

**HOUSEBREAKING IN CRYSTAL PARK EXTENSION 32:
A VICTIM RISK PERSPECTIVE**

By

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is humbly dedicated to my late mother, Magdeline Ngwanamorekwa Rametse-Malebati, who always had confidence in me even when I didn't believe in myself and to my late father, Philimon Khalo Malebati, who passed on during its finalisation stage.

May their precious souls continue to rest in peace "Tshwene le Ramaite".

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ABSTRACT

This research explored the phenomenon of housebreaking at Crystal Park Extension 32 from a victim risk perspective. Crystal Park Extension 32 area was developed more than 12 years ago and it is located on the eastern side of Benoni, Ekurhuleni Municipality (Gauteng Province). This area is a semi-suburb with 400± households. A year or two after the area was established, it was struck by a string of housebreaking incidents which left residents desperate for help. This triggered need to conduct this study. To accomplish this task, the qualitative approach, which applied the case study research design, was utilised. Since this research was qualitative in nature, two non-probability research methods were used to select participants. Convenience sampling was utilised to select eight (8) victims, the primary units of analysis, while purposive sampling was used to sample five (5) subject matter experts (SMEs), the secondary units of analysis. The SMEs included three (3) SAPS members from Crystal Park Police Station, one member of the Crystal Park Community Policing Forum (CPF) and one dog patroller from the neighbourhood watch group called AmaRussia. In total, 13 research participants, comprising victims and SMEs took part in the study. Data from both victim and SME participants were collected through semi-structured interviews and analysed through thematic analysis. It was discovered that most burglars who operate in Crystal Park Extension 32 plan their attacks. They are not opportunists who work alone but work in groups of between two and six people. Each member has a specific role allocated to them in the group. The three basic roles are the spotter/lookout, the driver, and the looter. Because a housebreaking can only be committed in an unoccupied house, different techniques are used by burglars to check for occupancy. The techniques include: pressing the intercom or knocking at the gate to check if anyone will answer; placing a piece of wood in the rail of the gate the day before the incident which should be removed if there is anyone at home; and looking for cars on the driveways or car ports. It was revealed that once a suitable target has been identified, the burglars gain access to the yard by jumping the wall/fence or entering through an unlocked gate. To gain entry to the house, the research participants said that, even though other entry methods such as windows or the roof are used, the burglars preferred the door as it was the easiest. After stealing the desired goods from the house, the door was used by most burglars in Crystal Park Extension 32 as the exit. Participants in this study further revealed that the items that are mostly targeted by burglars who operate in Crystal Park Extension 32 are

electronics, especially the television (TV). Housebreaking incidents in Crystal Park Extension 32 were said to primarily take place during the day in the work week when most residents are either at work or school. Incidents in the area peaked in December because many people receive their bonuses at the end of the year and may purchase expensive personal items and household goods, and because many residents are away from home during the festive season. Furthermore, occupants who show off their lifestyles by throwing boxes from newly purchased electronics outside next to the dustbin on rubbish collection day, increase their risk of victimisation. Participants further noted that people become victims because of their routine activities. Likewise, houses without basic security measures, such as barrier walls/fences, burglar bars on doors and windows, poor lighting at night and overgrown trees or shrubs are more vulnerable to housebreaking attacks. As most of the afore-mentioned security vulnerabilities relate to architectural or environmental design, the crime prevention through environmental strategy (CPTED) is recommended for reducing or preventing housebreaking incidents in Crystal Park Extension 32. The CPTED, as a possible prevention strategy against housebreaking incidents in Crystal Park Extension 32, was deemed suitable as this research was grounded on the environmental criminology framework by using three opportunity theories to underpin the study. They were the Routine Activity Theory (RAT), opportunity model and the Rational Choice Theory (RCT).

The participants agreed that the lack of *Ubuntu* among neighbours creates a breeding ground for opportunistic crimes such as housebreaking. A basic principle, such as *Ubuntu*, discourages individualism and encourages communal living. Communal living creates a sense of belonging and unity which, in turn, makes crime prevention through informal social controls possible (i.e., bystander/neighbour interventions and neighbourhood watch initiatives). A highly individualised community is socially disorganised because neighbours do not look out for each other. As a result, in communities characterised by individualism, people turn a blind eye when they witness a crime being committed in their neighbourhood. A unique finding of this study was that a new neighbourhood can be a likely risk factor for housebreaking incidents. This means that residents in a newly built neighbourhood, like Crystal Park Extension 32, which was constructed six years before the research commenced, are likely to experience heightened incidents of housebreaking.

KEY TERMS: Burglary, Burglary at residential premises, Environmental criminology, Housebreaking, Modus operandi, Opportunity crime, Opportunity theories, Property crime, Victim, Victim risk factors, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), Residential burglary.

KAKARETŠO

Nyakišišo ye e sekasekile ditiragalo tše di diregilego ka Extension 32 Crystal Park tša bohodu bja go thuba ka dintlong, go tšwa go maitemogelo a batšwasehlabele. Lefelo la Crystal Park Extension 32 le hlomilwe mengwaga ya go feta ye 12 ye e fetilego gomme le ka lehlakoreng la ka bohlabela bja Benoni, Mmasepaleng wa Ekurhuleni (Profense ya Gauteng). Lefelo le ke lefelo la ka thoko ga toropo leo le nago le malapa a ka bago a 400. Ngwaga goba ye mebedi ka morago ga gore lefelo le le hlongwe, go ile gwa ba le ditiragalo tša go thuba dintlo tše di ilego tša dira gore badudi ba hloke thušo. Se se ile sa dira gore go be le tlhokego ya go dira nyakišišo ye. Mokgwa wa khwalithethifi o šomišitšwe go kgoboketša datha ka mokgwa wa go kgetha dikemedi fela go tšwa go batšwasehlabele ba seswai (8), le go kgetha dikemedi ka morero ka go kgetha batšeakarolo ba ditsebi ba ba hlano (5). Batšeakarolo ba ditsebi bao ba šomišitšwego go nyakišišo ke maloko a mararo (3) a SAPS go tšwa Seteišeneng sa Maphodisa sa Crystal Park, leloko le tee la foramo ya maphodisa a setšhaba a Crystal Park (CPF) le mohlapetši o tee wa dimpša go tšwa sehlopheng sa bahlapetši ba tikologo seo se bitšwago *AmaRussia*. Ka kakaretšo, nyakišišo e šomišitše dikemedi tše 13. Datha e kgobokeditšwe ka go šomiša mokgwa wa dipoledišano tša dipotšišo tše di bulegilego gomme tshedimošo ya sekasekwa. Dinyakišišo di utollotše gore mahodu ao a hlaselago ka Crystal Park Extension 32 ga a šome a nnoši gomme a šoma ka sehlopha. Ditlhaselo ka moka di a rulaganywa, gomme o mongwe le o mongwe o na le maikarabelo, o tee o leta ka tle, o mogwe a thuba mola o mongwe e le mootledi. Mahodu ba šomiša dithekiniki tša go fapana go hwetša ntlo yeo e se nago le batho; bjalo ka go tobetša sedirišwa sa mogala goba go kokota, le go beya dikgong tseleng letšatši pele ba thuba go bona ge e ba di tla tlošwa, goba go hlodimela ge go na le dikoloi. Mahodu a tshela maboto go tsena ka dintlong goba a tsena ka dikeiti tša go se notlelwe. Ga a rete go tsena ka mekgwa ye mengwe ka ge gole bonolo go tsena ka lebati. Bosenyi bo akaretša go utswa dielektroniki kudu dithelebišeni (TV). Ditiragalo tše di ba mosegare ge bontšhi bja badudi ba le mošomong goba sekolong. Bontšhi bja bosenyi bo direga ka Desemere ka ge bontšhi bja bašomi bo hwetša diponase gomme ba reka dilo tša go tura le dithoto tša ka malapeng. Lebaka le lengwe la gore bosenyi bo be godimo ka Desemere ke gore badudi ba ya mafelong a maikhutšo a go fapafapana. Mahodu a tseba gape gore ba thuba ntlong efe ka go bona mapokisi a thoto e mpsa ao a lahlilwego pepeneneng. Dikutullo di laeditše gape

gore bohodu bja dintlong bo hlaga kudu dintlong tša mabone a go se šome gabotse tša goba le mehlare e megolo kudu, tša go hloka mabota le didirišwa tša tšhireletšo tša tlaleletšo mafasetereng le mabating. Nyakišišo ye e šišinya Leano la Tlhamo ya Tikologo (CPTED) go thibela goba go fokotša ditiragalo tša bosenyi ka Crystal Park Extension 32. Nyakišišo ye e theilwe godimo ga foreimeweke ya bosenyi bja tikologo, gomme e šomišitše diteori tše tharo, (go fa mohlala, ditiro tša tlwaelo, motlolo wa monyetla le mabaka ao a hlohleletšago dikgetho) go thekga nyakišišo.

Nyakišišo e laeditše gore go hloka tšhomišano ga baagišani ke monyetla wo o šomišago ke mahodu go ditiragalo tša bohodu bja dintlong mola phorintshipole ya *Ubuntu* e hlohleletša tšhomišanommogo le go phela gabotse le batho ba bangwe. Go phedišana gabotse go tliša maikwelo a botee le kwano gomme tšhomišannommogo e ka thibela bohodu ka go ba le dihlopha tše di hlokomelanago. Badudi bao ba phelago ba nnoši gomme ba se na le tšhomišanommogo le baagišani ba bangwe, ge go e ba le ditiragalo tša bosenyi badudi ba lebelela thoko ka gore o mongwe le o mongwe o hlokometše tša gagwe. Dipelo tša nyakišišo ye di laeditše gore go dula tikologong e mpsha e ka ba lebaka la go thubelwa ka dintlong. Se se hlaloša gore badudi ba tikologong yeo e sa tšwago go agwa bjalo ka Crystal Park Extension 32, yeo e agilwego mengwaga e tshela pele nyakišišo ye e dirwa, ba ka itemogela ditiragalo tša godimo tša bohodu bja go thubelwa ka dintlong.

MANTŠU A BOHLOKWA:

Go thuba, Go thuba mafelong a bodulo, Thuto ya bosenyi bja tikologo, Go thuba dintlong, Mokgwa wa go šoma, Bosenyi bjo bjo hlagago fela, Diteori tša sebaka, Bosenyi bja dithoto, Mohlaselwa, Mabaka a kotsi ya Mohlaselwa, Thibelo ya Bosenyi ka Leano la Tlhamo ya Tikologo (CPTED).

OKUCASHUNIWE

Lolu cwaningo luhlale isenzeko sokugqezwa kwezindlu e-*Crystal Park Extension 32*, ngokombono wengozi yesisulu. Indawo yase-*Crystal Park Extension 32* yakhiwa eminyakeni engaphezu kweyi-12 edlule futhi itholakala ohlangothini olusempumalanga neBenoni, ngaphansi kwaMasipala Ekurhuleni (eSifundazweni sase-Gauteng). Le ndawo iyindawo esadolobha elinamakhaya angama-400±. Ngemva konyaka owodwa noma emibili kusukela le ndawo isunguliwe, kwahlaselwa uhude lwezizameko zokugqezwa kwezindlu nokwashiya izakhamuzi zikhungathekile futhi zidinga usizo. Lokhu-ke kudale ukuthi kube nesidingo sokwenza lolu cwaningo. Ukufeza lo msebenzi, kwathathwa indlela yocwaningo echazayo futhi kwasetshenziswa nomklamo wocwaningo lwendaba. Njengoba lolu bekuwucwaningo lwendlela echazayo, kusetshenziswe izindlela ezimbili zocwaningo ezingalindelekile ukuze kukhethwe abahlanganyeli. Ukusampula kokuqoqwa kwemininingwane okufinyelela kalula kwasetshenziswa ukuze kukhethwe izisulu eziyisishiyagalombili (8), okungamayunithi ayinhloko okuhlaziya, kuyilapho ukusampula okuhlosiwe kwasetshenziswa ukuze kuthathwe ochwepheshe bezihloko abahlanu (5) (ama-SME), amayunithi esibili okuhlaziya. Ama-SME ahlanganisa amalungu amathathu (3) e-SAPS aseSiteshini Samaphoyisa e-*Crystal Park*, ilungu elilodwa lesigungu samaphoyisa somphakathi sase-*Crystal Park (CPF)* kanye nomlindi wezinja oyedwa ovela eqenjini eliqaphile lomakhelwane elibizwa ngokuthi *AmaRussia*. Sebebonke, abahlanganyeli bocwaningo abayi-13, okuhlanganisa izisulu nama-SME, babambe iqhaza ocwaningweni. Imininingwane evela kubo bobabili abayizisulu kanye nabahlanganyeli bama-SME yaqoqwa ngezingxoxiswano ezihlelwe kancane futhi yahlaziywa kusetshenziswa okuhlaziya kwezindikimba. Kutholakale ukuthi izigebengu eziningi ezisebenzela e-*Crystal Park Extension 32* ziyakuhlela ukuhlasela kwazo. Azizona osomathuba abasebenza bodwa kodwa kunalokho basebenza ngamaqembu abantu ababili kuya kwabayisithupha. Abahlanganyeli baqaphele ukuthi kubalulekile ukuthi abagqezwe balolu hlobo basebenze ngamaqembu njengoba ilungu ngalinye linendima ethile elinikezwe yona. Izindima ezintathu eziyisisekelo ogadile / isibukile, umshayeli, kanye nomphangi. Ngenxa yokuthi ukugqezwa kwezindlu kungenziwa kuphela endlini engahlali muntu, kwatholakala ukuthi amasu ahlukeni asetshenziswa ngabagqezwe ukuhlola ukuthi kukhona abahlalayo. Amasu asukela ekucindezeleni i-*intercom* noma ekungqongqozeni esangweni ukuze sihlale ukuthi ukhona yini

ozophendula; ukubeka ukhuni emzileni wesango oya endaweni ngosuku olwandulela ukugqezwa kwendlu, uma kubhekwa ukuthi ukhuni cishe luzosuswa uma kukhona umuntu ekhaya; ukubheka izimoto emigwaqweni yokushayela ekhaya noma emachwebeni.

Kuvele ukuthi uma sekuhlonzwe inhloso efanele, abagqezazi bangena egcekeni ngokweqa udonga/uthango noma bangene ngesango elingakhiyiwe. Ukuze bathole ukungena endlini, abahlanganyeli bocwaningo baphakamise ukuthi nakuba ezinye izindawo zokungena ezinjengamafasitela noma uphahla zingase zisetshenziswe, abagqezazi bancamela ukusebenzisa umnyango njengoba lokhu kwakulula kakhulu. Ngemva kokweba izimpahla ezifunwayo endlini, umnyango wasetshenziswa yizigebengu eziningi e-Crystal Park Extension 32 njengendawo yokuphuma. Abahlanganyeli kulolu cwano baphinde baveza ukuthi izinto ezihloswe kakhulu ngabagqezazi abasebenza kule ndawo yizinto ezisebenza ngogesi, ikakhulukazi omabonakude (TV). Izigameko zokugqezwa kwezindlu eCrystal Park Extension 32 kuthiwa zenzeke ikakhulukazi ngesonto nasemini lapho iningi labahlali lisemsebenzini noma esikoleni. Kuvele ukuthi izigameko zanda kakhulu kule ndawo ngoZibandlela ngenxa yokuthi abantu abaningi bathola amabhonasi uma kuphela unyaka bese bethenga izinto zomuntu siqu nezasendlini ezibizayo. Kuphinde kwavela ukuthi izigameko eziningi zenzeka ngoZibandlela ngenxa yokuthi iningi labahlali lisuke lingekho emakhaya ngesikhathi samaholidi. Ngaphezu kwalokho, kwatholakala ukuthi abahlali ababukisa ngempilo yabo, isib. ukulahla amabhokisi asanda kuthengwa ezinto zikagesi ngaphandle eduze komgqomo wodoti ngosuku lokuqoqwa kukadoti, kwandisa ingcuphe yabo yokuba izisulu. Abahlanganyeli baphinde bakhala ngokuthi abantu baba yizisulu ngenxa yemisebenzi yabo evamile. Ngokunjalo, izindlu ezingenazo izindlela zokuphepha eziyisisekelo njengezithiyo zezindonga noma uthango, izinsimbi ezivimba ukugqezazi emafasiteleni namasango okuvikela eminyango zisengcupheni yokugqezwa. Okufanayo kusebenza ezindlini ezinokukhanya okubi ebusuku nemithi ekhule kakhulu noma izihlahla. Njengoba ubungozi bokuphepha okukhulunywe ngabo ngenhla buhlobene nomklamo noma izizinda zemvelo, Ukuvimbela Ubugebengu ngeSu Lokuklama Isizinda (CPTED) kuyanconywa ukuze kuncishiswe noma kuvinjwe izigameko zokugqezazi kwezindlu e-Crystal Park Extension 32. Lolu cwano lusekelwe ohlakeni lobugebengu bendawo, kusetshenziswa imibono emithathu yamathuba (okungukuthi, imisebenzi

evamile, isifanekiso samathuba kanye nokukhetha okunengqondo) ukuze kusekelwe ucwaningo.

Abahlanganyeli bavumelene ngokuthi ukwentuleka koBuntu phakathi komakhelwane kudala isizinda sokuzalanisa ubugebengu obungenzeka njengokugqezwa kwezindlu. Umgomo oyisisekelo njengoBuntu awukukhuthazi ukukhetha komuntu ngamunye futhi ukhuthaza ukuphila komphakathi. Ukuphila komphakathi kudala umuzwa wokuzwana nobunye, okwenza ukunqandwa kobugebengu ngokulawulwa komphakathi okungakahleleki kwenzeka (okungokuthi, ukungenelela komuntu obukele/umakhelwane kanye nezinhlelo zokugada komakhelwane). Umphakathi okhetheke kakhulu awuhlelekile emphakathini ngoba omakhelwane ababukelelani. Ngenxa yalokhu, emiphakathini egqame ngokuzikhethela, abantu bayashalazela uma bebona ubugebengu obenziwa endaweni yangakubo.

Okutholakele okuyingqayizivele kwalolu cwaningo kwaba ukuthi ukuhlala endaweni entsha kungaba yisici esiyingozi sezehlakalo zokugqezwa kwezindlu. Lokhu kusho ukuthi izakhamuzi endaweni esanda kwakhiwa efana ne-Crystal Park Extension 32, eyakhiwa eminyakeni eyisithupha ngaphambi kokuqala kocwaningo, kungenzeka zithole izigameko eziningi zokugqezwa kwezindlu.

IMIQONDO ESEMQOKA:

Ukugqezwa, Ukugqezwa endaweni yokuhlala, Isifundo ngokuhlola ukuhleleka kobugebengu, Ukugqezwa kwezindlu, Indlela yokusebenza ejwayelekile yobugebengu, Ubugebengu obungahleliwe, Imibono ephawula ukwenza ubugebengu ngokusekelwe ethubeni olitholile, Ubugebengu bokucekela phansi impahla yomuntu siqu, Isisulu, Izici zobungozi besisulu, Ukuvimba Ubugengu ngeSu Lomklamo weSizinda, Ukugqezwa kwendawo yokuhlala.

ABBREVIATIONS

ABIS	Automated Biometric Identification System
AFIS	Automated Fingerprint Identification System
CBD	Central Business District
CCTV	Closed-Circuit Television
CIT	Cash-in-Transit
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease
CPF	Community Policing Forum
CPTED	Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design
CSC	Client Services Centre
DHA	Department of Home Affairs
DoJ & CD	Department of Justice and Constitutional Development
DVD	Digital Video Disc
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigations
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPSJS	Governance, Public Safety and Justice Survey
IO	Investigating Officer
LRAT	Lifestyle-Routine Activity Theory
MO	Modus Operandi
NCPC	National Crime Prevention Council
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
RAT	Routine Activity Theory
RCT	Rational Choice Theory
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SA	South Africa
SAPS	South African Police Service
SME	Subject Matter Experts

StatsSA	Statistics South Africa
TV	Television
UCR	Uniform Crime Report
USA	United States of America

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CHAPTER 1: GENERAL ORIENTATION AND RESEARCH APPROACH

1.1 Introduction

Although only contact crimes, such as robbery, assault, murder, and rape, are classified as serious and violent crimes by the South African Police Service (SAPS), any type of crime is serious and should be treated as such. All crimes have victims who will suffer directly or indirectly. Often times, the victims of crime are ignored, and the focus is placed on the crime and the perpetrator. One such crime is housebreaking or burglary at residential premises,¹ classified as a property-related crime by the SAPS due to the lack of contact between the victim and the perpetrator. Even though the primary targets of a residential robbery are the possessions owned by the resident(s) or money,

“[a]nyone who has been burgled will know that the impact of the crime runs far beyond the loss of belongings. The financial impact of burglary can be significant for many people, but the emotional stress that comes from being burgled often lasts much longer” (Verisure, 2017:np).

Concurring with Verisure (2017:np), Bjørge (2016:36) who explains that, in addition to causing financial loss and physical damage to property, the psychological damage caused by housebreaking or the invasion of one’s home by strangers diminishes one’s sense of safety. Based on the recent Governance, Public Safety and Justice Survey (GPSJS) on victims of crime by Statistics South Africa (StatsSA, 2022), out of the seven types of crime reported in the survey, housebreaking has, “consistently been the most experienced crime by households” (StatsSA, 2023:25a). Figure 1.1 below shows the percentage distribution of the crimes experienced by households in South Africa during 2022/23. Housebreaking accounts for 72% of the crimes, followed by home robbery (13%), motor vehicle theft (5%), assault (4%), deliberate damage to property (4%), sexual offence (1%) and murder (1%) (StatsSA, 2023:25). StatsSA (2023:31b) reveals that approximately 1,6 million incidents of housebreaking were

¹ Important to note is that the terms housebreaking, burglary at residential premises or burglary are used interchangeably throughout this dissertation.

reported during the Victims of Crime Survey.

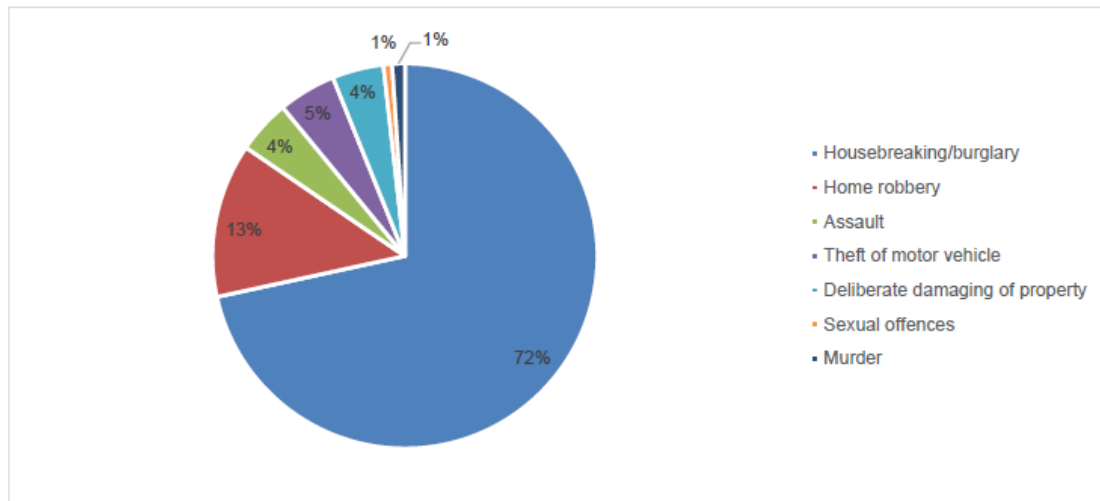


Figure 1.1: Percentage distribution of type of crimes experienced by households in the 12 months preceding the survey, 2022/23

Source: StatsSA (2023:25a)

The statistics from the Victims of Crime Survey by StatsSA (2023:25a) reveal that the number of housebreaking incidents experienced by South African households is very high and the impact the crime has on its victims is dire.

