# FEAR OF CRIME WITHIN NON-GATED RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES IN THE URBAN CONTEXT

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Specially dedicated to *Mak* and *Pa* and *the rest of the family*. Thank you Allah S.W.T. for everything.

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## **ABSTRACT**

Since more than 30 years ago, the fear of crime (FOC) has become one of the major concern not only among the scholars in the field of criminal theories but the field of psychology and architecture too. It is not only related to the emotional; FOC has made communities become more isolated and built selfishness among the individuals. Other than that, it widens the gap between communities within an area, makes public places desolated, and increase punitive rates among the local community. Based on criticism on first generation CPTED (1stGenCPTED), the crime rate did not show any signs of abatement, in fact it has becomes worst. The purpose of this dissertation is to identify methods of crime prevention in non-gated residential communities (NGRC) in urban areas that can reduce the level of FOC. There is a research on FOC that has proven that the level of FOC in NGRC is lower compared to within gated residential communities (GRC). This dissertation is conducted to review other related studies and to propose architectural-based guidelines that is supported by relevant arguments. The findings show that CPTED strategies that have been implemented are more on the second generation CPTED (2ndGenCPTED) which are more community-oriented. It concludes that the level of FOC within NGRC do not only depend on social or psychological matters, but is still influenced by architectural design solution.

#### ABSTRAK

Lebih dari 30 tahun yang lalu, ketakutan terhadap jenayah (FOC) telah menjadi salah satu daripada tajuk yang menjadi tumpuan utama para sarjana bukan sahaja dalam bidang teori jenayah, tetapi bidang psikologi dan bidang seni bina. Ia bukan sahaja berkaitan tentang emosi; FOC telah menjadikan masyarakat semakin terpinggir dan membina sikap mementingkan diri. Ia bukan sahaja melebarkan jurang antara komuniti-komuniti dalam sesebuah kawasan tetapi menjadikan tempattempat awam terbiar kosong dan meningkatkan kadar punitif di kalangan masyarakat setempat. Malangnya, kadar jenayah tidak pula menunjukkan sebarang tanda pengurangan sebaliknya ia semakin membarah. Tujuan disertasi ini adalah untuk mengenal pasti kaedah pencegahan jenayah dalam komuniti kediaman tidak berpagar (NGRC) di kawasan bandar yang boleh mengurangkan FOC. Terdapat penyelidikan mengenai FOC menunjukkan tahap FOC lebih rendah di kalangan komuniti kediaman tidak berpagar (NGRC) berbanding komuniti kediaman berpagar (GRC). Disertasi ini dirangka bagi mengkaji semula kajian-kajian lain yang berkaitan dengannya dan mencari kaedah reka bentuk seni bina berdasarkan sokongan hujah-hujah yang releven. Disertasi ini adalah penyelidikan berteraskan literature- atau library-based. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa strategi CPTED yang dilaksanakan lebih menerapkan kaedah generasi ke-2 CPTED (2GenCPTED) yang lebih berorientasikan keselamatan masyarakat. Kesimpulannya, tahap FOC dalam NGRC masih dipengaruhi oleh penyelesaian reka bentuk seni bina, tidak hanya bergantung kepada perkara-perkara sosial atau psikologi.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATION

FOC - Fear of crime

CPTED - Crime Prevention through Environmental Design

GRC - Gated Residential Communities

NGRC - Non-Gated Residential Communities

SOC - Sense of Community

RC - Residential Community

LTH - Linear Terrace Housing

HTH - Honeycomb Terrace Housing

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural

Organization

1stGenCPTED - First Generation CPTED

2ndGenCPTED - Second Generation CPTED

3rdGenCPTED - Third Generation CPTED

GTSADP - George Town Special Area Draft Plan

MPPP - Majlis Perbandaran Pulau Pinang

## LIST OF GLOSSARIES

Cul-de-sac - a street that is designed to connect to another street

only at one end

Residential - containing mostly homes instead of stores, businesses,

etc.

