

Rural Policing of Burglary at Residential Premises in Ga-Molepo Village, Limpopo Province, South Africa

Beauty Mogaladi Malatjie,¹ Witness Maluleke²,
Khomotjo Phalane³ & Tinyiku David Ngoveni⁴

Abstract

There has been a massive decline in the ability of prominent community stakeholders to police and solve burglary at residential premises at selected rural areas. The objective of this study was to explore rural policing of burglary at residential premises within the Ga-Molepo village, Limpopo Province, South Africa. This was supported by the application of the Broken Window Theory (BWT). The inductive Thematic Content Analysis (TCA) was followed for data analysis. About Thirty-Two [32] participants were purposively selected from Mankweng-selected rural areas. From a qualitative standpoint and adoption of exploratory research design, data was gathered through semi-structured In-Depth Interviews (IDIs). The inductive Thematic Content Analysis (TCA) was adopted for analysis. This study established that more training is required, and forensic investigators are urgently needed to support the local South African Police Service (SAPS), as they seem to be incapable of preventing this crime, but only respond after commission of this crime (Practicing reactive rural policing) and they even fail to deal with backlog of reported cases. For recommendations, the local SAPS members in a rural setting should prioritise this crime, irrespective of its nature, while using the 'Night Guards' to oppose threats and restore peace and order.

Keywords: Burglary at residential premises, Ga-Molepo village, Limpopo Province, Rural policing, South Africa

¹ The author is a Master Arts (MA) graduate in Criminology from University of Limpopo (UL). She worked as a Trainee Fraud Investigator at South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) under the Risk Management and Compliance Unit from 2021 to 2023. Her research interest is rooted on 'Rural Policing.' She can be reached at beautymogaladi2@gmail.com

² The author is an Associate Professor (Rural Criminologist) under the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice of UL. His research interests are demarcated to 'Endangered species/plants, Rural policing and Stock theft. He can be reached at witness.maluleke@ul.ac.za

³ The author is a Doctor of Philosophy: Criminology graduate, a senior Lecturer, attached to the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice of UL. Her research interest is confined to Victimology. She can be reached at khomotjo.Phalane@ul.ac.za

⁴ The author is the Chair of Department (CoD), attached to the Department of Criminology and Security Science, University of South Africa. His research interests are demarcated to 'Corrections management and Policing. He can be reached at ngovetd@unisa.ac.za

Introduction

The traditional Criminal Justice System's (CJS) approach to burglary prevention has two elements: police emergency response intervention and investigation, as well as prosecution and punishment. These are based on principles of general deterrence and specific deterrence, but also extend to the incapacitated effect of imprisonment. This seems like a failed model. Burglars fear being caught but they see the risk of being caught are very small (Wright & Decker, 1994). Burglars who are caught do not expect to be caught again. This is an objective perspective, given the extremely low conviction rates. One study found that only 1% of burglaries involve the perpetrator being caught in the act (Felson, 1994).

The SAPS inability to effectively deal with residential burglaries in South Africa seems to be related mainly to the reactionary policing style of the police (Govender, 2015). The SAPS is now more focused on law enforcement than crime prevention or the protection of private property. With limited staff and resources, SAPS struggles to meet the needs and expectations of the community in terms of protection from thieves and armed robbers. In this context, individual households are increasingly aware of the need to protect themselves and initiate crime prevention actions within their own communities such as neighborhood watch and Community Policing Forums committee (Govender, 2015).

Literature review and theoretical framework on rural policing of burglary at residential premises

The contributory factors of burglary at a residential premises

Bennett and Wright (1984) are in agreement that within the context, three main elements are involved in the burglary at a residential premises process, namely: (1) The burglar(s) with the motive, (2) Selection of suitable target/residence and (3) The residents deemed as the victim. These three components are seen as dynamic entities, with many different attributes and possible manifestations, which interact in such a manner that this crime often occurs. The many different attributes and possible manifestations can be studied through the identification of factors or variables in a conceptual framework. There are several reasons behind why people choose to commit residential burglary. Burglars are motivated by the money, more than anything else, whether the need is real or perceived, or by greed.