1.2 Problem statement and study rationale

Problem statement is described by Bisht (2023:np) as a short description of the issue a research study seeks to undertake. A problem statement describes what is currently happening, the desired outcome and any gaps between the current status and the desired outcome (Bisht, 2023:np). The author further highlights that it is important for a research project to start with a clear problem statement so that readers and fellow researchers understand the problem being addressed and why it is important for the study to be conducted.

1.2.1 Property-related crimes in South Africa

Although contact crimes, such as assault, murder, and rape, are prioritised by the criminal justice system (CJS), property crimes, such as burglary at residential premises, also need attention. Brown and Harris (1989:129) believe that, because burglary at a residential premise involves intrusion and violation of what is considered

one's primary and safe territory, victims of burglary suffer more than victims of other property-related crimes.

As depicted in Table 1.1 below, property related crimes reported to the SAPS for the five-year period between 2018/19 and 2022/23 show a steady decline with a total of 495 161 reported in 2018/19 and 375 970 in 2022/23. On the other hand, Table 1.1 also shows that burglaries at residential premises, for the five-year reporting period between 2018/19 and 2022/23, have the highest number of incidents of the property-related crime cases.

Even though there was a slight decrease of 2,27% in the number of burglaries at residential premises reported in 2021/22, in comparison to 2020/21, the number increased by 7 323 in 2022/23 in comparison to 2021/22. This means that a total of 163 493 housebreaking incidents were reported in 2022/23 and 156 170 incidents were reported in 2021/22. This is a significant increase which needs to be urgently addressed.

Table 1.1: Property-related crime: South Africa 2018/19 – 2022/23

Property-Related Crimes							
Crime Category	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Count Difference 2022 versus 2023	% Change 2022 versus 2023
Burglary at non-residential premises	71 224	69 713	65 508	62 197	62 588	391	0,6%
Burglary at residential premises	220 865	205 959	159 721	156 170	163 493	7 323	4,7%
Theft of motor vehicle or motorcycle	48 324	46 921	35 023	37 402	37 461	59	0,2%
Theft out of or from motor vehicle	125 076	118 213	83 183	81 504	87 173	5 669	7,0%
Stock-theft	29 672	28 418	26 310	25 001	25 255	254	1,0%
Total	495 161	469 224	369 745	362 274	375 970	13 696	3,8%

Source: Adapted from **SAPS (2023)**

Although the number of incidents seems high, this is not a true reflection of the extent of the housebreaking problem in South Africa as not all victims report their victimisation to the SAPS. The Victims of Crime Survey by StatsSA revealed that, in 2022/23, approximately 1,6 million incidents of housebreaking were reported by participants who completed the survey whereas only 163 493 incidents were recorded by the SAPS in the same reporting period. If the number of cases recorded through the victim survey conducted by StatsSA are compared to the number of cases recorded by the SAPS, it means that approximately 1.4 million incidents of housebreaking were not reported to the police in 2022/23. According to StatsSA (2023:31), there was a

decrease in the percentage of households that reported some or all incidents to the police in 2022/23. In the 2021/22 Victims of Crime Survey, 59,2% of households revealed that they reported their victimisation to the police, whereas, in 2022/23, just over a half (51,4%) of the victims opened cases with the police (StatsSA, 2023:31). The dark figure of police records of housebreaking incidents has negative consequences on preventative strategies for the crime by the criminal justice system (CJS) and the effective allocation of police resources. Buil-Gil, Medina and Shlomo (2020:364) explain that “[f]or decades, criminologists have been aware of the severe consequences that the dark figure of crime has for designing and evaluating crime prevention policies and, by extension, for citizens’ everyday lives.” Regardless of the discrepancies between crime statistics reported by the SAPS and those reported by StatsSA, what the two reports have in common is the fact that housebreaking has, over the years, consistently contributed the highest number of incidents to the total property-related crime category.

1.2.1.1 Statistics of property-related crimes for the Gauteng Province and Crystal Park

Crystal Park Extension 32 is located in Gauteng Province. In this sub-section, property-related crime statistics reported in the province as well as the policing precinct of Crystal Park are discussed. Based on the housebreaking provincial statistics by the SAPS (2023:np), in 2022/23, a total number of 35 899 incidents were reported to the police in the Gauteng Province. This is an increase of 1 536 incidents in comparison to the number of incidents (n=34 363) recorded in 2021/22. Additionally, Gauteng reported the highest number of housebreaking cases in comparison to the other eight provinces in South Africa (SAPS, 2023). Table 1.2 below depicts that, like the national statistics discussed earlier, burglary at residential premises in Crystal Park has, for the five-year period between 2018/19 and 2022/23, contributed the highest to the overall number of property-related crimes reported to the Crystal Park police station.

Table 1.2: Property-related crime: Crystal Park police station, 2018/19–2022/23

Property-Related Crimes: Crystal Park Police Station							
Crime Category	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/21	2022/23	Count Difference 2022 versus 2023	% Change 2022 versus 2023
Burglary at non-residential premises	45	55	55	46	56	10	21,7%
Burglary at residential premises	420	245	204	214	188	-26	-12,1%
Theft of motor vehicle or motorcycle	77	96	74	69	87	18	26,1%
Theft out of or from motor vehicle	97	99	110	60	38	-22	-36,0%
Stock-theft	4	4	2	2	0	-2	0,0%
Total	643	499	445	391	369	-22	-5,6%

Source: Adapted from SAPS (2023)

The statistics above also depict a fluctuating trend in the number of incidents reported between 2018/19 and 2022/23. Four hundred and twenty (420) incidents were reported to the Crystal Park police station in 2018/19 while 245 incidents were reported in 2018/20, a decrease of 175 incidents. The researcher started this study in 2018/19 when incidents reported at Crystal Park police station were at their peak (n=420). Nonetheless, the declining trend persisted until 2021/22 with 204 incidents being reported to the police but, in 2021/22, the number of reported incidents increased by 10 incidents, an increase of 4,46%, from 2020/21 to 2021/22. This increase may seem statistically insignificant, but the impact of robbery has long term emotional consequences for the victims (Verisure, 2017). In 2022/23, the number of incidents declined again by 26 cases in comparison to the previous reporting year. Even though the declining trend in the number of incidents seems to be persisting in this area, a total number of 188 cases is still very high for one policing precinct. Even though the statistics presented by StatsSA and those recorded by the SAPS do not correlate, the statistics from both organisations depict housebreaking as the most common type of property-related crime experienced by South Africans. The mere fact that housebreaking is ranked at the top of the property-related crimes by both the StatsSA and SAPS means that this crime needs to be prioritised in terms of both research and crime prevention strategies. Also, a burglary at residential premises may be listed as a property-related offence but the illegal entry into a person’s home has a longer lasting impact than the material or financial loss the victim may have suffered. Despite the very high number of incidents of residential burglaries experienced by South African residents, very little scientific research has been conducted by local scholars on this phenomenon. While the researcher was reviewing the literature for previous scientific studies, he was able to find only two criminological studies (Mpfu, 2019;

Van Zyl, 2002) on housebreaking conducted in specific small areas in South Africa which were relevant to the aim and objectives of this current study. The focus of Mpofu's (2019) study was on the Cato Crest Informal Settlement of Durban, KwaZulu-Natal Province, while Van Zyl (2002) focused on two areas in Pretoria, Gauteng Province, namely, Pretoria West and Garsfontein. Even though the latter study was conducted in the Gauteng Province, the same province as the current study, neither of the two studies focused on an area in Johannesburg or in the Ekurhuleni Municipality specifically where Crystal Park Extension 32 is situated.

1.3 Research aim and objectives

The research aim outlines the intentions behind the research or what the research intends to accomplish (Gupta & Shah, 2020:61) while research objectives are regarded as clear steps adopted to attain the research aim (Gupta & Shah, 2020:61). In this study, the primary aim was to *explore* factors that contributed to the likelihood of residents of Crystal Park Extension 32 experiencing housebreaking crime. Based on the above aim of the study, objectives were therefore as follows:

- To present an in-depth overview of the modus operandi (MO) used during housebreaking incidents committed in Crystal Park Extension 32.
- To identify factors that put residents of Crystal Park Extension 32 at risk of housebreaking incidents.
- To determine the impact the crime of housebreaking has on victims residing in Crystal Park Extension 32.
- From the findings of this research, to recommend measures that can be used to reduce or prevent housebreaking incidents in Crystal Park Extension 32.

1.4 Research questions

Research questions provide guidance in a research study (Leavy 2022:83). In simple terms, research questions are simply questions that need to be addressed in the study (Leavy, 2022:83). Research question complement the research objectives. The key issues to be focused on in a research project are phrased in a form of questions that are tied to the study objectives. The research questions were thus the following:

- What modus operandi is used to commit incidents of housebreaking in

Crystal Park Extension 32?

- What factors contribute to the likelihood of some households of Crystal Park Extension 32 becoming targets for housebreaking?
- What impact does housebreaking have on victims residing in Crystal Park Extension 32?
- What measures can be put in place to reduce or prevent housebreaking in Crystal Part Extension 32?

1.5 Study contribution

With this study, the researcher hopes to, firstly, contribute by describing the complex phenomenon of housebreaking as it is understood and experienced by the research participants (i.e., victims of housebreaking in Crystal Park Extension 32 and subject matter experts [SMEs]). Secondly, the study aimed to contribute to the current criminological literature on a very common but under-researched phenomenon of residential burglaries. The current limited literature focuses more on housebreaking as an act or housebreakers as perpetrators while less focus is given to burglary victims and the effects of burglary on them. Hence, this research will add new knowledge on burglaries from victims' viewpoints and their impact on them. Finally, as a resident of Crystal Park Extension 32, the researcher hopes that the recommendations made through this research will help the residents to better protect themselves from housebreaking incidents.

1.6 Key theoretical concepts

For contextual understanding, the following key concepts are defined:

1.6.1 Burglary

Burglary is defined as the unlawful entry into a structure to commit a crime or theft with or without the use of force (Federal Bureau of Investigations [FBI], 2010; Morgan, Morgan & Santos, 2015:16). Siegal (2015:328) defines burglary as entering a dwelling place using force, threat, and deception with the intention to commit crime once inside. Bernasco (2014:146) adds that a residential burglary takes place when a person enters another person's house without their permission, with an intention to steal.

1.6.2 Housebreaking

According to the SAPS (2023:np), housebreaking with intent to commit a crime means the unlawful and intentional breaking into and entering a building or a structure intending to commit a crime within it. There is a difference between housebreaking and house robbery. During a housebreaking incident, the perpetrators target an unoccupied house whereas “a crime is recorded as a residential robbery when an armed individual or individuals enter a private residence by force while the people who live or work there are present” (Mpofu, 2019:16).

The difference between burglary and housebreaking depends on an individual’s location. For example, in South Africa, the legal term used for breaking and entering a residential area is often called housebreaking rather than burglary while the term burglary is often used to describe breaking and entering business buildings. Whereas in the United States, the term burglary is often used to describe breaking and entering both residential and business areas.

In this research, the terms housebreaking, burglary, house/residential burglary, burglary resident and burglary at residential premises were used interchangeably.

1.6.3 Community Policing Forum (CPF)

A CPF is a forum established in terms of section 19(1) of the SAPS Act 68 of 1995 (SAPS, n.d.). It comprises a group of individuals from various communities, community organisations, stakeholders such as traditional authorities, the local and provincial government and police representatives who meet regularly to discuss local crime prevention strategies (SAPS, n.d.). The aims of the CPF are to ensure police accountability, transparency, and effectiveness while serving the community (SAPS, n.d.).

1.6.4 Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

“CPTED is a multi-disciplinary approach to deterring criminal behaviour through environmental design. CPTED strategies rely upon the ability to influence offender decisions that precede criminal acts by affecting the built, social and administrative environment” (International CPTED Association [ICA]: 2023:np).

The primary goal of CPTED is to decrease crime opportunities by employing physical or architectural design features that discourage crime. The five principles or prevention strategies of CPTED are: surveillance and visibility; territoriality; access and escape routes; image and aesthetics; and target hardening (Saferpaces, 2023:np). The intention of CPTED is to change physical structures that encourage crime and turn them into physical structures that discourage criminal activities (Thobane, 2017:258). This crime prevention strategy is concerned with buildings and landscaping and is based on the principles of territoriality, surveillance, access control, target hardening, maintaining image and activity support (Montoya, Junger & Ongena, 2014:515).

1.6.5 Environmental criminology

This study followed the environmental criminology framework. The environmental perspective in criminology highlights the importance of situational factors connected to the increase of crime risks in relation to crime opportunities (Solymosi & Bowers, 2018:210).

“The point of departure for [environmental criminology] is that human behaviour is situated in place; therefore, the place in which crime occurs needs to be (at the very least) one of the dimensions of crime investigated-essentially, crime has a geography” (Andresen, 2006:259).

According to Brantingham and Brantingham (1981:np), the background of geographical profiling is closely tied with crime opportunity theories. It is for this reason that three crime opportunity theories, the Routine Activity Theory (RAT), the opportunity model and the rational choice (RCT), underpinned the environmental criminology framework of this study to explain the phenomenon of housebreaking, particularly, what puts the victims at risk of this crime. Refer to Chapter 3 for discussions on the theoretical framework.

1.6.6 Neighbourhood watch

“A [neighbourhood] watch program is a group of people living in the same area who want to make their [neighbourhood] safer by working together and in conjunction with local law enforcement to reduce crime and improve their quality of life. [Neighbourhood] watch groups have regular meetings to plan

how they will accomplish their specific goals and leaders with assigned responsibilities” (National Neighborhood Watch, 2024:np).

Neighbourhood watch groups have meetings on a regular basis to discuss how their crime reduction goals will be achieved; they also appoint leaders who have assignment responsibilities (National Neighborhood Watch, 2024:np). In simple terms, neighbourhood groups are the “eyes” and “ears” of the CPF, police and private security companies operating in the areas. Neighbourhood watch groups, like the CPF, bridge the gap between the community and the police. The difference between the CPF and the neighbourhood watch is that the CPF is a formal structure established in terms of SAPS Act 68 of 1995, as explained above under point 1.5.3 and the neighbourhood watch is an informal additional structure to the CPF initiated and run by the residents. However, the two forums work close together with the police.

At the time of this research, there was a neighbourhood watch group called *AmaRussia* who patrolled the Crystal Park Extension 32 area with dogs. The residents paid them a small amount of money for their services. However, the participants of this research revealed that *AmaRussia* had buy-in from only one street and they were, therefore, watching that specific street and not the entire area.

1.6.7 Property-related crime

“Property related crime refers to crimes during which tangible property of an individual or institution is taken by criminal elements without permission, and in the absence of the owner/custodian of such property” (SAPS, 2022:59). Property-related crime, as classified by the SAPS (2022:59), includes:

- Burglary (residential) or housebreaking;
- Burglary (non-residential);
- Motor vehicle or motorcycle theft;
- Theft from or out of a motor vehicle; and
- Theft of stock.

The specific type of property-related crime focused on in this study is burglary (residential) or housebreaking.

1.6.8 Victim

A victim according to the Minimum Standards on Services for Victims of Crime is

“a person who has suffered harm, including physical or mental injury, emotional suffering, economic loss or substantial impairment of his or her fundamental rights through acts or omissions that are in violation of [the South African] criminal law” (Department of Justice and Constitutional Development [DoJ & CD], n.d.:3).

In the context of this study, a victim of crime therefore refers to any individual, group or entity that has suffered harm or loss due to criminal activity, specifically, housebreaking and victim risk factors explain why an individual or a group of people is more likely to become a victim of crime, housebreaking or residential burglary.

1.7 Dissertation layout

Chapter 1

This chapter lays out the foundation for the study by focusing on the problem statement, aims and objectives of the study as well as the study rationale and the value of the study. Also discussed in this chapter are the research methods employed to conduct the research.

Chapter 2

In this chapter, the general literature related to the phenomenon of burglary at residential premises is discussed. The literature review was compiled by consulting various sources such as books, journal articles, dissertations and theses, and the internet.

Chapter 3

The framework as well as theories underpinning the study are dealt with under this chapter.

Chapter 4

Ways in which data were analysed are summarised in this chapter followed by a

detailed discussion and interpretation of the findings.

Chapter 5

In Chapter 5, the research findings are summarised and recommendations are provided before presentation of the conclusion.

1.8 Summary

This chapter laid the foundation for the research by presenting the problem statement, as well as the research aims, objectives and the questions. The significance of the study is also discussed in this chapter followed by the definition of key concepts.

The next chapter focuses on the literature review.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Fink (2014:3) states that a literature review closely examines research articles, books, and any other reliable and relevant sources in the area of study. This is done to narrate, recapture and closely analyse sources relevant to the research problem. The main intention of a literature review is to give an outline of sources consulted while systematically investigating a specific topic. Furthermore, the literature review highlights the importance of the study and how it will contribute to the body of knowledge of the specific field.

This chapter reviews the literature in terms of the modus operandi used during burglary at residential premises, victim risk factors, the impact of residential burglaries on the victim, and measures currently used to prevent the crime.

2.2 The modus operandi of burglary at residential premises

Modus operandi (MO) means the methods of operation used by criminals. MO is like a road map which provides criminals with guidelines on which directions and decisions to take. Bonn (2015:np) and Labuschagne (2019:278) opine that MO refers to a behavioural pattern of actions followed by offenders to successfully commit a certain criminal activity. "The MO can be very simplistic or extremely complex, with various levels of sophistication that reflect the experience, motivation, and intelligence of the offender" (Labuschagne, 2019:278).

Through studying a MO of a crime, one can understand how and how long the planning might have taken place, how many people were required to execute the burglary and the role and responsibilities allocated to each member of the group, if the burglary was committed by a group. MO also provides information on the type of instruments used for which activity during the burglary. MO can also explain how entry and exit were executed. Lastly, MO can assist in identifying goods which are stolen and how they are stored before they are distributed.

Considering the MO of a crime, the commission of a housebreaking incident is characterised by three different phases, namely, the planning phase, the crime

commission phase, and the post crime phase.

2.2.1 The planning phase

The planning phase involves activities such as: time taken to plan the burglary; target selection; casing of a target; identification of the day and time on which the crime will be committed; identification of resources required; allocation of roles; identification of entry and exist points; and the amount of time spent inside the house.

2.2.1.1 Time taken to plan burglary

Mullins and Wright (2003:813–814) explain that a residential burglary is often committed in groups. In a study conducted in Turkey by Mercan (2019:50), a group of burglars typically met between 12:00 and 13:00 to plan their activities. Meeting venues usually involved public places such as parks in the neighbourhood (Mercan, 2019:50). The planning of a burglary, according to Mercan (2019:50), involves only a few hours and the targeted house is identified on the day of the burglary while offenders are meandering in the neighbourhood. On the contrary, Blevins, Kuhns and Lee (2012:3) are of the opinion that planning a burglary may take between one and three days of planning before the crime is executed.

2.2.1.2 Casing of a target

After planning the burglary, offenders walk on the pavement of a targeted neighbourhood chosen by their leader to select a house. Refer to section 2.4 for factors that increase the likelihood of an area or the chances of a house becoming a target for burglary. Before burglars attack the property, they ensure that no one is in the building. This can be done by tossing a ball on a window of the targeted house or going inside the yard and ringing the doorbell to attract the attention of the occupants if they are home (Mercan, 2019:46). The most common method of casing is through checking the mailbox. If the mailbox seems to be unattended, then chances are that occupants of the house are not at home (Mercan, 2019:46). This was also supported by Van Zyl (2002:126) who conducted research in Garsfontein (in Pretoria East) and Pretoria West. Van Zyl (2002:126) adds that burglars look for cars on driveways and outside lights which are on during the day. Mercan (2019:53) posits that access to the yard can be gained through climbing a fence or crawling through small trees. Once in

the yard, burglars assess the targeted house based on the following three risks (Wright & Decker, 1994:85):

- (i) **Surveillability:** During this stage, offenders check if there are any people around the area who will witness the crime being committed;
- (ii) **Occupancy:** The offenders check whether the members of the household are present inside the house or not; and
- (iii) **Accessibility** involves the checking of security measures (which could serve as a deterrent) applied in and around the targeted property.

Furthermore, during the casing of the target, entry and exit points into and out of the house are also identified. When the burglars realise that no one will see them and that it is easy to get access into the targeted house then the chances of successfully committing the crime increase. Although the amount of time taken during casing of target may differ from professional burglars to opportunist burglars, Mercan (2019:53) argues that the time taken usually does not exceed five minutes – especially for opportunistic burglars. Van Zyl (2002:125) contends that casing is not a spontaneous activity; it can take two to three days before the burglary is committed, especially for professional burglars.

2.2.1.3 Identification of resources

To ensure successful planning, perpetrators must ensure that they have all the necessary tools. These include cell phones, gloves, portable key cutters and key blanks, a bolt cutter, a long metal screwdriver and a crowbar, and human resources.

Cell phones

Cell phones are used for communication between the intruders inside the house and those stationed outside the house looking out for response, either armed response or response by neighbours or occupants of the house (Mercan, 2019:55).

Gloves

Perpetrators wear gloves to avoid leaving fingerprints on the crime scene. In a case where gloves are not available, socks or cloths are used (Mercan, 2019:53).

Portable key cutters and key blanks

After the key type and size is identified, burglars cut a blank key to make a replica of an original key to gain access into the building without breaking in (Bennette & Hess, 2007:379).

Bolt cutter

This instrument is mostly used to cut padlocks and burglar bars (Volkov, Fenkelstein, Novoselskey & Tsach, 2015:1589). Other tools include a hammer, drill machine, grinding machine, car jack and a pick (Mercan, 2019:52).

- Hammer and chisel: The chisel is placed between the door frame and the door. The hammer is used for hitting the chisel to destroy the locking mechanism of the door.
- A drill machine is used to drill through the door lock to render the lock dysfunctional.
- The grinding machine is used to cut the burglar bars and padlocks.
- A car jack is used to create enough space for burglars to have access to the building by placing the car jack in a vertical position between two parallel burglar bar rods and forcefully pressing them outwards.
- A pick is mostly inserted into the keyway and used to open the door without a key (Mercan, 2019:52).

Most of the tools required for residential burglary can be purchased at local hardware stores and some supermarkets.

Human resources

In most cases, residential burglars acquire inside information about the occupancy and goods available in the targeted house before the commission of the crime. Someone known or familiar to the perpetrators or someone who is willing and wants payment (Wright & Decker, 1994:77) can supply this information. Wright and Decker (1994:77) further explain that people willing to provide information for a fee may include security guards, housekeepers, gardeners, and postmen. Additionally, Van Zyl (2002:125) posits that jobseekers may also provide burglars with information about a

targeted house. Mpofu (2019:63) further explains that inside information can also be sought by burglars through forging close relationships with people who are currently employed or have previously worked in the residence. It is easier for a housebreaking to be committed when the burglars have information on the occupants of the house (Mpofu, 2019:63).

2.2.1.4 Division of labour

A collective effort is required when executing a burglary hence the division of labour. To reduce the workload, roles are allocated based on the skills each gang member possesses. Additionally, an experienced burglar usually allocates tasks and roles. The following roles are allocated in robbery groups (Mercan, 2019:55–56):

2.2.1.4.1 A team leader

Burglary groups often have a team leader who gives instructions to other members. A team leader gives the group direction, makes sure that everything is moving smoothly and performs the duties of lookouts and intruder when the need arises.

2.2.1.4.2 A look out

This role is allocated to two to three members of the group to watch out for people who may disrupt the burglary in progress. The lookouts watch entrances such as gates and doors. This duty requires special skills such as the ability to choose hiding spots while watching the target. This position determines the failure or success of the burglary.

2.2.1.4.3 An intruder

The role of an intruder is played by at least two members of the gang whose duties are to enter the building and start looting. Their duty starts with trying to gain entry by forcing a door, window, wall, or roof open. Sometimes the lookouts assist in the breaking down of entrances. Once the intruders have gained entry to the property, the lookouts return to their positions and the intruders start looting.

