again, everything is not black and white, So I don't want to say that, but like. The whole idea of a cop is just they come in

afterward, they swoop in afterward, they're not protecting shit. Excuse me. They're not

protecting anything and no, I very firmly do not."

Mina and Layla's views were focused on the purpose of policing and both believed that

policing does little to prevent crime. Another participant also had the same point of view as Mina

and Layla, thought that police did not do much to prevent crime and mainly focused on showing

up after a crime had been committed. Marrissa, a 22 year old white and Hispanic woman

explained that,

> "I'm not seeing them here now actively trying to make like a relationship with their
>
> community and get comfortable with the citizens that are living here and they try…The
>
> only time that they're trying to prevent crime is when something is going on or like what
>
> whenever they're getting involved with their community, it's always. When something
>
> terrible has happened, I think that's the wrong approach."

Layla, Mina and Marissa all felt that police cannot reduce crime and were not able to

think of a method for how they could. These three participants' showed little to no hope for

social change with policing tactics. Anthony also agreed that police were not doing their part and

needed to show up to neighborhoods that truly need police support. Erin and Kassie shared very

negative views of the police. These participants' answers spoke to the amount of disappointment

and lack of change they have seen with police in Chicago.

Feelings about Police: "My anxiety rate tends to increase"

A minority of participants (N = 4) felt that the police made them nervous, anxious, or

scared. Only four participants offered this sentiment, but no one was directly asked about it so

others may have felt similarly. Mina, explained her nervousness around police, explaining that:

> "I feel one I feel I feel nervous when I see a cop in general. Let's start there. I feel like

they're. I don't get a great feeling when I'm around them. They stress me out and then

when I think about just everything that comes with being a cop and seeing what I've seen

in just the past couple of years, watching shit unfold."

Mina described that she feels nervous when she noticed cops in general. While Layla described

that direct interactions with the police automatically make her feel extremely nervous. Layla was

pulled over by the police and explained that she was "freaking out" and didn't know what would

happen next, with her opinion of police being "they're not all that, like some people crack them

up to be." Both Mina and Layla felt that either police presence nor police interaction made them

feel very nervous.

Vivian, a 24 year old Hispanic and White woman had a similar response when she

explained her feelings about police:

"When I see or when I'm close to a cop, or I feel like a cop is around me, I don't

Necessarily get that feeling of complete safety, sometimes they make me nervous, just

because of everything you hear on the news and you know there is such good things such

as good cops and the bad cops and you never know who is who. I think a lot of times

cops like uhm- they tend to like, uhm, take advantage of their position or you know try to,

I mean obviously position relative to power and then they-they use that more than they

Should, "I can tell you what to do, you have to listen to me" or anything like that and

they try to coerce you into things that aren't necessarily legal but like a lot of people

don't know all the laws, and myself included and that your like "ok ok" you know if you

want search my car, search my car. You know like. And they make me a littler nervous,

I'm a little uhm, uneasy with them around..."

Similar to those above, Anthony discussed his negative feelings about the change in

policing tactics over the years and how he felt about them now:

> "I don't care for them. I remember when I would hear like stories of like cops back in the days. You know, they actually meant a lot to the community. Like you knew the cop name they would, you know, make sure that the kids were safe and good. And you know, like they just had that actual reputation with the neighborhood. And that's something that I actually think was really cool back then, but now? …My anxiety rate tends to increase whenever I see, you know. Any of them."

Anthony further explained how often he and his friends get pulled over and stopped for driving or walking around in their neighborhood. He explained that he often feels "personally attacked" with some of the interactions due to the lack of violations when getting pulled over. Anthony's multiple interactions with the police made him feel that he needed to have his own "personal curfew" to avoid too many unnecessary interactions with the police. Over-policing and unmotivated police stops are causing anxiety and restrictions to Chicago residents like Anthony.

Understanding both sides: "You have your good cops and your bad cops"

While many participants had negative opinions on the police, almost half felt quite neutral about their feelings towards police. Some participants even went on to explain what else the police could do to help, but still had a very neutral stance on how they felt. For example, William a 25 year old Black man explained that "uhmm, you know mixed emotions, you know, not all cops are bad, but you know there are some bad eggs out there. So you know I just try to keep it a neutral respect." He acknowledged that not all cops were bad, but some were, and he tries to keep a neutral outlook. Another participant, Carmen also explained that,

> "I'm indifferent because yea I don't necessarily feel safer uhm, or less safe when they're around. It's just like, like I have pretty indifferent, I have a sense of indifference towards

police. Like I'm not like fuck yall or good the cops are here. There's cops, it's just more of acknowledgement of their presence than a concern about their presence."

