Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Theory is good but it doesn’t prevent things from existing.
Charcot to Freud
(Dear 2000:4)

Foucault had once remarked that ‘a whole history remains to be written of spaces’ (Driver 1995: 425). For him, phenomena, processes and structure of history were always fragmented by geography so that things turn differently in different spaces and places. This is because particular spaces serve to discipline and act as surveillance of individuals in the modern era.

In the domain of scientific geography, the positivists and quantitative geographers use space to explain the interrelationship between people and place. Although different in their approaches, these geographers believe that dimensions and contents of space are naturally given (Harvey 1970) and the interrelationship between people and places should be discussed under the framework of general spatial laws. However, contrary to an absolute understanding of space – the ‘empirical space’ in the Cartesian sense, often seen as a static container within which events occur although through movable and dynamic flow of behaviour (Hubbard, et al. 2000), the relative understanding of space warranted prioritising of socio-spatial processes through which space is constituted within a given specific context (Dear 2000). That is, although space in itself is primordially given, the spatial structure of social life cannot adequately be explicated by the abstract logics of geometry as the organisation and meaning of space is a product of social transformation and experience. In somewhat similar vein, Soja (1989) argues that it is necessary to place the concept of spatiality, the created space of social organisation and production at the very centre of critical human geography in order to disclose social relations. The ideas of lived space with its symbolic values and its reliance on everyday life are given attention in the work of Shields (1991) as well who uses the term ‘social spatialisation’ to designate the ways in which the spatial is constructed socially through direct interventions in the landscape. Castells (1977) also postulates space as a material product emerging dialectically from the interaction of culture and nature.
Such understanding of space promotes a theoretical development away from the universality experiences towards a greater sensitivity to difference and local discourses reviving the question of areal differentiation comprising of local narratives ungoverned by general rules (Gregory 1984; Cooke 1989). Also, space gets conceived as ‘social space’ or more precisely as social spatiality. The basic idea is that the spatial forms an integrated part of social practices and/or social processes and that practices and processes are all situated in space (and time) inherently involving a spatial dimension. This is so at all scales of social life, from daily affairs of life to macro affairs. This shift from ‘things in space’ to the actual ‘production of space’ has been developed by the French philosopher and sociologist Henri Lefebvre (1991). Heideggerian existential phenomenology also suggests for the inseparability of material environment from practical dealings with the world. According to him, specific spatiality of *Dasein* is grounded in temporality and understanding of human spatiality should give rise to dialectical unity of objectivity and subjectivity (Heidegger 1962 quoted by Peet 1998: 35). However, it is not until after the ‘spatial turn’ in the social theories that the importance of space in understanding social and cultural phenomena has been fully realised (Massey and Allen 1984, Johnston 1991 and Unwin 1992).

The overlapping of space with place is a complex phenomenon, which has been much debated and yet place has also been, until relatively recently, theorized purely in absolute terms as a bounded locale for gathering of people (Duncan 2000). In such formulations, material environment used to be the beginning and the end of most geographical analyses. Viewed as an independent and a separate factor and conceptualised in a form of a fixed capital (Harvey 1977, 1982), it relegated social processes to a subordinated role in the making of spaces. Gradually, however, it has been accepted that material environment cannot be an independent part of social theory unless there is an active mediation between material environment and social practices.

It was in 1970s that humanistic geographers argued for a working definition of place as mediating between objective and subjective sensitivities (Agnew 1987; Entrikin 1991). The scholars suggested that places do not exist as just bounded territorial units, but they are created and situated in social, political, economic and historical contexts.
well beyond their notional boundaries and as such the relationship between space, spatial forms and spatial behaviour is not contingent upon natural laws, but it is an outcome of social experience (Livingstone 1992a; Sibley 1995; Sidaway 1997).

The postmodernist constructs of space as contextually specific entity and social theory’s fundamental attempt to make sense of everyday life (Dear 2000) is what constitutes social space or more precisely as social spatiality - an outcome of a sequence and set of operations. Social relations exist to the extent that they possess a spatial expression. That is, they project themselves onto the space, becoming inscribed there and in the process producing that space that becomes a place. It is not that spatial is socially constructed; the social is also spatially constructed (Massey 1984 cited in Mills 1993).

It may perhaps be argued that in urban context such as of Delhi, neighbourhoods may be posited as microcosm of social spaces. This proposition is not new; neighbourhood as a spatial unit to study human behaviour had become very popular in the beginning of the twentieth century (Simmel 1950; Young and Willmott 1957; Jacobs 1962; Lewis 1968; Mead 1968; Muruyama 1976). This can be attributed to the changing way of life of the people due to industrial revolution whereby issues pertaining to urban life were becoming primary focus of studies across all the disciplines. Gradually neighbourhoods were viewed as a ‘fundamental part of the social patterning of the cities’ (Gold 1980:160). Although most of the relevant literature on neighbourhoods was contextualised in terms of rural settings (Tonnies 1887; Simmel 1950), the focus remained on the behavioural environments from both, the rural and urban settings. Rural areas were characterised by more of community life whereas in the city community life was replaced by formalized, contractual, impersonal and specialized relationships (Gold 1980; Tonnies 1887). Such difference was attributed to the fact that urban environments were ever changing in which individuals adopted calculated indifference as coping strategies by avoiding relationships. As metropolitan personality demonstrates the blase attitude of towards each other, weakening of bonds and erosion of the traditional base of social solidarity took place. Consequently, a sense of detachment from surrounding occurs and the outcome of such behaviour is anomie or deviance- a condition in which the normal rule that regulates social behaviour has atrophied (Simmel 1950). It may be pointed out that this argument was
for declining tendency in place claiming because sense of community\(^1\) can eventually be translated into responsibility for ensuring safe and well-maintained living space. However, as discussed so far now there is much implicit and explicit emphasis in current discourses on location-specific spatiality of experience and its multi-faceted implications ((Bridge, Forrest and Holland 2004).