Knowledge of the area and potential victims: The environment in which burglary at a residential premises takes place

The study by the University of North Carolina at Charlotte Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology conducted by Blevins, Kuhns and Lee (2012) entitled: *“Understanding decisions to burglarise from the offender’s perspective,”* indicates that there are multiple motivations for engaging in burglary at a residential premises including drugs, money, foolishness, and thrill-seeking. Within this sample it was quite apparent that drug and alcohol use were, at a minimum, correlated to involvement in burglary at a residential premises and in many cases, the direct cause, and a primary motivator, for males and females alike. Within the entire sample, 88% of respondents indicated that their top reason for committing burglaries was related to their need to acquire drugs (51%) or money (37%), although many reported needing the money to support drug problems. Crack or powder cocaine and heroin were the drugs most often reportedly used by these offenders and these substances were often being used in combination with other substances, including marijuana and alcohol, during burglary at residential premises attempts.

Usually, professional burglars work with an ‘inside person’ or they are an inside person. This person has access to the potential target and advises the potential burglar about the things they can steal from the house. The person may also provide very sensitive information, such as the time when the owners are away and the weaknesses in security at the house. For example, housemaids and gardeners work with burglars and update them on what is new in the house and where they keep the money. The maid would wait until the family goes on a vacation and call the burglars to come take what they want (Cromwell, Olson & Avary, 1991).

In other instances, the person may not be aware that they are an informant for the burglary. They could mention that the owner is going on a vacation and that they have bought new furniture or they have been keeping a large amount of money in the house, to their family or friends. For example; a maid from a disadvantaged home may mention to her siblings that her boss is going away for the weekend and they will be alone in the house, however, one of their siblings is a burglar who sees an opportunity (Cromwell, Olson & Avary, 1991).

People who live a wealthy lifestyle are associated with valuable goods in their household which may attract a potential burglar when searching for a suitable target. Burglars may see the lifestyle of flashy life, expensive cell phones, clothes, shoes, or the cars driven by the residents (Van Zyl, Wilson & Pretorius, 2003). This gives the

burglar the impression that the house has more valuable goods that can bring them good money. A burglar may assume that they may have a stash of cash in the house or expensive jewelry they can sell for money. Residents may also be ignorant in taking safety precautions, especially if they have never been victims of a burglary at a residential premises before. Certain residents are much more at risk of being victimised, as they regarded as easy targets (Van Zyl *et al.*, 2003)

SecurAlert (2013) highlights that profiling of the average burglar suggests that most burglars are males under 25 years of age (usually mid to late teens) and not the smooth, cool, dapper professional you see on Television (TV) or in the movies. They are thug's looking for an easy score and can be very sloppy in terms of how they break into and run-sack a home. Most use ordinary household tools to break into a home including, screwdrivers, channel-lock pliers, small pry bars and hammers. Many times, they just use brute force to go through a door or window and most have an arrest record, usually for robbery, assault or drug-related offenses so although they are typically not prone to violence, when surprised or confronted by an occupant, they could attack.

Open or not properly locked windows and doors: The conditions that exist prior to the commission of burglary at a residential premises

Zinn (2010) provides that, burglars tend to target estate residents because they assume that those roaming around the area are legit and have been let in by security at the gate. People who reside in estate houses are not careful with their security systems and they tend to leave the doors and windows open. They do not pay attention to what happens outside their house, like seeing strangers, they just assume they have been cleared at the gate by security, whereas they may not have been. This makes it easy for burglars to gain access to their houses because of the open door or window. Having good and multiple locks on doors and windows makes it hard for burglars to succeed when they attempt to push a door or window. Houses with badly maintained doors and windows are more attractive to burglars. When a burglar tries to force entry into a house and they struggle, they are likely to attempt someplace else or not proceed with the crime for that day. For houses that are not well maintained, they tend to gain easy access and may not even have to worry about making sounds that may get them caught (Aantjes, 2012).

Lack of home security or burglar alarm: Motivations based on suitable targets

Cromwell, Olson, and Avary (1991) argue that burglars prefer to target residents who do not have an alarm rather than to take the greater risk of being caught

by burglarising a house with an alarm system. Some of these burglars pull away from houses that have a warning sign of a burglar alarm, they do not want to take the risk of finding out if the residents are bluffing or not. Although some burglars may take the risk of entering a house that has an alarm system because the response from the police or security company may take a few minutes. In such cases the burglar may not take a lot of things, they may take jewellery or things that will not make it hard for them to lift. The advantage is that most furniture cannot be taken or they will not do a lot of damage since they had limited time.