2.2.1.4.4 A driver

This role is not required if the burglars do not have access to a vehicle but if the

burglars have access to a vehicle, the driver must safely transport the burglars to and from the crime scene. In addition to being used as a get-away vehicle, the vehicle is also used to carry the loot. Refer to section 2.3.2 for the post burglary phase.

2.2.1.4.5 Day, time and month

Van Zyl (2002:141) posits that, in South Africa, burglaries are mostly committed on Mondays to Thursdays between 06:00am and 12:00pm when occupants of the house are either at work or school. Based on Trelidor (nd:np), burglary happens between 10h00 and 15h00, with most incidents taking place between 12h30 and 14h00. Burglaries committed on Fridays and Saturdays are committed between midnight and 06:00am when occupants are at places of entertainment or visiting friends and family (Van Zyl, 2002:141). The recent studies conducted by Mbonambi (2023:291) indicate that burglaries can also take place during weekends due to occupants not being at home. Mbonambi (2023:292) further highlights that most burglaries happen during the day rather than at night. StatsSA (2023:30) reveals that in 2022/23 most of the incidents of housebreaking in South Africa took place in June (n=191 000), followed by July (n=154 000) and then December (n=152 000). Van Zyl (2002:141) found that burglaries in both Pretoria West and Garsfontein peaked in December. This is also supported by Mbonambi (2023:289) who found that December/January are prime months for burglars because residents are away for holidays.

2.2.2 The crime commission phase

After the planning of residential burglary has been concluded, then the execution of the crime takes place.

2.2.2.1 Types of burglary

2.2.2.1.1 Forced burglary

According to the Uniform Crime Report by the FBI (2019:np), a perpetrator who uses force to enter a property may damage parts of the property's wall by collapsing it, breaking the door, breaking the window, or even breaking the ceiling. Manaugh (2016:166), who interviewed incarcerated burglars in the United States, found that they prefer these methods to gain entry to the house rather than lock picking. During

this type of burglary, instruments, such as grinder, screwdriver, drill, car jack and various techniques, are used to gain entry (refer to section 2.2.1.3).

2.2.2.1.2 Unforceful burglary

According to the FBI (2019:np), burglaries can still occur even when there is no force used to enter the structure. Unforceful burglary takes place when perpetrators do not use force to enter the building to commit an offence. Access is gained using opened windows or unlocked doors (FBI, 2019:np). During an unforced burglary, offenders may use tricks and falsehoods to gain entry (such as pretending to be a plumber) (Brookman, Maignire, Pierpoint & Bennett, 2010:06). This is supported by Hocr (2007:603) who states that burglars also use false keys, false orders, and false costumes to enter victims' homes.

2.2.2.1.3 Attempted burglary

Attempted burglary has both the characteristics of forced and unforced burglary. It involves the breaking or removing of windows, doors, roofs and even unlocking doors using keys (Hocr, 2007:602). Hocr (2007:603) further explains that, even if the burglary is not completed, the suspect can still be charged with attempted burglary. The author adds that the only thing that distinguishes this nature of burglary from the other two is that the burglar escapes or is caught before the crime is completed. The burglar may be caught while trying to enter the property, and those who succeed in gaining entry may be caught or escape before looting the house (Hocr, 2007:603).

In addition to the above sub-types of burglaries, Bennette and Wright (1984:148) identified the following categories:

2.2.2.1.4 Opportunistic burglary

This is a type of burglary that happens very quickly because the offender was at the right place at the right time and took advantage of the situation. The decisions taken by offenders to commit the crime occur haphazardly which makes it difficult to predict their behaviour (Sonya, Brantley & Whitaker, 2016:218). This kind of burglary is mostly committed by amateurs who do not plan the crime and therefore steal anything whenever an opportunity arises (Beirne & Messerschmidt, 1995:153).

2.2.2.1.5 Search offence

Here, offenders start by searching for a place where they can commit a burglary and immediately after the target is identified, the burglary occurs (Bennette & Wright, 1984:148). Bennette and Wright (1984:148) further state that, unlike opportunist burglars who happen to be at the right place at the right time, the search offence offender has an intention to commit a burglary from the beginning of the search. This kind of burglary may involve forced and/or unforced entry as previously discussed under sections 2.2.2.1.1 and 2.2.2.1.2.

2.2.2.1.6 Planned burglary

During a planned burglary, the offender identifies a suitable target but does not attack on the same day (Bennette & Wright, 1984:148). Rengert and Groff (2011:156) opine that this kind of burglary is mostly committed by professional burglars who, after identifying the target, take time to thoroughly plan the offence. Unlike the search offence burglar who carries tools just in case an opportunity presents itself, offenders who commit planned burglaries wait to commit the crime. This kind of burglary mostly involves unforced entry as the type of offenders who commit these crimes are skilled in lock picking or opening a window from outside without breaking the glass (Hagan, 2008:283). However, forced entry can also be applied. Offenders who commit this type of burglary do not steal anything, as in a case of an opportunistic burglary, but specialise in certain goods such as jewellery (Merican, 2019:58).

Van Zyl (2002:143) further elucidates that planned burglaries expose burglars to a heightened level of risk. As a result, offenders take less than five minutes on this type of burglary as they want to escape from the crime scene before the arrival of armed response, neighbours, police or owners of the house (Van Zyl, 2002:143). Mpofu (2019:63) adds that housebreaking is a passive crime, therefore, burglars chose a time and place that will limit their probability of having an encounter with victims, onlookers, or armed response. There are, however, some planned burglaries that present a low risk where burglars relax and search the house thoroughly knowing that occupants will be away for a long time (Van Zyl, 2002:143).

2.2.2.2 Goods targeted

Burglars tend to choose money and jewellery (Mercan, 2019:53). The United States Department of Justice Special Report (FBI, 2013:2) states that some burglars prefer to steal electronics, such as televisions (TVs) and Digital Versatile Disc (DVD) players, while other burglars tend to steal credit cards, purses, wallets, bank cards, and money. In addition, the priority across all different types of burglaries is to find money and jewellery as these goods are easy to conceal (Mercan, 2019:58). Apps (2012:114) adds that burglars have moved their attention from large electronic devices to small and expensive items such as money, laptops and spare car keys. Mpofu (2019:16) opines that offenders target residences as they yield higher rewards and further explains that money is primarily targeted, followed by electronics, jewellery, and firearms.

2.2.2.3 Duration of burglary

Burglars vacate the premises when they are satisfied or feel they are at risk (Woods, 2009:68). Contrary to Woods (2009:68), Van Zyl (2002:143) argues that the duration of a burglary is determined by circumstances such as the type of burglars (i.e., opportunistic, or professional), the type of security installed or the whereabouts of the occupants. Van Zyl (2002:143) explains that a burglary at a house that is protected by an activated alarm system, an armed reaction or where residents have not gone far from their home and can return at any moment would take less than five (5) minutes. On the other hand, the duration of a burglary will be longer than five (5) minutes if residents are absent for a longer period (i.e., are at work or on vacation) (Van Zyl, 2002:143).

2.2.3 The post burglary phase

After committing the crime, offenders mostly exit the house through the door. If the keys have been left behind the doors, offenders unlock and open doors from the inside of the house to vacate it (Swanson, Chamelin & Territo, 2003:267). Burglars use different modes of transport to flee from the crime scene. Those who have stolen large items will have a vehicle ready to transport the group and the stolen goods, while those who have stolen small items can simply walk from the crime scene with the items

concealed (Mercan, 2019:52). Some offenders prefer to use public transport to get away from the crime scene (SAPS, 2015). Mpofu (2019:18) explains that professional burglars use various modes of transport as they often operate in remote neighbourhoods that they know very well.

The stolen items are disposed of or sold. Although the intention of burglars is to get rid of the loot, sometimes the loot is kept at a “safe house” within the neighbourhood where the burgled house is situated to avoid being seen with stolen goods immediately after the crime (Breetzke & Cohn, 2013:67). Sutton (2010:09) has identified various ways of disposing off stolen goods:

Commercial fence supplier

A commercial fence supplier sells the loot to illegitimate businesses, such as pawnshops and second-hand stores, where no questions are asked about the origin of the goods.

Residential fence supplier

This supplier approaches someone who is known for buying stolen goods and tries to sell the items to him/her.

Network sales

This way of disposing stolen goods involves the offender giving the looted items to other people who can market the items on his/her behalf. To receive a cut after the goods have been sold, the marketer increases the price of the items.

Commercial sales

Unlike the commercial fence supply, this kind of business is legitimate. The business owner receives and sells stolen goods without anyone’s knowledge.

Hawking

Hawking means that the burglars sell the stolen items themselves. This is the simplest way of disposing of the loot. The burglar, however, runs a risk of being caught with the stolen goods.

eSelling

The stolen goods are advertised on the internet to attract buyers. In this way, the burglar has a less chance of being caught unless the buyer becomes suspicious and alerts law enforcers.

2.3 Victim risk factors

Daigle (2012:237) posits that risk factors may assist in developing an understanding of why certain people become targeted for certain crimes while others are not. Burgess, Regehr and Roberts (2012:11) acknowledge that there are no characteristics or profile of a crime victim. Silvestri and Crowther-Dowey (2016:188) also argue that any person can be a victim of any crime including a property crime such as burglary. This means that people of all ages, races, ethnicities and socioeconomic status are susceptible to crime. However, there are certain factors that put some people at a higher risk of being a victim of crime, such as burglary.

2.3.1 Suburban area versus rural area

Dabney (2012:191) and Chon (2017:50) explain that people who live in suburban areas are generally viewed as wealthy and are most likely to be targets of residential burglaries. Another reason that makes urban areas more susceptible to incidents of burglary in comparison to rural areas is the issue of anonymity because neighbours in urban areas often do not know each other which makes it difficult for members of the community to be on the lookout for one another. On the contrary, people who reside in rural areas have a sense of belonging to their own community which makes it easier to know and relate to each other and in turn makes surveillance easy. In support of the latter, Brookman et al (2010:7) add that people who live in the rural areas are less vulnerable to incidents of burglary compared to those who live in urban areas. Brookman et al (2010:7) further explain that disorganised or areas characterised by social disorder tend to experience more incidents of burglary in comparison to organised areas. Additionally, Brookman et al (2010:7) believe that those who rent residential properties are more likely to be burgled in comparison to homeowners. The authors attribute this to the fact that tenants may be new to the area and not familiar with their neighbours or may not be interested in community safety measures as they

regard themselves as not part of the community but as temporary dwellers (Vito, Maahs & Holmas, 2006:332). Daigle (2012:237) adds that age, income, and type of housing determine whether people are exposed to burglary. Moreto (2010) believes that the location of a house contributes to being targeted as a victim of a residential burglary.

2.3.2 Surrounding area

Moreto (2010:np) explains that an area that is surrounded by informal settlements where there is a high rate of unemployment,² is most likely to experience burglaries. Diagle (2013:67) further suggests that neighbourhoods that are characterised by lawlessness and are viewed as dangerous and dysfunctional are linked to the increase of burglary incidents.

2.3.3 Households/premise characteristics (immediate design and planning features)

Firstly, houses that are poorly planned, lack adequate lighting and are surrounded by trees or shrubs are vulnerable to burglaries (Kruger, Landman & Liebermann, 2001:50–51). Secondly, households without appropriate security measures, such as lockable gates, barrier walls or fences, burglar doors and burglar windows, are more likely to be broken into (Blevins et al, 2012:3). Tsenoli, Wittebrood, Farrell and Pease (2004:83) argue that houses that detached houses are more exposed to burglary as compared to apartments. This is attributed to the fact that it is easy to access these houses and that natural surveillance is poor (Tsenoli et al, 2004:83). Houses situated in expensive neighbourhoods are found to be more vulnerable to burglaries compared to those in poorer neighbourhoods (Schönteich, 2001:06). Generally, people who reside in upmarket neighbourhoods are perceived to own expensive items that might be lucrative for burglars.

² It is not the intention of this study to generalise that all people residing in informal settlements and/or are unemployed commit burglary.

2.3.4 Lifestyle

Flashy lifestyles can expose occupants to burglaries. People who wear expensive brand clothes, drive expensive cars and live in affluent neighbourhoods or houses are exposed to burglary because perpetrators believe they will find valuable items in their households (Tsenoli et al, 2004:84).

2.3.5 Individual risk factors

Diagle (2013:65) suggests that victim risk factors should not only be limited to households but also to individuals, hence the development of individual risk factors. Moreto (2010:np) adds that a high concentration of households headed by single parents in a neighbourhood can be identified as a risk factor for residential burglaries as the single parent is less likely to be at home in comparison to having two parents in a household because one parent may be at home during the day. Tsenoli et al (2004:83) add that divorced, separated, or widowed residents stand more chance of having their homes burgled compared to married people, because they stay alone, and their houses are mostly vacant when they are not home. Individual risk factors are further broken down into demographical characteristics, such as age, gender, marital status, lifestyle, genes, and psychological and cognitive factors, that contribute to victimisation (Diagle, 2013:66). Diagle (2013:66) adds that young people are more prone to incidents of burglary in comparison to adults as they may be away from their homes most of the time. Brookman et al (2010:7) opine that young people and the poor are more vulnerable compared to older and richer individuals who can afford high levels of security for their homes.

The victim risk factors above suggest that suspects do not select their targets haphazardly but look for certain characteristics that encourage them to burgle their targets. The surroundings of the victim can either act as a pull or push factor when suspects are planning a burglary. The nature and type of premises can also encourage or discourage burglars from committing the offence. Another factor is the lifestyles of households. People who are often away from their homes are more prone to incidents of burglary than those who are mostly at home.

2.4 The impact of residential burglary on victims

Burglary is not classified as a serious and violent crime because no physical injuries are sustained, and the victim does not meet the offender face to face. But the reality of the matter is that burglary is a serious crime which affects victims in other ways. The effects that the crime of housebreaking has on the victim are sub-divided into the psychological, financial, and social impact.

2.4.1 Psychological impact

Victims of burglary may exhibit emotional issues such as sadness, anger, denial and fear (Beaton, Cook, Kavanagh & Herrington, 2000:np). This condition not only affects primary victims but also other members of the household and the community (Clerke & Hope, 1984:235). Wilson (2012:np) reports that the psychological impact on victims of crime including victims of burglary comprise two aspects, namely, cognitive and emotional. In the cognitive aspect, the victim is likely to suffer from disorientation, confusion, difficulty in problem solving, memory problems, poor attention span, trouble thinking, blaming someone and distress (Beaton et al, 2000:np). Furthermore, victims may experience emotions such as fear/anxiety, anger, depression, grief, guilt, helplessness, feeling isolated and desire to withdraw or hide (Commissioner for Victims' Rights, 2018:np). Wallis (2010:105) further explains that the psychological impact of crime is associated with emotions and feelings. While some victims of crime may experience anger immediately after the crime, others may experience fear of being victimised again because they perceive their environment as unsafe (Wallis, 2010:105). Van Zyl (2002:32) adds that "Residential burglary is not only a violation of privacy but can also be a factor contributing to heighten[ed] levels of fearfulness and anxiety amongst residents." According to Chung, Stedmon, Hall, Marks, Thornhill and Mehrshahi (2014:np), victims also tend to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) while some victims feel that their privacy has been violated (Tseloni, Thompson & Tilley, 2018:15).

2.4.2 Financial impact

Since burglary is a property crime, it is expected that the burglar must benefit financially from the loot taken while the owner of the property suffers the loss. Newburn

(2007:379) identifies ways in which victims of burglary suffer financially, namely, stolen property, damaged property and insurance.

2.4.2.1 Stolen property

In most cases, victims must replace the stolen goods (Wallace & Robertson, 2011:49). Although some people may be able to replace the stolen goods, others may not have the money to replace the items while items of sentimental value cannot be replaced.

2.4.2.2 Damaged property

During a forced burglary (refer to point 2.2.2.1.1 *supra*), offenders usually damage property (Wikström, 2012:82) and it is the responsibility of the property owner to attend to the damages (Tseloni et al, 2018:15). The owner may have to buy new windows, doors, frames, locks, roof, and pay someone to install them. This is an unexpected cost for the household owner.

2.4.2.3 Insurance

If goods stolen are not covered by insurance, victims must either live without them or buy new ones. Those who have insurance may stand a chance of getting new household contents if there was a forceful entry and their insurance claim is successful (Kutty, 2008:144; Tseloni et al, 2018:15).

2.4.2.4 Work absenteeism

A victim may not go to work and stay at home to safeguard their assets. This may result in unpaid leave, which may cause financial strain for the victim due to a burglar's actions (Tseloni et al, 2018:15).

2.4.3 Social impact

The fear of repeat victimisation is one of the after-effects of residential burglaries. To avoid re-victimisation, some victims may change their lifestyles (i.e., avoiding going out in the evenings, during the week or on rainy days) (Wallace & Robertson, 2011:46). Victimisation has a serious impact on the social life of victims as some victims may become withdrawn or spend most of their time at home to guard their assets. This

isolation or sudden change in a person's lifestyle might cause depression (Beaton et al, 2000:np)

2.5 Preventative measures

Because housebreaking at a residence is a property crime, this section discusses preventative measures linked to property crime. As mentioned in sections 1.5.5 and 3.1, this study was anchored on the environmental criminology framework, therefore CPTED was deemed a suitable prevention strategy given the type of crime (i.e., a property crime) being studied.

2.6 Summary

To deal with burglary effectively, it is important to understand its nature. To facilitate an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question, the MO used by perpetrators in terms of the planning phase, the crime commission phase and the post crime phase was discussed in detail. Furthermore, a comprehensive discussion of factors which make people vulnerable to burglary also took place in this chapter. The various ways (i.e., psychological, financial, and social) in which victims are impacted by the crime were also detailed.

In the next chapter, the various theories which underpinned this study are described.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

Generally, crime and violence affect every citizen. This calls for the application of central theories of environmental criminology to explore the problem of housebreaking. Theoretical approaches are often adopted to explain the study of crime, criminals, and environmental influences. The examination of the patterns of residential burglary calls for a multifaceted approach including the use of theories to explain this phenomenon.

As explained under sub-section 1.5.5, this study followed the environmental criminology framework, a criminological perspective that emphasises the connection between situational factors and the increase of the risk of crime in relation to crime opportunities (Solymosi & Bowers, 2018:210). This study was thus primarily underpinned by three opportunity theories, namely, the Routine Activity Theory (RAT), opportunity model and the Rational Choice Theory (RCT). These three opportunity theories were used to explore reasons why victim participants who took part in this research were victimised. In addition to the three crime opportunity theories, a fourth theory, namely, the social disorganisation theory was used to further explore why offenders, based on the characteristics of the residential area (i.e., Crystal Park Extension 32 in the case of this study), may have chosen to commit acts of housebreaking in the area. While the former three theories are primarily centred on the lifestyle or routine activities of the victims which motivate an offender to make a rational choice to commit crime, the social disorganisation theory focuses on the distinctness of neighbourhoods in shaping conditions that can encourage or discourage criminal activities.

3.2 Crime opportunity theories

As explained above, three crime opportunities theories, namely, the routine activities theory, the opportunity model as well as the rational choice theory, were used to explain why victims who participated in this study had experienced housebreaking incidents.

3.2.1 Routine Activity Theory (RAT)

The Routine Activities Theory (RAT) explains how people's living patterns or daily routine activities create opportunities for crime to take place. The RAT was developed by Cohen and Felson (1979:590) to explain situations that create the opportunity for the occurrence of criminal activities. This theory proposes that the starting point of crime commission is when the offender develops an urge to commit a crime (Cohen & Felson, 1979:590). According to the RAT, offenders are unable to resist the urge and follow it up by committing the crime (Cohen & Felson, 1979:590). According to this theory, crime happens when there is a convergence, at a particular time and place, between a motivated offender, a target (property) or a victim and a lack of guardianship (Cohen & Felson, 1979:589; Bottoms & Wiles, 1997:320; Walsh & Hemmens, 2008:81).



Figure 3.1: Routine activities theory

Source: Adapted from: Clarke and Eck (2003)

Above is a visual illustration of the RAT, the convergence between a motivated offender, the lack of guardianship and a suitable target.

3.2.1.1 A motivated offender

A motivated offender is regarded as “any person who for any reason might commit a crime” (Clarke & Felson, 1993:3). This definition is supported by Fisher and Lab (2010:341) who define a motivated offender as anyone who can engage in criminal activities when the opportunity arises. This implies that a motivated offender is simply

an individual who is capable, willing, and ready to commit crime should there be opportunity or a chance to do so. Additionally, this is a person whose increased temptation to commit crime is motivated by the opportunity presented (Chamard, 2010:213). Also see a discussion on opportunistic burglary under sub-section 2.2.2.1.4, in Chapter 2.

3.2.1.2 A suitable target

Chamard (2010:213) explains a suitable target as any object or person that draws the attention of the motivated offender. This notion is also supported by Felson and Bopa (2010:28) who describe a suitable target as “any person or a thing that draws the offender towards a crime”. Cohen and Felson (1979:591) identified four components of a suitable target:

Value

Value refers to the real or perceived worth of a target as perceived by the motivated offender.

Inertia

The size, weight, and process of removing the targeted items are taken into consideration when one decides to commit a crime.

Visibility

Visibility means the ability of the offender to see items to be stolen.

Access

Finally, for a target to be deemed suitable by a potential offender, it should be viewed as being easily accessible.

3.2.1.3 Absence of a capable guardian

A capable guardian is anyone or anything whose presence at a particular place and time discourages a motivated offender from accessing a suitable target (Chamard, 2010:214). Consequently, the absence of a capable guardian increases the likelihood of selection of a target suitable for a crime. Examples of capable guardians are the

presence of people inside a targeted house, a dog inside the yard, the presence of neighbours, police visibility and/or armed response, and security measures such as an alarm connected to armed response, perimeter fence, locked gate, burglar windows and doors (see section 2.4 for prevention measures). The role of a capable guardian is to safeguard the target.

3.2.2 OPPORTUNITY MODEL

One of an environmental criminologist's interests is the dimensions of crime opportunities and the thought processes of selecting victims or targets. Cohen, Kleugel and Land (1981:507) combined the RAT and the lifestyle model to explain why people fall victim to crimes. The central tenet of this theory is that individuals are victimised due to the lives they lead as well as their routine activities which bring them or their property in close proximity with a motivated offender in the absence of a capable guardian (Cohen et al, 1981:507). According to Cohen et al (1981:507), this theory is based on the following five factors that increase the likelihood of criminal victimisation:

3.2.2.1 Exposure

Exposure implies that, for crime to occur, the offender needs to be able to identify and have access to the targeted person or object at a particular place or time (Cohen et al, 1981:507). This means that crime only takes place when a motivated offender comes into direct contact with a suitable target (refer section 3.2.1. on the discussion of the RAT). Consequently, exposure is directly linked to the risk of victimisation in that the increase in exposure increases the likelihood of becoming a victim of crime (Cohen et al, 1981:508). In simple terms, exposure refers to the physical visibility and the accessibility of a target.

3.2.2.2 Proximity

Proximity refers to the distance between the suitable target (i.e., residential area) and a place where high number of potential offenders are located (Cohen et al, 1981:507). This theory suggests that suitable targets for a housebreaking, for example, are located very close to an area that has high concentration of potential offenders (Cohen et al, 1981:508). This element implies that most individuals are victimised due to the area in which they live. This means that, since the victim and the offender live close to

each other, it is easy for the offender to study the victim's routine activities and determine when the victim and his/her property are more at risk for victimisation (Cohen & Felson, 1979:588).

3.2.2.3 Guardianship

As previously explained under the RAT sub-section, a guardian includes anyone or anything, such as security officials, police officials, neighbours and any security measures that can be used as a form of a deterrent (i.e., a CCTV), which can prevent crime from occurring by their mere presence or by means of direct or indirect actions (Cohen et al., 1981:508). This suggests that burglars are likely to target houses with little to no guardianship.