Similar to Carmen's neutral opinion, Marissa also felt very indifferent; she explained that she did not "put them on a pedestal as much as other people would" and explained later in the interview that she was "very indifferent towards the police." Isaac, a 22 year old Black and Hispanic man also explained that he saw police "just patrolling like literally just sitting and just like people watching, which I'm like go crazy, I guess like. Maybe do something else? I don't know." His comments suggested that the police did not really affect him and he did not have too many positive or negative feelings about them.

Another participant, Mark (21 year old Black man), did not feel very fond of the police, but also understood that if he was put into a position of needing help, he would have to call, thus felt very stuck in the middle of both sides. He explained that,

"I don't really fuck with 12 [police], but uhhhh (laughs) I understand that I wouldn't be out screaming defund the police, I understand they here to protect the civilians, I understand that if they are not always like siding with like ya know Black people or siding with just whatever side they on, if it's just not justified, I understand it's reasoning behind it. And it's like I don't know, I just don't feel like I'm always in the right mind when I'm saying fuck the police because there are those times when if I'm in need, I would have to call the police, or who else would I call? I understand that relationship. Uhh. Yea ."

Unlike Mark, Emily and Harrison both felt indifferent toward the police but also showed hope for how the police could do better. Unlike other participants' conversations about the police, Emily and Harisson were neutral about them but also felt it was important that they do

things correctly. Emily explained that she doesn't have a relationship with police in her neighborhood at all and never needed to interact with them. She explained that the police were not relevant to her livelihood at all. Later in the interview she explained that police "could do things, but I think they have to do it correctly to be able to actually help people…" Interestingly, while she did not think much about the police, she still felt that it was important they do things in a helpful manner.

Harrison, a 26-year-old Black man, shared his position on police, and explained that "you have your good cops and your bad cops…I think that some people do actually actively try to make a difference" He also shared later that if the police "took it a step back and a scale-back approach and really tried to get people the help that they need, you know if they're stealing and doing different things in the first place. Different programs or initiatives and not just, you know, taking them and treating them like criminals" then police could have a better impact on their neighborhood.

Throughout the interviews with these participants, it was made clear that residents do not believe the police were helping both to reduce crime or to better their relationships community members. Along with this, trust of and the relationship with the police were quite nonexistent. When people saw the police, participants described that they got anxious. When people explained their feelings about police, they also felt quite neutral about police, not knowing entirely how they feel, though others were rather negative about the police and their practices. Therefore, the overall perception of police from participants was that the police were not making a positive impact in the community.

Desensitization to Crime: "It's Just Like the Norm"

Through discussions of the police, participants also explained that while police may make

them feel uncomfortable, they did not feel affected by crime in their area. Almost all the participants who described seeing crime often felt that criminal activity was something that they got used to while living in the area, and they often portrayed an "unbothered" attitude. While it was not clear if participants truly felt bothered or affected by the crime, they explained and portrayed an attitude that suggested crime was not something they worried about. While they cared about their safety, crime had started to feel like a norm within their neighborhood. A minority (N = 6) showed signs that they were completely desensitized to the crime around them, while the remaining 14 participants either did not share their feelings about crime or felt concern for the crime in their area.

Anthony talked about how he felt about crime in his area and responded saying "you know, like I said, its its its its an everyday thing," and showed just how unaffected he felt by the question. Another participant Edwin, who is a 29 year old Hispanic man, explained that:

"uhmm I mean nobody wants crime right. But I guess you know being from that type of setting, you get used to it, you know. Like you just kind of deal with what is going on around in your area cuz like you know you're from there and you can't just leave, right?"

Edwin brought up a good point and explained that he had no choice but to get used to it since that's where he lived. In Edwin's case, he shows that he is not completely desensitized and unbothered, but yet forced into feeling that way due to not being able to move out of the area.

Layla also had a similar story with her answer to the question saying "it does not no, But I think that might be just cause of like desensitization just growing up in the city… so I think it's just like the norm if that makes sense." Layla also agreed that her desensitization to crime was due to the circumstances of her growing up in the city. Two other participants, Sarah and Mark also agreed that they did care about crime but did not feel affected by it. Sarah and Mark both

live on the south side of Chicago in high-crime areas. Sarah, a 20 year old Black woman explained that "Yea I mean it does bother me but I think that I am so, I don't know, I'm kinda disassociated from it, like, I don't know if numb is the right way to put it, but just like I don't know, I don't take it as seriously..." Whereas Mark also felt the same way saying that "uhh I do care about it. But I wouldn't say it bothers me.. uhhh. I'm probably would say sadly I've become normalized to the amount of crime…" Both Sarah and Mark care about the crime but like the other participants, had become subdued to the severity of the crime around them.

