The Systematic Review on Sense of Security in Urban Neighborhoods

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Abstract: Sense of security has been highlighted as one of significant factor due improving the quality of life in urban neighborhoods in previous researches. This research’s aim is to provide a holistic overview on literatures addressing the significance of sense of security and factors influencing it. To do so, 46 research articles relating to sense of security in urban neighborhoods are considered and reviewed. The results revealed the significant factors affecting sense of security in urban neighborhoods by considering the existing inconsistencies of the results. The validity and reliability of the articles with the focus on statistical strategies are examined and the possible moderation of effects are surely investigated and warranted.

Keywords: Sense of Security, Urban Neighborhoods.

1. Introduction

DeFrances and Smith (1998) argued that with reducing the sense of security in urban neighborhoods, the increasing concerns over the urban neighborhoods’ crime is occurring for people especially for American psyche that fear of becoming a victim of criminal misconduct is the main concern. Keane (1998), Ross and Jang (2000) highlighted the association among individual’s sense of security with the limitations of personal freedom, social isolations and lack of trust between neighbors. According to Hamed Najafpour et al (2014), sense of security as factor influencing quality of life in urban neighborhoods is significant. Moreover, other researches also revealed the significance of socioeconomic status on urban neighborhoods’ sense of security (Mohsen Ghods et al (2014), Mohsen Ghods et al (2014), Vahid Bigdeli Rad et al (2014), Mohsen Roshan et al (2014), Sharifah Salwa Syed Mahdzar, Hossein Safari (2014), Vahid Bigdeli Rad and Ibrahim Ngah (2014) and Vahid Bigdeli Rad and Ibrahim Ngah (2013)). According to Hamed Najafpour et al (2013), legible environmental of urban neighborhood also can promote the residents’ sense of security there. Furthermore, Vahid Bigdeli Rad et al (2014) reviewed factors influencing safety in urban neighborhoods and they mentioned the importance of sense of security in urban neighborhoods. Therefore, this research undertook a comprehensive and holistic overview on previous articles with the focus on sense of security in urban neighborhoods to catch the main factors associating with it.

2. Methods

Due to catch the aim of this research, the most related and extensive research articles with association to sense of security in urban neighborhoods are undertaken.

2.1 The strategy of research

Due to the aim of this research, four electronic databases such as Taylor and Francis, Web of Science, Google Scholar and Sage Publication, were considered. In addition, the research scope designed in accordance to articles with English language during 1980 to 2009. In this regard, most appropriate and well matched articles with the principles and scope of research considering sense of security in urban neighborhoods were undertaken. Finally, extracted articles were inspected by asking the experts of architectural and urban design criteria due establishing accuracy and robustness of the research.

2.2 Selection of criteria

Investigating on factors influencing sense of security in urban neighborhoods was the aim of this research. To do so, articles with explosive association to sense of security, urban neighborhoods and crime issues were considered and interventional and qualitative studies, proceedings of conferences and the opinions of experts were undertaken.
3. Research results
3.1 The characteristics of research

The characteristics of 46 reviewed articles focusing on sense of security in urban neighborhoods are shown in Table 1. Moreover, instead of article with the number of 40 which was theoretical based (reviewed book), the other articles were structured based on statistical analysis. As illustrated in Table 1, 76 percent of reviewed articles were conducted in American urban neighborhoods and 15.2 and 8.6 percent of them were conducted in European and Australian urban neighborhoods respectively. Additionally, undertaken sample sizes were ranged from 100 to 8845 participants which 89.7 percent of them were focused on both females and males and the rest were just considered women. Furthermore, 89.13 percent of reviewed articles were conducted on urban neighborhoods and the others were investigated on urban and rural neighborhoods. As next step of this research, factors associating with sense of security in urban neighborhoods addressing different points of views are highlighted to establish a holistic overview on undertaken articles. Meanwhile, the summaries of factors affecting sense of security in urban neighborhoods are illustrated in Table 2 of this research.

