

THE THEORY OF BROKEN WINDOWS: THE INFLUENCE OF ENVIRONMENT ON THE CRIME RATE

Rajesh Gupta

Research Scholar

Shri Venkateshwara University

Dr. Ashok Yadav

Assistant Professor

Shri Venkateshwara University

ABSTRACT

Indicators of disorder both directly and indirectly lead, according to the shattered windows theory, to an increase in criminal behaviour as well as sentiments of fear in the community. Although there is a substantial amount of theoretical evidence to support the idea that disorder is positively related to fear of crime, the empirical literature on examining the indirect effect of the individual's perception of incivilities on fear of crime is limited, particularly in developing countries. This is particularly problematic because there is a positive correlation between disorder and fear of crime. This is especially true in nations where the level of living is lower compared to that of wealthy nations. The broken windows hypothesis postulates that disorder is a symptom of a lack of neighborhood management, that it promotes fear of crime, and that it starts off a chain reaction that eventually leads to criminal activity. These are the three main points that make up the theory. It has been found that there is a connection between the condition and dread; however, the current study contends that this connection is actually meant to be an indirect one and that the apparent loss of control is what should produce fear. It has been discovered that there is a connection between the condition and dread; however, it has also been found that there is a connection between the condition and dread.

Keywords: *Theory of Broken Windows, influence, environment, crime rate, Broken, Windows*

INTRODUCTION

The interrelationships between disorder in the neighbourhood, informal social control, and criminal activity are the subject of a modern debate in the field of criminology. This debate stems from a diverse body of theoretical concepts that attempt to explain the connections between the variables. According to the shattered windows thesis that was developed by Wilson and Kelling (2016), both physical and social illnesses have a significant influence on criminal conduct. Both directly and indirectly, because chaos impairs informal social control, it encourages criminals to believe that the community does not care about the criminal activity they are committing. On the other hand, theories of informal social control contend that the link between disorder and crime is not causal but is, rather, fictitious due to the confounding variable of local informal control. They say this association is spurious rather than causal.

This discrepancy in theoretical perspectives has significant repercussions for the theory of criminology as well as for public policy. As a result, the findings of empirical research regarding this controversy are of the utmost relevance. By examining the most recent findings of empirical research, this article provides an overview of the debate surrounding the relationship between broken windows and informal social control. The degree to

which studies come close to approximating Indian interactions is perhaps the most significant question to consider while carrying out an analysis of the empirical literature.

In order to evaluate the most recent research, we evaluate it using a potential outcomes or counterfactual definition of causality, which has recently acquired attention in the fields of statistics and social science (Morgan & Winship 2015, Rubin 2016). We make an effort, if it is feasible to do so, to provide our own evaluations of the relative strengths and weaknesses of the studies as well as our opinion of the plausibility of the assumptions used in various research designs. This evaluation is subject to discussion and criticism; nonetheless, we believe that articulating our perspective provides a point of departure for following debate by serving as a starting point for the discussion. Our conversation comes to a close with a discussion of what we consider to be significant potential directions for future research.

History of broken window theory:

In 1982, James Q. Wilson and George Kelling came up with the idea that a broken window can be used as a metaphor for a criminal act. They called their hypothesis the broken window theory. Their philosophy is predicated on the idea that crimes should be stopped as soon as they are committed so that they do not escalate into more serious offences.

It was in the 21st century that police commissioner William Bratton translated the theory into the real-life practise because it was believed that due to this theory there was a seriously decreased in crime rate, they tried to introduce some severe punishment even for a small crime. This theory has a significant impact in India .

When Mr. Bratton quit his job, most of the crime rates dropped by roughly half, which indicates that this hypothesis has some beneficial results in real life as well.

Broken Windows for India

The writers are of the opinion that the rate of criminal activity will be affected when the broken windows theory is applied to the setting of India, if we try to apply it there. If the broken window is fixed, there will be a decrease in the amount of crimes that are committed. Take, for instance, the problem of ensuring everyone's safety on the roads. Signals are disobediently ignored, roads are crossed without regard for safety, a one-way street is turned into a two-way street, and hawkers encroach upon sidewalks. One person gets ideas from another to violate traffic safety standards, and as a result, the disorder that is produced spreads across the community.