The ways that participants processed crime around them was important in the way they felt about police and disorder. First, it could be possible that participants have been forced to desensitize themselves to crime due to the lack of reliance they have on the police. Participants like Layla, felt that police were no help and no longer had any reaction to the crime around them. Another participant, Anthony, had a more anxious reaction to the police than to the crime around him. It could be possible that residents were directing their fear of crime toward the police due to the lack of protection and safety that they are supposed to provide. As explained by Hinkle (2008), with a loss of police legitimacy, residents directed their fear of crime toward the police. Desensitization to crime was also something that was not discussed by Wilson and Kelling in their initial broken windows theory but clearly affects the amount of fear that residents have towards crime in their neighborhood.

Crime and Disorder

Neighborhood Image and Crime: "It Doesn't Look as Up Kept"

Moving onto the second research question, about how residents understand the relationship between disorder, other neighborhood characteristics, and crime, two major sections are presented. The first section reveals the ways participants understood disorder and its

connection to crime. Due to the lack of major findings, this was not necessarily a major theme, but a categorization of participants' varying perceptions and responses. This section represents a very small group of the participants, showing that disorder was not very understood by participants at all. Many participants did not know how to answer or wanted to skip questions about the disorder.

Overall, participants did not understand the concept of disorder very well. There was not a large commonly shared view over disorder, therefore this section explains the varying perceptions of disorder. Some participants perceived crime and disorder as the same thing, while some felt that crime and disorder were two very different concepts. Four participants (Sarah, Mina, Harrison, and Vivian) made connections throughout the entire interviews suggesting that they often saw physical or social disorder as a predictor of or connection to criminal activity. Three participants, Isaac, Marissa, and Jackson saw disorder and crime as two different things and hinted at the difference through answers to various questions.

When I asked Harrison if his neighborhood reflected the type of crime in his area, Harrison responded "Definitely rundown houses, abandoned buildings, trash all over the street, right, people out, you know..." Harrison described that his neighborhood reflected high crime due to the amount of physical and social disorder cues such as the abandoned buildings, loitering, among others. Sarah also described how she felt about the level of criminality in her areas, and described the area around her school as "grimy" explaining that she used that word because:

"Just like, I don't know, kinda like, oh gosh, you uhmm, hmm, Just more eriee, like more embarrassing stuff going on, and it doesn't look as up kept and normally when a neighborhood doesn't look upkept, it's like more, uh, more rowdy, more things

happening, more hood, so I say like I'm pretty sure the crime that happens around my

neighborhood is less than like other neighborhoods."

Sarah described her neighborhood as both grimy and high in crime and explained her choice of

the word grimy because it related to more disorder.

Similar to Sarah, Vivian described areas with different levels of crime as looking

different. She explained:

"When you think of high crime areas you think of them as less well-kept and I think

that's for a variety of reasons. I would describe my neighborhood, uhm, as above

averagely kept and because of that it correlates with there being less [crime] and then it

ends up being more clean and I think there's just more people, since we don't have the

aspect of constantly having to worry about the crime in our area, like it's easier to keep

up with things, or being outside and taking care of the front of their or homes or picking

up the area."

Vivian explained that areas with high crime were more likely to have more "physical cues" of

crime, thus, she made a connection between physical disorder and crime.

Isaac, Marissa and Jackson felt differently than those mentioned above and saw disorder

as something separate from crime. Isaac explained that his neighborhood did not have too much

crime, and when it did happen it was usually out of necessity. When I asked Isaac about crime in

his neighborhood, he explained,

"I will say if I see people posted up, ''m like, OK, like it, obviously different, but I

wouldn't say the crime levels. I wouldn't just make an assumption of the crime levels

because just cause someone else pulls up on the block don't mean the neighborhood with

like like, you can't say that just cause I see someone posted up on West Humboldt

Park."

Isaac was very quick to answer that he did not see groups of people or people hanging around outside (i.e., "posted up") as any indication that crime was happening. Marissa also explained that she did not think there was a relationship between disorder and crime,

> "No, I don't. I mean, in general, I don't necessarily think that, uh, neighborhood has to look a certain way. Or like if it looks a certain way a certain way, you can't really accurately assess how much crime is in it. But I feel like the way the neighborhood looks, it looks, I guess, well kept it. It looks like a a regular Chicago neighborhood to me. But yeah, but I I've lived here for a while, so maybe others might think differently, but I don't think there is like a surface level indicator."

 Marissa, like Isaac, also did not believe that the image of a neighborhood held any connection to the level of crime. When Marissa was asked if the cleanliness of her neighborhood was connected to the amount of crime, she again stated that she did not think there was a "specificial visual characteristic to neighborhoods with low or high crime rates." Marissa showed extreme awareness of the difference between the characteristics of a neighborhood and the amount of crime.