Community - a group of people who live in the same area (such as a

city, town, or neighborhood)

Terrace - a row of houses that are joined together, a group of

row houses

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## **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

## 1.1 Introduction

Housing is an essential need for everyone (Ta, 2000). Therefore, many researchers have studied on how residential communities can develop to be a safer place for society, preventing incidences of crimes and encourages unique identity of its group (Wolfe, Bakos, & Chapin, 1985). With a forever increasing number of population and also immigration, owning a dwelling place called 'home' in a general residential area is becoming less likely because too many multi-ethnicity, a large gap of the age group and personal interests can weaken the Sense of Community (SOC) within the area (McMillan & George, 2003). SOC always mention as one of the factors that contribute to deterring crime as it encourages the residents to know one another; it strengthens the community reliance on each other, and increases awareness of outsiders (Kingston, Mitchell, Florin, & Steven, 1999). Fear of Crime (FOC) has close connection to crime prevention. With the comprehensive level of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) implemented in designing residential communities, it is unfortunate to see level of FOC within gated area is higher than within non-gated area. This dissertation aims to seek the criteria that lead to this result in previous related research.

#### 1.2 Problem Statement

There are a few discussions and papers written about the *Gated-, and Non-Gated Residential Areas* where CPTED measures are taken into account, such as a case study on terrace housing area in Kuala Lumpur (Mohit & Elsawahli, 2010); a pilot survey on evaluating CPTED in gated area (Sakip & Abdullah, 2012); the users' perception towards gated and guarded residential area in his thesis (Wei, 2007).

Physical elements such as gates and fences are proven to establish territoriality in a residential community (Newman, 1996) and the design of access and egress for housing area itself control the intended users (Abdullah, Salleh, & Md Sakip, 2012). Other researchers also have outlined CPTED strategies that can be applied to the residential communities and partially successive attempts. Wilson presented in his paper titled 'Designing out Crime', that Newman does not agree with the urban fortress scenario that envisages residents retreating their homes and hiding behind a configuration of security hardware (Geason & Wilson, 1989). It does not allow a community to grow, establish the neighbourhood with a good living quality and decreasing the residents' sense of responsibility (Geason & Wilson, 1989).

Throughout several literatures, the author found that CPTED seems to reduce the incidence of crime but is not really effective when it comes to reducing fear of crime (FOC) (Minnery, 2005). Based on research conducted by A. Abdullah, M. N. Mohd Salleh and S.R. Md Sakip; the residents who live in *Gated Communities* experience higher fear of crime level (M=5.84, SD=1.23) compared to residents who live in *Non-Gated Communities* (M=3.85, SD=1.66) (Abdullah, Salleh, & Md Sakip, 2012). This result has led the author to study further in this dissertation. The author chooses to study on how this result can end up since gates and fences seem to be a clear barrier between public and private spaces in housing area.

## 1.3 Research Objectives

The aim of this research is to identify the crime prevention strategies that were applied within *Non-Gated Residential Communities* (NGRC) in urban areas that leads to lower level of *Fear of Crime* compared to *Gated Residential Communities* (GRC). Initially, this research was derived from the author's proposal for Design Thesis, the issue for this research is raised from site analysis of the project. At the end of the study, it can help to formulate the overview of the Design Thesis and enrich the understanding on certain aspects when designing NGRC. Throughout this research, there are several objectives that need to be fulfilled which are:

- i) To identify/clarify factors of *Fear of Crime* in residential communities
- To investigate residential crimes in housing area within urban context as it helps to know the relationships between fear of crime and non-gated residential communities
- iii) To outline crime prevention strategies implemented in current practices within *Gated- and Non-Gated Residential Communities*

## 1.4 Research Question

Based on literature studies, research questions arising are:-

- i) What is the factor of FOC within residential communities? How does FOC affect the residents? How FOC is being measured?
- ii) What are the similarities and differences of crime prevention strategies that were applied within *Gated* and *Non-Gated Residential Communities*?
- iii) How can these strategies be adapted in order to reduce residential crime in *Non-Gated Residential Communities* in urban areas?

