ESTIMATION OF CHANGES IN PROPERTY CRIME WITH NEIGHBORHOOD LIFE CYCLE

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Abstract

Property crimes may be most related to the socio-economic characteristics of neighborhoods. As a basis for developing a way to estimate changes in property crime as induced by urban growth, we adopt two concepts; routine activities theory and deviant place theory. The first establishes the impact on a neighborhood's susceptibility to crime of a sense of guardianship, available targets, and motivated offenders; where deviant place theory explains the relationship between the frequency of visits to high crime areas and the likelihood of becoming a victim.

The characteristics of neighborhoods obviously play an important role in the increase or decrease of property crime when a neighborhood progresses through the neighborhood life cycle. This cycle begins with an established neighborhood, characterized by new construction of homes and a known sense of community. Eventually, the neighborhood transforms into a community with tenured residents, and established guardianship. As the neighborhood ages, housing stock may deteriorate due to a lack of proper maintenance, encouraging some residents to move into different communities, bringing the neighborhood into the final stage that has a general lack of guardianship. Given these stages, it should be noted that influx of new investments and gentrification can revive the neighborhood.

We will present a tool that we develop to estimate how crime rates change in neighborhoods based on changes in neighborhood characteristics. This tool can be used to explore the effect of different neighborhood attributes on the increase or decrease of property crimes in a neighborhood.

Key words: property crime, neighborhood life cycles, simulation