3.2.2.4 Target attractiveness

Any individual or property considered desirable or valuable to the potential offender can be referred to as an attractive target (Cohen et al, 1981:508, also see value under sub-section 3.2.1.2). Therefore, the more attractive the target, the more likely it is to be desired and victimised by motivated offenders (Cohen et al, 1981:508). Another dimension is the ability of the potential target to offer resistance (Booyens, 2008:95), meaning that a motivated offender will most likely select a target that may offer the least amount of resistance. For example, a house that has no security measures may be perceived by burglars as a target that will not offer much resistance.

3.2.2.5 Properties of specific offences

This principle refers to the ease at which a target can be victimised (Booyens, 2008:96). Restrictions, such as security alarm systems, burglar bars, dogs and electric fences, have a potential to reduce the potential offender's ability to act against a preferred target (Cohen et al., 1981:508). The more difficult it is to commit a crime against a specific target, the less likely that the crime will take place.

In summary of this sub-section, the RAT argues that people are victimised because of their daily routine activities. The opportunity model, on the other side, states that people become victims because of the opportunities presented by victims to the offenders. The proponents of these two theories argue that victims' daily activities

directly or indirectly contribute towards their victimisation. Another common premise of the two theories is that the absence of capable guardian, availability of target and motivated offender are the key elements that cause crime victimisation.

3.2.3 Rational Choice Theory (RCT)

The RCT was developed Cornish and Clarke (1986:vii) who argue that the commission of a criminal act is the outcome of deep thinking that involves taking rational decisions based on the expected cost and benefit of the crime to be committed. The RCT states that

“individuals partake in criminal activity following a logical thought process that consciously analyses and weighs the benefits and costs of committing crimes. If the perceived cost of committing the crime is outweighed by the benefit, people will be more likely to offend” (Perera, 2023).

The following assumptions underpin the RCT (Turner, 1997:354):

- Human beings have free will to choose how to act.
- By nature, human beings are purposive and goal oriented. Nothing happens by accident.
- Human beings have a hierarchy in terms of their values and preferences.
- Human beings act rationally with regards to:
 - The value of their alternatives.
 - What each alternative will cost.
 - The best way to increase value.

The central argument of this theory is premised on the cognitive rationalisation that goes with the thought process of committing crime, which includes the justification of committing the crime (Cornish & Clarke, 1986:vii). This thought process is illustrated by how offenders strategically plan the crime (refer to section 2.3.1) as they process the cost and benefit outcome of engaging in the criminal activity. The RCT employs elements of the RCT theories to explain crime in that “rational decision-making governs identifying opportunities and targets” (Perera, 2023:np).

3.3 Social Disorganisation Theory

In addition to the above crime opportunity theories, the social disorganisation theory is discussed to explain why individuals in certain neighbourhoods are prone to crime. This theory was developed by Shaw and McKay in the 1940s. Based on the social disorganisation theory, poverty, residential mobility, ethnic heterogeneity, and weak social bonds decrease the capacity of the community to control the behaviour of its residents and visitors through informal social controls, hence the increase of crime in a specific neighbourhood (Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003:374). Informal social controls are reactions by a group that enforce conformity to norms and laws that play a role in crime prevention (i.e., intervention by eyewitnesses, community patrollers, etc.) (Thobane, Artz, Ngubane, Maksudi & Haji, 2020:93–94). The central message of this theory is that, in communities where members do not share the same values regarding what is legal or illegal, informal social controls become weak which leads to social disorganisation (Thobane et al, 2020:94).

Shaw and McKay adopted Park and Burger's concentric zone model to explain crime through social disorganisation. According to this theory, the city is divided into five zones, namely, Central business district (CBD), transition zone, working class zone, residential zone and commuter zone.

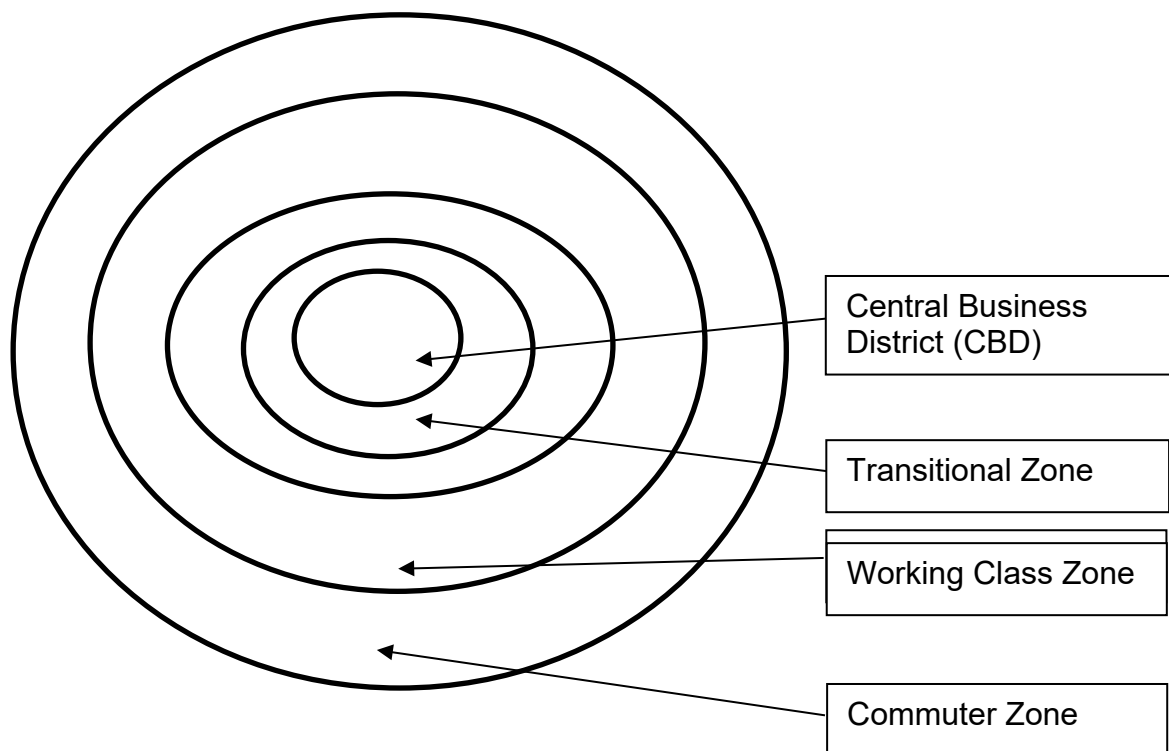


Figure 3.2: Concentric zone model

Source: Shaw and Mckay (1942:18)

Zone one, the CBD or industrial district, consists of shops, offices, residential flats and industries. The transitional zone comprises deteriorated or abandoned buildings and slums which are used to provide shelter to residents so that they can stay close to work which is in zone one (CBD or industrial district) (Shaw & Mckay, 1942:18). Zone three, the working-class zone, is dedicated to the housing of or renting out of property to mostly single working people (Shaw & McKay, 1942:18). Zone four, the residential zone, is mostly occupied by individuals from the middle to upper economic class who can afford to pay mortgages in the suburbs (Shaw & McKay, 1942:18). Zone five, the commuter zone is meant for those who mostly use public transport to commute to work on daily basis (Shaw & McKay, 1942:18) e.g., townships.

According to Shaw and McKay (1942:53), crime is concentrated in the industrial and commercial area (areas located next to the city centre) and reduces as it moves to residential areas. This means that the zone aspect of this theory is not applicable to the crime of housebreaking.

Kubrin and Weitzer (2003:374) discovered four variables from this theory that show the relationship between external structural conditions and neighbourhood crime such as residential burglary. The variables are: informal social control; social ties; social capital; and collective efficacy. Informal social control includes streets patrols by residents and the interrogation of people found meandering on the streets. Social ties are concerned with residents who are encouraged to participate in social gatherings and activities, community meetings and recreational activities (Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003:375–376). Social capital is defined as non-physical resources made by people relating to each other, which call for action to achieve common benefits (Coleman, 1988:100). These non-physical resources may include obligations, trust, information, and norms (Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003:375). Lastly, collective efficacy can be achieved through social networks as they encourage the strengthening of residents' connections to attain social control and cohesion (Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003:376).

In summary, the social disorganisation theory implies that a community that does not have a sense of unity may experience increased levels of crime (Akers, 2012:115). As a result, when a sense of belonging is destroyed, community members find it difficult to abide with the norms and values of the community (Rose & Clear, 2002:76).

When social control is lacking, residents are less likely to take notice of impoliteness or offences taking place in their environment but, if they do, they are less likely to intervene personally or call the police to stop them. Thus, where social control is lacking, burglars run lower risks of apprehension while residents run higher risks of victimisation (Mpofu, 2019:22).

3.4 Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

Although the CPTED strategy is adopted to prevent many different types of crimes, this crime prevention strategy is also applicable to property crimes such as burglary. The intention of CPTED is to change physical structures that encourage crime into those that discourage criminal activities (Thobane, 2017:258). This crime prevention strategy is concerned with buildings and landscaping and is based on the following principles: territoriality; surveillance; access control; target hardening; maintaining image, and activity support (Montoya et al, 2014:515). In this context, the CPTED strategy is discussed based on the following principles: territoriality, surveillance and

visibility, access and escape routes, target hardening and image and aesthetics.

3.4.1 Territoriality

Territoriality is intended to make sure that there is no unassigned space and that all the assigned spaces are easily identifiable (Montoya et al, 2014:519). People have a need for a sense of ownership and belonging. In achieving this, they tend to be territorial of their assets by erecting fences, putting up signage and developing distinguishable landscaping (National Crime Prevention Council [NCPC], 2003:5). As a result, when someone crosses the above measures which mark another person's territory, they become an intruder (Kruger, 2019:np).

3.4.2 Surveillance and visibility

The primary purpose of surveillance is not to deter a potential burglar from committing a crime but to detect the presence of a perpetrator (NCPC, 2003:4). As a result, potential burglars may be discouraged from committing burglary because someone is watching them. The most preferred method of surveillance is the Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) system linked to an armed response company. With this type of surveillance, the potential burglar is aware of being watched and that chances of being arrested are increased (Montoya et al, 2014:520). The surrounding environment should make it easy for residents to spot suspicious activities. This can be achieved by installing sufficient lighting on the streets and around the house (Kirkwood, 2012:66; Fennelly, 2019:71). Fennelly (2019:71) further suggests that the cutting or pruning of shrubs around the house and the surrounding areas assist in surveillance and visibility. Marzbali, Abdullah, Ignatious and Tilaki (2016:92) emphasise that all front windows and doors should be visible from the street. Regular police and security patrols can also assist in surveillance by increasing the chances of burglars being caught (Van Zyl, 2002:194).

3.4.3 Access and escape routes

During the planning stage, burglars plan access to and escape routes from the crime scene to avoid being seen or arrested (refer to the section on MO). Therefore, access and escape routes are also important in the prevention of burglaries. Unused land can be used as access and escape routes thus such land should be properly fenced and

monitored if not developed (Kruger, 2019). Van Zyl (2002:189) recommends that unoccupied or dilapidated building structures together with open fields, parks and green zones should be managed effectively to avoid them being used as hiding places before and/or after criminal incidents. Some of the items stolen during housebreaking incidents are stored in open fields, parks and green zones in the neighbourhood after which they are distributed or sold (Van Zyl, 2002:189) (also see section 2.3.3). Van Zyl (2002:189) emphasises the reporting to the police of suspicious open fields, parks and green zones in the neighbourhood which may be used as “cooling spots” for items stolen during burglaries.

3.4.4 Target hardening

The intention of target hardening is to deter the burglar from tampering with the target. Although housebreaking and house robbery differ as housebreaking occurs in the absence of occupants whereas house robbery takes place in the presence of residents, most of the preventative measures are similar. In his study of house robberies in South Africa, Zinn (2010:155) suggests the installation of electric fences on top of walls, good quality burglar bars on all windows and doors which are always locked. Zinn (2010:155) further explains that hardening the target must also include the installation of a security alarm and panic buttons linked to armed response. Nee and Meenaghan (2006:05) concur with all the above by stating that the use of good quality locks and alarms plays a crucial role in the reduction of exposure to burglary incidents.

The following preventative measures are outlined by the Burglary Prevention Organisation (2018:np):

- Doors and locks check: Checking of doors and locks by residents on a regular basis to test for functionality.
- Window safety: Keeping windows closed at night.
- Being observant: Being alert and aware of one’s surroundings, including identifying unusual activities in and around one’s property.
- Being a good neighbour: Social disorganisation theory argues that neighbours who are not on good terms with each other are prone to a disorganised

community. This will invite more criminal activities. Consequently, being neighbourly is encouraged.

- Keeping lights on: It is recommended that residents keep their outside lights on in the evening to show their presence inside the property.
- Installing an alarm system: An alarm system is a good detection measure and it is thus recommended that residents invest in it.
- Home safe installations: Having a safe at home may assist in the safe keeping of valuables such as jewellery, money and firearms.

Additionally, the following preventative measures for house robbery were identified by Zinn (2010:155):

- Erection of a security fence;
- Installation of electric fence on top of palisade fencing;
- Installation of security lights automatically controlled by motion sensors;
- Making use of dogs to alert neighbours of illegal activities that bark when they spot a stranger; and
- Encouraging residents to be vigilant and conscious of their environment.

Zinn (2010:153) also advises that erecting an armed response signboard does not necessarily discourage perpetrators from committing house robberies but rather encourages them to devise a strategy on how to bypass the alarm system. Even though palisade fencing is encouraged, a wall is recommended since perpetrators cannot see the house from the street making their entrance and exit more difficult (Zinn, 2010:156). On the contrary, if perpetrators manage to get inside the yard, it is impossible for passers-by to see what is happening behind the wall (Zinn, 2010:156).

3.4.5 Image and aesthetics

A well-maintained area creates a positive sense of safety (Kruger, 2019:np). To maintain a good image and sense of safety, a property and its environment must be maintained by keeping it clean and preserving the infrastructure by replacing broken items such as windows.

3.5 Summary

This chapter discussed the theories that underpinned this study. Firstly, the proponents of the opportunity theories, such as the RAT, opportunity model and the RCT, are of the opinion that, when a motivated offender identifies a suitable target without a capable guardian, then they are bound to make a rational choice to commit crime. Secondly, the point of departure of the RCT is that criminals do not act haphazardly but weigh the cost of committing a crime against the benefit thereof. As a result, if the benefits outweigh the cost, a crime is likely to be committed. Lastly, the social disorganisation theory is rooted on the notion that when social bonds between residents are weakened, crime in the specific neighbourhood increases.

The focus of the next chapter is the research methodology employed to conduct the study.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

As explained by Sileyew (2019:1), research methodology is a guideline which researchers follow when conducting their research to show how problems and objectives of the study were formulated as well as the methods followed to conduct the research. In other words, research methodology guides researchers on how a certain research project should be conducted.

This chapter focuses on the discussion of the research methodology employed to conduct this study in terms of the research approach and the research design, which comprised sampling techniques as well as data collection and analysis methods. Also discussed in this chapter are the ethical principles followed throughout the empirical phase of the study.

4.2 Research approach

The two main research approaches are quantitative and qualitative research. Quantitative research mainly focuses on collecting numerical data to explain phenomena and its focus is to “answer questions about relationships for the purpose of explaining, predicting and controlling the phenomena” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2019:88). Bryman, Bell, Hirschsohn, Dos Santos, Du Toit, Masenge, Van Aardt and Wagner (2014:31) further explain that the relationship between quantitative research and theory is deductive and that quantitative research is more practiced in natural science as it adopts objectivity. The focus of quantitative data is to find, confirm or validate relationships between variables and to make generalisations (Leedy & Ormrod, 2019:88). Due to its emphasis on the accuracy of measuring the process (Bryman et al, 2014:49–50), the quantitative research approach falls short of showing that research is connected to real life. It is for the latter reason that this approach was, due to the nature of the problem being studied and the research objectives not deemed suitable for this study. The research problem needed to be studied by looking at the experiences and world views of those who had experience (i.e., victims of housebreaking) and knowledge (i.e., the SMEs) of the phenomenon.

Leedy and Ormrod (2019:88) describe qualitative research as an approach which

seeks to answer questions about the multifaceted nature of a phenomenon for the purpose of describing and understanding it from the viewpoint of those participating in the research. Qualitative research, therefore, studies a phenomenon in its natural setting and as it is experienced in everyday life of certain individuals. The following are characteristics of the qualitative research approach:

- It is unstructured and allows for flexibility in all stages of the research process. Because it is unstructured, it is appropriate for the exploration of the nature of a problem or phenomenon.
- A study can employ a qualitative research approach if its primary purpose is to describe a research phenomenon or problem.
- Researchers who employ this method mostly collect their data in the field where the problem is being experienced by the research participants.
- Qualitative researchers tend to gather information from multiple sources instead of relying on only one source.
- Qualitative researchers are key instruments in the data collection process as they collect the data themselves.
- Throughout the research process, the researcher focuses on establishing meanings held by the participants about the problem being studied, and not the meanings brought into the study by the researcher or what is found in the literature.
- Qualitative research is context specific. The study being conducted is situated within a certain context where the research participants are located (Kumar, 2019:16–18; Creswell & Poth, 2018:43–44).

The qualitative research approach was deemed suitable for this study because the primary aims of the study were, as highlighted in the above characteristics to: (a) *explore* a complex phenomenon of residential burglary which had never been studied before in the context of Crystal Park Extension 32; and (b) *describe* this complex phenomenon from the viewpoint of the research participants.

4.3 Research design

A research design refers to the plan for how the research will be conducted, the decisions taken, or the steps followed in the research process. Loseke (2017:6) compares the research design to an architect's blueprint upon which the research will be built. The research design chosen for this study was the case study method.

“Case Studies are a qualitative design in which the researcher explores in depth a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals. The case(s) are bound by time and activity, and researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time” (Creswell, 2014:241).

The term case study refers to a particular research design where the focus is to conduct an in-depth study of an intricate phenomenon or a limited number of cases in a specific context (Tight, 2017:16; Rashid, Rashid, Warraich, Sabir & Waseem, 2019:1). According to Priya (2020:95), the following are the attributes of the case study design:

- A case study is a strategy and that uses research methods such as data collection or analysis techniques; and
- A case study entails an in-depth or holistic study of a specific unit of analysis in its natural setting or real-life situation.

Based on the above attributes of the case study, the design was appropriate for this research as the researcher sought to conduct an in-depth exploration of housebreaking as experienced by residents of Crystal Park Extension 32 in their natural setting. As such, the exploratory case study design was used in this study.

Like any other research design, a case study has disadvantages. Firstly, due to the lack of formal statistical procedures, case studies do not guarantee objectivity (Mustafa, 2008:22). Secondly, because of their small sample sizes, results from case studies cannot be generalised (Channaveer & Baikady, 2022:318; Mustafa, 2008:23; Priya, 2020:104). Thirdly, Mustafa (2008:23) adds that conducting case study research is costly and it takes time. However, the researcher was able to overcome the above disadvantages in the following manner: firstly, to ensure objectivity, the researcher

went through a process of reflexivity where preconceived ideas on the topic at hand were acknowledged through a process of bracketing. Secondly, it was not the aim of this research to generalise the findings outside of Crystal Park Extension 32. Therefore, the findings should be read within the context of the study and not generalised to other contexts. Lastly, the cost element was offset by the fact that this study was funded by the UNISA Master's and Doctoral Bursary which covered most of the costs. As a result, most of the costs of conducting case study research during the empirical phase of the study were covered by a bursary. The researcher spent more than 12 months in the field. The first interview was conducted on 13 March 2020. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the researcher stopped collecting data after the first interview and resumed in May 2020 after the hard lockdown was lifted. The last interview was conducted on 30 September 2021. However, while the researcher started writing up the chapters in 2022, he realised that there was some information missing from some of the victim participants' responses and he contacted them between July and August 2022 for follow-up interviews.

4.3.1 Population and sampling

Population is referred to a universal group of people or phenomena which possess specific characteristics (Brynard, Hanekom & Brynard, 2014:57). For the purpose of this study, the population for the primary unit of analysis was all victims of housebreaking in Crystal Park Ext 32. The population for the second unit of analysis was SMEs employed by the Crystal Park Police Station, a neighbourhood watch group and the local CPF. Sampling is defined by Brynard et al (2014:56) as a technique used to select a small group from the population to determine the characteristics of the population. Brynard et al (2014:56) explain that sampling simplifies the research, saves time, lowers costs, and determines specific properties for the whole, as it is usually impossible to study the entire population. "The notion behind sampling theory is that a small set of observations can give an idea of what can be expected in the total population of the intended study" (Strydom & Roestenburg, 2021:379).

The two methods of sampling are probability and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling is a design whereby every member of the population has an equal chance to be selected to take part in the research study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013:207–213). Examples of probability sampling include simple random sampling, stratified sampling,

proportional stratified sampling, cluster sampling and systematic sampling. Probability sampling methods are utilised mainly in quantitative research where the sample size is as big and as representative of the population as possible. Non-probability sampling does not guarantee that every member of the population will be represented in the sample (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013:207–214). Some examples of non-probability sampling are accidental sampling, snow balling and purposive sampling. The non-probability sampling methods are used mainly in qualitative research because the focus is not to ensure that all members of the population have an equal chance of taking part, but rather on collecting rich and in-depth data from a small number of individuals. Therefore, the number of participants in qualitative research is smaller than those in quantitative research because the focus of qualitative studies is depth and not numbers (Strydom & Roestenburg, 2021:381). This research used the non-probability sampling design because the primary purpose of this research was to collect holistic, comprehensive, and in-depth individual accounts of the phenomenon under study.

Furthermore, two types of non-probability sampling, namely, convenient, and purposive sampling were used to select research participants. Through convenient sampling, residents of Crystal Park Extension 32, who were victims of residential burglary, were selected. Convenient sampling is based on two principles: availability and willingness to participate in a study (University of Guelph, 2018). The primary unit of analysis were the victims of housebreaking. To draw the sample of victims using convenient sampling, the researcher informed all the residents of Crystal Park Extension 32 on social media (i.e., the WhatsApp group) about his intention to conduct the research and requested that those who had experienced incidents of housebreaking contact him privately for more information. Approximately 10 residents contacted the researcher revealing that they were victims and they would like to take part in the study. Appointments were made with the volunteers and the first interview was conducted on 13 March 2020. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a state of national disaster was declared in South Africa on 26 March 2020 to curb the spread of the virus. The restrictions which were put in place to prevent the spread of the virus, such as the hard lockdown when only essential services workers could leave their houses, forced the researcher to stop the face-to-face interviews. After the hard lockdown was lifted at the end of April 2020, the researcher contacted the volunteers

to find out if they were still willing to participate in the study. Only three agreed to continue and the rest (approximately seven) said that they had changed their minds and would no longer take part in the study. This meant that the researcher had to employ another recruitment strategy, also convenience sampling, by going door to door around the area to ask households if they were victims of housebreaking and if they would participate in the study. Through this strategy, five more victim participants volunteered in addition to the initial three who volunteered through WhatsApp.

The secondary unit of analysis comprised the SMEs, which included SAPS members from Crystal Park Police Station, a member of *AmaRussia*, a neighbourhood watch group, and a member of the CPF who all were selected through purposive sampling. The organisations the SMEs were from (i.e., the SAPS, CPF and neighbourhood watch) were selected through purposive sampling. When participants are chosen purposively to take part in a study it implies that they are knowledgeable on the topic at hand or they possess characteristics desired for the study. After receiving permission from SAPS to conduct the study with police officials and members of the CPF, the researcher went to Crystal Park Police Station to introduce himself and to explain the purpose of his study, after which police officials who were interested volunteered to take part in the study. The name of the CPF chairperson and contact details were obtained from the police station and the researcher was introduced to the group through the chairperson. A meeting was then arranged by the chairperson where the researcher met the CPF team to explain the purpose of his study. After the CPF meeting, only one person volunteered to participate in the study. Where the recruitment of *AmaRussia* member was concerned, because the neighbourhood watch group is made up of only community members, it was not necessary for the researcher to seek further permission to conduct research with its members beyond the ethical clearance from the University of South Africa (UNISA) College of Law Research Ethics Committee. A meeting was arranged with the neighbourhood watch group during which the researcher explained the purpose of the research. Once again, only one person showed willingness to participate in the research from the *AmaRussia* group. Even though the neighbourhood watch participant is a resident of Crystal Park Extension 32, he was classified as a subject matter expert because he deals with the issues of housebreaking not only on a personal level but professionally as well through working with the police, the CPF and security companies in the area.