Dogs are believed to have a very positive impact in reducing the chances of a house being burglarised. Dogs are very effective in discouraging burglars from entering a residence. They are a security system that is used in both rural and urban areas. The absence of a dog results in burglar(s) entering the residential premises with no notice. Dogs usually bark when they see someone they do not know or something strange happening in their surroundings. The barking will then wake people in the house to check if things are okay outside. Burglars feel that they will easily get caught once a dog barks since people are now aware and they beg off (Cromwell, Olson & Avary, 1991). Security systems are mainly to prevent crime from taking place in your household. Nine out of ten burglars, when they encounter an alarm or security system, refrain from burglarising the house. Houses with no security system are more likely to be subjected to burglary. Taking precautions on windows and doors should be a priority for one's home safety (Lifeshield, 2012).

Lack of outdoor security lighting

The more favourable the burglar perceives specific conditions, the greater the chance that he will proceed with the burglary. Lighting around the house can prevent a successful burglary. Houses that have lights in their surroundings or streets that have lights are less likely to be burglarised. Most people who commit burglary at a residential premises avoid being seen by other people and lights make their presence more visible because they can be detected more easily. The most effective lights are motion-sensing lights which are able to detect when someone is in the surroundings, they detect movement (Aantjes, 2012). Motion sensing lights are effective because immediately when a burglar is sensed in the surroundings, they turn on or alert the owner, thus the burglar fails to proceed with their initial plan of stealing. When a residence is dark, the likelihood of detecting if someone is in the house is very slim. Neighbours will not be able to see if an unordinary event is taking place at the house when there is no lighting. Lighting gives burglars the impression that they can be seen and that someone is

watching them, which makes it harder for them to continue with their initial plan of burglarising the house (Aantjes, 2012). This also relates to the design feature of neighbourhoods or residences; thus, all neighbourhoods are prone to burglary; they are all regarded as a target areas although the nature and extent of the burglary at residential premises will differ between neighbourhoods or designs. Urban areas or more affluent areas may be targeted by burglars for valuable goods (Van Zyl, 2006).

Residents who are away from home due to work, recreational activities or other purposes give burglars an opportunity to break and enter the house in their absence. As a burglar's main viewpoint is not being seen that is the best opportunity for them to burglarise a house. If they meet the residents of the house, it would be an accident and not something that was done intentionally (Van Zyl, Wilson & Pretorius, 2003). Aantjes (2012) further indicates that burglars refrain from committing a burglary at residential premises in neighbourhoods where there are people in the street or those doing outdoor activities.

Walmsley and Lewis (1993) produced research results that indicated a distinct association between middle to upper-income suburban neighbourhoods and property crimes such as burglary, larceny, and car theft, whereas low-income neighbourhoods were associated with crimes of violence. Walmsley and Lewis (1993) further stress that residential premises with accessible good roads may become more vulnerable to this crime than those with limited roads access, as accessibility to and exit from the target area can be achieved. Burglars are motivated by the need for money, more than anything else, whether the need is real or perceived, Walmsley and Lewis (1993). The motivated burglar tends to search for a suitable target in the neighbourhood he knows best (Walmsley & Lewis, 1993). If he has specific knowledge of a target and its occupants or has gained inside information through a tipster, that target will be more vulnerable than other potential targets of which he has no knowledge. The process of burglary at a residential premises involves the decision-making judgement by the burglar (Walmsley & Lewis, 1993). When a motivated burglar finds a suitable target, the immediate situational conditions will influence his final decision whether to proceed with the burglary at a residential premises or not. The situational conditions refer to the local conditions prevailing in the micro-environment prior to the commission of the burglary. The more favourable the burglar perceives these conditions, the greater the chance that they will proceed with the burglary at a residential premises (Walmsley & Lewis, 1993).