Jackson had a similar response to Isaac and Marissa, when talking about crime in his area; he shared that he did not,

> "feel like [his neighborhood] reflect it because don't nun really reflect crime except like crime itself. Cuz when, what I'm thinking about like question like that make me feel like you gotta connect like crime and like the way a city looks, when it shouldn't be that way, cuz real talk like, regardless, how much, how like underkept a community could be, and how it could look on the outside, is not necessarily a reflection on what it really is

like."

Jackson explained that he did not feel there was a certain "image" that showcased certain amounts of crime and doesn't want people to make that connection. All three participants agreed that a neighborhood characteristic should not predict the amount of crime. Isaac, Marissa and Jackson all suggested that physical or social disorder such as run-down houses, or groups of people should not make the neighborhood look criminal. These participants not only showed extreme awareness to the difference between physical and social disorder, but they also show a deeper understanding of the reasons behind disorder and crime such as privilege, discrimination, and lack of social resources.

Overall, perceptions of disorder was extremely important, but there were no major findings with enough participants to indicate the exact ways that participants perceived disorder and its relation to crime.

Gentrification and Residential Instability: "It's Been a Struggle"

One of the biggest themes consistent throughout all the interviews was the topic of gentrification and residential instability. About half of the participants brought up either gentrification changing their neighborhood for the better or gentrification causing issues such as residential instability. When participants talked about gentrification, some explained that it decreased their perceptions of higher levels of crime and disorder, while for others, gentrification that caused residential instability was identified as leading to their perception of higher levels of crime and disorder.

First, gentrification affected Carmen's and Mina's feelings about disorder and fear of crime/safety. Carmen discussed her neighborhood saying, "uh I like my neighborhood. Uhm, it's somewhat gentrified and I think that definitely, or it's in the early stages of gentrification. So that

definitely uhm, affects my perception of the safety." Carmen also explained that her area had relatively little to no crime, so the gentrification made her feel that there was less crime present.

Mina also explained that because of the growing amount of gentrification in her area, that the neighborhood was becoming safer, with less physical disorder present. Mina explained "Because of the property taxes, because of how much people pay out here, there is inherently something that comes with that. We don't have a lot of abandoned buildings on our block, we don't, we don't live in a food desert. We don't struggle here. I could walk anywhere, I could get groceries, I could get food…" Mina saw that with gentrification, there was less physical disorder (i.e., abandoned building) and she experienced less fear of crime and felt safe being able to walk anywhere or go anywhere without being scared.

Vivian, also felt that the rise in gentrification was making her neighborhood feel safer. Vivian explained that "because of like gentrification and stuff like that, it's a lot of newer homes. And we associated newer homes being richer people, being less crime. It's just kind of how the trend goes. And so I would say the neighborhood, in general, doesn't come off to me that is represented of a lot of crime." Vivian, similar to Carmen and Mina suggested that gentrification improved her perception of crime and/or disorder.

Jamie, a 48 year old White woman also touched on gentrification in her neighborhood and explained that "the area where I live and surrounding areas are starting to be really gentrified and so there this combination of like much higher priced homes and then also like some families that have lived here for a really long time. And so I think like that combination, it doesn't feel super transient. And so I feel like when you have less transiency, there's less crime." Jamie explained that her neighborhood was both new residents and old residents, which did not make her feel that there was more crime or more instability. Kiev, a 22 year old Hispanic man, also

had a similar reaction when he described his neighborhood as gentrified. Kiev described the state of his neighborhood with: "there is a lot of people with money coming in, developing the real estate, I don't think they would do that if there was fear of crime." This suggested that he thought gentrification only happened in areas with low crime.

Another participant, Emily described when richer white people entered an area, police started to patrol the area more.

"I think something about my neighborhood that's kind of changed the way people view crime and stuff is like gentrification. And like often in high school this is, this is so bad, like we used to joke in high school, like, oh, people are gentrifying our neighborhood. It's gonna get safer now that there's more white people here. Like there's gonna be more cops. There's going to be more like surveillance. And there's not going to be as much like violence or anything. So, I think it was more violent when I was younger than it is now. In terms of like being outwardly violent like things happening to people on the street, but. I think like. I think that perception has changed just because of, like, how the makeup of my communities changed, because it used to be predominantly Hispanic. But now a lot of the people that live here are like people who drive Teslas and Porsche, and I've never seen that."