(With this introduction as a backdrop, the concern of this thesis is with the making of social spaces articulated through spatially embedded neighbouring/social interaction and the extent to which such spaces (and places) have an ameliorating bearing upon crimes. In other words, the question is if spatially encoded social spaces/places develop local social capital (Williams and Windebank 2000, Coulthard et. al. 2002) to act as some sort of social check on crime reduction (and civic participation) or not (Blunkett 2003)? The issue here is not to see social phenomena in space, but to explore social phenomena (of crimes) and social spaces that are constituted out of social relations (Massey 1994). The dissertation focuses on the reinterpretation of social events like crime through the perspective of situatedness of places having specific identity.

The notion of social space being imbricate with social relations is important in considering crime in space because as a social event crime has consistent relation to spatial frameworks. For example, social space that is also spatially cohesive may deter the potential criminal as s/he would perceive such a space as being monitored and watched by its residents in which an intruder could be easily spotted for an involved person would not only be more aware of his/her environment and the ways in which it works s/he would have greater stake in keeping it safe (Ittelson et. al. 1974:261).)

The chapter is divided in two main sections. Over the period, the foregrounding of material bases in decoding social relations, the constitutive relations between the two and emerging social space has undergone many strands of scholarly thinking. The first section attempts at tracing this trajectory under the literature review. In the following paragraphs, an attempt has been made to trace the trajectory of the development of modern geographical thoughts as they relate to the evolution of space/place-centric geography providing ample scope for studying social phenomena.
by including every local detail, which may have contributed to the reframing and reshaping of that event beyond theoretical bondage. Admittedly, there may be some overlap with the earlier discussion in so far as continuity of particular proposition is maintained although care has been taken to minimise it. The second section is a detailed account of the proposed study, its objective, research questions, research methodology and sample design and so on.

**Literature Review**

*a. Space and Social Relations*

The *first* concept of social space is ‘spatial practice’ which embraces the social production as well as particular locations and spatial characteristic of each social formation. Spatial practice ensures continuity and some degree of cohesion. The aggregate spatial practices of society simultaneously produce and presuppose society’s space in a dialectic interaction – society produce space slowly by dominating and appropriating it. This associated spatiality is the perceived space, generated in the inter-relations in daily experiences and practices (Sheilds 1991). The *second* concept is representation of space, which is connected to the order imposed by dominant social relations of any society, its codes signs and knowledge about space. This is a conceptualised space constructed by technocrats and professionals. *Finally*, Lebvebre (1991) introduces the concept of space of representation, which involves the spatiality of social life- the place and its symbolic value. This is *lived space*, the space of inhabitants and users. Those who are similar in terms of lifestyle tend to interact socially and those who interact socially tend to be similar in terms of lifestyles (Bourdieu 1987).

Places are thus defined as centres of meaning for people at any scale rather than just locations at a local scale. Secondly the place concept is constructed as a subjective relation between individual and place and not seen as a particular relation of one person to one place. Rather, different types of place relations are linked to the different ways people experience space (Massey 1991, 1995 quoted by Duncan 2000: 283). Post-modern thought represents a reassertion of the significance of space in social thought. However, as mentioned earlier, social theory is fundamentally an attempt to make sense of everyday life, which refers to the problem of theorizing contemporaneity - of making sense of the contemporary life (Dear 2000).
Recently production of geographical knowledge has been inspired by some new ideas. The first is about the ways in which the 1980s and 1990s globalising era appreciated and foregrounded the importance of space in understanding social and cultural phenomena in what is termed as the 'spatial turn' (Giddens 1991; Jameson 1991; Shields 1991; Sennet 1994; Urry 1994; Castells 1989, 1996; Bauman 1998; Hall 1996; Mort 1998). The second relates to geography's 'cultural turn', i.e., the integration of social and cultural theories into geographical analysis. This approach was adopted with the view that studying cultural artefacts and their place in the landscape can reveal the way of life (Crang 1998). Culture was now conceived as a process through which people make sense of a world of material objects (Hubbard et al. 2002). Geography now addresses culture not as a residual category or as a relativism tool, but as the very medium through which social change is experienced (Cosgrave and Jackson 1987: 95). Thus through the intervention of interpretive theories and methods cultural turn brought more accommodative aspect in geographic enquiry of spaces and social events. It has been argued, however, that while the combination of cultural turn in geography and wider spatial turn across the social sciences might create more fluidity and post-disciplinary landscapes, it is also true that disciplinary boundaries do continue to exist within the academia (Sibley 1995).

b. Spatiality and Crime

In the history of development of geography, the period of 1960s revolutionised the spatial study. In reiterating crime as a social fact (Durkhiem 1938), which occupies all kinds of physical and social spaces (Pearce 1989) that can be viewed in many ways, geographers concerned with crime studies increasingly emphasised specific places in terms of its analysis. Since geographers identify clusters of crime and identify them as 'delinquency areas' (Herbert 1989), the task then was to understand the ways in which such 'places' have emerged and characters which they have assumed.