If the broken window is fixed, which is if one individual is prevented from producing disorder by the use of a sanction, then others will immediately fall in line with what is expected of them. No windows will be smashed, and as a result, order will be preserved if these visible but unaddressed abnormalities can be contained. If order is preserved, there will be an increased level of social control, and an increased level of social control would suggest a reduction in the number of instances of criminal activity.

When one hears the name "Kashmir," an image of violence, disorder, and anarchy immediately comes to mind. This causes a feeling of unease whenever the state's name is brought up in conversation. On the other hand, it's possible that the shattered windows explanation can explain why chaos is so widespread. There have been reports that minors who initially participate in the violence by throwing stones have progressed to using

firearms. If the disturbance had been dealt with when it was in its incipient stage, if the stone pelting and other small disorders had been arrested, then firearms and other types of weapons would not have been involved in the conflict. If disruption is brought under control, it will not develop into a criminal act. As a result, putting this idea into practise would undoubtedly result in a decrease in the number of illegal acts.

It is easy to understand why some people have the misconception that it is acceptable to conduct minor offences or to cause disturbance since they will not be held accountable for their actions. What is the answer to this problem? bringing in further legislation with stringent punishments? No, India does not suffer from a lack of legislation; in fact, we suffer from a greater abundance of it than they do. In order to accomplish what needs to be done, laws need to be effectively implemented, and initial issues need to be resolved before going on to more significant issues. According to the broken windows idea, a reduction in the number of people engaging in illegal activities can be accomplished if chaos is transformed into order.

Broken Windows Theory: Disorder, Crime, and Discriminant Validity

They were not the first to bring out the negative impacts that disorder may have on communities, but Wilson and Kelling (2016) were the first to accuse disorder of actually producing crime. They postulated that even a single incident of disorder (the proverbial "broken window") may set off a chain reaction of the community's deterioration if it was not immediately addressed and resolved.

This approach applied to anything from vandalism to disruptive youngsters to aggressive people asking for money on the street. Wilson and Kelling were of the opinion that the failure to address these issues in a timely manner promoted a sense among the members of the community that all of the mechanisms of formal and informal social control had failed. Residents would gradually give up streets, parks, and other public spaces to criminals who viewed the lack of cohesiveness and control as an excellent opportunity to practise their skills.

These criminals regarded the absence of cohesiveness and control as a fantastic opportunity to practise their professions. The empirical research on broken windows hypothesis has produced mixed results, despite the fact that the idea itself has a compelling appeal. Some studies, such as Savolainen (2016), Skogan (2017), and Xu, Fiedler, and Flaming (2015), have offered their support for the hypothesis. Other studies, on the other hand, permit only the hypothesis's provisional conclusion, which is that some types of disorder may be related to some types of crimes in some locations using some measurement techniques, but not others. In addition, even when a connection is found between the two, it is not clear what the exact nature of that connection is. It is difficult to determine whether the overlap between disorder and crime is consistent with broken windows' sequential, causal disorder-to-crime process or, alternatively, whether disorder and crime are both sub-components of larger conditions of concentrated sociostructurally disadvantage. While disorder and crime do frequently co-occur, it is difficult to determine whether this overlap is consistent with broken windows' sequential, causal disorder-to-crime process.

Evidence of Effectiveness and Theoretical Mechanisms

When it comes to the realm of broken windows, empirical studies can be separated into two categories: those that test the theoretical propositions and mechanisms of the theory, and those that test the crime-reducing impacts of broken windows-based policing tactics. Both of these categories are important to consider. In the

following, we will begin by discussing the current empirical state of main theoretical tests, and then we will move on to discuss studies on broken windows-based policing.

The findings of some of the theoretical tests and the evaluations that were carried out in practise do not always align with one another. Skogan (2018) proposed a version of the thesis, whereby incidents of incivility begin a process that ultimately leads to the deterioration of entire neighbourhoods. This piece was published un The Atlantic many years after the famous essay first appeared in the publication. Skogan, in contrast to Wilson and Kelling (2016), supported his argument with data from five major American cities. These data showed that residents' perceptions of physical and social disorder were significantly associated with self-reported victimisation of robbery. Skogan's argument was more convincing than Wilson and Kelling's (2016). His ultimate conclusion was that "both directly and indirectly crime it [disorder] plays an essential role in neighbourhood decline," despite the fact that BWT is a longitudinal study and Skogan's data were cross-sectional. "Broken windows" do require immediate repair, as the phrase suggests.