Emily made a connection between changes in police presence and the amount of crime due to gentrification. Emily's perception showed that she felt police care more about areas with white people and with people who have more money. Therefore, when she saw her neighborhood experiencing an in-migration of richer white people, she felt that her area was being cared about more by the police and the city. Although her perception is contrary to the notion that police usually patrol more in areas with more people of color, Emily's perception was based on the idea

that police were more likely to care for and protect white people. She saw gentrification as a signifier that police would come to protect the individuals moving in.

While the previous participants saw gentrification as something that decreased their perception of crime and disorder. Mina, Isaac, and Edwin additionally explained that gentrification also caused residential instability which increased their perception of crime and disorder. Mina provided her thoughts on the crime she saw happening in her neighborhood and the relationship it had with gentrification. Mina explained,

> "I think, in a way, yeah, the crime here that's being committed does kind of reflect what's going on, though, because people are being priced out of their homes, people are being priced out of… they can't even afford it. I've seen so many families just in the past five, ten years literally move off my block because they can't afford it anymore. They're getting bought out. What does that lead to? Stealing. Because you could make money. What does that leave? So yes, I do think it reflects perfectly on what's going on."

Mina saw people priced out of the neighborhood with the effects of gentrification and felt that the stress and instability that gentrification caused was an indicator of crime. Mina exemplified how an increase in gentrification could represent the amount of disorder that arose due to the instability of people struggling.

Isaac, a 22 year old Hispanic and Black man, also described that his neighborhood was where families moved to after being priced out of gentrified neighborhoods and stated that "all residential. It's all, it's all people who were pushed out of, like, Logan Square, Wicker Park before they were gentrified." Isaac described a neighborhood that was facing very high residential instability due to the increase in displaced people moving in.

Lastly, Edwin, a 29 year old Hispanic man, also explained his position on how his

neighborhood has been changing due to crime:

> "Yea I mean yea because over the years, people saw a shift in the neighborhood for sure and like the amount of crime did go up, and then people started moving out. Older couples that have been there for a long time, move out. You know then you get a family, that wouldn't exactly be the standard of liking [referring to people that may cause issues in the neighborhood] because they might be out of control. People were moving out and the wrong people were moving in because like it's basically people that wouldn't take care of their homes"

Edwin's statement showed that he saw residential instability as one of the first signs of disorder, lack of cleanliness, and a rise in crime. Edwin's statement was another example of the way gentrification and residential instability were affecting perceptions and experiences with police, crime, and disorder.

Isaac, Mina, and Edwin explained their thoughts on their neighborhood through their worries about gentrification. The issues that arose from gentrification in Chicago neighborhoods were causing stress and residential instability for a lot of residents. The changing dynamic in neighborhoods showed that residents do not often know their neighbors due to the amount of moving in and out. These three participants clarified that gentrification has caused instability and disorder within their neighborhood, changing their perception of crime and disorder.

Gentrification clearly changed the way people perceive crime and disorder in their area. This also influenced the framing of broken window policing since some participants felt that the areas improving were the ones that faced instability. Some participants did see this connection and felt that gentrification both pushed people into crime and caused disorder in their area.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The main objective of this study was to understand participants' perceptions on crime, disorder, and police. Overall, the 20 participants in this interview-based study were very willing to discuss their ideas and perceptions about police, crime, and disorder. In relation to the police, participants voiced a lot of concern. Regarding the first research question about perceptions of police and crime and their relationship, there were three major themes that surfaced. The first major theme included a large concern that police were of no help at all. Participants felt that the police were of no help and made them feel anxious and nervous when seeing them, being around them, and being confronted by police. The second major theme included the idea that police were misguided but that they could change to do better. The third theme that was found was desensitization to crime. When they talked about police and crime, participants felt they were quite used to being around crime and did not often fear their area due to crime, even when crime in their area was high.

Regarding the second question, about crime and disorder, there were two sections of narratives. Participants held varying perceptions of disorder; these results were difficult to code and responses were restricted due to limitations that will be discussed further. The second section included a major theme about gentrification and residential instability affecting perceptions of crime and disorder.

In relation to previous literature about police, participants did not perceive police in a positive light, suggesting that the police did not have a positive relationship with community members in their area. While Hinkle (2008) found that fear of crime could be spurred by the presence of police, my participants felt afraid of the police, not crime. This meant that there was

possibly a deeper issue with the relationship between the police and the participants. Gau and Pratt (2008) found that police acted more aggressively when more crime and disorder was perceived, which could explain participants, like Anthony, who lived in a high crime area and felt police were more aggressive towards him. Anthony was also a 26 year old Black man, so Anthony's treatment from police could be due to his racial status (Hipp, 2010). A recent study by Picket et al. (2022) found that Black people fear police more than crime, with fear stemming from personal victimization and past mistreatment. Gau and Pratt (2010) discussed that communities that no longer saw police as legitimate could have reached a "tipping point" when order-maintenance policing was no longer effective due to the amount of serious crime being too high. Participants that had negative views towards police, and lived in high-crime areas could potentially be living in areas that passed their "tipping point".