The earlier geographies of crime were largely cast in this tradition with a focus on regional variations in different types of crime and of justice. Social ecology provides some kind of framework for this type of approach and the models and concepts during this period were based on spatial activities of human being where s/he was considered as a rational actor who has perfect knowledge of world.
However, the real world relations did not match this situation and the emergence of the ‘Behavioural Geography’ advocated the question of human’s decision-making power and locational alternatives. This was also realized in the field of criminology and some scholars tried to understand problem related to crime by applying this concept (Smith 1976; Rengert 1981; Felson 1986). According to these scholars there were two aspects that needed to be looked at: one is spatial behaviour and second is behaviour in space. Researches in spatial behaviour consist of explanation to describe behavioural processes irrespective of the spatial structure. The focus of the analysis was on the place where criminals were situated as behaviour in space relates to the location of opportunities for crime. It presumed that the spatial structure of an area can be used to explain criminal behaviour in space. In 1970 when the debate was on about ‘place of people in regional science’ then a popular issue, which emerged, was the ‘place of people in geography of crime’ (Evans and Herbert 1989). There are two things to be noted here, first is the area where criminals are residing and the second the place where the crime is committed. Linds (1930) in his study of Honolulu and other later studies have shown that crime sites and criminal residences were often different (Wootton 1959; Lander 1954; Morris 1958; Wallis and Maliphant 1967; Herbert 1972a; Jarvis 1972). Wootton (1959) found that delinquency tended to be concentrated in particular areas which were generally slum locations. Lander pointed out that the spatial pattern of delinquency residence in Baltimore had closely related socio-economic variables to the variance of delinquency areas. However, the relationship between delinquency residence rates and the social characteristics of neighbourhoods were not constant over time and space. Morris who followed the tradition of Mayhew (1862) and Booth (1891) in mapping the patterns of criminal residence and crime in Croydon found out that there was no exact correspondence between the areas of criminal residence and areas in which most offenders committed their crimes. Delinquency rates reflected to be high in areas with declining populations and also in areas receiving a rapid influx of immigrants. These areas had low educational levels, high proportion of male working population. Curtis (1974) analysed the spatial pattern of violent crimes, causes and prevention in a large cities such as Boston, Philadelphia, Atlanta, Chicago and San Francisco. He propounded that poverty area with low-income families; children under age eighteen not living with both parents and unskilled labour force and sub-standard housing attracted crime.
Thus criminal areas may be located in any part of the city, but crime areas were to form pockets of particular type of crime depending upon the favourable environment to the criminals.

It is clear from the above discussion that crime is certainly attached to particular spaces and places. Researchers have also talked about some of the auxiliary factors, which affect these spatial arrangements. David Ley (1974), for example, had argued that stress areas could be identified in the inner part of the city where normal patterns of behaviour could be adversely affected and constrained by the fact that people felt unsafe. Fear affects some group of individuals more than others (Pain 1997). The effect of social structure, especially gender and age difference, the effect of fear of crime on activity patterns and urban life especially in the context of social interaction and vice versa were some of the areas suggested for further research (Pain 2001).

Although research on crime vis-à-vis places and locations took place during the sixties, the study on place became submerged within the locational analysis and was essentially confined to the geometry of space rather than its meaning (Curry 1995). The emergence of humanistic geography brought a new phase in understanding of place/space wherein place location in space is propagated as more than a territory to which people attach values. Relph put forward this view as an argument about making of place:

... Places in these terms are fusions of human and natural orders and are significant centres of our immediate experience of the world. They are defined less by unique locations than by the focusing of experiences and intentions on to particular settings.' (Relph 1976: 141)

Post-modern thinkers also believe in analysing spatial organisation of social phenomena such as crime within the local socio-spatial imperatives in a specific context.

Explanatory Frameworks

This section deals with literature that seeks to develop explanatory frameworks that may account for the emergence of a crime prone area. Various models have been put forward in the criminal literature seeking to explain the etiology of the event of crime,
but there is no consensus as to which theory has the best explanation of the crime event.

In general, it has been observed that theories of and research on offenders have been dominant in the crime related literature. Most research on crime and crime prevention has been focussed on why certain types of people commit crime and what can be done about them. It is only recently that crime rather than criminality of people involved in crime has been catching the attention of researchers (Weisburd 1997; Chakraborty 2004; Eck and Weisburd 2004). Theories that deal with causations broadly focus on a range of structural and spatial causes that have been linked with crime events.