Sampson and Raudenbush (2017) presented the most compelling version of the spurious criticism, which stated that crime and disorder, while indeed occurring together — are not causally associated. This version of the spurious critique was established by Sampson and Raudenbush (2017). They argue that both are the outcome of structural neighbourhood pressures and collective efficacy, which occurs when locals trust each other more and are prepared to intervene during instances of criminal activity or disturbance. After accounting for factors such as collective efficacy and other important neighborhood-level factors, Sampson and Raudenbush provide convincing evidence that there is no correlation between disorder and criminal activity. Despite this, there was still a substantial connection between the condition and the theft (Sampson & Raudenbush,2017). They come to the conclusion that the disorder-crime relationship is generally fictitious because, if disorder and crime are largely unassociated after shared reasons are introduced, then the link between disorder and crime can be considered to be mostly fictitious.

According to the perceptual criticism, one of the most significant challenges in the study of disorder is the requirement for conceptual clarity on the character traits of incivility and disorder (Kubrin, 2018). The assumption that the perception of incivilities is an objective assessment of physical indicators of disorder has been called into question by a growing body of research that has investigated how perceptions of incivilities are formed per se. The findings of this research suggest that individuals have varying conceptions of what constitutes disorder. The results of this research strongly indicate that incidents of civil disobedience are not universally classified in the manner that BWT proposes. Instead, individuals's views of disorder are formed by a wide variety of environmental, demographic, and psychological factors, which results in a large amount of difference in perceptions among persons living in the same places. For instance, Link and colleagues (2017) shown that perceptions of the likelihood of criminal activity are a better indicator of feelings of disorder than the reverse formulation proposed by BWT.

Concept of Crime

Crime and criminals are a problem in virtually every civilization, and the exceptions to this rule are few and far between. Providing a clear and accurate definition of "crime" is not a simple undertaking. However, due to the fact that crime is both a socio-legal phenomenon and a legal phenomenon, several jurists have defined crime in a legal and social way. The information comes from Tappan. "A crime is an intentional act or omission in violation of criminal law, committed without any defence or explanation and penalised by the law as a felony

or misdemeanour," says the definition of crime. "A crime is an act or omission in violation of criminal law." Salmond, a well-known jurist, established the definition of a crime as something that is considered by the law to be damaging for society as a whole, notwithstanding the fact that its immediate victim may be an individual. As a result, it is a violation of the law, which is detrimental not only to the person but also to society. The appropriate response to this problem is retribution at the behest of the state. There is a strong correlation between the society and the social policies that are in place at any particular period. The idea of what constitutes a crime shifts in tandem with the development of new ideologies and the shifting social landscape. The act, which in the past was not considered a crime, may now be considered a crime in this day and age and be prevented and punished by the criminal legislation, which is to be updated accordingly. The purpose of criminal law is to protect society by retributively punishing those who break the law and deterring lawbreakers from committing further crimes.

OBJECTIVE

1. To further one's knowledge of the history of the shattered window theory.
2. To do research on the Existing Proof of Effectiveness and Potential Theoretical Mechanisms

LITERATURE OF REVIEW

Jacinta M. Gau (2017) In connection to the shattered windows theory, two schools of thought have emerged regarding criticism: (1) It seems that concentrated disadvantage is more intricately linked with disorder than the theory allows for; and (2) There is concern that disorder and crime lack discriminant validity in the sense that people do not actually differentiate between the two. Both of these ideas come from the same place: The current study integrated these two points of view by investigating whether concentrated disadvantage, which includes disorder itself, affects the degree to which people view disorder and crime as separate problems. Specifically, the researchers wanted to know if people are more likely to view disorder and crime as separate problems in areas where there is According to the findings of multivariate models, individuals who have a perception that their local community is more chaotic are more likely to differentiate between disorder and criminal activity. In this paper, we give theoretical proposals for future tests of the broken windows theory, and we examine the policy implications for order maintenance policing initiatives.