In terms of broken windows theory, Wilson and Kelling (1989) explained that an important caveat in their theory was the police staying in good standing with the community. The main goal of order-maintenance policing is to arrest low-level offenders that contribute to the disorder in an area. Participants explained that they feel police are no help and they do not have hope that the police can contribute to the well-being of the neighborhood. This can mean that people do not see order-maintenance policing as a legitimate form of protecting their area. Participants, such as Carmen, explained that they often feel policing is ineffective, so order-maintenance policing may not be actively seen by residents, therefore they see little to no change. Another possibility could be that residents are more concerned about violent crime, rather than low-level, which order-maintenance policing is not directly focused on and so would do little to help better the relationship with the community. Participants, such as Vivian, explained that they get scared around police, so it could be that they either see police presence as

an indicator that crime is in the area or feel that police will act aggressively. As explained by Hinkle (2008), with a loss of police legitimacy, residents directed their fear of crime toward the police. Desensitization to crime was something that has not been discussed by Wilson and Kelling in their initial broken windows theory but clearly affected the amount of fear that residents had towards crime in their neighborhoods.

In relation to the second research question about how residents understood the relationship between disorder, other neighborhood characteristics, and crime, one major theme that arose was the relationship between gentrification and perceptions of crime and disorder. While some participants felt that gentrification made them feel that there would be less crime and disorder, others felt that gentrification went hand in hand with residential instability and had issues in their area pertaining to residential instability. Findings on gentrification included 10 participants that felt gentrification was a pressing issue. The relationship between gentrification and perceptions of crime and disorder should be further investigated. Gentrification in Chicago plays an important part in the way participants view issues on crime, disorder, safety, and fear of crime. A specific study focusing directly on gentrification and these issues would be extremely interesting.

In relation to the second question as well, perceptions of disorder were explored. However, there was not enough information to create solid connections between the ways participants perceived disorder. With such minimal results, there was little room to make advanced connections between the results in this study and the broken windows theory. Overall, with those who did want to talk about disorder, it was quite split between those who did or did not see crime and disorder as the same concept. In terms of broken windows theory, two participants Sarah and Mina, indirectly explained that the presence of disorder would make them

not want to be outside, which supported the idea that disorder makes residents retreat as stated by Wilson and Kelling (1982). Only three participants were able to distinguish clearly between disorder and crime, while 4 residents were not able to see the difference between disorder and crime and often described crime as a type of disorder. Those who were able to distinguish crime and disorder did support the perceptions of those described in the broken windows theory by Wilson and Kelling (1982). Although, those who did see crime and disorder as different concepts, like Isaac, did not seem to be as scared of crime, as he knew the difference between what would be dangerous and what was just disorder. Those who saw crime and disorder as the same concept did seem more fearful, taking any indication of crime or disorder as a sign of danger. However, this was an extremely small number of participants, and it was not enough to make clear distinctions with the broken windows theory.

One of the biggest limitations was the approved interview questions that were used in this study. The interview questions that were used were too limited when talking about disorder. Participants were able to answer questions with short sentences, this mistake severely limited responses about disorder, thus restricting the results of my data. Some participants also did not know what the disorder was and opted out of not answering the question. Future research needs to involve examples of physical and social forms of disorder, in order to help reduce the amount of participants who were unwilling or unable to talk about disorder due to lack of knowledge. However, participants were extremely interested in talking about the police, even with short-phrased questions. So short responses about disorder could be due to a lack of knowledge around the topic of the disorder. Although saturation was reached in every other area, saturation was not reached on the issue of disorder. Future research on disorder should start with clear definitions of disorder and ask extremely open-ended questions to start. In the future, piloting the interview

protocol would help ensure that questions were clear and elicited sufficient accounts from participants.

One of the biggest strengths included participants' eagerness to share their thoughts on police and crime. Participants were extremely comfortable talking about police and how they felt, how they have been treated by police, and their political thoughts on policing practices. Talking with participants, rather than a survey, allowed participants to bring up stories, personal experiences and show emotion through their explanations. The personal narratives that participants shared helped when reviewing major themes and seeing which participants felt the same way about certain issues.