Hearnden and Magill (2004) reveal that burglars often abuse alcohol and drugs, which increases the need for money, this is clearly linked to the prevalence of burglary

at residential premises, using stolen items for sale. The study conducted by Jalilian, Alavijeh, Changizi, Ahmadpanah, Amoei, and Mostafavi (2014) identified Five (05) main themes resulting from the fieldwork interviews by participants; coded as follows: “1) Personal factors, 2) Family attitudes, 3) Conditions, 4) Others’ effects, regulations on burglary at a residential premises punishment, and; 5) Availability of stolen property.”

Recently (2018-2023), the most problematic criminals in the area are local burglars, the ones that are native citizens of this area, they collude with foreign nationals in the commission of these crimes. These criminals abuse alcohol and drugs, they are often referred to as addict adolescents, they practice this as a lifestyle. The most stolen items are jewellery, money, home electronics, laptops, tablets, mobile phones, and TVs, among others. Sometimes it is very unusual items, such as clothes and food. This crime is likely to be committed by homeless people at times. In an attempt to respond to these crimes effectively, Walmsley and Lewis (1993) share that it is hard to break into commercially owned buildings as businesses, stores, and banks manage their money differently than they used to, making the money harder to get a hold of, decreasing the gain and increasing the risks. Residences, on the other hand, often are empty and unattended during the day. Potential victims sometimes have great deals on valuable items at home that are easy to sell and divest. It is also hard to prosecute someone for a burglary at a residential premises if they have not left any traces, such as Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) or fingerprints, or if someone did not see them in the act (Sonne, 2006).

This is also a contributing reason why people commit residential burglary. In cases where there is no trace of a person, one must concentrate on the objects that were stolen. Bad descriptions, lack of photographs or markings, and so on, make it hard to find any stolen object and connect it to a specific burglary at a residential premises. In terms of properly preventing, combating, investigating, and policing burglary at residential premises where a suspect is unknown, the Criminal Law (Forensic Procedures) Amendment Act (No. 37 of 2013) (The ‘DNA Act’) can assist the police by identifying the suspect by means of fingerprints, footprints, or any physical evidence that can be found at the crime scene (Sonne, 2006).

The prevalence of burglary at residential premises

Burglary at a residential premises is a property crime that has the highest occurrence rate of all crimes in South Africa. It may therefore have a significant impact on people’s perceptions and feelings of safety (Shaw, 1997). The picture that the media

portrays of South Africa, locally and abroad, is that the country is burdened with high crime levels. This poses a real challenge to the safety and security of ordinary citizens, and to tourists visiting the country. Crime has the potential to derail the transformation process in South Africa and to deepen the already existing divisions within society (Shaw, 1997). Generally, the Victims of Crime Survey (VOCS) looks at private houses from all nine provinces in South Africa and offers data about the changing characteristics of crime from the viewpoint of these houses and the victims of crime. According to previous reports, and in line with the SAPS' statistics, the most common crime experienced by South Africans is burglary and household robbery, resulting in 969,567 (VOCS, 2017/18).

According to the (VOCS, 2018/19) report, incidences of deliberate damage to residential property and arson, theft of personal property, and street robbery increased in 2018/19 compared to 2017/18. There were about 70,000 incidences of deliberate damage to residential property and arson in 2018/19. This crime affected 0.32% of households in South Africa. The SAPS number of reported cases of burglary at residential premises for 2018/19 is far outside the 95% confidence interval for the estimated number of reported cases. This implies that the estimated number of reported cases from the Government, Public Safety and Justice Survey (GPSJS) is significantly higher than the number of cases of burglary reported by the SAPS (VOCS, 2018/19). Importantly, nearly 184,000 houses experienced just over 264,000 incidents of household robberies over the previous 12 months but the SAPS has only 22431 cases reported in its statistics. Yet again, the occurrence of these crimes could be as much as 12 times higher than is revealed in police statistics (VOCS, 2018/2019).

In 2019/20, there were 205,959 house burglaries reported to the police, and an average of 464 houses were burgled per day (VOCS, 2019/20). The number of households that experienced burglary in the past five years preceding the survey increased from 2,1 million in 2015/16 to 2,3 million in 2019/20. With an estimated 1,2 million incidences of burglary in 2019/20 and affecting 891,000 households in South Africa, this represented 5,3% of all households in the country. While incidents of burglary peaked in June and December during the 2018/19 period, burglary peaked in June, September, and December in 2019/20 (VOCS, 2019/20).