a. Structural Framework

In the first half of the twentieth century place-centric approach to crime theories had received most attention. Researchers who were later identified with the Chicago School of human ecology documented within cities variations in delinquency and offender rates (White 1932; Shaw and McKay 1969; Bursik and Gramsick 1993). These researchers have linked crime and delinquency rates with features of community structures like economic status and racial composition (Bursik and Gramsick 1993; Sampson and Lauritsen 1994). A body of researchers also claimed that crime and delinquency are related to economic development arguing that higher level of development is directly proportional to higher crime rates in given area (Cavan and Jordan 1968; Clinnard and Abott 1973; Friday and Hage 1976; Toby 1979; Friday 1980; Shelley 1981). Among the economic factors, unemployment has been cited as an important determinant for crime (Vold 1958; Fliesher 1966). Another interpretation interlinking crime with economic factors has been established through direct relationship of crimes with the levels of poverty. Various studies have postulated that low-income neighbourhoods are the ones, which reports greater crime (Schimid 1960; Schimid and Schimid 1972; Scott 1972; Gittus and Stephens 1973; Pyle 1974; Corsi and Harvey 1975; Avio and Clarke 1976; Herbert 1976). Further, industrialisation and urbanisation - necessary corollary of economic development - have also been held as responsible factors for rise of crime, especially in developed nations (Ghosh 1968; Clinnard and Abott 1973; Martin 1973; Friday and Hage 1976; Pepinsky 1976; Quinney 1977; Chamliss 1978; Greenberg 1978; Tifft 1979; Friday 1980; Shelley 1981).
In the past twenty years, another group of structural theorists have devoted attention to how social and organisational characteristics of street blocks work to social withdrawal, crime and disorder (Jacobs 1962; Baum et al. 1978; Craik and Appleyard 1980; Appleyard 1981; Perkins et al. 1990, 1992; Taylor 1981, 1995). The researchers tried to link crime with range of features such as high schools, bars and public housing, which will be conducive to the deviant environment (Roncek 1981; Roncek and Bell 1981; Roncek and Faggiani 1985; Roncek and Pravatiner 1989; Roncek and Maier 1991; Snyder 1995).

It is evidenced from the discussion that at every level of aggregation some areas have less crime than others (Bratingham and Bratingham 1982). Location-wise, some factors facilitate more crime than the others. However, structural theories are much more acceptable in the criminological discipline though it has some limitations. They are too mechanistic in nature and undermine the role of individuals or role of subcultures. It may be possible that in some areas where crime has been repeated consistently, other opportunities are controlling the situation. Another argument placed against structural theories is that they fail to stress the role of mediating processes within the family (Brewer, Lockhart and Rodgers 1998). Thus it can be concluded that structural theories may have had a good explanation for the development of a crime area but we would need a good explanation for criminal event. Specifically we would like to have a theory that could answer as why certain areas are selected by offenders – why some targets are attractive and other are repellent. How and what types of routine activities of offenders, victims and what does guardians of crime as police, friends, parents and security contribute to the likelihood of crime occurring in particular places.

b. Demographic and Familial Framework

However, some of these economic-structural theories have been critiqued on the ground that not all people commit crime due to their economic irrelevance, particularly in the Indian scenario only economic factors do not possibly explain the delinquency problem as several other dynamics nested within the structure of the area in question determines the pattern of crime (Hartjen 1982). Few of the most discussed
parameters have been discussed here so as to contextualise them in the Indian crime scenario.

Along with the economic factors culturally some opportunities may attract potential offenders. For example, it has been argued that areas which are densely populated have a tendency to attract higher deviant activities as these areas are crowded without a sense of space amongst individual making it easier to perpetrate criminal acts (Shaw and Mckay 1942; McCarthy et al. 1975; Skogan 1977a; Schiechor et. al. 1979; Bhatnagar 1990; Bhusan 1997). Similarly, some areas may be disproportionately populated by women increasing what may be termed as ‘target availability’ in one place so that offenders have to put in their least effort in committing crimes (Morris 1958; Herbert 1977a; Stanko 1990; Crawford et al. 1990; Murray et al. 1990; Dobash and Dobash 1992; Walklate 1995; Pain and Koskela and Pain 2000). Another connected analogy emerging is that women are not safe at the hands of their acquaintances (Stanko 1990, 1995). However, few authors have contested this postulate by arguing that elderly are more prone to victimisation as they stay at home mostly and do not have a strong network in the area (Hindelang 1979; Wurff et. al. 1979; Oh Hwan 2003).

Recent studies have also come up with the findings that children also belong to the most vulnerable category (Anderson et. al. 1990a; Hartless et. al. 1995; Nayak 2003). Sometimes, familial characteristics such as home environments are seen as moulding children whereby the end product of unfavourable family environment may account for deviant behaviour (Cohen 1955; Cloward and Ohlin 1960; Trasler 1962; Hirschi 1969; Polk and Schafer 1972).

c. Locational and Spatial Frameworks

Although all of these postulates have tried to understand the non-economic issues related to violence, the spaces, which they share, have not been taken care of by the propagators. Various studies do show certain areas to be more crime-prone as compared to others because of the type of environment they possess. That is to say, certain spaces because of the idealised constructs they have been encrypted with are linked with the idea of safety whereas some places attract more offenders in the same area (Smith and Parker1980; Van der Wurff et al. 1988; White 1990; Herbert and
By and large, it has been seen that public spaces are 'natural' choices by offenders. Dark street corners of the neighborhood places that are not used regularly by the residents and poor housing designs can invite more offenders and offence (Newman, 1972; Ward 1990; Vrij and Winkel 1991). Scholars have also argued that increased sense of ownership of these uncared spaces and proper surveillance can reduce the magnitude of fear of crime (Newman 1972; Coleman 1990; Oc and Tiesdell, 1997).6 If the community is settled in a particular area for long period then they develop a sense of community along with a sense of belonging which act as a preventive measure in terms of occurrence of crimes (Durkheim 1938; Shaw and McKay 1942; Bursick and Gramsick 1993). Some research has also questioned the traditional belief of homespace as a safe haven (Stanko 1990; Valentine 1989; Pain 1997b).