Mataka P. Flynn (2018) The term "broken windows effect" refers to the concept that urban disorder has a favourable effect on the prevalence of more serious crimes. The word "broken windows" indicates a range of disorders that can occur within communities. The idea has been the topic of a significant amount of debate in the academic community and has had a significant impact on the administration of justice in the INDIA, where it has led to an increase in the emphasis placed on community policing and zero tolerance policies. This essay examines the evidence for the presence of the broken windows effect as well as the efficiency of the policing techniques that are linked with it.

Jihong "Solomon" Zhao(2016) According to the broken windows theory, heightened perceptions of disorder, increased fear of crime, and diminished community social control are significant inhibitors of public participation in crime prevention. These significant inhibitors arise directly from concerns for personal safety and a sense of futility associated with the effort that is required. This research was carried out with the intention of testing, even if only in part, the postulated relationships between circumstances, perceptions, and behaviours.

The information was gleaned from the results of a survey that was administered over the phone to around 1,100 people residing in Houston, Texas. A GIS spatial analytic tool was used to document social nuisance crime and disorder episodes that were reported by the police in the immediate vicinity of each respondent's dwelling. This was done in addition to the standard survey data that was collected. By making use of structural equation modelling, we are able to investigate the connections between the effects of major components of the broken windows theory and citizen participation in the promotion of public safety. According to the findings of the study, incidences of disorder had a considerable influence on people's perceptions of disorder, and perceptions of disorder had a tendency to increase people's anxiety for their own personal safety, which in turn tends to lower people's feeling of collective efficacy. In conclusion, there was a substantial correlation between collective efficacy and citizen participation in crime prevention. These findings are consistent across a wide range of neighbourhood situations that are organised according to an index of concentrated disadvantage. The data that were given here offer support, to a significant degree, to the premises that were drawn from the shattered windows theory. The discussion goes into some depth on the study's flaws as well as its pertinent implications.

Brandon C. Welsh(2019) Over the past three decades, the broken windows theory (BWT) has exerted a significant amount of impact on both the social sciences and policy. It proposes that chaos in neighbourhoods invites further criminal activity and discourages the beneficial social behaviour that helps prevent crime. Both of these factors contribute to an increase in the rate of crime. In this article, we conduct a meta-analysis of 96 studies to examine the effects of disorder on residents' (a) general proclivities for aggressive behaviour and (b) perceptions of and attitudes toward their neighbourhood (for example, fear of crime). Particular attention is paid to aspects of research design that might confound causal inference. Scholars have debated the veracity of the BWT. We were unable to find any consistent evidence to support the hypothesis that disorder leads to increased levels of aggressiveness or a more pessimistic outlook on the neighbourhood. Studies that found such effects disproportionately used weaker research designs that omitted key correlates or confounded perceptions of disorder with other neighbourhood attitudes. [C]onfusing perceptions of disorder with other neighbourhood attitudes was a common practise among the studies that found such effects.

Gregory N. Price(2017) Understanding the causal aspects of crime can help drive policy measures that could potentially catalyse urban economic growth and development. This is because crime has the potential to be detrimental to the growth and development of cities' economies. This study contributes to the growing body of empirical research on the Broken Windows theory by investigating the possible causal implications that housing stock quality associated with disorder has on crime at the level of urban neighbourhoods. The commission of crimes, by their very definition, takes place in specific locations, like neighbourhoods; this means that the spatial element of crime cannot be overstated. If individual criminal activity reflects optimum behaviour based upon signals that transmit tolerance for crime in a particular environment, then crime may also correspond to specific environmental qualities of neighbourhoods. This is because crime is a signal of tolerance for crime. The Broken Window Hypothesis postulates that criminals optimise their behaviour based on the characteristics of a neighbourhood that the criminal considers to be measures of the degree to which a specific neighbourhood cares about or tolerates criminal activity. This hypothesis was inspired by the observation that criminals optimise their behaviour based on the characteristics of the neighbourhood in which they operate. Criminals who engage in rational inference are able to see that the housing characteristics of a neighbourhood are correlated with that neighborhood's tolerance for criminal activity and disorder. As a result, the housing characteristic can become an input into the decision-making process regarding whether or not to

commit a crime. An individual's choice to commit a crime can be interpreted as a game in which there is a continuum of different types of neighbourhoods, each of which sends a different message about the degree to which crime is accepted in that particular area. We estimate the parameters of Poisson specifications of the optimal decision to commit a crime conditional on a neighbourhood's housing stock quality and characteristics using data on police reported crime across census blocks and neighbourhoods in the city of Jackson, Mississippi. This data was obtained from the city's Department of Public Safety.