The Republic of South Africa's crime statistics of burglary at residential premises is 39,477 from April to June 2021-2022, it increased from 37,128 from April to June 2020-2021. Residential burglary has increased by 6, 3 % (Statistics South Africa, 2022). Criminality patterns and movements differ significantly between urban

suburbs and traditional lower-income areas such as towns and informal settlements. The lower class is mostly defenseless to both the dangers and the consequences of victimisation. They are generally powerless to decrease the likelihood of being victimised, for instance, by connecting safekeeping gates and alarm systems, and are repeatedly not gifted to protect or to replace taken things (Louw & Shaw, 1997).

According to (GPSJS) 2022/23, housebreaking/ burglary at residential premises is the most common crime experienced by households in South Africa. A total of 1,1 million households experienced housebreaking incidences in the 2022/23 period. An estimated 1,6 million incidences of housebreaking occurred, representing 5,7% of all households in the country. About 51% of households that experienced housebreaking reported some or all incidences to the police. The percentage of households that reported the incidences to the police decreased from 59,2% in 2021/22 to 51,4% in 2022/23, and housebreaking was more often experienced by male-headed households than women-headed households and households in non-metro areas (Statistics South Africa, 2023). The SAPS's latest crime stats for the Fourth (4th) quarter of 2022/23, indicated that robberies at residential premises increased by 4% when compared to January-March 2022. Statistics South Africa says that house break-ins are the most common crime experienced by households in South Africa (Auto & General, 2023).

Moreover, this type of property crime will possibly continue to be a severe problem in the community for the foreseeable future (Brown & Benedict, 2002). Another challenge is that national-level crime statistics obscure the immensely skewed distribution of crime within a country, city, or neighbourhood. The rates of most crime, especially property crimes, are significantly higher in urban areas than in rural areas (Kriegler & Shaw, 2016).

Impacts of burglary on residential premises

The impact of burglary on a resident's feelings of safety will vary from person to person, depending on how seriously they were affected by the burglary. Barkan (1997) confirms that female victims of burglary at a residential premises are more likely than male victims to be afraid and upset, while male victims are more likely to be angry or annoyed after experiencing a burglary. According to the research, the main results show that the victims of burglary at a residential premises often suffer from several anxieties after the offence. Given that most studies were conducted a short time after the burglary, fewer studies have emphasized the long-term strain and change in behaviour (Wollinger, 2017). It was also found that time played an important role in the

feelings people experienced directly after a burglary at a residential premises and after some time elapsed (Wollinger, 2017).

Burglary at a residential premises has a huge psychological and emotional impact that is overlooked by many people, including South African law enforcement agencies such as the SAPS. When a person reports burglary, not only were their belongings stolen but also their feelings of safety. The impact of burglary at a residential premises differs from one person to another and it also depends on the extent of the burglary. The impact depends on how seriously one was affected by the burglary. Female victims tend to be afraid and upset whereas male victims are filled with anger or annoyed after experiencing burglary at a residential premises (Van Zyl *et al.*, 2003). Victims of burglary at a residential premises experience feelings of outrage, frustration and feel exposed by their burglar (Butcher, 1991).

Theoretical framework

The Broken Windows Theory

The study implements BWT as a guide in exploring the policing of burglary at residential premises. The BWT of societal order proposes that societies must be cautious against the least criminalities (Wilson & Kelling, 1982). If such disorders or small crimes are not taken seriously, as a result, serious crimes can be committed. The police must take all crimes seriously irrespective of their nature. If the police uphold its old-style role as night guards the threats to order within the society flourish (Hinkle, 2013). This theory proposes that policing approaches that target slight criminalities such as wreckage, public drinking, and fare dodging aid in creating an atmosphere of order and fairness, thereby avoiding additional serious criminalities. Wilson and Kelling (1982) have in-scribed that broken window policing must not be perceived as zero tolerance or zealotry, but rather as a technique that needs cautious training, rules, and management, and a constructive connection with societies, hence connecting it to community policing (Hinkle, 2013).

The BWT was born out of a trial in policing that was carefully strategised and assessed. However, it was vital to decrease crime, and factored into its analysis were numerous indicators that described crime only. To advance policing in South Africa through a BWT or other approaches we are required to raise a culture and capability of planning and assessing police practices (Hinkle, 2013). The thoughts presented by BWT and policing shows that SAPS may report societal and physical disorder in communities. This suggests that they might prevent serious crime. The “Fixing broken

windows” has developed an essential component of crime prevention tactics and policies (Braga, Welsh & Schnell, 2015).