Generally grouped under spatial theories of crime (Eck and Weisburd 1995), some frameworks bringing crime and place come together can be used as an event preventive strategy so as to have a dramatic and immediate impact on crime problems (Clarke 1992).

Spatial theories of crime were mainly centred along the understanding of the importance of place in crime prevention efforts. Three recent theoretical perspectives - rational choice theory, routine activity theory and crime pattern theory represent this group. All three theories link places (likely locations with the desirable targets) of the offenders where they operate from different geographical perspectives. A rational choice perspective suggests that offenders decide to select target to commit crime in a particular area (Cornish and Clarke 1986). However, it is critiqued because the claim to have selected a rational target is untenable as from the perspective of offenders, the targets will always be interpreted as rational (Parsons 1951). However, few scholars have demonstrated that it is possible to test various forms of rational choice (Hogarth and Reeler 1987) particularly if it is used in conjunction with the routine activity theory (Eck and Weisburd 1995).

Routine Activity theory seeks to explain the occurrence of crime events as the confluence of several circumstances (Cohen and Felson 1979, 1984, 1986). Although it resembles lifestyle theory (Hindelang et al. 1978; Titus 1995) very closely, the
proponents of this theory argue that crimes occur when three things come together in space and time - a motivated offender; a desirable target and the target and the offender must be at the same place at the same time and finally, three types of controllers – intimate handlers, guardians and place managers- must be absent or be ineffective. Intimate handlers are the people who have direct personal influence over an offender (such as parents, teachers, friends, coaches, or employers etc.) Potential offenders commit crimes when they see that potential guardians (or intimate handlers) are absent or are few in numbers (Felson 1986). This perspective has a merit to explain long-term shifts in some crime rates (Felson 1986) and differences in victimisation rates among groups of people (Kennedy and Forde 1990a; 1990b). Integrating both the theories, scholars (Rengert and Wasilchick 1985; Eck and Weisburd 1995; Rengert 1996) have developed crime pattern theory to explain the distribution of crime across places. That is, the distribution of offenders, targets, handlers, guardians and managers over time and place describe the crime patterns. Further, reasonably rational offenders while engaging in their routine activities are supposed to keep record of the places with less or without guardians and where their handlers are unlikely to be present. As they conduct their normal activity they become more aware of criminal opportunities in the area. Whichever place comes to their attention as a probable target, becomes the future targets of offenders (Bratthingham and Brattingham 1993).

It has been argued that although crime pattern theory and routine activity theory are mutually supportive in many respects, they can give rise to different explanations for a crime event at specific locations (Eck and Weisburd 1995). Given a set of high crime locations, a crime pattern theorist’s should focus on how offenders discover and gain access to the place. A routine activity theorist would focus instead on the behaviours of the targets and possible absence of controllers whose presence may have prevented it. Hence, both explanations can be valid in different contexts and situations. However, it is true that crimes are events with a specific location within given space and time, but the crime event in itself is one among many events, which occur within the crime commission process. Hence the tendency to oversimplify and to overlook the element of surprise means the role of prior knowledge and pattern planning of the offender to commit crime is hard to sketch. Routinisation of crime also involves procedural aspects, which is hard to unscramble as offender routine
activity also involves multitasking. It is also difficult to identifying the crime commission processes, as there may be the chances of intermingling. And since this process work within the criminal justice agency's function, hence they may not find systematic collation of information relevant for crime prevention (Cornish 1993a).

d. Social Space, Community, Neighbouring and Crime

Although in the current world of rapid globalisation global and local are becoming increasingly blurred, the traditional stratification of resources and events remains entrenched in place despite the advent of globalisation and the ecological differentiation by class, occupation and crime is apparently increasing at different levels whereby place stratification is seen both in neighbourhood as well as cities (Sampson 2004). A long history of research in United Kingdom and United States has established a reasonably consistent set of findings relevant to place-centric community context of crime. Broadly there are two viewpoints. The early work of Shaw and McKay (1942) speculated that community characteristics led to the community disorganization or the inability of community to maintain social check thereby leading to high delinquency rates. Community disorganisation has been explicitly defined as the lack of ability of a community structure to realise effective social controls for preventing violence (Kornhauser 1978; Bursik 1988; Sampson and Groves 1989).