3.2 Assessment of Factors Sense of Security in Urban Neighborhoods

Ainsworth BE et al (2003) considering the association among physical activity and social, cultural, environmental, policy and personal variables highlighted the factors affecting residents’ physical activity. In addition, they highlighted the effect of physical activity on people sense of security in urban neighborhoods. Veba and Nile quoted in Allen-hays et al 2007 which focused on examining the significance of characteristic of neighborhoods and their attachment with neighborhoods’ social network by simulating the residents’ participation in Waterloo urban neighborhoods highlighted the association between physical participation in urban neighborhoods and sense of security. Austin, D.M et al (2002) highlighting the association among the condition of urban neighborhoods and people sense of security revealed the association among the quality of housing and neighborhood, victimization experiences with sense of security. Ball, K et al (2007) focused on the relationship between environmental, social and personal items with women’s participating in urban physical activity such as walking. They pointed that diverse environmental, social and personal items and sense of security were related to people physical participation in urban neighborhoods.

Table 1: The Characteristic of Research based on 46 reviewed articles

| Sample size | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| n ≤ 150     | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 150 (n ≤ 500)| X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 500 (n ≤ 1000)| X |   |   | X | X | X | X | X |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| n ≥ 1000    | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Country     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| America     | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Europe      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Australia   | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Setting     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Urban       | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Urban rural |   | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Gender      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Female +    | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Male        |   | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |

Table 2.2: Factors Affecting Sense of Security in Urban Neighborhoods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Factors Influencing Sense of Security</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1  | Ball et al. (2007), Harrison et al. (2007), Piro et al. (2006), Doyle et al. (2006), Suminski et al. (2005), Li et al. (2005), Lim and Taylor (2005), Hooker et al. (2005), Humphel et al. (2004), Foster et al. (2004), Young and Voorhees (2003), Wilbur et al. (2003), Eyler et al. (2003), De Bourdeaudhuij et al. (2003), Ainsworth et al. (2003), Giles-Corti and Donovan (2002a), Giles-Corti et al. (2002b), Craig et al. (2002), Carnegie et al. (2002), Brownson et al. (2001), King et al. (2000), Booth et al. (2000), (Ve ba & Nile quoted in Dekker (2007) and Allen-hays et al. (2007)), Crank et al. (2003) and Long and Sarason (1971 quoted in Mannarini and Tedi (2009)). | Physical Participation:  
- Walk-ability  
- Casual interaction between neighbors  
- Social Cohesion  
- During a Day  
- During a Night |

In addition, examining the association of social participation, victimization and neighborhood satisfaction with sense of security in urban neighborhoods, Baba, Y et al (1989) revealed the association among neighborhood satisfaction and victimization experiences with sense of security and no relationship between physical participation and sense of security in urban neighborhoods. Booth, M.L et al (2000) investigated on identifying the association among environmental affects and social cognitive with old people’s physical participation in urban neighborhoods. They revealed the relationship among physical activity and physical participation in urban neighborhoods. In addition, Brown, B.B et al (2004) undertook a model to examine the association among incivilities such as unkempt lawns and litter with crime and sense of security in urban neighborhoods and resulted the negative effects of incivilities in sense of security of residents in urban neighborhoods.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighborhood Incivilities</th>
<th>Physical Environment</th>
<th>Demographic Factors</th>
<th>Victimization Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Fear of Crime</td>
<td>- Appearance</td>
<td>- Gender</td>
<td>- Serious crimes known as: (Murder, Non-negligent manslaughter, Forcible rape, Robbery, Aggravated assault, Burglary, Larceny-theft and motor vehicle theft people get attacked or Physically Injured)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Perceptions of Incivilities</td>
<td>- Building design</td>
<td>- Age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Disturbances by neighbors or youngsters</td>
<td>- Street Lightings</td>
<td>- Socio economic status</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Natural surveillance</td>
<td>- Education,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Educational status</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|

4. Conclusion

This research considered forty-six research articles relating to sense of security in urban neighborhoods. Five main factors and their sub-factors relating to sense of security in urban neighborhoods are revealed. There were very few scholars providing the groups of indicators associating to sense of security in urban neighborhoods. The significant of sense of security for urban neighborhoods was highlighted as the first step of this research and then factors such as Physical Participation (Walk-ability, Casual interaction between neighbors, Social Cohesion, During a Day and During a Night), Neighborhood Incivilities (Fear of Crime, Perceptions of Incivilities and Disturbances by neighbors or youngsters), Physical Environment (Appearance, Building design, Street Lightings and Natural surveillance), Demographic Factors (Gender, Age, Socio economic status, Education and Educational status) and Victimization Experience (Serious crimes known as: (Murder, Non-negligent manslaughter, Forcible rape, Robbery, Aggravated assault, Burglary, Larceny-theft and motor vehicle theft people get attacked or Physically Injured)) associating with sense of security in urban neighborhoods are highlighted.

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