#### 1.5 Literature Review

This chapter will discuss findings from the literature including previous thesis, books and journal papers. It is important to have these as main references to this research because this dissertation is applying literature based research. Firstly, the author will bring the reader to understand the concept, theory and principle of FOC whether in general or in housing design. This understanding will help the author to formulate the chapter towards fruitful writing.

Secondly, the chapter will discuss the definition of residential community. This will give a thorough understanding of residential community and what are the matters that help build it. For instance, residential communities in high-rise urban dwellings are different from the rural area with regards to its ethnicity, age group, interest, living expenses and others.

Thirdly, the concern of this dissertation which is residential concepts will be discussed in conjunction with residential communities. Several studies that relate to FOC will be collected. The author will deepen the understanding of residential crimes that relates to building residents' awareness and fear toward crimes that have happened and are expected to happen within their neighbourhoods.

Other than that, this chapter will also compare the criteria and crime prevention strategies in GRC and NGRC. It will also describe CPTED in housing design mentioned by theorists in the respective fields. In addition, there is a subtopic that discusses the scenario of residential communities within urban heritage areas.

Lastly, all the sub-topics will be summarised in order to find the relationship and to build common principles, theory and understanding for the author. The information will be further analysed in another chapter.

## 1.6 Research Methodology

This chapter starts with the fundamental understanding of the research paradigm to formulate direction of the research. This research discusses the methodology in Chapter 3 and the framework of the research will be elaborated

extensively. There are few advantages for establishing the research paradigm. Researcher found that the research paradigm will help to articulate the theory and formulate the literature review into comprehensive analysis. Primary data comes from the observation from the site visits. Secondary data are books, grey literature, journal article and internet-based article and previous theses that related to the subject matter which is fear of crime. This will be further discussed in the Chapter 3.

Research design helps the author to use methods that drive the research. Method use is qualitative; where this method is useful when it comes to human and social science research. Creswell discussed that traditions like data collection, analysis, and report writing are included in all the phases in the research process (Creswell, 1994).

## 1.7 Expected Findings

From this study, it is expected that CPTED is not the only method that important in preventing incidence of crimes in residential community. Based on several researches, it was mentioned that stronger SOC within a residential community will dismiss the intended users and lower the opportunity of crime to happen within their areas.

The primary contribution is to clarify the potential of NGRC of being a safe development within urban areas. This will not only establish the need for tightened security measures for the residents but also helps to build up community awareness and responsibility among designers, architects and other respective practitioners.

The author would have to list down the possible improvement of relevant crime prevention strategies in NGRC especially when the residential communities (i.e. public housing) is located at very open and accessible area such as in urban areas. Resulted from this research, the guidelines is to be applied in the design thesis proposal. However, the guidelines need another research to verify its effectiveness towards real project since this research only based on literature review.

#### 1.8 Structure of Thesis

Generally, the research is divided into five main chapters. Chapter 1 provides an overview of overall study including background of study, research objectives, research questions, and literature review, outline the framework and methodology and expected findings of the study.

Chapter 2 presented collective studies on topics related which includes understanding CPTED, category of crimes in residential area, understanding urban heritage area, *Gated-* and *Non-Gated Residential Community* and community participation, case studies and other topics to support the research.

Chapter 3 discussed the methodology of the dissertation which includes case study on multi-storey housing development in urban heritage area; discusses in research paradigm and research design; and outlining the framework of research.

Chapter 4 comprised data of the dissertation. In this chapter, by using case studies, data is collected for the analysis. End of the chapter, synthesis of this data will be discussed to form possible strategies to achieve aim and objectives that mention in the earlier chapter.

Chapter 5 concluded this dissertation with a summary of research and mention the significance of the overall research. In addition, this chapter will also highlight the shortcomings of the research and recommend potential future work regarding this subject.

## 1.9 Summary

This study is an extension from other researches and it is specifically focusing on fear of crime in NGRC in urban heritage area. From this topic, we can understand that the author's perspective is not from CPTED perspective only but also how to relate to being responsive to heritage environment. It is a possibility that the solution would contribute to the improvisation of current practices in the country. It is not only developing good image to the practitioners but also help to engage better community participation pertaining to *Non-Gated Residential Communities*.

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