The counterarguments, however, are that neighbourhoods do possess ecologically and highlighted variations in the working of social efficacy and shared willingness of residents to intervene in achieving social check. As discussed earlier also, community capacity to prevent violence is conceptualised in terms of social interactions that lead to shared trust and capacity of mutually beneficial action, also labelled as 'social capital' (Putnam 1993; Woolcock 1998; Grootaert and Bastelaer 2002) and 'collective efficacy' (Sampson, Raudenbush and Earls 1997). The idea about the community capacity to prevent violence is drawn from the literature on social ecology of crime and from the recent work on social capital theory. Scholars propose that a neighbourhood deficient in social capital is less able to realise common values and maintain the informal social controls that foster safety (Putnam 1993; Bursik 1999; Sabol, Coulton and Korbin 2004). Here, strong socio spatial interaction (or social capital) does not only mean strong association, but shared expectation in the form of
residents’ common willingness to engage in social control (Sampson et. al 1997, 1999). Based on empirical studies drawn from all over the world, research indicates that neighbourhoods possessing higher level of social capital have been reporting much reduced level of crime and physical disorder than the neighbourhoods lacking in such attributes. For example, scholars have observed that in racially mixed minority residences, high level of existing social network/interaction among different communities have resulted in reduced level of crime (Skogan 1990; Rosenbum 1994; Saegart 1996a, 1996b; Saegart and Winkel 1998). What such evidences suggest is that probability of crime increases when individuals’ socio-spatial bonds are weak (Hirschi 1969). Further research has supported this argument by establishing that higher neighbourhood-centric interactions provide a responsible guardianship and the end product is reduction in crime levels (Bottoms 1994; Murray 1996). Later research conducted in the South American Mexico City has also confirmed this view that a community, according to its levels of trust or networks would prevent or allow crime (Paras 2001). Individuals’ level of social relation also affects the propensity of criminals to commit crime as directly evidenced in a Britain study (Samecki 2004). Another dynamics added to this view is that stable communities that often also possess a sense of belonging (to community) reflect lesser frequency of crimes (Braithwaite 1989). Another group of European scholars accepting this viewpoint in regard to delinquency argue that the institution of family is an underappreciated source of informal social control (Hagan, Merkens and Boehnke 1995).

To answer the question as to why the element of trust, reciprocity, following norms and social network at neighbourhood level is necessary to reduce crime it is proposed that social capital facilitates cooperation, which lowers the costs of working together (Pretty 2003). People have the confidence to invest in collective activities knowing that others will also reciprocate. Social capital produces an atmosphere conducive to economic activity, it provides a cultural will to solve community problems collaboratively (Lean 1995). The organisational infrastructure of social capital creates pragmatic skills that enable citizens to act directly to solve problems. Thus, block associations, social clubs, civic groups, churches and other grassroots groups may meet social and economic needs that increase well being and productive capacity of the members of the community so as to organise against crimes (McDougall 1993).
However, the view that community capacity to prevent violence is achieved primarily through social relations embodied in dense networks within geographically bounded spaces known as neighbourhoods has been challenged on the following grounds (Bellair 1997; Morenoff, Sampson and Raudenbush 2001). It is argued that in many poor neighbourhoods, residents are tightly interconnected through personal networks of family and kin, but these network ties do not produce the collectives that result in control of disorderly behaviour and violence. Another issue raised against this is that in poor and disadvantaged neighbourhoods, there are strong networks of personal ties, but these networks may impede social organisation because of their high degree of social isolation from other communities (Massey and Denton 1993; Sullivan 1996; Wilson 1987, 1996). The existence of the stable and close network in isolation thus may have negative repercussions for the neighbourhood in terms of violence. Another argument proposed against direct connection between low violence and a dense web of strong ties within communities is that in many urban communities shared expectations for social control are maintained even in the absence of thick ties among neighbours (Sampson, Morenoff and Earls 1999). The scholars are of the views that strong ties may not be the norm in urban communities as friendship and social support networks inside the neighbourhood are increasingly organised in a local and parochial manner (Wellman 1979; Fischer 1982). However, neighbouring is also defined in terms of socialising, although it can be multi-dimensional such as chatting, exchanging favours and knowing information about each other (Campbell and Lee 1990a; Wellman and Wortley 1990). Social ties are based more on functional need to develop protective mechanisms for one's children and home rather than any particular inherent need to interact socially with others (Gans 1962, 1967). The concept of dense social network, alternatively social capital, as a sole measure to prevent crime has further been criticised on the basis of the concept's ulterior emphasis on strong ties. Another weakness of the literature on social control is that it assumes social equilibrium and stability since social disorganization weakens social bonds and diminishes the scope for informal social check. Thus crime increases as social change disrupts stable patterns of social life.

Another important observation made in this regard is that the focus in these studies is on crime causation rather than the crime management and the stress is on how informal control suppresses crime rather than to assist in the management of the
crime-taking places in the area. It is not clear as how informal social controls operate to deal with offenders in the absence of formal control. Moreover, it has been argued that the quantitative measure generally used can underscore range of people's experiences of community and inadequately reflect variations in social bonding in small localities.

The Present Study

It can be seen that most of the studies are from outside India. It is in the later half of 1990s that we find some sporadic studies exploring spatial explanations for crimes in Indian cities. However, such studies have some serious limitation: first, they are thinly spread in that they cover too many aspects without actually offering any robust reasoning; second, the observations made in these studies often lack valid statistics; third, crime is a social morbidity, but it occurs in space. Geographers have tried to understand the role of space in relation to spread of crime in India, but their efforts lack empirical bases; forth, most of the studies are essentially oriented towards the offenders whereas research on victims has been ignored (Chakraborty 2004). Finally, the available research on crime in India and studies across the region suggest repetitive attempts, both in terms of content and explanatory factors.