Future research should focus on the relationships between objective and subjective measures of crime and disorder while taking into account racism and class stratification and peoples' understandings of gentrification. Race and racism and class and class stratification play important roles as participants frequently highlighted their personal opinion on racial and economic systemic issues in Chicago. Mina highlighted issues with police brutality and the lack of resources that people of color, and low-income south-side neighborhoods are provided and how that might affect the ability to lower crime and disorder. Sarah explained that people of color may react differently to police treatment, due to police treatment towards people of color. Emily also explained that Hispanic neighborhoods are under siege by gentrification and are being pushed out of the neighborhoods they have lived in for a long time. Emily also brought up issues with homelessness and poverty. Anthony described the lack of affordable housing in his area as well, explaining how hard it is to afford to live in the city. Mina and Emily are Hispanic, while Anthony and Sarah are both Black showing that race might play a role in perceptions. People of color were more likely to highlight these issues rather than participants who were

white. Although this was not directly looked at in this study, it is important and should be studied more in detail. Lastly, research should continue to explore gentrification since it was something participants felt extremely passionate about discussing. Gentrification was also a very pressing issue and intersected well with topics of crime and disorder. For example, a study looking at neighborhoods going through gentrification can benefit by including how participants in that area feel about crime and disorder.

In conclusion, this study indicated that perceptions of crime and police involved police being no help, police causing anxiety, neutral attitudes towards police and desensitization to crime. Perceptions of crime and disorder showed that disorder was not clearly understood, with perceptions varying, as well as gentrification being a focal point in conversation around disorder. The relationship between the perception of crime and disorder, as outlined in broken windows theory, was not found in this study. Perceptions of police played a vital role in the purpose of broken windows theory, and research on the relationship between urban neighborhood communities and police should be focused on more. Future research should also focus on gentrification and race/class.

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APPENDIX A

IRB APPROVAL FORM 1

SIU Southern Illinois University
CARBONDALE

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE
WOODY HALL - MAIL CODE 4344
900 SOUTH NORMAL AVENUE
CARBONDALE, ILLINOIS 62901

siuhsc@siu.edu
618/453-4534
FAX 618/453-4573

To: Courtney Boyce
From: M. Daniel Becque
            Chair, Institutional Review Board

Date: March 10, 2022

Title*:*   *Perceptions of Crime, Neighborhood, and Police Using Broken Windows Theory*
Protocol Number: 22041
The above referenced study has been reviewed and approved by the SIUC Institutional Review Board
under an expedited category.

This approval by Southern Illinois University IRB on **March 10, 2022,** is considered active. The following
IRB policies apply to protocols approved in expedited categories:

- Changes or modifications to the protocol, regardless of how minor, must be submitted for IRB
  review and approval prior to implementation, except to eliminate immediate hazard to subjects.

- Promptly report adverse events, off- protocol activities, or other noncompliance to the IRB
  within 5 business days. Contact the IRB for further guidance.

- The IRB will request an annual update each year the project remains active. Update forms must
  be received by the due date provided to maintain active status.

- The Principal Investigator is responsible for reporting study closure to the IRB in a timely
  manner. Please contact the IRB for a study closeout form when research activities are complete.
  A study is considered complete when you are no longer enrolling new participants, collecting or
  analyzing data.

- As always, you are responsible for compliance with Southern Illinois University Carbondale
  policies and procedures. If you have any questions or require further information, please
  contact the Institutional Review Board Office via email siuhsc@siu.edu or via phone at 618-453-
  4530.

Best wishes for a successful study.

This institution has an Assurance on file with the USDHHS Office of Human Research Protection. The
Assurance number is 00005334.

MDB:sk
Cc: Kristen Barber

APPENDIX B

IRB APPROVAL FORM 2

To: Courtney Boyce

From: M. Daniel Becque
               Chair, Institutional Review Board

Date: October 17, 2022

Subject: *Perceptions of Crime, Neighborhood and Police Using Broken Windows Theory*

Protocol Number: 22041

The SIUC Institutional Review Board has approved the following modifications to your study:

1. Increased participant number.
2. Follow-up interviews.

Kindly remember that expedited protocols require an annual progress report. Please refer to the original approval memo for the protocol's annual progress due date. Failure to file a project update report may lead to the premature closure of your protocol.

When your study is complete, please fill out and return a study close-out form. A study is considered complete when you are no longer enrolling new participants, collecting or analyzing data.

Thank you for helping us keep your file up to date.

MDB:eb
cc: Rachel Whaley

APPENDIX C

CONSENT FORM SENT TO INTERVIEWEES

My name is Courtney Boyce. I am a graduate student in the School of Anthropology, Political Science & Sociology at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

I am asking you to participate in my research study. The purpose of my study is to understand the perceptions of crime, neighborhoods, and police of Chicago residents. The qualification of this study includes living in the City of Chicago.

Participation is voluntary. If you choose to participate in the study, it will take approximately 45 minutes of your time. You will meet me via zoom, for an interview. The minimum age to participate is 18 years of age.