Daniel T. O'Brien(2018)The "broken windows" theory (BWT) from the field of criminal justice has motivated scholars in the field of public health to investigate the influence that disorder in a neighbourhood has on a variety of resident health behaviours and outcomes. This research identifies and meta-analyzes the evidence supporting three mechanisms (pathways) via which it is suggested that neighbourhood disorder can harm health. In doing so, it takes into consideration the fact that different studies have used different methods. Following a search, 198 studies were found, of which 152 had adequate data for a meta-analysis. These studies tested any of the three routes, as well as downstream, general health outcomes. The findings of the meta-analysis showed that a person's perception of disorder had a consistent relationship not just with mental health outcomes but also with substance usage and indicators of overall health. This provided support for the psychosocial model of disadvantage, which postulates that stressful circumstances have an impact on mental health and the sequelae associated with it. There was no consistent indication that the disorder had an impact on either the physical health of the individual or their risky behaviour. After further investigation, it was found that the level of support for BWT-related hypotheses had been exaggerated. This was caused by the censoring of data as well as the failure to consistently incorporate crucial covariates. These covariates included socioeconomic status and collective efficacy. Even in cases where there is evidence that BWT has an effect on outcomes, such data is driven by research that measured disorder as the focal individual's views of it. This may lead to a confusion between feelings of pessimism about the neighbourhood and one's mental health.

Jacinta M. Gau(2016)The broken windows theory, as well as enforcement techniques that are founded on this perspective, postulates that residents' impressions of disorder in their neighbourhoods lead to fear and social withdrawal, which in turn makes the streets more vulnerable to major predatory crime. Because of this, one of the most important assumptions is that the fundamental exogenous variable in the broken windows process, which is disorder, and its outcome variable, crime, are in fact two distinct entities. However, there is a lack of consistency in the empirical evidence about the discriminant validity of measures of disorder and criminality. This confusion is caused in part by the widespread reliance on comparing "objective" indicators of disorder and crime (such as using systematic social observations of disorder and/or official records of crime), which fails to capture the social meaning ascribed to disorder by community residents and may trigger the "broken windows" process. This confusion is caused in part by the widespread reliance on comparing "objective" indicators of disorder and crime. The current study provides competing confirmatory factor analytic models to examine the relative fit of one- and two-factor models of people's perceptions of disorder and crime in their towns. This was done so that the problem may be addressed. The findings indicate that the two-factor model should not be used because there is a strong connection between people's views of disorder and criminal activity. The shattered windows hypothesis and order maintenance policing both need to be reexamined in light of this conclusion, which is the principal implication of this discovery. Broken windows policing, also known as order maintenance policing, is predicated on the notion that citizens see disorder as an issue apart from crime and that lowering disorder will produce a drop in fear. This theory is central to the concept of order maintenance policing. By proving that survey respondents did not, in fact, differentiate between disorder and crime, the

findings of the current study disprove the fundamental logic of order maintenance policing. This result has ramifications not only for the actual efficiency of order maintenance policing in terms of decrease in crime, but also for the people's satisfaction with police agencies who focus more on disorder than they do on severe crime.

Nathan Berg(2019) We claim in this paper that there is a strategic complementarity in criminal activity. [S]ome criminals will work together to commit crimes. The chance of apprehension, which has an effect on the crime rate, is influenced by the crime rate itself, which gives rise to the phenomenon of strategic complementarity. The obvious consequence of this is the potential multiplication of the rate of crime that has reached equilibrium. The self-fulfilling nature of the crime rate ultimately leads to the realisation of the actual crime rate. Our investigation, through the use of strategic complementarity and self-fulfilling crime rates, offers an explanation of the shattered window theory from an economic point of view. No matter how successful the policies recommended by the broken window theory are (such as cleaning up graffiti, reducing the amount of trash in the street, and repairing broken windows), our model demonstrates that the theory made a significant contribution to the economics of crime by introducing the concept of belief-based deterrence. In addition, we demonstrate that the equilibrium crime rate remains unchanged whenever the broken window policy aims for the lowest possible equilibrium crime rate among a set of possible alternatives.