The present study has a focus on hitherto unexplored territory, particularly in the Indian context. The framework of analysis follows the concept of social space the making of which can be mediated through place-based localised social capital developed via neighbouring/social interaction. It is proposed that social spaces thus developed have an ameliorating bearing upon the presence/absence of proneness to crimes in a given locality of Delhi (Hartanagel 1979; Skogan and Maxfield 1980; Kennedy and Krahn 1984; Short 1989).

Admittedly, the possibilities of network ties remaining confined to neighbourhoods have increasingly been reduced with the rise of information and communication technologies and yet the study necessitates that only those neighbourly ties are explored which are spatially embedded. Chapter 4 details out how these neighbouring activities have generally been conceived of and measured.
Here, we would like to comment very briefly on the relevance of this approach. First and foremost, this particular aspect is least researched in the Indian context. Second, despite ubiquity of crimes across the city, there exist clear evidences that certain pockets/localities in Delhi have concentration of crimes. Withholding these concentrations, however, certain neighbourhoods in high crime areas have lower crime incidences and vice versa and these neighbourhoods are spread over rich and poor areas of the city. Also, some of them have unique characteristics in terms of varying social spatial practices (Jain 2000), which are likely to be governed by the existing occupational, historical, educational and other dynamics of a given locality. These factors together, we argue, make Delhi a good case for exploring some of the issues discussed so far.

The proposed study has the following objectives:

**Objectives:**

1. a) To identify consistently high crime prone areas in Delhi;  
   b) To trace the socio-economic profile of such areas;

2. a) To define and determine the socio-spatial network of informal interaction and formation of spatially confined social space; and  
   b) To interrogate the interface between social space and crime.

**Research Propositions**

- Various types of crime have distinct spatial pattern (Quetelet 1835; Bhusan 1997; Mary 1996);

- a. Spatially confined social interaction as one of constituent components of social space has a bearing on making of crime-prone and/or relatively safer localities (Saegart and Winkel 2002; Pain 2001; Kanan and Pruitt 2002; Barnett and Mencken 2002)

  b. Higher the intensity of spatially embedded interaction, lesser would be the incidence of crime and vice versa (Wurff et al 1988; McIntyre 1997; Sampson et. al. 2001)
Database

Our research design requires utilising both primary and secondary data. Secondary data have been primarily used to provide a spatial and temporal backdrop for the subsequent identification of particular localities for detailed exposition. The major source for secondary data is the national newspaper - Times of India published and read widely in Delhi and the coverage is for the period of 1992 to 2001. This database has been supplemented by data from the government reports such as National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) reports and Primary Census Abstract of the Census of India, 2001. Reporting of crime, of necessity, is surrounded by controversies. Newspaper data also have their own limitations. The use of supplementary data from other sources is an attempt at minimising them.

...official crime statistics can help clarify conceptual issues about the relationship between macro-level processes and crime. However, such research must be interpreted with caution and should take into account how socio political actors and institutions produce crime rates. It may be wiser to view officially reported crime rates as measuring 'criminalisation' rather than actual criminal behaviour (Neuman and Berger 1988: 299)

The data from newspaper is through the content analysis of crime news occurring in Delhi in which the information processed is under the following heads: place and its type, time of crime, age and sex of victims and the relationship between them and offender. The next step involved arranging and grouping the locality-wise data at two spatial scales: a) district level (nine districts) and b) ward level (143 wards) as well as clubbing of all the localities as obtained from the content analysis into wards and districts with the help of 'notional maps' prepared by the census organisation.

In passing, it may be pointed out that data from the newspaper provides a much detailed account such as described above making it possible to explode some of the myths in crime literature (Mason 2005: 837).

Crime categories used by NCRB has been adopted to obtain the major classification of crimes reported in the newspaper. The purpose of this exercise is to simplify and homogenise the typologies so as to make the different data sets comparable. NCRB divides all crimes into two broad categories such as cognisable and non-cognisable crimes. Indian Penal Code has further division of crime such as crimes against body,
property, women, children, public order and economic crimes. For this study all IPC cognizable crimes classified under crime against body, property and women have been covered.

Identifying and measuring social network involved generating information through primary survey. For this questionnaires were at the household levels. Apart from basic demographic characteristics of households, information gathered include extent and intensity of social network, the extent to which such networks were confined to space, and the nature of neighbourly activities and several other related aspects. Certain questions regarding the role of formal and informal organizations such as neighbourhood watch units, residents’ welfare associations and other organizational set-ups at the local level were also covered for better understanding of the issues at hand. The process of selecting the survey localities for the in-depth study and other details are included in chapter 4. However, the sampling procedure is given in this chapter.

Methodology
All crimes have been clubbed into three homogenous categories – incidence of violence, property and sexual harassment. Crimes such as murder, attempt to murder, culpable homicide not amounting to murder and kidnapping and abduction were grouped under violent crimes; dacoity, its preparation and assembly, robbery, theft and burglary have been defined as crime against property while molestation, rape, harassment of women have been covered under crime against women named as sexual harassment incidences.