Methods and materials

This study adopted the exploratory research design, by attempting to gain insight into a situation under research by gathering relevant perceptions from the selected participants. Referring to this study, there seems to be a lack of basic information on this subject. Therefore, this study ensures the selected participants’ acquaintance with the subject, in order to increase their understanding of this crime to become involved in solving the problem of rural policing geared towards burglary at residential premises in Ga-Molepo village, Limpopo Province, South Africa, guided by the stipulated objectives (Maluleke, 2016).

Moreover, the qualitative research approach was employed to provide an understanding of the feelings, values, and perceptions that motivate and influence the participants’ behaviour. Qualitative research’s intention is not to generalise to a population, but to advance a detailed study of a significant phenomenon for transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Research designs ensure that the research accomplishes a purpose, and research can be conducted with existing resources. This study used non-probability: Purposive sampling. Participants with rich information were selected for this study (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). These villages were selected because they experienced high volumes of burglary at residential premises based on the crime statistics found online about Ga-Molepo burglary incidences reported at the Mankweng police station. This study was limited to the Ga-Molepo community, situated in Limpopo Province, Mankweng policing area. The participants for this study in total is 32. Four (04) villages from which the participants were selected, namely Tshebela, Rampheri, Mogano, and Bethel, to conduct this study.

The participants were those who had personally experienced burglary or those who knew someone who was a victim of burglary within the Ga-Molepo community. For this study, eight (08):04 participants from each village were selected to form part of semi-structured IDIs from these villages; Tshebela, Rampheri, Mogano, and Bethel. Each group from each village consisted of community members, community leaders (CPF or Steering Committee leaders), traditional leaders (*Ntona*), and FBOs leaders (Pastors). These villages were selected as they reportedly had experienced this crime.

The inductive TCA was used in these explorations. Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest that it is the first qualitative method that should be learned as it provides core skills that are useful for conducting many other kinds of analysis. Data was analysed

using the following steps of the inductive TCA. The importance of the inductive method is to permit research results to arise from the main or important topics inborn in the raw information, without the limitations executed by arranged methods (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The information collected through IDIs from Ga-Molepo community members after recording the interviews was analysed. What are the causes of burglary and which premises are mostly targeted by burglars? These questions were directed to participants to find out what causes burglary and which premises are mostly targeted.

Brief study findings, analysis, and discussions

The following study theme was identified by this study.

The probable causes and targets of burglary at residential premises

The following question: *“What could be the causes of burglary at a residential premises and which premises are mostly targeted for burglary?”* was posed to all participants to achieve objective 2 of this study. This is what participants revealed in verbatim.

“The participant said that burglary is caused by criminals seeing valuable properties during the day when they pass by the houses and come back at night to burglaries and burglars target houses that have students because they know that they use laptops or tablets for online learning” (Interviewee 1- Tshebela village).

“The participant said that burglary is caused by criminals who wanted electronic devices to sell in order to make money and burglars target big houses thinking that they will find valuable properties” (Interviewee 2- Tshebela village).

“The participant said that burglary is caused by criminals who target houses that are not occupied” (Interviewee 3- Tshebela village).

“The participant said that burglary is caused by being far from Mankweng police station and unemployment, and burglars target houses that are not occupied” (Interviewee 4- Tshebela village).

“The participant said that burglary is caused by criminals who sell properties in order to buy drugs (drug fix) and the burglars target houses that have Digital Satellite Television [DStv] decoder outside” (Interviewee 5- Tshebela village).

“The participant said that they do not know what causes burglary and burglars target premises that have valuable properties” (Interviewee 08- Tshebela village).

“The participant said that burglary is caused by people who are not working and think that they will steal properties and sell them in order to make money and

burglars target big houses assuming that there will be valuable properties” (Interviewee 10- Mogano village).

“The participant said that burglary is caused by unemployment in rural areas and burglars target unoccupied houses and big houses” (Interviewee 12- Mogano village).