Rebecca Konkol(2019)The current research investigates whether or not broken windows theory, which posits that disorder in neighbourhoods, public spaces, social environments, and housing contributes to an increase in criminal activity, holds true. In addition, these consequences are examined in a separate manner with regard to significant crime rates (i.e., Part I) and less serious crime rates (i.e., Part II). Systematic observations were used to compile data on disorder for a racially and ethnically stratified sample of sixty block groups located inside the city of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in the United States of America. The use of these data, in conjunction with census and crime data, allowed for the testing of the effect of disorder measurements on each criminal outcome measure through the utilisation of linear regression modelling. However, the influence of disorder on crime was limited to the public space disorder measure, which is consistent with the broken windows theory. Disorder was connected with crime rates, which is consistent with the theory. In addition to this, the impacts of disorder on the rates of Part I crimes were mediated by the rates of Part II crimes. There was some evidence that supported the broken windows theory, which posits that the context of a community has a greater influence on crimes of a lesser severity. It may be beneficial for neighbourhoods that are experiencing an increase in the frequency of disorder to strengthen partnerships between law enforcement officers, community members, and other local stakeholders. The goal of these partnerships is to deter offending at all levels, and as a result, decrease indices of disorder and crime. Neighbourhoods that are experiencing an increase in the frequency of disorder may benefit from this.

CONCLUSION

To investigate whether exogenous changes in local disorder have an effect on crime and informal control, novel interventions at the neighbourhood level, such as randomly assigned demolitions, cleanup efforts, and greening projects, are required. Even more urgent is the requirement for research on informal social control, namely research that makes use of experimental interventions to change social capital and collective efficacy throughout different areas. In conclusion, despite the fact that we have placed the majority of our attention on the issue of causality as the primary concern in our evaluation of the empirical literature on disorder, informal

control, and crime, we have high hopes that our evaluation will not only encourage the conduct of additional empirical research but also the expansion of existing theories of disorder, crime, and informal control.

REFERENCES

- [1] Wilson, J. Q., & Kelling, G. L. (2016). Broken Windows: The police and neighborhood safety. *Atlantic Monthly*, 211, 29-38.
- [2] Garofalo, J., & Laub, J. H. (2016). The fear of crime: Broadening our perspective. *Victimology*, 3, 242-253.
- [3] Wilson, J. Q. & Boland, B. (2015). The effect of the police on crime: A response to Jacob and rich. *Law & Society Review*, 16, 163-169.
- [4] Harcourt, B. E., & Ludwig, L. (2016). Broken windows: New evidence from India and a five-city social experiment. *University of Chicago Law Review*, 73, 271-320
- [5] Covington, J., & Taylor, R. B. (2017). Fear of crime in urban residential neighborhoods: implication of between- and within-neighborhood sources for current models. *Sociological Quarterly*, 32, 231-249.
- [6] Taylor, R. B. & Shumaker, S. A., & Gottfredson, S. D. (2017). Neighborhood-level links between physical features and local sentiments: Deterioration, fear of crime, and confidence. *Journal of Architectural Planning and Research*, 2, 261-275.
- [7] Golub, A. Johnson, B. D., Taylor, A., & Eterno, J. (2016) Quality-of-life policing: Do offenders get the message? *Policing: International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, 26, 690-707.
- [8] Branas CC, Kondo MC, Murphy SM, South EC, Polsky D, MacDonald JM. 2016. Urban blight remediation as a cost-beneficial solution to firearm violence. *Am. J. Public Health* 106(12):2158–64
- [9] Branas CC, South E, Kondo MC, Hohl BC, Bourgois P, et al. 2018. Citywide cluster randomized trial to restore blighted vacant land and its effects on violence, crime, and fear. *PNAS* 115(12):2946–51
- [10] Browning CR, Dietz RD, Feinberg SL. 2004. The paradox of social organization: networks, collective efficacy, and violent crime in urban neighborhoods. *Soc. Forces* 83(2):503–34
- [11] Hua Zhong(2019) "From Broken Windows to Perceived Routine Activities: Examining Impacts of Environmental Interventions on Perceived Safety of Urban Alleys" *Psychol.*, 04 December 2018
Sec. Environmental Psychology
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.02450>