Age cohorts for classification were decided according to the range method, i.e., difference between the lowest and the highest age group divided by the number of classes. Following the standard norms, four age groups have been derived - less than 18 years (early young age group), 18-35 yrs (later young group), 35-60 yrs (middle age group) and more than 60 years (elderly group).

In order to explore some of the commonly held beliefs in research, i.e., brutal act of violence commonly perpetrated by the people with whom the perpetrator had little or no personal contact (Perry 2001:29); some spaces are safer than the others and the
like, an attempt is made to organise the data obtained through the content analysis in the format of 'victim-suspect relationship' - relative, acquaintances (day to day friends and neighbours who are not close) and strangers. Likewise, data have also been organised to clearly locate the site of incident and places where victimisation has been reported, familiar and unfamiliar both - victims' homes, public place such as car park, footpaths, parks and bus stops etc. – this information is characterised as public place. Time of committing crime has been also taken into account.

a. Sampling
At the outset, segregation of respondents on the basis of age groups and sex was carried out with the help of locality-wise voting lists in order to ensure the coverage of both males and females from all age cohorts. Final respondents were selected as per the method of ‘probability sampling’ (Baker 1994) since in probability sampling each individual has equal chance of representation. From this stratified frame, keeping in view the universe size, required sample of every nth population has been considered for the interview. Often termed as 'circular stratified random sampling', this method works in a circular fashion, i.e., if required numbers are not achieved then the counting does not stop at the end, but the process continues a circular manner. In total, around 400 households were visited and overall four hundred and three (403) persons were interviewed from different age groups. The interviewees came from 50 households each from 8 sites selected for detailed survey (see chapter 4 for further details).

Chapter Scheme
The thesis is divided into five chapters; the first chapter contains literature review so as to provide pointers for the conceptualisation and firming of subsequent analysis. It also elaborates the research framework including the statement of the problem, research design, database, methodology and sample design. The second chapter is about the spatial distribution of crimes in India with special reference to Delhi and its districts. The third chapter draws from content analysis of newspaper. This chapter provides various details around which victimisation has taken place over the decade under the spatial framework. The emphasis is mainly on the processes operating at the moment of crime occurrence. Scholars call this situational approach. The study makes
an attempt to examine the adaptability of this approach in the context of Delhi for the available studies are mostly from Europe and America. These three chapters together not only throw light on the spatial patterning of crimes in Delhi, but they provide the crucial background information against which the subsequent analysis could be placed. The following fourth chapter then explores spatially bound social interaction and its implications for crime occurrence in various socio-spatial crime sites. The fifth and the final chapter is about the major findings and conclusions drawn from the study.

Endnotes

1 There is a common confusion whereby neighbourhood has often been used interchangeably with the word ‘community’. However the terms share similar connotations of homogeneity, real or perceived, of mutual interest and of self-help. Thus the point at which they differ is their spatial dimension. The term community has been applied to wider scale.

2 Many of the geographers remained sceptical of the usefulness of new cultural geography in the world’s growing social and economic inequalities. Philo (1991) stated that due to its immense popularity other important aspects of human geography are being neglected. Specifically the intangibility of the spaces of signs, symbols, desires, and fears is leading to the dematerialized and desocialised human geographies (Jackson 2000; McDowell 2000a; and Smith 2000).

3 While commenting on the objectivity of space and defining socially produced space as ‘spatiality’, Soja (1989) suggests that not all space is socially produced, but all spatiality is.

4 Schiechor et al. (1979) found only property crimes to be positively related to the overall density of the city.


6 This postulate has often been termed as the ‘ecological model of crime’, which was primarily developed by the Chicago School of Human Ecology. Their theme of research is based on the assumption that people’s behaviour is determined by their effort to struggle for space within urban environment.

7 The section draws heavily from Bridge, Forrest and Holland 2004.

8 Social capital comes about through the changes in the relations among persons and facilitates action. If physical capital is wholly tangible being observable in observable material form and human capital is less tangible being embodied in the skills and knowledge acquired by an individual, social capital exists in the relations among person (Coleman 1987). Hence it is a critical asset for creating opportunities that enhance well-being and for achieving greater security and reduced vulnerability (World Bank 2001).

9 One of the characteristics of social capital is that it is not an aggregate concept that has its basis in individual behaviour, attitudes and predispositions. It is not a ‘community’ that participates or builds trust, but the people who belong to civic organisations and acquire positive feelings towards each others (Brehm and Rahn 1997). However, it is plausible to expect that a community according to its levels of trust or networks would prevent or allow crime; however that does not necessarily mean that crime is caused by the lack of social capital.
Strong ties alone in the communities may not be sufficient to produce the capacity to prevent violence especially if these neighbourhoods are isolated from contacts with the broader society. This may be particularly so in the hyper-segregated and disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Alternatively, dense networks of primary ties may not be required for communities to achieve low rate of violence. Sampson et. al. (2001) argued that even in the absence of strong ties among neighbours shared expectations for social control can be maintained. They proposed that the concept of collective efficacy as a mechanism to facilitate social control that does not necessarily requires strong ties or associations. Collective efficacy is a combination of working trust and voluntary effort of residents to engage in social control. Collective efficacy focuses more on shared belief in the capacity of community rather on private ties.

The Times of India has been chosen due to its wide readership in Delhi region also credited to have the record of being one of the oldest newspapers daily in India.