“The participant said that burglary is caused by unemployment and laziness of people who like flashy lifestyle and the burglars' target houses where elderly people live alone” (Interviewee 13- Mogano village).

The consulted literature confirmed that people who live a wealthy lifestyle are associated with valuable goods in their household which may attract a potential burglar when searching for a suitable target. Burglars may see the lifestyle of a flashy life, expensive cell phones, clothes, shoes, or the cars driven by the resident (Van Zyl, *et al.* 2003). The residents who are away from home due to work, recreational activities, or other purposes give burglars an opportunity to break and enter the house in their absence. As a burglar's main aim is to not be seen this is the best opportunity for them to burglarise a house (Van Zyl, Wilson & Pretorius, 2003). Hearnden and Magill (2004) revealed that burglars often abuse alcohol and drugs, which increases the need for money, this is clearly linked to the prevalence of burglary at residential premises and selling stolen items for money. It also showed that the scope of visible local policing predisposed individuals' fears of criminality, but assurance in law enforcement too. Sindall and Sturgis (2013) have repeated the concept that perceptibility has an essential and constructive outcome on self-assurance. Target fulfillment with the police is added as an essential step of the law enforcement routine (Sindall & Sturgis, 2013).

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study concludes that burglary at residential premises is one of the most common crimes in rural areas that affects victims severely because of re-victimization and loss of property. The victims are affected psychologically and financially. Victims of burglary also experience trauma and feel that their properties are not protected and feel unsafe, which is the duty of the police to protect them and their properties.

Recommendations on the causes of burglary at residential premises and possible targeted premises

It was established that burglary is caused by unemployment, drugs, laziness and being far from a police station and the criminal's target unoccupied houses, big houses,

houses with DSTV decoder and houses where elderly people live alone. The following were recommended based on the causes of burglary and premises targeted:

- More police must patrol the communities.
- The communities members should be provided with mobile or satellite police station to reduce this crime.
- Formulation of youth programme, which can keep youth busy by preventing them to think about committing this crime.
- The police must be provided with more resources to be able to respond to crimes, for example, the police must be provided with enough vehicles to be able to travel to the crime scenes on time.
- The local SAPS should improve to solve the existing back-log cases by cooperating with stakeholders within community level.
- The found stolen items should be returned to the rightful owners.
- New policies should be introduced to deal with this crime holistically.
- Victim empowerment programme should be inducted to deal with victim's trauma and experienced losses.
- The police should be well-trained and able to deal with different crimes in the communities.
- Allocate more budget to employ more qualified police officers and forensic investigators and train them on techniques that are used when responding to different crime scenes.
- Strengthen security measures around the houses such as locking gates, sensing alarms, electric fences, Close-Circuit Television (CCTV), and lights/ sensing lights.

References

- Aantjes, F. (2012). *Residential burglaries a comparison between self-report studies of burglars and observational data from Enschede*. https://essay.utwente.nl/61668/1/MSc_F_Aantjes.pdf.
- Auto & General [Online]*. (2023). Home robberies on the increase – 8 security barriers that every SA household should consider. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2023-07-31-home-robberies-on-the-increase-8-security-barriers-that-every-sa-household-should-consider/>.
- Barkan, S.E. (1997). *Criminology: A Sociological Understanding*. New Jersey: Upper Saddle River.
- Bennett, T., & Wright, R. (1984). *Burglars on burglary: Prevention and the offender*. Hampshire, United Kingdom: Gower Publishing Limited.
- Blevins, K.R., Kuhns, J.B., & Lee, S. (2012). *Understanding decisions to burglarise from the offender's perspective*. <https://airef.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/BurglarSurveyStudyFinalReport.pdf>
- Braga, AA., Welsh, BC & Schnell, C. (2015). Can Policing Disorder Reduce Crime? A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 53 (4). 567-588.
- Braun, V & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3(2): 77-101.
- Brown, B., & Benedict, W.R. (2002). Perceptions of the Police: Past Findings, Methodological Issues, Conceptual Issues and Policy Implications. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management*, 25(3): 543-580.
- Butcher, D.B. (1991). *Crime in the third dimension: A study of burglary patterns in high-density residential area*. Unpublished Dissertation for Master of Arts (Criminology), Department of Geography, School of Criminology, Simon Fraser University: British Columbia.
- Cromwell, P., Olson, J., & Avary, D. (1991). *Breaking and entering: An ethnographic analysis of burglary*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Felson, M. (1994). *Crime and everyday life: Insight and implications for society*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.
- Govender, D. 2015. State of violent crime in South Africa post 1994. *Journal of Sociology and Social Anthropology*, 6(4), 459-467.