No pilot study was conducted for this study because of the small number of research participants who were willing to take part in the study. As such, the pool of participants was not big enough for a pilot study to also be conducted.

4.3.1.1 Unit of analysis and sample size

The concept unit of analysis refers to what is being studied (Babbie, 2016:97). It could be an individual, group of people, an organisation, a phenomenon or a case under investigation (Akremi, 2020:2). The primary units of analysis for this study were the individual residents of Crystal Park Extension 32, particularly victims of housebreaking. A total number of eight (8) victims participated in the research. Thobane (2017:293–294) explains that victims of crime may be defined as a “hidden population” as they may not want to share their victimisation with researchers. Trying to access this hard-to-reach population through traditional research methods is often insurmountable. This could be the reason why only eight (8) residents were willing to speak about their victimisation experience even after the researcher went door to door in an attempt to recruit participants. Strydom and Roestenburg (2021:381) explain that there are no rules for sample size in qualitative studies. The focus of qualitative research is primarily the collection of in-depth information. Moreover, the design used (i.e., qualitative research and case study design) did not require a big sample to be selected but for rich, comprehensive, and holistic data to be collected for a few cases. It is for this reason that a total number of eight victims was deemed satisfactory for this study. Where the secondary unit of analysis is concerned, i.e., the SMEs, a total of five (5) experts from the SAPS (n=3), the Neighbourhood Watch (*AmaRussia*) (n=1) and the CPF (n=1) participated in the study. This meant that 13 individuals participated in this study (i.e., eight victims and five SMEs). This number was determined by the willingness to participate in the research by both the victim and SME participants.

4.3.1.2 Geographical delineation

This study focused on Crystal Park Extension 32, one of the areas in the Crystal Park suburb situated in the City of Ekurhuleni, Gauteng. The area has 400± separate houses occupied by black middle-class adults. The area is a few kilometres from Daveyton and Chief Albert Luthuli townships. Along the N12 are slums which are a walking distance from Crystal Park Extension 32. Since this was an *exploratory*

study, the research focused only on Extension 32 and excluded other areas within the broader Crystal Park suburb. The researcher focused on this area because of convenience and feasibility but, most importantly, out of concern as a resident of Extension 32, due to the rising incidents of housebreaking.

4.3.2 Data collection methods

Data collection methods refer to different techniques used when gathering information for a research project. These methods differ depending on whether a qualitative or quantitative research approach is used to conduct the study. Typical qualitative data collection methods include interviews, focus group discussions and observations. This research used semi-structured in-depth interviews to collect data from both victim and expert participants.

4.3.2.1 Semi-structured in-depth interviews

Before the interviews were conducted, the researcher applied for ethical clearance from the UNISA College of Law Research Ethics Committee as alluded. After permission was provided by UNISA, an application was submitted to the SAPS to seek further permission to interview police officials and members of the CPF. Upon receiving permission from the SAPS and the CPF, a request was made to the teams to participate after which individual appointments were made with the willing individuals. No further ethical clearance, beyond the clearance from UNISA, was needed for *AmaRussia* and the victim participants, except through consent forms from the individual interviewees (refer to sub-section 1.8 for ethical considerations), to participate in the study.

A semi-structured in-depth interview is described as a structured conversation between two individuals (i.e., the interviewer and interviewee) for the purpose of obtaining systematic knowledge (Kvale, 2011:6; Morris, 2015:4). Morris (2015:4) further explains that interviewing involves the interviewer asking the interviewee, an expert on the topic at hand, questions and following up on responses to extract as much information as possible from the conversation. The author emphasises that semi-structured interviews should be a flexible and free-flowing conversation where the interviewer allows the interviewee the freedom to lead the interview. However,

through a pre-developed interview guide and through probing, the interviewer directs the interview as discreetly as possible to ensure that the interviewee provides relevant information in the time allocated for the interview (Morris, 2015:4). Cassell (2019:6) adds that, although there will be a list of questions and prompts in semi-structured interviews, the interviewer may deviate from the interview guide depending on the responses submitted by the interviewee. This means that, in qualitative research, no two interviews can be the same as interviewees can provide different responses. Nieuwenhuis (2020:108) warns that it is important, as a researcher, to keep a balance between allowing for flexibility to explore a topic in depth and to answer the pre-determined questions versus getting distracted by trivial information that will not contribute to the research. If done correctly, in-depth interviews are an effective method of obtaining rich data about a particular social issue because, through the interview, the researcher has access to the interviewees' "thoughts, reflections, motives, experiences, memories, understandings, interpretations and perceptions on the topic under consideration" (Morris, 2015:5–6). Morris (2015:6) adds that the interviewing method is versatile and can be used to collect data on an extensive range of research topics and questions.

In this research, one-on-one face-to-face interviews were conducted with each of the victims and SME participants. The reason for choosing the semi-structured interviewing method was motivated by the fact that the primary goal of this research was explorative and, by its nature, explorative research seeks to obtain thick and in-depth data from the research participants who have experience and knowledge on the topic being researched. Also, the choice of this data collection method was informed by the research problem, the aims and objectives of this study, the research approach selected as well as the research design. As explained under the sampling sub-section, victim participants were chosen using the accidental or convenience sampling based on their availability when the researcher went door to door in the neighbourhood. From this exercise, a total of eight (8) homeowners who were victims of burglary, volunteered to participate in the research.

Individual appointments were then made with the participants. To ensure that the participants were comfortable and to build rapport, the interviews took place in the participants' homes. In this way, they were not inconvenienced by having to leave their

home. The choice to conduct the interviews one on one and face to face was motivated by the fact that the topic being studied was extremely sensitive. As such, conducting one-on-one interviews eliminated the chances of the participants hiding information should they have been interviewed in a group. Also, doing the interviews face to face allowed the interviewer to detect a participant's discomfort. When the researcher noticed that a participant was uncomfortable answering a specific question, they were encouraged not to answer. Conducting the interviews face to face also helped as the researcher was able to ask follow-up questions or to probe participants for clarity and to journey with the participants as the narratives unfolded allowing for thick data to be collected. The participants were allowed to narrate their stories from their own points of view. The interviews ranged from 60 to 90 minutes. Also, permission was provided by all the interviewees for the interviews to be audio recorded. Even though the researcher took notes during the interviews, the audio recording allowed the researcher to focus on having a conversation with the interviewee instead of focusing on writing extensive notes. Also, the recordings assisted during the transcription phase of data analysis as the interviewer was able to record the interviewees' responses verbatim. Accordingly, the likelihood of misrepresenting the research participants during data interpretation and presentation was minimised.

The same principles, as highlighted above, were followed when interviewing the SMEs who were interviewed at their own offices. Their interviews varied from 45 minutes to one hour.

4.3.3 Data analysis and interpretation

According to Schurink, Schurink and Fouché (2021:392), the purpose of data analysis is to "bring order, structure and meaning to the data collected". The authors add that, even though qualitative data analysis is "messy, ambiguous and time-consuming", it is an innovative and exciting process. Moreover, qualitative data analysis does not occur in a linear form, but it is a repetitive process (Schurink et al, 2021:392). Schurink et al (2021:401) further explain that qualitative research utilises the thematic approach for data analysis and interpretation as the aim is to understand the phenomenon under study as experienced by the research participants.

4.3.3.1 Thematic analysis

Caulfield (2023) explains that thematic analysis is a qualitative data analysis method where the researcher conducts a close examination of the data to “identify common themes – topics, ideas and patterns of meaning that come up repeatedly”. There are many ways of conducting a thematic analysis but the most popular is the six-step process developed by Braun and Clarke (2013) (i.e., familiarisation, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and writing up). To analyse the data collected from the interview in this study, the researcher followed thematic analysis steps as adapted by Schurink et al (2021:402–407).

Transcribing the data

Before the transcribing the data collected through the interviews, the researcher manually organised the hardcopy notes from each of the interviews. The audio recordings of the interviews were also uploaded to the researcher’s laptop to prepare for transcription. During the transcription phase, the researcher transcribed what was said by the interviewees verbatim. The research questions were used to decide on the information that would be used for the non-textual data mentioned above (Schurink et al, 2021:403). The researcher transcribed all the interviews himself, which allowed him to become familiar with the data.

Familiarise with own data and creating of initial codes.

During this stage, the researcher read and re-read the transcribed data, played, and re-played the audio recordings (Schurink et al, 2021:403). At this stage, the researcher also critically analysed the meaning of the words, phrases and expressions used by the participants. As advised by Braun and Clarke (2013:205), during this phase, the researcher ought to think “actively, analytically and critically” about what the collected data really means and then identify codes. Schurink et al (2021:403) define a code as a label that represents a specific meaning attributed to a text. During coding, the researcher assigned a single word (i.e., a code) to a part of text in the transcripts. Because the analysis was done manually, on the researcher’s laptop, and not through a computer assisted software, such as Atlas.ti or NVivo, each code was highlighted in a different colour.

Coding

During this phase of data analysis, new words were assigned to the identified codes and more codes were developed from the initial codes. The identification of codes was done repeatedly as the researcher went back and forth between the different transcripts to look out for similarities and differences (Schurink et al, 2021:405). It was at this stage when various codes were also linked to each other or clustered based on their similarities in meaning. The identified codes were also compared to the criminological theories which underpinned this research (refer to Chapter 3 for a discussion of the theories). Schurink et al (2021:405) explain that, even though there are no “right” or “wrong” codes, the codes generated need to be expressive of the interpretation of the data in relation to the research question or study objectives.

Thematic development (second order analysis)

During this phase, the codes were collated into themes with the assistance of the research questions. Themes were identified and finalised based on their frequency of appearance or similarities to each other. The researcher also looked for themes that were different or deviated from the norm and included them in the analysis.

Data interpretation and presentation

According to Ngulube (2015:18),

“[t]his phase entails the assessment, analysis and interpretation of the empirical evidence that has been collected. The different points of view of the participants are presented in sufficient detail and depth, so that the reader may be able to gauge the accuracy of the analysis.”

To interpret the data for this study, the researcher used existing literature on the topic as well as theories that underpinned the study to support or refute the research findings. Verbatim responses of the research participants were also used for emphasis and to support the findings. Importantly, the findings are presented in a narrative form in Chapter 5 as a way of facilitating the interviewees’ experiences and viewpoints of the topic.

4.4 Reliability and trustworthiness of data

Different studies use different methods or techniques to ensure that measurement procedures and instruments have acceptable levels of reliability and trustworthiness before drawing conclusions. In qualitative studies, the terms “reliability” and “trustworthiness” are used to check the accuracy of the collected data (Kuada, 2012:101).

4.4.1 Reliability

Segal and Coolidge (2018:2) opine that reliability refers to two things relating to a measurement, namely, consistence and stability. This means that, when a measurement is used several times under the same conditions to measure a phenomenon, it should yield the same results every time. In ensuring reliability for this study, participants were asked clear, straightforward, and unambiguous questions. Also, the use of probing during the interviews ensured that participants provided reliable responses. Furthermore, maintaining confidentiality, as discussed later under the ethical considerations, also enhanced the reliability of responses provided by the research participants.

4.4.2 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness in qualitative research refers to four elements as developed by Lincoln and Guba (1985:np), namely, credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability.

4.4.2.1 Credibility

Credibility, according to Billups (2021:29), refers to the extent to which the research findings are believable, truthful and have holistically captured or represented the phenomenon being studied. Credibility, in this research, was ensured through prolonged engagements with the participants, persistent observations and/or keeping a reflective journal wherein the researcher identified his preconceived views of the topic through a process of reflexivity and bracketing. Credibility was further ensured through triangulation as data were collected from different sources (i.e., eight victims of housebreaking, three police officials, one member of the CPF and one member of

AmaRussia).

4.4.2.2 Dependability

Dependability refers to the consistency of the data over time and over different conditions (Polit & Beck, 2014:435; Billups, 2021:30). To ensure dependability, the supervisor conducted an inquiry audit of the research purpose and methods applied throughout the study. Additionally, through the inquiry audit, the research supervisor also examined the truthfulness of the research findings and recommended revisions where necessary. Moreover, triangulation in terms of interviewing different research participants and data collection methods, as mentioned above, took place and thus assisted the researcher to check for similarities and differences in the data.

4.4.2.3 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the confidence that the research findings are based on the narratives and perspectives of the participants and not on the researcher's biases (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:290; Billups, 2021:30). To ensure confirmability, the researcher engaged in a process of reflexivity. Also, verbatim responses by the research participants are used in the data analysis chapter to enhance confirmability of the research findings (see Chapter 5).

4.4.2.4 Transferability

“While the goal of qualitative research is not to produce results, which are statistically generalizable, the intent is to produce findings that other researchers can interpret for similar settings, even to the point of applying the research design for their own purposes” (Billups, 2021:30).

To achieve transferability in this study, the researcher has included thick descriptions of conversations he had with the research participants (i.e., through verbatim responses). Also, details of all the methods used to conduct this research have been provided under the research methodology section and throughout the dissertation.

4.5 Ethical considerations

Strydom and Roestenburg (2021:117) believe that research involving humans as

participants has not always considered the interests of the subjects being investigated in an ethical manner. Borah (2020:93) explains that ethics are important for setting boundaries in research, for prioritising the best interest of participants, and for helping researchers to separate right from wrong. Ethics “refers to accepted principles of right or wrong that govern the conduct of a person, the members of a profession or the actions of an organization” (Borah, 2020:93). Ethical decisions are therefore made based on the accepted principles of what is deemed right in terms of research. Throughout this study, the researcher ensured that there was an adherence to the 2016 UNISA Policy on Research Ethics. Moreover, the researcher did not embark on the empirical study until ethical clearance was obtained from the UNISA College of Law Research Ethics Committee. Additionally, the following research ethics guided the study:

4.5.1 Informed consent, voluntary participation/autonomy

Informed consent simply means that participants must give permission to be part of the study based on the information provided to them prior to the study being conducted. This information should include the aim of the study, the activities to be taken during the research, the cost and benefits of the study and that participants can withdraw from the study at any time (Patten & Newhart, 2018:36). Informed consent can be given in many ways including verbal, written, electronic and telephonic. For this study, two consent forms (one consent form for participants to keep and the other one for researcher’s records) were issued and the participants were required to sign to show that they participated in the study voluntarily. Participants were informed that participation was voluntary and that they could stop the interview at any time. Autonomy implies that the individuals have the right to decide which activities they want or do not want to engage in (Adams & Callahan, 2014). The research participants in this study were not coerced to be part of the study as they were allowed to make autonomous decisions to participate or not. Additionally, the participants were, through the consent form, further requested to give consent for the interviews to be audio recorded.

4.5.2 Non-maleficence (Do no harm)

Non-maleficence means “do no harm”. This ethical principle calls upon researchers to

be sensitive and aware of the any potential harm and distress participants may be exposed to during the study (Bachman & Schutt, 2014:57; Bless, Higson-Smith & Sithole, 2013:29, Hardwick & Worsley, 2011:30; Strydom & Roestenburg, 2021:119). This ethical principle dictates that the researcher should avoid harming participants either physically or psychologically. To ensure that participants were not harmed in any way, the researcher kept all information confidential and no personal information that can identify the participants was or will be published (refer to section 1.8.4 below). To further minimise harming the participants, they were allocated numbers as a means of identification instead of using their names. This was done to ensure that no one else, besides the researcher, is able to identify any of the participants when reading the findings presented in Chapter 5.

4.5.3 Beneficence

Beneficence refers to participants benefiting from the research. Furthermore, beneficence suggests that research should strive to do no harm but increase possible benefits for the participants (Patten & Newhart, 2018:35). Even though research participants did not receive any incentives for participating in this study, they may benefit from the research findings and the recommendations made on how burglary at residential premises can be prevented.

4.5.4 Confidentiality, privacy and anonymity

The privacy of the participants was respected, and no personal information was disclosed to anyone. All hard copies of collected data were scanned into the researcher's password protected laptop and only the researcher had access to the data. The research supervisor also had access to the data on request to conduct an audit inquiry. All hard copies of data were shredded immediately after scanning. The electronic data will be permanently deleted from the researcher's computer after 15 years of completing the study. To ensure anonymity, the researcher removed any identifiable information, such as names, and used codes, for example, Victim 01 or SME 01, to identify the participants.

4.5.5 Justice

Justice suggests that costs and benefits of the research should be shared equally

amongst the participants (Patten & Newhart, 2018:35). To ensure that the research was just, the researcher treated all participants equally and no participant was viewed as more valuable than the other.

4.6 Summary of the study limitations

Research limitations are the imposed restrictions which are out of the researcher's control (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019:156). The authors emphasise that study limitations, however, affect the research design, findings and conclusions and it is for this reason that they need to be acknowledged and clearly highlighted early in the research report.

4.6.1 Methodological limitations

In the case of this research, the limitations related to research methodology were:

4.6.1.1 Sample size

This study followed qualitative research where only 13 cases (i.e., eight victims and five SMEs) were studied, therefore, its findings cannot be generalised. Participation requests were made to all security companies operating in Crystal Park Extension 32 and none of the companies were willing to participate in the research even after the researcher explained the value of their participation as they are experts on the topic at hand. Due to unwillingness to participate, and since participation ought to be voluntary, armed response security companies were excluded from the study. The focus of this study was, firstly, on the victims' perspectives and, secondly, the explorative nature of the research meant that the purpose was not to generalise the findings but to understand and describe the phenomenon from the viewpoint of those who have first-hand experience of it.

4.7 Summary

Research methodology, in terms of the approach and design which includes sampling, data collection and analysis, is examined in this chapter. The chapter closes with a discussion of measures used to uphold the reliability and trustworthiness of the data collected as well as the ethical principles upheld throughout the study. A summary of

the study limitations is also presented in this chapter.

In the chapter that follows, the research findings are presented and interpreted.

CHAPTER 5: PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This research was *exploratory* in nature and the qualitative research approach was adopted to conduct it. The choice of the research approach was influenced by the fact that the researcher wanted to obtain in-depth and first-hand views, knowledge, and experience of participants on the phenomenon of housebreaking as it occurred in their context, Crystal Park Extension 32. Moreover, the goal of the research was exploratory because, even though housebreaking has been identified as the most common type of property crime experienced by South African households, very little local scientific studies have been conducted on this phenomenon.

As discussed in the previous chapter, an interview schedule with open-ended questions was used to facilitate one-on-one face-to-face interviews. Data were collected from eight (8) residents of Crystal Park Extension 32 who were victims of housebreaking, three (3) SAPS officials from the local police station, one (1) CFP member and one (1) member of *AmaRussia*, a neighbourhood watch group. The interviews were audio recorded to allow the researcher to focus on having an uninterrupted conversation with the participants. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data collected from the research participants.

5.2 Participants' demographical information

For this study, demographical information of the participants is presented to provide the context of the research in terms of who participated in the study and not to draw any inferences or conclusions based on the demographics.

5.2.1 Victim participants' demographical information

As explained in Chapter 1 and throughout this dissertation, the main units of analysis from which the primary data were collected were residents of Crystal Part Extension 32, specifically victims of housebreaking.

Table 5.1: Victim Participants Demographics

Participant	Sex	Age	Relationship status	Occupation	Years in Crystal Park
Victim 1	Male	31–40	Married	Employed	7
Victim 2	Male	51–60	Single	Employed	7
Victim 3	Male	51–60	Married	Self-employed	8
Victim 4	Male	41–50	Separated	Employed	6
Victim 5	Male	20–30	Single	Unemployed	4
Victim 6	Male	41–50	Married	Employed	7
Victim 7	Male	41–50	Cohabiting	Employed	7
Victim 8	Female	31–40	Married	Employed	7

As shown in Table 5.1 above, a total of eight (8) victims were interviewed, where seven (7) identified themselves as male and only one (1) identified as female. The over representation of male participants in this research could be attributed to the fact that the researcher was male and, due to the sensitivity of the topic, the males may have felt comfortable sharing sensitive information about their victimisation with another male. The opposite assumption could be that female victims did not volunteer as they did not feel comfortable speaking to a male researcher about such a sensitive topic. As previously explained, victims of crime are hard to access because of their vulnerability.

Out of eight (8) victim participants, four (4) were married, two (2) were single, one (1) was cohabiting and one (1) was at the time of the research separated from his partner. All three married participants were staying with their partners. One single participant was staying alone, while the other one was staying with his parent. The

cohabitating participant was staying with a partner and a child. Lastly, the separated participant was staying alone during the time of the incident.

Seven (6) of the participants were employed including the one (1) self-employed participant, while only one (1) participant was unemployed.

Because Crystal Park Extension 32 was a new development when the research took place, the participant who had been living there the longest had been a resident for only eight (8) years. According to the research participants and knowledge of the researcher who is also a resident, construction of Crystal Park Extension 32 started between 2012 and 2014 and was completed between 2014 and 2015. The researcher moved into the area in 2015 and this study commenced three years later in 2018 and the interviews started in 2021.

5.2.2 SME Participants Demographical Information

To supplement the data collected from the victim participants, five (5) SMEs were also interviewed. As depicted in Table 5.2, three (3) of the SMEs were police officials from Crystal Park police station, one (1) was a CPF member and one (1) was a dog guard from the local neighbourhood watch called *AmaRussia*. Two of the police officials are employed in the intelligence service office and one under social crime division of the SAPS. The SMEs were included in this research because of their professional knowledge, especially about the modus operandi used to commit burglaries.

Table 5.2: SME Participants' demographics

Participant	Department	Rank	Years of Experience
SAPS Official 1 (SME 1)	Intelligence Service	Warrant officer	30 Years
SAPS Official 2 (SME 2)	Intelligence Service	Warrant Officer	30 Years
SAPS Official 3 (SME 3)	Social Crime Prevention	Warrant Officer	22 Years
Community Policing (CPF) Member (SME 4)	CPF	Cannot reveal position for the purpose of anonymity as community members may recognise the individual	5 Years
Neighbourhood Watch Member (SME 5)	<i>AmaRussia</i>	Dog Guard	06 Months

Additionally, the participation of the SMEs in this research assisted in augmenting, confirming, and testing the credibility of information provided by the primary unit of analysis, especially where both research subjects were asked the same questions.

Initially, the researcher planned to interview more SMEs from SAPS, but it was impossible due to their busy schedule and COVID-19 restrictions. As a result, only three SMEs from the SAPS volunteered. Nonetheless, as previously explained, the SMEs were not the primary unit of analysis of this study.

5.3 Findings (Thematic Analysis)

Braun and Clarke's (2006:16–23) six steps of thematic analysis, as adapted by Schurink et al (2021:402–407), were used to analyse data. The findings in this chapter are presented using a third-person narrative style of writing, meaning the story is told from the perspective of the research participants, and not of the researcher. Table 5.3 provides a summary of themes that emerged from the data collected from both the

victim participants as well as the subject matter experts.