There is no penalty for not participating or for withdrawing from the study. If you want to withdraw, you should contact me. Any information submitted prior to your withdrawal will be deleted.

Your responses will be audio/video recorded. If you choose not to have your responses recorded, your participation will not be needed. These recordings will be transcribed/stored and kept for three years on a password-protected laptop. Afterward, these recordings will be destroyed, and any retained data will be de-identified. Please do not use individual names or locations in your responses to protect the privacy of nonparticipants.

All your responses will be kept confidential within reasonable limits. Only those directly involved with this project will have access to the data. I will take all reasonable steps to protect your identity.

You may skip any question that you would prefer not to answer.

The anticipated risks of this study include a very minimal possibility of the recordings being compromised. The anticipated benefits include contributing to research to my research project, and helping understand how to make neighborhoods safer.

If you have any questions about the study, please contact me, Courtney Boyce, at Courtney.boyce@siu.edu, or my advisor Dr. Whaley, Sociology program at Southern Illinois University Carbondale Sociology, Whaley@siu.edu

I have read the information above and any questions I asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this activity and know my responses will be tape-recorded. I understand a copy of this form will be made available to me for the relevant information and phone numbers.

"I agree _____ I disagree _____ to have my responses audio/video recorded."

"I agree_____ I disagree _____ that (researcher name) may quote me directly, but anonymously/with a pseudonym in their paper"

Participant signature: _____ Date: _____

This project has been reviewed and approved by the SIUC Institutional Review Board. Questions concerning your rights as a participant in this research may be addressed to the committee chairperson, Office of Research Compliance, SIUC, Carbondale, IL 62901. Phone (618)453-4534. E-mail: siuhsc@siu.edu

APPENDIX D

SOCIAL MEDIA POST

Hello!

My name is Courtney Boyce! I am a student in the Sociology program at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, currently working on my master's degree. I am currently working on my Masters research paper, and am in need of more participants.

The purpose of this project is to understand the perceptions of crime, neighborhoods, and police of Chicago residents. Participation is voluntary. If you choose to participate in the study, it will take approximately 45 minutes of your time. We will meet via zoom, for the interview.

To participate you must be: From Chicago AND older than 18 years of age.

If you are interested please email me at Courtney.boyce@siu.edu

Any further question can be directed to my advisor Dr. Whaley, Graduate School of Sociology, Rwhaley@siu.edu.

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS 1

- How much crime do you think is in your Chicago neighborhood?

- Do you care about the amount of crime in your neighborhood? Does it bother you?

- What do you think about the level of criminality within your neighborhood?

- Does your neighborhood reflect the amount of crime, and in what ways?

- How often do you see police on an average day outside?

- Do you think police presence has made a visible difference within the area?

- How do you feel about the police?

- Have police helped or hindered the neighborhood?

- Have police helped or hindered anything you're doing?

- How clean do you perceive your neighborhood to be?

- Is your neighborhood clean or dirty? In what ways?

- How much disorder do you perceive your neighborhood to have?

- Is your neighborhood affected by crime?

- Do the houses, stores, parks, streets, alleys reflect the amount of crime within the neighborhood?

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS 2

- How much crime do you think is in your Chicago neighborhood?

- What types of crime do you think happen in your neighborhood?

- How does it compare to other neighborhoods around you?

- Do you care about the amount of crime in your neighborhood? Does it bother you?

- Does your neighborhood reflect the amount of crime, and in what ways?

- How often do you see police on an average day outside?

- How often do you see police interact with someone?

- Can police effectively reduce crime in your neighborhood?

- Do you think police presence has made a visible or structural difference within the area?

- How do you feel about the police that you've seen in your neighborhood?

- How do you feel about your neighborhood?

- Does your neighborhood have a sense of community?

- How would you describe your neighborhood culturally? Structurally?

- Is your neighborhood clean or dirty? In what ways?

- Do you think people work actively to take care of the neighborhood?

- How much disorder does your neighborhood have?

- Is your neighborhood's cleanliness affected by crime?

- Do the houses, stores (storefronts), parks, streets, and alleys reflect the amount of crime within the neighborhood?

- How do you feel about going outside at night? Do you avoid certain areas?

- Do you talk to your neighbors often?

- Do you know your neighbors?

- Do you trust your neighbors?

VITA

Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale

Courtney A. Boyce

Courtney89boyce@gmail.com

DePauw University, Bachelor of Arts: 2017-2021
    B.A. in Sociology with a Minor in Peace & Conflicts Studies and Studio Art GPA: 3.36

Research Paper Title:
    Voices from the streets: Perception of Crime, Police and Disorder in Chicago
    Neighborhoods

Major Professor: Rachel Whaley