- Hearnden I & Magill C. (2004). #Decision making by house burglars: offenders' perspectives. # Home Office Research Findings No.249, Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate, London.
- Hinkle, J.C. (2013). The relationship between disorder, perceived risk, and collective efficacy: A look into the indirect pathways of the broken windows thesis. *Criminal Justice Studies*, 26 (4), 408-432.
- Jalilian, F., Alavijeh, M.M., Changizi, M., Ahmadpanah, M., Amoei, R.A & Mostafavi, F. (2014). Factors related to burglary from the perspective of burglars: A qualitative study. *Avicenna Journal of Neuro Psycho Physiology*, 1(2), 1-6.
- Kriegler, A., & Shaw, M. (2016). *A Citizen's Guide to Crime Trends in South Africa*, Cape Town: Jonathan Ball.
- Lincoln, Y. & Guba, E. (2000). *Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences: Handbook of qualitative research*. London: Sage Publication Inc.
- Louw, A., & Shaw, M. (1997). Stolen opportunities: the impact of crime on South Africa's poor. *Institute for Security Studies*, 14(1) 1-73.
- Miles, M.B., & Huberman, A.M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. London: Sage Publications.
- Maluleke, W. 2016. *The use of Deoxyribonucleic Acid in combating stock theft in South Africa*. Unpublished Doctor Technologiae: Policing. Soshanguve South: Tshwane University of Technology.
- Marshall, C. & Rossman, G.B. (1999). *Designing qualitative research*. 3rd Edition. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publishing.
- Repetto, T.A. (1974). *Residential Crime*, Cambridge: Ballinger Publishing Company.
- Securalert. (2013). *Home burglary awareness and prevention*. <http://www.jsu.edu/police/docs/Schoolsafety.pdf>.
- Shaw, M. (1997). *Crime in transition*. ISS Monograph Series, 12: 7-27.
- Sindall, K., & Sturgis, P. (2013). 'Austerity Policing: Is visibility more important than absolute numbers in determining public confidence in the police'. *European Journal of Criminology*, 10(2), 137-153.
- Sonne, J. W. (2006). *Criminal investigation for the professional investigation*. London: Library of Congress.
- Statistics South Africa. (2023). *Crime in South Africa up in 2022/23*. <https://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=16562#:~:text=Housebreaking%20is%20the%20most%20common,all%20households%20in%20the%20country>.

- Statistics South Africa. (2022). *Victims of Crime Survey*. <http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/Report-03-40-01/Report-03-40-012017.pdf>.
- Van zyl, G. S., Wilson, G. D. H., & Pretorius, R. (2003). Residential burglary in South Africa: why individual households adopt reactive strategies. *Acta Criminologica: The Southern African Journal of Criminology*, 16(3):107-111.
- Van Zyl, G.S. (2006). *Residential burglary in South Africa: a geographical perspective*. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Faculty of Humanities, Department of Geography, Geoinformatics, Meteorology. University of Pretoria: Hartfield.
- Victims of Crime Survey [Online]*. (2017/2018). Available at: <http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0341/presentation.pdf>.
- Victims of Crime Survey [Online]*. (2018/2019). Available at: <http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/pdf>.
- Walmsley, D.J. & Lewis, G.J. (1993). *People and Environment: Behavioural Approaches in Human Geography*. Second Edition. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Wilson, J.Q. & Kelling, G.L. (1982). Broken Windows: The police and neighbourhood safety, *The Atlantic Monthly*, 249(3). 29-38.
- Wollinger, G. R. (2017). Choice behaviour after burglary victimisation: Moving, safety precautions, and passivity. *European Journal of Criminology*, 14(3), 329-343.
- Wright, R.T & Decker, S.H. (1994). *Burglars on the job: Street life and residential break-ins*. Boston: North Eastern University Press.
- Zinn, R. (2010). *Home Invasion: Robbers disclose what you should know*. Tafelberg: Cape Town