Table 5.3: Themes and sub-themes

Themes	Sub-themes
1. Modus operandi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning phase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Time taken to plan - Target/house selection - Tools required - Number of gang members • Offence phase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Entry techniques - Time taken inside the house and search method - Time of the incident
2. Risk factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victim risk factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Routine activities - Lifestyle • Environmental/Area risk factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unused open lands - Lack of access control - Social disorganisation - New housing development
3. Impact on victims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial impact • Psychological/emotional impact • Social impact
4. Participant suggested preventive measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erection of barrier wall with electric fence around the neighbourhood • Installation of boom gate for access control • Installation of security alarm system by households • Installation of burglar bars by households • Dogs • Regular patrols by the SAPS, CPF and neighbourhood watch • Social bonds between neighbours

5.3.1 Theme 1: Modus Operandi

The goal of this part of the study was to understand and explain how, in the personal and professional experiences and viewpoints of the research participants, the offenders who commit burglaries in their area, Crystal Park Extension 32, operated.

The personal experience refers to that of the victims while the professional experience refers to that of the SMEs.

5.3.1.1 Planning phase

Time taken to plan the burglary

Participants were asked if, in their opinion, burglaries committed in the area are planned. Most of the participants pointed out that they believed that indeed the offenders planned their activities. This finding corroborates with the literature by Bennette and Wright (1984:148) as previously discussed. However, one victim felt that the burglaries were spontaneous which is supported by Rengert and Groff (2011:155) as discussed in Chapter 2. Regarding the time frame to plan the burglary offence, it was highlighted by SMEs that the planning phase can take a few hours to three months. In support of the latter, Mercan (2019:50) believes that planning of a burglary takes a few hours, while Blevins et al (2012:3) are of the opinion that it takes place between one and three days.

“Planning can take place from one week up to three months and sometimes the perpetrators monitor you even longer.” SME 4 (CPF Member)

“The planning only takes place few hours.” SME 5 (Neighbourhood Watch Member)

It was revealed by SMEs that, during the planning phase, issues such as targeted house and items, resources required, entrance and escape routes, house search style, and disposing of the loot, are discussed by the perpetrators.

(i) Target selection/Casing the target

When asked what makes a house a target for burglary, four victim participants reported that occupancy is important, meaning that offenders target houses which are unoccupied.

“A majority of people are at their workplace during the day and there is no occupancy at home and chances of burglars to be caught are slim.” Victim 1

Ensuring that the house is unoccupied before committing the burglary is in line with

the definition of housebreaking as explained under the definition of key concepts (section 1.5). A residential robbery takes place while the people who live in the house are present (also refer to Mpofu, 2019:16) whereas a burglary is committed in an unoccupied house. The participants reported that the primary method of casing a target or checking for occupancy is by observing the routine activities of the households.

“Someone around you observes your routine, what time you go home and what time you leave home and informs the burglars about your schedule.”

Victim 3

The above verbatim response by Victim 3 also brings in the element of an informant providing inside information reported on in the literature under section 2.3.12 (see Wright & Decker, 1994:77; Mpofu, 2019:63; Van Zyl, 2002:191). This was also reported by one SME participant who asserted that inside information is mostly given to the perpetrators by helpers, victims’ relatives, or family members. Mpofu (2019) explains that information is gathered either through observing the evidence or through forming relationships with people who currently work or have previously worked in the residence (Mpofu, 2019:63). In her research on cash-in-transit (CIT) robberies, Thobane (2014:167) refers to the person who provides inside information to the robbers as a “finger man” meaning that the role of the person is to point the offenders in the right direction. Mpofu (2019:17) adds that burglars may conduct the investigation themselves by posing as municipal officials, such as water meter readers, for example, so that they are allowed access into their targets. Van Zyl (2002:191) opines that a target about which burglars have information is more vulnerable than other potential targets. Mpofu (2019:63) agrees with the latter by adding that it is easier for offenders to commit a housebreaking when they have information on the movements of the occupants of the house.

Another method of choosing the target, as explained by the research participants, is looking for cars on driveways or in car ports (Van Zyl, 2002:126). Participants added that another popular method of checking for occupancy by burglars who operated in Crystal Park Extension 32 was by knocking at the gate/pressing the intercom at the gate and pretending to be lost. This finding corroborates what was said by Zinn (cited in Pieterse, 2015:np) on how robbers and burglars operate. “Most burglaries take place during the day when people are at work. They will usually pick a neighbourhood

and go from house to house, ringing doorbells or intercoms to see if anyone is home” (Zinn cited in Pieterse, 2015:np). Participants in this current study reported that if no one comes out of the house after ringing the intercom at the gate or knocking for a while, then the burglars conclude that the house is unoccupied. Additionally, offenders can, the day before the burglary, also place a twig on the gate rail and if it is still there the following day, they then conclude that the house is unoccupied and thus continue with the burglary.

“The burglars sometimes check on the driveways or car port if there is a car; if no cars then they know there is no one at home. Sometimes they pretend as if they are lost and they come and knock at the door asking for directions and, if no response, then they know the house is empty.” SME 4 (CPF Member)

“The burglars put a small stick on the gate rail during the day and the following day they check if the stick is still there. If they find the stick on the same spot, they know the gate was never opened, so the house is not occupied.” SME 5 (Neighbourhood Watch Member)

Van Zyl et al. (2002:113) emphasise that “residents who are away from home at regular intervals are more vulnerable to housebreakings than those with irregular time schedules.” The absence of occupants in a house represents the absence of a capable guardian and thus increases the likelihood of a house becoming a target for burglary. Refer to RAT and opportunity model respectively for discussions on guardianship. Also, an unoccupied house is an attractive target which will offer little resistance should it be attacked by burglars.

It was further highlighted by Victims 4 and 8 that houses were also identified based on their location. Houses located on quiet streets were more vulnerable to burglary as compared to houses located on busy streets.

“Potential burglars do not want to be seen committing the crimes, that is why they prefer streets which are not busy because this reduces their chances of being caught.” Victim 8

“Quiet streets mean less movement and less chances of being seen.”

Victim 4

In support of the above finding, Mpofu (2019:63) highlights that because burglary is a passive crime, offenders will choose times and places where the chance of encountering either the victims or witnesses is minimised. The passive nature of housebreaking makes the benefits (i.e., getting away with the loot without being seen) outweigh the risks (i.e., households pressing a panic button to despatch armed response).

Participant 7 added that houses adjacent to open spaces are also vulnerable to burglary attacks.

“Houses adjacent to open space are vulnerable to burglary.” Victim 7

Kruger (2019:np) and Van Zyl (2002:189) explain that open land can be used by criminals as access and escape routes.



Picture 1: South-western side unused land

Picture 2: North-eastern side unused land

As depicted in pictures above there were, at the time of the research, two vacant lands on the east and the west sides of Crystal Park Extension 32. The participants believed that these undeveloped lands increased the risks of burglaries in their area, as they created easy access and exit for criminals into their neighbourhood.

(ii) Tools required to commit the offence

When participants were asked about the tools required to commit a successful burglary, they mentioned that a screwdriver and a crowbar were the most important tools followed by car jack, hammer, a pair of plyers, lock pick, a cell phone, and a vehicle. Most of these tools are also mentioned by Mercan (2019:53–55) in the literature chapter.

"They used car jack to jack the burglar bars." Victim 2

"They broke into the car and took the car jack and use it to force the burglar bars open." SME 4 (CPF Member)

"I suspect they used a lock pick to unlock the door because they were no forced entry marks on the door and door frame." SME 5 (Neighbourhood Watch Member)

Below is a description of how each tool is used:

- The screwdriver is pushed between the door and the door frame to force the door open.
- The hammer is usually used in conjunction with screwdriver to hit its head. The crowbar works more like screwdriver but is used to force burglars' bars open.
- A car jack is used to jack burglar bars to force them open.
- Pick guns are used to pick the door locks to open the locks.
- A cell phone is used to communicate with each other.
- The car is used to transport the burglars and their loot to and from the burglary area.

Van Zyl (2002:144) found that the tools, which were most often used to force security gates, bars and door locks open, were crowbars, bolt cutters and sometimes shifting spanners.

(iii) Number of gang members

When asked about the number of people involved in a burglary incident, the participants alluded to the fact that the number ranges from two to six people. However, SME 2 stated that there are those who work alone but they are opportunists. This assertion is supported by Beirne and Messerschmidt (1995:153) who explain that individual burglars are often opportunists who happen to be at the right place at the right time, while organised groups of burglars are more professional and meticulously plan their activities to avoid being caught (Rengert & Groff, 2011:156). Moreover, committing burglary, as an individual, increases the chances of being

caught because the perpetrator cannot be a look out and a looter at the same time.

"In most cases, people involved in burglary would be between one and five, but they prefer to be in a group because that makes their work much easier."

SME 4 (CPF Member)

"Opportunist works alone." SME 2 (SAPS Official)

"The guys moves in a group of two to three guys. Burglars are organised syndicates ..." SME 1 (SAPS Official)

"Usually it is two offenders." SME 5 (Neighbourhood Watch Member)

"The burglars move in a group of plus/minus six people." SME 3 (Police Official)

Mercan (2019:55) explains that it is important for burglars to work in a group as the responsibilities are shared and each member is given a task and a specific role (see Chapter 2).

"Firstly you have the spotters. The spotter will spot the house or be on the lookout for anything that can disturb them. The driver is in the car waiting. One or two people breaking into the house." SME 4 (CPF Member)

"When it comes to burglars, tasks are allocated to members of the syndicate." SME 1 (SAPS Official)

"Yes, they work in a group and they allocate task to each other. Three guys goes inside the house, another one will wait in the car one guy will standing outside checking if someone is coming so that he can send a signal to the guys inside the house." SME 3 (SAPS Official)

As explained by SME 1, SME 3 and SME 4 above, the primary roles are driver, spotter or lookout and looter. The driver drops off the gang members at the crime scene and drives them away after the offence. Then spotter(s) or lookout(s) are strategically placed to observe people's movements and also to alert other members of the gang when someone is approaching or if there is armed response. The individuals who break into the house to remove the desired assets are the looters (Mercan, 2019:55–

56). Participants further stated that sometimes, after access is gained, all members of the burglary team, except for the driver waiting in the vehicle in the driveway or on the pavement, enter the house to loot.

5.3.1.2 Offence phase

(i) Entry techniques

When participants were asked about the techniques used by the burglars to gain access into the yards of their targets, they all reported that burglars gain entry by jumping the barrier wall or fence.

“They easily jump over the wall fence without being noticed.” SME 3 (SAPS Official)

“My house does not have any electric fences hence [it] was burgled easily because the burglars just jumped the barrier wall.” Victim 5

Additionally, SME 1 mentioned that occupants sometimes do not lock their gates and the burglars gain access through unlocked gates.

“The burglars would go through the unlocked gate and pretend to be lost and looking for directions. They will then knock at the door and if no response, then they easily burgle the house.” SME 1 (SAPS Official)

Zinn (in Pieterse, 2015:np) revealed that burglars avoid low walls or fences as they may be seen from the streets. Because burglary is a passive crime, robbers choose places that will decrease their chances of encountering the victims or witnesses (see Mpofo, 2019:63).

When asked how entry was gained into the house, the most predominant response submitted by the victim participants was the door. Van Zyl (2002:134) also revealed that burglars prefer doors, including sliding doors, on a patio that is not visible from the street.

“They broke the door and our burglar.” Victim 1

“They entered my house through the door by removing the burglar bar that

was on my door." Victim 2

"They destroyed my burglar bars on the door before they can break the door to get inside the house." Victim 3

"They came through my sliding door, after breaking it down." Victim 5

"The perpetrators broke my burglar bar at the door from the main entrance."
Victim 7

"The burglar bars from my door was removed so that they can come inside."
Victim 8

Entry through the door is often made by breaking burglar bars, then forcing the door open or smashing the sliding door. "Sliding doors are an easy way for burglars to get into the house. All they have to do is lift it up off its rails and they are inside the house" (Zinn cited in Pieterse, 2015:np). SME 5 added that, in some instances, entry is gained by skilled burglars who open the door lock (Brookman et al, 2010:06).

Another method of entering the house mentioned was through windows. Van Zyl (2002:134) found that burglars preferred bathroom and laundry windows as these rooms are, in most instances, not fitted with alarm sensors.

"These guys are spontaneous, and they want to go unseen, they will just break the window and grab anything that is closer to the window." SME 2 (SAPS Official)

"They remove windowpane ..." SME 5 (Neighbourhood Watch Member)

SME 3 added that entry can also be gained by lifting the roof tiles.

"Although it is not often that burglars enter the house through the roof, but we do have instances where access to the house was gained through the roof top." SME 3 (SAPS Official)

This type of entry was supported by Hctor (2007:602) and Mercan (2019:55).

- (ii) Time taken inside the house and search methods

Participants were asked about their opinions regarding the time taken inside the house. In response to this question, the participants pointed out that burglars were inside the house between two and 20 minutes. Van Zyl (2002:143) agrees that planned burglaries can take less than five minutes.

“If they find what they want quickly, they can even take less than two minutes inside the house.” SME 1 (SAPS Official)

“The maximum time to be taken is 10 minutes.” SME 2 (SAPS Official)

“Everything can happen with 15 minutes.” SME 3 (SAPS Official)

“These guys do not need too much time, between five minutes to 10 minutes.” SME 4 (CPF Member)

“Roughly they can take around 20 minutes.” SME 5 (SAPS Official)

As explained by Cadler Security (2018:np) “burglars like to work as quickly as possible with the average burglary taking less than 10 minutes. The longer they stay around, the more likely they are to be seen and get caught.”

With limited time and many places to search inside the house, participants highlighted that ransacking was often burglars’ preferred method.

“They turned my house upside down; everything inside the house was all over the place. My clothes on the floor, bed turned upside down. It was just a mess.” Victim 8

This type of search is like vandalising the property while trying to find something to steal (Brandl, 2018:634). Brandl (2018:634) further highlights that this search method is often preferred by burglars who are not familiar with the household contents.

(iii) Day and time of burglaries

Participants were asked questions related to the day and time their houses were burgled and their whereabouts when their houses were targeted. The table below outlines the submissions made by each victim:

Table 5.4: Time of Incident

Participant	During the week/weekend	Time	Victim whereabouts
Victim 1	Weekday	Day	At work/school
Victim 2	Weekday	Day	At work
Victim 3	Weekday	Day	At piece job/school
Victim 4	Weekday	Day	At work/school
Victim 5	Weekday	Night	At church
Victim 6	Weekday	Day	At work/school
Victim 7	Do not remember the day	Night	At work
Victim 8	Weekday	Day	At work/school

As seen in the table above, the victims were not asked to provide details on the exact date of their specific burglary incident but were asked if their incidents happened on a weekday or the weekend and during the day or at night. Except for SME 7 who said he could not remember the day of the week on which the incident at his house happened, seven (7) of the victim participants indicated that their incidents took place during the week. Six (6) of the victims reported that the incident took place during the day while only two (2) reported that their houses were broken into at night. Seven (7) of the incidents, including one that took place at night, took place while the occupants of the house were at work and school while the eighth incident occurred while the single unemployed occupant was at church. At the time of the research, none of the victims had experienced more than one burglary or had been revictimised.

The responses show that most burglaries experienced by the victims in this study were committed during the day and during the week when occupants were either at work or at school (also see Wright & Decker, 1994:85).

“Majority of people are at their workplace during the day and there is no occupancy at home and chances of burglars to be caught are slim.” Victim 1

“Burglars are usually active on summertime during the day on Fridays and

Sundays especially when it is raining." SME 3 (SAPS Official)

"Sometimes during the weekend is silent [because people are home], but immediately when Monday starts, they also start [burglaries]." SME 4 (CPF Member)

"Although I do not remember the day but it was in May 2019 during a rainy day when I realised that my house was burgled." Victim 1

"The burglaries usually takes place on Tuesdays and Wednesdays around 11h00 and 15h00 when it is raining or cold." SME 5 (Neighbourhood Watch Member)

"I do not remember the day, but it was during the week on a rainy day, and I was at work." Victim 6

"I remember I was coming back from work and it was during the week in the afternoon. When I opened the door I could see mud footsteps on the floor because it was raining during the day." Victim 8

However, there were instances when burglaries took place at night while occupants of the house were out at parties or night vigils.³ Victim 5 reported that his incident took place at night in winter because of less movement on the streets due to the cold weather.

"It was on Tuesday during the night when I went out for night prayer. The streets were empty because it was late at night and very cold ... I came back around 12h30 AM only to realise that the house was burgled." Victim 5

This finding is in line with the results of the South African study by Van Zyl (2002:141) that revealed that most burglaries take place during the day, but some take place during the night, depending on the days of the week.

According to the participants, December was the most popular time for burglary

³ Night vigil refers to the eve of a burial where family members of the deceased as well as church members and community members gather for prayer.

incidents to take place in Crystal Park Extension 32.

“December time is a busy time for burglaries.” SME 3 (SAPS Official)

“Although burglaries happen all the time but, during November and December, there is always an increase in burglaries.” SME 4 (CPF Member)

“During December time most people leave their houses unoccupied because they are going on vacation. That is why the previous SAPS had a register for empty houses which was used by residents to register that their houses will be unoccupied while they are on vacation. The intention was that [a] SAPS official should frequently patrol the empty houses to prevent burglaries.” SME 2 (SAPS Official)

“During December time, there are lot of activities such as parties and most people spend most of their times not being at home.” Victim 7

Van Zyl (2002:141) found that burglaries in both his areas of study (i.e., Pretoria West and Garsfontein) peaked in December (also refer to Mercan, 2019:51) due to the holiday or festive season. During this season, many people receive their bonuses and may purchase expensive household electronics and gadgets which are sought after by burglars (refer to *iv* on page 76 for findings on targeted items). Participants also claimed that numbers of burglaries are high during the holiday season because people are less vigilant due to the holiday spirit or are on vacation (also see Van Zyl, 2002:141). As explained under the target selection point above, an unoccupied house is a suitable target for a residential burglary.

When asked about the season, there seemed to be a common thread between both the victim and SME participants as rainy days were identified as the peak days for burglary incidents in their area. Victim 5 and SME 5 added that incidents also happen when it is cold.

“Although I do not remember the day but it was in May 2019 during a rainy day when I realised that my house was burgled.” Victim 1

“It was on Tuesday during the night when I went out for night prayer. The

streets were empty because it was late at night and very cold ...” Victim 5

“I do not remember the day, but it was during the week on a rainy day, and I was at work.” Victim 6

“... When I opened the door I could see mud footsteps on the floor because it was raining during the day.” Victim 8

“Burglars are usually active on summertime during the day on Fridays and Sundays especially when it is raining.” SME 3 (SAPS Official)

“Burglaries takes place during rainy season and/or cold season.” SME 5 (Neighbourhood Watch Member)

“The rainy season in South Africa typically falls between October and April, with the peak of the rainy season occurring during December and January” (Finnan, 2023:np). Gauteng Climate (nd:np) adds that the rainy season in Johannesburg, where Crystal Park Extension 32 is situated, is in summer rather than winter. The three months that make up the summer season are December, January and February. This confirms the assertion by the participants, as well as supporting literature, that December is the peak season for burglaries. Based on the South African Victims of Crime Survey during the 2022/23 reporting period, “the highest number of housebreaking incidences occurred in June (191 000), July (154 000) and December (152 000)” (StatsSA, 2023:30). Looking closely at the results of the StatsSA 2022/23 Victims of Crime Survey, burglary incidents in South Africa take place mostly in winter (i.e., June and July) followed by summer (i.e., December). Results from this current study, on the other hand, suggest that most incidents in Crystal Park Extension 32 take place in summer (i.e., December, rainy days) followed by winter. What is common between the StatsSA findings and the findings of this study is that summer and winter were identified as the peak seasons for burglaries. In winter, streets are quiet, especially at night, due to the cold weather. Therefore, there is limited surveillance as explained by the CPTED and a lack of capable guardians, as explained by the RAT which increases the likelihood of victimisation. The rainy season played a role in the increase of burglary incidents in the area being studied. A logical explanation for this is that people are forced to stay in their houses due to the rain and thus are unlikely to witness

unusual activities in and around their neighbours' unoccupied houses.

Contrary to the above views, one of the SMEs had a different opinion and submitted that incidents of burglary in Crystal Part Extension 32 take place throughout the year and on any day.

"Right through the year, the perpetrators avoid committing crime on certain months or days because they will get caught. No specific days they keep on changing their patterns." SME 4 (CPF Member)

(iv) Items targeted

When participants were asked about the items stolen during burglary, electronics (especially the TV) were on the top of the list of the targeted items, although jewellery, clothes, wallets and food were also taken.

"Burglars usually targets electronics, money and car keys." SME 1 (Police Official)

"These guys need wallets and electronics such as flat screen TVs and cell phones." SME 3

"They usually steal stuff that has value, like TV, DVD, cell phone." SME 4 (CPF Member)

"They took my TV, computer, jewellery, food and soda from the fridge."
Victim 8

"TV was the only thing missing when I came back from work." Victim 2

"My clothes were missing when I came back to my house." Victim 3

"They only items which were taken from my house are cell phone and USB."
Victim 5

The findings corroborate those of Van Zyl (2002:148) as well as the literature discussed in Chapter 2. This study, in agreement with Mpofu (2019:16), found that money was the highest target. Calder Security (2018:np) explain that burglars primarily target money because cash is "convenient, portable and untraceable". In the current

study, SME 8 listed food among the list of the items stolen from her house. A study was conducted in Australia where 50 children between the ages of 11 and 17 years revealed that children and young people mostly commit burglaries on the spur of the moment, out of boredom or while intoxicated, and stole items they said they needed, such as food or drugs, as well as items that they wanted and could see through the windows or gardens (Gately & Rock, 2022:np). Of the 50 children, eight (8) mentioned that they were “often looking for fresh food from the fridge to eat in the moment, and frozen or tinned items to take home to family” (Gately & Rock, 2022:np). Mpfu’s (2019:66) study, conducted in Cato Crest, Durban, found that the burglaries in the area were mostly committed by young boys “... who always show a level of being hungry or being intoxicated”. Gately and Rock (2022:np) deduced that the eight children in their study who always targeted food during their burglary incidents committed the crime out of need and not greed. Because the focus of the current study was not the perpetrators or their profiles but what puts victims at risk, this could not be verified.

Calder Security (2018:np) asserts that designer clothes are expensive and are lucrative for burglars. Calder Security (2018:np) adds that burglars will steal house or vehicle keys either to sell to fellow offenders who come back to steal the car or to gain access to the property. To support the afore-mentioned, SME 4 reported that,

“there was a party at a certain house and the keys were stolen during the party from the door and few days later the keys were used to unlock the house and goods were stolen from the house.”

(v) Exit strategies

With regards to the exit strategy, the door was also used by burglars to exit the house. SME 1 summarised this by stating that: *“Easy way in, easy way out”*. This finding is supported by Swanson et al. (2003:267) who viewed the door as the most common exit used after a burglary and, if the keys have been left behind doors, offenders unlock and open doors from the inside of the house to vacate it.

“They exited [my] house using the same door they came in with. I believe they used that exit because it was easy for them to go unnoticed.” Victim 4

“Burglars used the same door to exit my property and jumped over the wall fence.” Victim 5

“These people always prefer using the door as their exit. The same applies to [my case] too, they used our side door to exit our property.” Victim 6

“The same door that was used to enter the house was also used to exit my house. These guys are very clever, they did not leave my door open and the burglar [door] open. They close both as if nothing happened. For people who are passing by, the door and the burglar bars looks intact. But the reality is that both of them are unlocked because their locks were destroyed during forceful entry.” Victim 8

“The exit from the property is dependent on the type and size of the loot, but usually the door is the most preferred exit methods especially when entrance was through the same door.” SME 4

“If they used the door to get it and it was easy, they will surely use the same door to exit.” SME 1 (SAPS Official)

“The burglars usually leave through the entrance [the same way they entered].” SME 2 (SAPS Official)

“There are those burglars who uses roof as their exit, but most of them uses doors if it is accessible and easy to use.” SME 3 (SAPS Official)

“The exit through window or door and the stolen goods are taken through the same exit.” SME 5 (Neighbourhood Watch Member)

The above verbatim responses show that the robbers exit the same way they enter the house. For example, if a window was used to enter a house, the same window will be used as an exit. SME 2 added that the exit point is determined by the size and type of the loot that needs to be removed from the house. It would, for example, be easier to remove a TV through the door in comparison to a window or the roof.

Once offenders have exited the property, the participants said that they load the loot inside the car parked either inside on the driveway or on the pavement outside the

yard for transportation to a safe house.

“When the criminals manage to get inside your yard with a car, they will clean your house, they will go inside your house collecting your things and put them inside their car and go back until the car is full.” Victim 1

“I think these thugs always have someone on the other side of the fence waiting for the loot [to be passed to them over the fence]. This person can also be the one who is checking out people on the street.” Victim 2

“My property didn’t have a fence; I think it was easy for the burglars to just go take things and load them inside their car...” Victim 8

“The burglars load the stolen goods inside the car that was waiting for them outside and flee the area.” SME 3 (SAPS Official)

The participants also revealed that, in instances where there is no getaway vehicle, the offenders move towards major public roads for transport or flee on foot; especially when the stolen items are small and can be concealed (also refer to Mercan, 2019:52). Another option for burglars who do not have a vehicle is to move towards the nearest spaces with long grass and trees to hide the loot and monitor it from a distance for few hours before they come back to collect it (refer to Breetzke & Cohn, 2013:67).

“They plan their exit route to the nearest bush or road.” SME 4 (Community Watch Member)

“They run to the nearest open space with long grass and shrubs and hide the stolen goods.” SME 5 (Neighbourhood Watch Member)



Picture 3: Open land with overgrown trees

As previously discussed, and seen in Picture 3, the area under research is surrounded by two open spaces with overgrown trees which expose the area to danger (i.e., burglaries or robberies) as they can be used by burglars as entry and exit routes as well as hiding spots.

Additionally, the researcher's interpretation is that the offenders who flee on foot probably do not live far from Crystal Part Extension 32. Victim 8 said:

"We have friends from other neighbourhoods and these friends turn out to be the ones who are stealing from our area."

The proximity element of the opportunity model indicates that suitable targets are located very close to their potential offenders (also see Cohen et al, 1981:508). In support of the researchers' assumption, as well as the opportunity model, Mpofo (2019:18) posits that

"travelling long distances is an undesirable process for residential burglary and that travelling in unfamiliar territory is generally avoided ... burglars typically select their neighbourhoods and targets among the ones they are familiar with."

5.3.1.3 Post burglary phase

When asked about post burglary stage, particularly the destination of the stolen goods, the answers included selling to pawn shops, individual clients, or organised criminals in neighbouring countries. It was also mentioned that burglars may also give the loot

to drug dealers in exchange for drugs. Sutton (2010:09) suggests that most of these stolen items are disposed of through residential and commercial fencing, sold to community members, pawn shops or second-hand goods stores.

“The goods are sold to pawn shops or given to Nigerian guys to get something [money].” SME 2 (SAPS Official)

“The looted goods are sold or given to someone who is not from the area or even sell the goods to the nearest countries.” SME 3 (SAPS Official)

“They sell the stolen stuff to pawn shops and to drug dealers in exchange for drugs.” SME 4 (CPF Member)

“They sell the goods to their customers.” SME 5 (Neighbourhood Watch Member)

SME 3 further stated that selling of goods to neighbouring countries is done by organised groups of criminals who have connections to criminals in the neighbouring countries. After the stolen goods are stored at a “safe house”, the transportation is arranged with the smugglers to transport the loot to the destined country. Huigen (2021:13–15) highlights that road transport is often used to transport the loot to neighbouring countries and that police officials are bribed at the borders by the perpetrators to allow the stolen merchandise to cross the borders.

5.3.2 Theme 2: Victim risk factors

The objective of this part of the study was to establish burglary risk factors associated with the individual targets as well as the area of Crystal Park Extension 32.

5.3.2.1 Household/individual risk factors associated with burglary

The victim participants agreed that they were targeted, firstly, because they did not have security measures to protect their houses and, secondly, because the perpetrators studied their routines. The properties of specific offences and target attractiveness elements of the opportunity model explain that offenders attack targets that offer the least amount of resistance because of a lack of security measures (Tsenoli et al, 2004:83; Blevins et al, 2012:3). Also, as explained through the CPTED,

target hardening and territoriality are among the measures that can be used to prevent property crimes such as housebreaking. Furthermore, the findings from this research support the routine activities and opportunity model claim that a suitable target that lacks guardianship (i.e., strong security measures, as mentioned above) is most likely to be victimised.

To establish whether the victims had made any upgrades to their security measures since they were victimised, they were asked to take the researcher through the security measures they had installed to protect their property against re-victimisation.

“Currently I have a wall ... and I also had to install security alarm system that is linked to armed response security company.” Victim 1

“I now have burglar bars on all doors and windows. I always that ensure that my doors are locked at all times especially when I go out.” Victim 2

“I had to install the stronger burglar bars on the door because I could see my house was no longer safe.” Victim 5

“I had to install burglar bars and erect wall fence and also get some dogs to guard my place.” Victim 6

“We have installed security alarm system, and we also have someone always at home.” Victim 7

“Although we had burglar bars on the window and door during our first burglary, we added wall fence with lockable gate and also installed security alarm system.” Victim 8

It was further reported that people became victims because they exposed their asserts to people outside of their homes (Tsenoli et al, 2004:84).

“When the door is widely opened and the possible perpetrators are passing by, they can easily see what is inside the house because the doors are facing the streets.” Victim 4

“The people in this area enjoy exposing their asserts and that makes them vulnerable.” Victim 6

“The victims are advertising what they have in their homes. Some victims even put the empty boxes of their newly purchased items outside the gate waiting for rumble collectors to collect them. Also, our children bring friends at our homes while we are at work, and these friends are busy checking the items in the house. The friends will return one day knowing the house is not occupied and loot the identified goods.” SME 4 (CPF Member)

Based on the exposure and visibility elements of the opportunity model, the physical visibility and accessibility of a target increases its likelihood of being attacked. As such, when residents leave their doors facing the streets wide open or leave boxes of new appliances outside on the floor next to the dustbin on rubbish collection day, they increase the exposure of their household assets to motivated offenders who may be meandering the streets to case targets.

When the victim participants were asked to identify different characteristics that made their houses vulnerable to burglary, the following submissions were made:

“Most of our houses are empty during the day because most of us are working.” Victim 1

“My house does not have any electric fences hence was burgled easily because the burglars just jumped the barrier wall.” Victim 5

“Our property was targeted because perpetrators believe that people from our area are more advantageous.” Victim 7

The following were further highlighted as household risk factors for burglary: poor lighting (also refer to Fennelly, 2019:71) and overgrown shrubs, trees or grass that leads to poor visibility. The verbatim responses below corroborate the above findings:

“Having a big grass in your yard can show that the occupants are negligent, and the grass can also be used as a hiding spot by burglars in your yard. Beautiful houses attract perpetrators because they believe beautiful houses have valuable goods inside them.” SME 3 (SAPS Official)

“The houses that do not have enough light during the night can also be used as a hiding spot before burgling the houses nearby or the same house

at night.” Victim 1

“Criminals can use big trees near the house to hide themselves before they do burglary.” Victim 8

On the contrary to the above household risk factors, Victim 3 and Victim 5 contended that no household characteristics put their houses at risk but offenders are always looking for opportunities to commit housebreaking. Victim 3 further believed that offenders broke into his house because of poverty.

“There is no household characteristic that made my house vulnerable to burglary. The burglars were just trying their luck because of high unemployment rate. I feel that they were opportunist and were probably poor.” Victim 3

“Perpetrators are always walking around looking for valuable to steal.”
Victim 5

Mpofu’s (2019:66) research reveals that some people, especially young boys, who commit burglary are from poor backgrounds and their living conditions encourage them to look for alternative ways of making ends meet. This is not to say that burglary is only committed by people from poor backgrounds, but poverty and need (as explained by the 50 young offenders in the Australian study discussed previously) may be one of the reasons why some people are prone to committing the crime.

5.3.2.2 Environmental/area risk factors

Spatial planning seemed to be a challenge in Crystal Park Extension 32 because of two unused open lands surrounding the area with overgrown trees and a lack of access control. Unmaintained and unused land poses a high risk for burglaries as burglars use these lands as hiding spots. Participants stated that the lack of access control was the main challenge because strangers often roam around in the estate. As such, the lack of territoriality, in a form of access control, as discussed under the CPTED increases the risks of robberies in the area (Kruger 2019:np).

“Everyone can come into this area whenever they want because there is no access control.” Victim 1

“It is a disadvantage to live in this area because other areas have access control. This area does not have boom gate to control access of who comes in and goes out.” Victim 5

“This area has too much entrances and exit because it is not surrounded by anything; people can come in any time they want. When walking on the streets, you meet new faces every day and most of those people they do not stay in this area.” Victim 8

Another concern raised about the area is the overpopulated slum area next to Crystal Park Extension 32 as well as small holding farms characterised by residential mobility.

“The area is surrounded by slums and RDP houses together with small holding farms.” Victim 1

Most of the employees working at the small holding farms live in the slum area which is used as their point of entry while they look for better employment or a place to stay. The social disorganisation theory highlights the fact that neighbourhood conditions can mitigate or aggravate crime. Conditions, such as ethnic heterogeneity and population turnover, can be aggravating factors for crime (also see Pereira, Mota & Andresen, 2017:1572). Pereira et al (2017:1572) suggest that ethnic heterogeneity can be a crime fuelling factor due to the lack of shared values such as what constitutes illegal behaviour or a crime. Additionally, an area with a community with a high population turnover experiences more social disorganisation (see Pereira et al, 2017:1572). This is attributed to the fact that there is no stability, and it is difficult to identify strangers when they enter the community which makes these areas prone to crime. Refer to the proximity explanation of the opportunity model as well as Mpofu (2019:18).

The research participants reported that the community of Crystal Park 32 seemed to lack basic principles such as Ubuntu highlighted by Tutu (1999:34-35) which discourages individualism and encourages communal living. Communal living creates a sense of belonging and unity which, in turn, makes crime prevention through informal social controls possible (i.e., bystander/neighbour interventions and neighbourhood watch initiatives). A highly individualised community is socially disorganised because neighbours do not look out for each other. As a result, in communities characterised

by individualism, people do not react when they witness a crime being committed in their neighbourhood.

One very important factor which makes this study unique is the fact that participants reported that, because their suburb was a new development, it was at a high risk for burglaries for the following reasons:

“New house owners do not update their security when they move in. This is understandable because you just bought a new house so you may not have money for security.” Victim 1

“New homes are often surrounded by vacant spaces.” Victim 4

“Residents have not yet formed solid relationships with their neighbours.”
Victim 5

“Thieves blend in easily in new developments due to constructions still being underway. This area is still under development because Ext. 52 was still being built across the road.” Victim 8

There is a lack of scientific research studies in South Africa, and globally, focusing specifically on housebreaking at new developments therefore the above submissions by the research participants cannot be corroborated or refuted by available literature. Even though very little information was provided by the research participants on the phenomenon of burglaries in new housing developments, the little information provided makes a unique contribution to the scientific literature on the subject.

5.3.3 Theme 3: Impact on victims

In this part of the research, participants were asked, based on either their personal experience as victims or professional opinions as SMEs, to expound on the consequences of residential burglary, particularly its impact on victims.

5.3.3.1 Financial impact

The primary and most obvious impact of the crime of burglary, as elucidated by the research participants, was financial loss by the victim. Participants alluded to the fact

that, when an item is taken during burglary, it must be replaced even if it is not insured or the insurance refuses to pay the claim (also refer to Wallace & Robertson, 2011:49). If the article is insured, they may need to pay an excess fee for it to be replaced. Victim 1 further said he had to incur an unplanned debt to replace his TV that was stolen.

“You will lose your assets during burglary. I used the last money to pay off the TV and now it is stolen and now we have to go and make another debt.”

Victim 1

“Not all people have insurances, so they need to replace the stolen items on their own.” SME 2

“The victims are supposed to replace the uninsured good and also to fix the damaged.” SME 3

“My cell phone is very important to me, I had to stay without it for few days and it was not easy, I had to replace it so that I can communicate with other people.” Victim 5

“I had to replace the stolen computer because I was using it on regular basis. As for the TV, I had to spend few months without it as I could not afford a new one. I also had to replace the ring that was stolen during the housebreaking.” Victim 8

Even when something is not taken from the house, the victims can still be impacted negatively. In one of the cases, the participant stated that, although nothing was taken during the burglary because all items inside the house were big and secured and thus could not be removed, the broken door and burglar proofing had to be replaced (also see Wikström, 2012:82). Moreover, it was highlighted that some items can never be replaced.

“You will never regain what you have lost.” Victim 2

“Although nothing was taken during housebreaking, my door and burglar bars were damaged, I had to buy new locks for both.” Victim 7

“Losing something that you cannot replace.” Victim 8

“The pain of losing something that has a sentimental value, you cannot replace it.” SME 2 (SAPS Official)

The above verbatim responses highlight that some of the items stolen during burglary incidents are sentimental and cannot be replaced. This is corroborated by Mpofu (2019:67) as follows:

“It emerged that there were some valuables that people kept in their house, some of them might be gifts from loved ones or things they bought when they were outside the country or things that get passed on to them by their late relatives. Some victims would have bought expensive items with their hard-earned money, so when that is taken away from them by criminals it becomes a problem because of both the monetary and sentimental value attached.”

5.3.3.2 Psychological impact

As explained in Chapter 1, in addition to the inconvenience of financial loss and physical damage to property, there is also psychological damage caused by housebreaking because the invasion of a home by strangers reduces the sense of safety in the home. When asked about psychological impact of burglary on them, the victim participants confirmed that the burglary impacted their emotional state. Fear (of revictimisation), anger, feeling of being unsafe/vulnerable and loss of concentration were found to be common in most participants in this study and this was also highlighted by Wallis (2010:105).

“The thought of becoming a victim again gives me a sleepless night.”

Victim 1

“Fear always. The tactics criminals use to enter our houses are very scary, they can bypass electric fence.” Victim 6

“The mind will be disturbed and the kids will not be able to concentrate [at school].” SME 3 (SAPS Official)

“Fear.” SME 4 (CPF Member)

Victims were also afraid of what could have happened to them if the offenders found them in the house as expressed by Victim 7:

“What could have happened if I was home during the incident?”

In addition to the above-mentioned common victim effects, one participant mentioned that she felt disgusted that the burglars touched her belongings.

“The feeling of strangers touching your personal items without your permission is disgusting.” Victim 5

To support the findings of this study, Beaton et al (2000:41) confirm that victims of burglaries are emotionally impacted by the crime. Chung et al (2014) further highlight the seriousness of psychological impact of crime and that some victims may experience post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Beaton et al (2000:40), and Commissioner for Victims’ Rights (2018:np) opine that victims of burglary sometimes experience a sense of guilt or self-blame.

5.3.3.3 Social impact

Victims’ social lives can also be altered by crime. When asked about how burglary has impacted their social lives, the victim participants expressed that they were, after the victimisation, unable to leave their homes unoccupied because they feared being re-victimised. Their social lives were thus compromised because they had to guard their houses and this resulted in them not being able to visit friends, family or entertainment venues.

“I do not spend too much time away from my house unless I am at work.”

Victim 1

“I am always here at home looking after my house.” Victim 5

“I spend most of my time at home with family.” Victim 8

The above findings affirm the opinion by Wallace and Robertson (2011:46) that victims change their lifestyles so that they do not become victims again. Although spending time at home to guard assets serves as deterrence for burglaries, being unable to go

out to socialise with others can result in isolation, which may later result in psychological problems (Beaton et al, 2000:40).

5.3.4 Theme 4: Suggested preventative strategies for burglaries

The intention of this section was to ask both the victim and SME participants to identify and recommend burglary preventative strategies based on their personal experiences or professional knowledge.

CPTED appeared to be at the top of the prevention strategies suggested by the participants. Firstly, the participants mentioned that they were concerned about entrance and exit to and from the area. Their concerns were that the area has many exits and entrances which makes easy for burglars to exit or enter the area. It is for this reason that participants suggested that a barrier wall with an electric fence should be erected around Crystal Park Extension 32 and that there should be only one entrance and exit area which is operated through a boom gate manned by a security officers (Montoya et al, 2014:515; Zinn, 2010:155). An installation of CCTV was also recommended.

“Wall fence around the area with boom gate.” Victim 1

“We need boom gate in order to have access control.” Victim 5

“A tall wall fence around the entire Crystal Park Extension 32 yard with razor wire or electric fence might deter offenders. And then installation of CCTV cameras around the area.” SME 2 (SAPS Official)

The participants submitted that, to resolve the current problems they face with lack of access control, the area should be converted into a gated community. The residents further mentioned that they were worried about the two unused lands around the area that lead to the two main roads (i.e., Van Ryn Road and Springs Road) but there are least five streets leading towards the unused lands which creates even bigger problems for them where access control into their neighbourhood is concerned. The recommendation provided by most participants regarding the unmaintained lands was that the trees and grass need to be cut. Victim 5 further suggested that both lands be fenced in the meantime to restrict access:

“A fence is needed around the open lands in order to restrict access to those lands. People can just come in and go out as they wish in our area.”

Recommendations for individual households included barrier walls with lockable gates, installing a security alarm system linked to an armed response security company and to cut shrubs in and around their yards.

“If it was possible for all of the residents, I would recommend that they each ensure that they have a wall erected with a secured electric gate...” Residents must also cut bushes around their houses.” SME 1 (SAPS Official)

“Encourage people to install alarm system in order to increase detection.” SME 3 (SAPS Official)

Participants further suggested that each resident should ensure that, in addition to the burglar bars on windows and doors, consider installing burglar bars on windows and doors and a burglar door separating the living room from the bedrooms (Zinn, 2010:155).

“Homeowners should consider having separate gates inside the house separating the bedroom from living room.” SME 2 (SAPS Official)

Participants emphasised that doors and burglar doors should always be locked with good locks (Nee & Meenaghan, 2006:05). Additionally, each resident should consider getting a dog to guard their houses because burglars “... want to get in and out as quickly as possible so any noise, like dogs on the property, would act as a deterrent” (Zinn in Pieterse, 2015:np).

Lastly, regular patrols by SAPS, CPF and neighbourhood watch were also highlighted by participants (also see Van Zyl, 2002:194).

“Street patrols by community members with walkie-talkie.” SME 4 (CPF Member)

“Our police must patrol regularly because currently they don’t.” Victim 7

Neighbourhood watch came under spotlight as six participants suggested that

residents should look after each other. Two participants further said residents should always be alert to what is happening in their area and be able to spot suspicious activities.

“Always be alert of your surroundings.” Victim 3

“Know your neighbours.” Victim 5

The social disorganisation theory as discussed under section 3.3 emphasises crime prevention through social bonds as highlighted by Victims 3 and 5 above. Strong social bonds between community members enable the community to apply informal crime prevention measures such as neighbourhood watches and looking out for your neighbours.

5.4 Summary

The data presented in this chapter were collected by means of semi-structured interviews from eight (8) residents of Crystal Park Extension 32 who were victims of burglary as well as from five (5) SMEs. Thematic data analysis was used to analyse the collected data and four main themes with sub-themes emerged from the data.

The data revealed that the commission of housebreaking incidents in Crystal Park Extension 32 took place in three phases, namely, the planning phase, the offence phase, and the post-offence phase. The victims that participated in this research experienced housebreaking due to opportunities that rose as a result of their routine activities; lifestyles; the environmental design of their neighbourhood; lack of adequate security measures by individual households; or lack of social bonds between neighbours. The data also showed that victims of burglary who participated in this study did not only suffer financially but they also suffered psychologically and socially. Crime prevention measures that fall under the three CPTED strategies, namely, surveillance and visibility; territoriality; access and escape routes; image and aesthetics; and target hardening were highlighted by the participants.

The chapter that follows provides the summary of the findings and an assessment of whether the objectives of this study were met followed by recommendations as well as the study conclusion.

CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The research was intended to explore the crime of housebreaking as experienced by residents of Crystal Park Extension 32. To address the primary aim of the research, the researcher identified the following research objectives:

- To present an in-depth overview of the modus operandi used during housebreaking incidents committed in Crystal Park Extension 32.
- To identify factors that put residents of Crystal Park Extension 32 at risk of housebreaking incidents.
- To determine the impact the crime of housebreaking has on victims residing in Crystal Park Extension 32.
- From the findings of this research, to recommend measures that can be used to reduce or prevent housebreaking incidents in Crystal Park Extension 32.

To achieve the study objectives, an explorative qualitative research approach following a case study design was used to explore the topic where in-depth data were collected using semi-structured interviews. Interviews were conducted with eight (8) victims of housebreaking (all residents of Crystal Park Extension 32) as well as five SMEs comprising three (3) officials from Crystal Park SAPS Intelligence and Social Crime Prevention Units, Crystal Park CPF and Crystal Park Neighbourhood Watch/*AmaRussia* member. Because this research followed the qualitative approach, thematic analysis was used to analyse the data.

The purpose of this chapter is to present the summary of the findings; declare whether the study objectives were met; present recommendations based on the results of the study and then conclude the dissertation.

6.2 Summary of findings

This following section serves two purposes, namely, to summarise the key findings of this research and to state whether the listed study objectives were achieved.

6.2.1 Objective 1: To present an in-depth overview of the modus operandi used during housebreaking incidents committed in Crystal Park Extension 32

As explained in the previous chapter, the housebreaking MO is divided into three phases, namely, the planning phase, the crime execution phase and the post crime phase.

6.2.1.1 Planning Phase

All participants (both victims and SMEs) expressed that, in their opinion, the burglars plan before committing burglaries in the area. During the planning phase, the following aspects of the burglary commission phase, are decided:

- Casing of the target.
- Tools required to commit the crime.
- The number of people involved in the burglar and their roles.
- Access and exit strategies.
- The targeted or desired items.
- The searching styles.
- The amount of time that should be taken inside the house.
- Disposal of stolen goods.

The planning phase is the blueprint of the burglary because this is where all details are discussed, hence participants in this study reported that the offenders take days to plan before the robbery is executed. However, they also mentioned that some criminals are opportunistic and therefore do not plan their burglaries, but they act as an opportunity presents itself.

(i) Casing of the target

During casing, the perpetrators try to check the occupancy of the targeted house. Then check what must be broken to get easy access to the building. Once the targeted house is not occupied and the assessment on how to enter the house is done, then the perpetrators check if they can spot the targeted items inside the house while they are still outside.

(ii) Tools required

After casing their target, the burglars identify the tools required to successfully gain access into the property. The research participants revealed that the tools included crowbars, car jacks, screwdrivers, pliers, vehicles, cell phones, hammers, and picks. Each tool has a significant role to play, and its absence may pose a challenge to the burglars, especially if such a tool cannot be replaced by another one.

(iii) The number of people involved in the burglar and their roles

The study found that the burglars often work in groups of two to six people. To execute a successful burglary, the team members are allocated tasks. The tasks include the driver, the spotter or lookout, and the looter. In some cases, when access is gained, all burglary team members go inside the house to loot with only the driver waiting outside. In such cases, the driver will also play the role of the lookout and alert the group inside the house, via a cell phone, of armed response or people approaching the house.

6.2.1.2 Burglary commission phase

(i) Entry and exit points

Two methods of gaining access into the yard were discussed, namely, jumping over the wall or fence or entering through an unlocked gate. Once inside the yard, it was said the door was the preferred method to gain access into the house because it was the easiest. The participants further submitted that the preferred exit point was also the door because it was regarded as the easiest exit. In the words of SME 1: *“Easy way in, easy way out”*. Also, the door was preferred because if big items were being removed from the house, they could easily fit through the door. See sub-section 4.3.1.2, specifically points (i) discussions on entry techniques; and (iv) for exit strategies.

(ii) Targeted items

Although other items, such as food, clothes, jewellery, and wallets were also mentioned, the victim participants submitted that when their houses were broken into, they mostly lost household electronics such TVs (which were said to be the most

popular and desired item by burglars), laptops, DVD players or cell phones. See sub-section 4.3.1.2, specifically point (iv) for discussions on items targeted.

(ii) Time taken and search style

As explained in Chapter 4, the search method is, therefore, dictated by the time the burglars have inside the house. Because burglars spend a very short time (i.e., 2–20 minutes in the house), the ransacking searching method was preferred by offenders operating in the Crystal Park Extension 32 area. See sub-section 4.3.1.2, specifically point (ii) for discussions on time taken inside the house and search methods.

(iv) Day and time of burglaries

The research participants revealed that burglary incidents in Crystal Park take place predominantly during the day when residents are at school or work. In terms of the month, incidents peak mostly in December due to the holiday season as most people are away from home. Also, incidents take place mostly in summer and winter. It was highlighted that the rain in summer and the cold weather in winter play a significant role in the number of burglary incidents as people stay in the house when it rains or is cold. As such, the decreased movement of people in the streets increases the risk of housebreaking incidents taking place as there is no one on the streets acting as natural surveillance. See sub-section 4.3.1.2, specifically point (iii) for day and time of burglaries discussion.

6.2.1.3 Post burglary phase

Stolen goods are disposed of based on a plan discussed during the planning phase of the crime. The research participants explained that the stolen goods are usually sold to fencers, such as second-hand goods stores, drug dealers and, in some instances, the loot is transported and sold to buyers from neighbouring countries.

Based on the presentation of findings as well as the above summary, this research objective was met successfully.

6.2.2 Objective 2: To identify factors that put residents of Crystal Park Extension 32 at risk of housebreaking incidents

The victim participants submitted that daily routine activities and lifestyles primarily put residents of Crystal Park Extension 32 at risk of becoming victims of housebreaking. The lack of security measures, such as barrier walls, burglar doors and windows, also increased the chance of becoming a victim of burglary. Also, the victim participants felt very strongly that the lack of access control into their neighbourhood put them at risk of being targets of housebreaking. As explained through the RCT in section 3.2.3, people make choices based on costs and rewards. If the reward for committing a housebreaking, for example, is higher than its costs (i.e., chances of being caught because of security measures), the burglar is more likely to commit the crime.

A unique contribution this study makes is the new housing development phenomenon which was said by the participants to increase the risk of housebreaking for the following reasons: (a) New home owners do not immediately install the necessary security measures; (b) New homes are often surrounded by undeveloped vacant spaces with overgrown trees and shrubs; (c) In new housing developments residents have not formed concrete relationship with each other and therefore cannot easily tell a neighbour from a stranger or are unable to look out for their neighbour as they do not have a relationship with them; and (d) Thieves blend in easily in new developments especially those that are still under construction.

Based on the risk factors findings presented and the above summary, this research objective was met successfully.

6.2.3 Objective 3: To determine the impact the crime of housebreaking has on victims residing in Crystal Park Extension 32

Financial impact

Whether the burglary was successful or unsuccessful (where property was not moved out of the house), the participants submitted that victims are impacted negatively financially by either having to replace the stolen items and/or fix or replace broken doors, windows, burglar bars, or roofs particularly if the property was not insured. However, even if the property and/or stolen items are insured, insurance companies may do not pay the claim or, if the insurance does pay the claim, the victim must still

pay the excess before their goods are replaced or their property is fixed. Also, the victim participants accentuated that some things are of sentimental value and can therefore never be replaced even if one has the means to do so.

Psychological impact

All the victim participants highlighted they were psychologically affected by the incident. Feelings, such as anger, fear, stress, unsafety, a lack of concentration experienced by children at school, and disgust, were highlighted by the victim participants as an impact of housebreaking.

Social impact

Participants explained that, after their houses were burgled, they limited the time they spent outside of their homes with friends and family as they had to stay at home to guard their assets due to the fear of re-victimisation. See point 5.3.3.3.

Based on the findings discussions and interpretation presented in section 5.3.3 as well as the above summary, this objective was achieved.

6.2.4 Objective 4: From the findings of this research, to recommend measures that can be used to reduce or prevent housebreaking incidents in Crystal Park Extension 32

The research participants suggested preventative measures which could be adopted to prevent burglary incidents in Crystal Park Extension 32. The measures involved CPTED strategies, such as fencing the residential area and installing a boom gate to increase access control; cutting the trees and long grasses that can be used as hiding spots by perpetrators; installation of barrier walls/fences with lockable gates by individual households; installation of burglar bars on doors and windows; having good lighting around the property; and having dog(s) in the yard. Other preventative measures included regular patrols by the SAPS, CPF, and neighbourhood watch and that neighbours should show the spirit of *Ubuntu* by looking out for each other.

The section that follows unpacks preventative measures recommended by the researcher supported by the research findings. Based on discussion of findings on suggested preventative measures, the above summary of the key findings as well as

the recommendations below, this research objective was also met. Therefore, the four research objectives that were set at the beginning of this study were met fully.

6.3 Recommendations

The fourth objective of this study was to recommend preventative measures for housebreaking incidents in Crystal Park Extension 32, based on the research results. The researcher makes a recommendation for CPTED to be used as a primary crime prevention strategy for housebreaking incidents in Extension 32.

6.3.1 Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

The primary goal of CPTED is to decrease crime opportunities by employing physical or architectural design features that discourage crime. The recommendations are therefore made based on the five basic elements of CPTED, namely, territoriality; surveillance and visibility; access and escape routes, target hardening; and image and aesthetics.

(i) Territoriality

As discussed, earlier territoriality refers to a person protecting their territory from trespassers (Montoya et al., 2014:519). Preventative measures recommended by the participants in this study for crime prevention were: building a barrier wall with an electric fence around the Crystal Park Extension 32 area; and an installation of a boom gate where access and exit is controlled by a security officer. A CCTV with cameras strategically placed at various blind spots around the area would also help the security officers at the boom gate to detect any suspicious individuals roaming around the area.

(ii) Surveillance and visibility

With regards to surveillance, particularly natural or informal surveillance, the principle of *Ubuntu*, as discussed in the previous chapter, can encourage communal living where neighbours look out for each other and discourages individualism.

Strong communities are known to look out for each other. When you know your neighbours, you will be more inclined to look out for them or their property and they will do the same for you. Even if there are no official neighbourhood watch, when

neighbours know each other well, they are more likely to be aware of the comings and goings at a property and will watch their neighbour's home when the neighbour is not at home (StatsSA, 2023).

Also, residents should not only be united and alert but should also form a good relationship with their local police station so that they can report any suspicious activities in their neighbourhood. CPFs and neighbourhood watches play a pivotal role when it comes to bridging the gap between the police and community members as they are the ears and eyes of the police in the community. It is thus important for community members to support these secondary crime prevention initiatives. The notion of a neighbourhood watch is encouraged by Marks and Overall (2015:7) who suggest that, although other means of security interventions are important, it is more important for neighbours to look after each other and act when the need arises. Van Zyl (2002:163) believes that neighbourhood watches increase surveillance, deter criminals, and encourage residents to become the eyes and ears of the police on the streets. Furthermore, Van Zyl (2002:163) expresses that neighbourhood watches increase social cohesion and greater trust between community members (refer to previous discussions on *Ubuntu*). At the time of the research, the community already had an active CPF, and a neighbourhood watch forum called *AmaRussia* which had buy-in from only one street. These two forums should be strengthened and supported by residents of Crystal Park Extension 32. Van Zyl (2002:132) explains that informal surveillance plays a significance role in the decrease of burglary incidents.

To increase surveillance, a CCTV linked to armed response and operated by the security officers at the boom gate can be installed and the cameras should be placed at strategic points and blind spots around the area. The best surveillance is the human being; hence it is important for residents to maintain good relationships with their neighbours so that they can look out for each other. This notion was also popularised by Marks and Overall (2015:07) who highlight the importance of a united neighbourhood.

To resolve issues of visibility around the area, the researcher recommends that the City of Ekurhuleni Municipality contact the National Department of Human Settlements and Nedbank to ensure that the overgrown trees are cut. As explained throughout this dissertation and through the CPTED, unused and unmaintained lands with overgrown

shrubs, trees and grass can exacerbate crimes as offenders can use them as access and escape routes and/or hiding spots.

(iii) Access and escape routes

The participants and the researcher recommend the fencing of the area and the installation of a boom gate to ensure that there is only one access and exit point into the neighbourhood. Additionally, as explained in the previous chapter, the research participants revealed that there are two unused lands around the area which could be used by the perpetrators as hiding spots or escape routes. It is therefore recommended that the City of Ekurhuleni should, as explained above, engage with the two landowners, and ask them to come up with a development plan for the unused lands, fence them off or monitor them on a regular basis to prevent them from being used as access and escape routes.

(iv) Target hardening

Target hardening is a preventative strategy for housebreaking. Residents of Crystal Park Extension 32 need to make their houses more difficult to access by having walls around their properties with lockable gates and fitting their doors and windows with strong burglar bars. The more effort the burglars must make to gain access into a property, the more likely that they will abandon it and look for an easier or unprotected target. In agreement with Zinn (2010:156), the researcher recommends that individual residents erect palisade fences instead of walls. A palisade fence will enable people walking on the street to see what is happening in their neighbours' yard, unlike a wall which can be used as a hiding place or for climbing (Zinn, 2010:156). This concurs with the study conducted by Marks and Overall (2015:12) who highlight that boundaries need to be transparent to see from inside to outside and vice versa. Walls prevent visibility during patrols in the area. Furthermore, it is also important that, when the house is unoccupied, residents should ensure that their burglar doors and doors are locked and that windows are closed.

For households that can afford additional security measures, the researcher recommends the installation of an alarm system connected to an armed response company. Most importantly, the alarm system needs to be tested and serviced

regularly.

With regards to new homeowners, the researcher recommends that when owners move into a new home they should, in addition to the above recommendations, change all their locks. Moving to a new house is an exciting and transformative experience, filled with possibilities and new beginnings. Amidst the excitement of unpacking and settling in, one crucial aspect that often goes overlooked is the security of the new home. While it is natural to assume that the previous owners (or the builders/developers) have handed over all the keys, someone else might have access to your property. That's why changing the locks when moving into a new house is an essential step in safeguarding the family and its belongings (Ricardo, n.d.).

(v) Image and aesthetics

Kruger (2019) explains (see Chapter 2) that a well-maintained area creates a positive sense of safety and security. Landman (2018:119) further highlights that buildings that are not well-maintained are closely associated with crime. Therefore, it is recommended that each household in Crystal Park Extension 32 keeps its yards clean (i.e., remove rubble, cut off overgrown shrubs and grass in and around the yards).

6.3.2 Recommendations regarding victims' lifestyle exposure and routine activities

Residents can avoid revealing that they have purchased expensive or desirable household electronics by tearing the boxes into small unrecognisable pieces and placing them inside the dustbin on rubbish collection day (refer to the opportunity model in sub-section 3.2.2). Additionally, residents are advised to change their routines on a regular basis as a way of confusing potential burglars (also see Liu & Lo, 2019:71). Based on the RAT, as explained in Chapter 3, motivated offenders study victims' daily routines before they commit the crime.

6.3.3 Recommendations to the SAPS

It is the constitutional mandate of the SAPS to prevent, combat and investigate crime. Hence the investigation process is very important, especially where prevention is not effective. In most burglary cases, there are no witnesses or witnesses cannot be

traced. Therefore, the investigating officer (IO) relies heavily on the evidence found on the crime scene as well as the victim's statement.

SAPS is currently utilising the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) for investigations (SAPS, 2018b). Although this system is yielding good results in identifying wanted suspects, only those suspects whose fingerprints were taken before (i.e., when the person was applying for police clearance or when the person was arrested for committing a crime) will appear on the system. Burglary suspects who have never applied for a police clearance certificate or were never arrested before do not appear on the AFIS. Concern was also raised by SME 1:

“Some burglary cases are closed even though fingerprints are found on the crime scene because those fingerprints do not appear on our system.”

To understand the system better, the researcher asked the participants how investigation is done on fingerprints that do not appear on the AFIS. SME 2 said the following:

“It is very difficult to work on fingerprints that are not on the AFIS system because SAPS must request the Department of Home Affairs to check that for them and this has too much red tape. SAPS has been fighting for years now to have access to the Home Affairs system, but nothing is coming forward.”

The Automated Biometric Identification System (ABIS), housed by Department of Home Affairs (DHA), is the only authenticated biometric system used to confirm the citizenship of individuals in South Africa (Department of Home Affairs, n.d.). Besides collecting fingerprints, the ABIS also collects other biometrics such as facial recognition photographs and iris prints (Duncan, 2022:163). One of the intentions of ABIS when it was initiated in 2016 was to match suspects' fingerprints with those on the system (Department of Home Affairs, n.d.). The researcher, therefore, recommends that the ABIS system be integrated with the SAPS system to check for fingerprints of suspects who do not appear on the AFIS system. Linking the SAPS AFIS to the ABIS system will eliminate the use of the middle person (i.e., DHA officials requested by SAPS to check for fingerprints on the system) and thus may increase

the speed of handling burglary cases. This will not only be beneficial to SAPS members but also will also give the public the satisfaction of having their burglary cases resolved faster. Furthermore, the integration of the systems may relieve the DHA officials of dealing with SAPS requests on suspect fingerprint profiling or ABIS profiling.

6.3.4 Recommendations regarding psycho-social support for victims

Burglary victims, just like any other crime victims, suffer in different ways. The Bill of Rights in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa states that everyone has the right to privacy (South Africa [SA], 1996:7). During a housebreaking incident, a property is entered without permission of the owner, which criminalises the act. Furthermore, the property is searched for items to steal, which automatically violates the right to privacy of the property owner.

The feeling of knowing that there was a stranger inside a house touching and taking some of the items inside the house traumatises the victims. The question often asked by the victim is: *“What could have happened if I was home when the incident took place?”* as highlighted by Victim 7 which leads victims to experiencing negative emotions such as fear, anxiety, and stress. As a result, psycho-social support is necessary for victims of housebreakings. Although some people are aware of such services, many individuals are not, and they also do not know how to access such services. This is supported by Jenness (2018:81) who highlights that some victims are not aware of psycho-social services available to assist them. Since police stations are often the first contact after the burglary incident, it is recommended that a list containing contact details of organisations providing psycho-social services to victims of crime should be displayed at the client services centre (CSC) of each police station and/or the police official taking the victim’s statement should make such information available. Upon receiving such information, the victim can contact an organisation of their choice that offers the services they require.

Moreover, service providers who provide psycho-social support to victims of crime, should strengthen their awareness campaigns within the communities, at schools and at churches, for example. Such awareness campaigns should not only take place during commemorative days, such during Crime Victims’ Rights Week, but should take

place on a regular basis to conscientise residents about such services. In addition to the services awareness campaigns, it is recommended that the SAPS conduct regular awareness campaigns in the area about housebreaking and how residents can protect themselves (Fennelly, 2012:130).

6.3.5 Recommendations for future research

Housebreaking contributes the highest number of incidents to the overall number of property crimes in South Africa. In 2022/23 alone, 1,6 million incidents of burglary were reported by participants who were interviewed for the Victims of Crime Survey (StatsSA, 2023:31) yet very little scientific research, especially on a national level, has been conducted on this crime type. Future research should also be done on the impact of burglary on victims based on characteristics such as gender, age and race. This will close the gap of house occupants whose views are often ignored, which also includes the impact on children. Future researchers should also focus on the psychological impacts of burglary on victims and on burglaries in new housing developments as this study only touched on this phenomenon. Another area that could be explored is the use of technology and the internet by burglars when they plan burglaries. Some burglars may, for example, go through real estate websites to check for floor plans of advertised houses to plan for burglaries of the houses as soon as they are occupied. Perpetrators can also use online street maps to identify escape routes to avoid being caught.

6.4 Study limitations

As explained by Hicks, Butler and Myrick (2019:37), the study limitations are highlighted in a research study to give a reader a clear understanding of the challenges the researcher encountered during the research study. Study limitations also provide a detailed plan on how the challenges were addressed without compromising the quality of the study (Hicks et al, 2019:37). Lastly, limitations of the study also suggest that the results of the study cannot be generalised (Hicks et al, 2019:37).

6.4.1 Methodological limitations

The limitations encountered in this study relate to the sample size and limited local studies on housebreaking.

6.4.1.1 Sample size

This study followed qualitative research with a small sample (i.e., eight victims and five SMEs) therefore its findings cannot be generalised to Crystal Park Extension 32 since the sample was not a representation of the entire population. The researcher had initially anticipated to interview approximately 20 participants for this study (both experts and resident participants). However, after recruiting research participants through sending messages about the research on the residents' WhatsApp group and making interview arrangements with those who indicated that they wanted to participate, the COVID-19 state of disaster was declared on 20 March 2020 when a hard lockdown or alert level five was imposed. During the hard lockdown, face-to-face interactions were limited to immediate family unless providing essential services outside of the home. Since the interviews were supposed to have taken place face to face, the researcher called each of the participants to ask for the interviews to be done telephonically. Unfortunately, participants were not comfortable for the interviews to be conducted telephonically and the researcher then agreed that the face-to-face interviews will commence after the hard lockdown. Moreover, as explained by Thobane (2017:293–294), victims of crime are defined as a “hidden population” who do not want to share their victimisation with researchers and thus only eight victims volunteered to participate in the research.

In the beginning, the researcher planned to include armed response security companies operating in the area as part of the sample, as they are usually the first to arrive at a crime scene. Requests were made to all security companies operating in Crystal Park Extension 32 but they were not willing to participate in the research even after the researcher explained the value of their participation as they are experts on the topic at hand. Due to their unwillingness to participate and since participation was voluntary, armed response security companies were excluded from the study.

After the hard lockdown, when face-to-face interactions outside the immediate family were permitted, the researcher reached out to the participants to make appointments for the face-to-face interviews. Some participants, who were initially interested in taking part in the research, lost interest and only 13 (i.e., eight victims and five SMEs) said they were willing to continue. As such, face-to-face interviews took place from 2020 to 2021 during level one of the South African National Lockdown and all

precautionary measures to avoid the spread of COVID-19 virus were observed (i.e., social distancing of two metres between the interviewer and the interviewee; wearing of a mask all the time by both the interviewer and interviewee; and regular sanitising of hands by both the interviewer and interviewee).

To offset the limitation of generalising the findings due to the small sample size, this study followed the explorative qualitative research approach and therefore the aim was not to generalise findings but to emphasise a highly problematic yet under-researched phenomenon. In addition, the researcher envisaged that this study will increase both scientific and public knowledge on the phenomenon of housebreaking. As such, even though the results cannot be generalised, the residents of Crystal Park Extension 32 can use them, as well as the recommendations of this study, to protect themselves against incidents of housebreaking.

6.4.2 Limited literature on housebreaking in South Africa

Although housebreaking is a well-researched field internationally, there was, at the time of this research, very limited scientific literature on the phenomenon in the South African context. Additionally, very little research on the phenomenon has been conducted from the victims' point of view. To close the gap in local literature on the subject, the researcher relied on international studies as well as two seminal works by South African researchers (Van Zyl, 2002; Mpofo, 2019). The researcher was, however, very careful to ensure that he did not transport international findings to the South African context without a proper analysis. It is the hope of the researcher that more scientific South African studies will be conducted based on the gaps identified in this study.

6.5 Conclusion

The intention of this study was to understand the phenomenon of housebreaking in Crystal Park Extension 32 from the perspective of the victim. Although the study was victim centred, the researcher also included expert participants, such as members from the SAPS, CPF and neighbourhood watch, to augment the data collected from the units of analysis. The primary participants were drawn from different age groups, occupations, relationship status and genders. All the victims were black, since only

black people live in the area. What stood out in the data was that victims who participated in the study were exposed to victimisation due to their daily routine activities, exposure of their lifestyle, and a lack of security and informal social crime measures. The participants further mentioned that environmental related factors that increased their likelihood of being victimised included the lack of access control in their area as well as two undeveloped lands with grown trees which could be used as access and exit points or hiding spots by burglars. A unique contribution made through this research relates to the fact that the participants identified the fact that their area was a new housing development as a risk factor for housebreaking. The reasons provided were as follows: (1) New homeowners do not immediately tighten their security measures when they move into a house; (2) New homes are often surrounded by undeveloped vacant spaces with overgrown trees and shrubs; (3) In new housing developments, residents have not formed strong social bonds with their neighbours; and (4) Thieves blend in easily in new developments especially those that are still under construction.

Even though burglary is a non-contact and non-violent crime, the research participants revealed that the crime has devastating financial, psychological, and social consequences and should therefore be given the attention other crimes are given.

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ANNEXURE A: UNISA ETHICAL CLEARANCE



UNISA CLAW ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date 20190807

Reference: ST 91 of 2019

Applicant: DJ Malebati

Dear DJ Malebati

Decision: ETHICS APPROVAL

FROM 01 August 2019

TO 01 August 2022

Researcher: Ditshele Joseph Malebati

Supervisor: Dr MS Thobane

Housebreaking in Crystal Park Extension 32: A victim risk perspective

Qualification: MA Criminology

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the Unisa CLAW Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for 3 years.

*The CLAW Ethics Review Committee reviewed the **Low risk application** on 1 August 2019 in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment. The decision was ratified by the committee.*

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the CLAW Committee.



University of South Africa
Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150
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3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing, accompanied by a progress report.
5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data require additional ethics clearance.
7. No research activities may continue after the expiry date **1 August 2022**. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

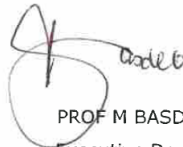
The reference number ST91 of 2019 should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.

Yours sincerely,



PROF T BUDHRAM
Chair of CLAW ERC

E-mail: budhrt@unisa.ac.za
Tel: (012) 433-9462



PROF M BASDEO
Executive Dean : CLAW

E-mail: MBasdeo@unisa.ac.za
Tel: (012) 429-8603

ANNEXURE B: SAPS PERMISSION LETTER

SUID-AFRIKAANSE POLISIEDIENS



SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE

Privaatsak/Private Bag X 94

Verwysing/Reference:	3/34/2
Navrae/Enquiries:	Lt Col Joubert AC Thenga
Telefoon/Telephone:	(012) 393 3118

THE HEAD: RESEARCH
SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE
PRETORIA
0001

- A. The Provincial Commissioner
GAUTENG
- B. The Divisional Commissioner
DETECTIVE SERVICE

**PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SAPS: HOUSE
BREAKING/BURGLARY IN CRYSTAL PARK EXTENSION 32: A VICTIM RISK
PERSPECTIVE: UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA: MASTERS DEGREE:
RESEARCHER: DJ MALEBATI**

- A.
 - 1. The above subject matter refers.
 - 2. The researcher, Mr DJ Malebati, is conducting a study: Housebreaking/ burglary in Crystal Park Extension 32: a victim perspective, with the aim **to explore housebreaking as experienced by residents of Crystal Park Extension 32.**
 - 3. The researcher is requesting permission to interview approximately ten (10) SAPS members at Crystal Park police station who are responsible for the investigation of housebreaking cases in the area.
 - 4. The proposal was perused according to National Instruction 1 of 2006. This office recommends that permission be granted for the research study, subject to the final approval and further arrangements by the office of the Provincial Commissioners: Gauteng.
 - 5. We hereby request the final approval by your office if you concur with our recommendation. Your office is also at liberty to set terms and conditions to the researcher to ensure that compliance standards are adhered to during the research process and that research has impact to the organisation.
 - 6. If approval is granted by your office, this office will obtain a signed undertaking from researcher prior to the commencement of the research

**PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SAPS: HOUSE
BREAKING/BURGLARY IN CRYSTAL PARK EXTENSION 32: A VICTIM RISK
PERSPECTIVE: UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA: MASTERS DEGREE:
RESEARCHER: DJ MALEBATI**

which will include your terms and conditions if there are any and the following:

- 6.1. The research will be conducted at his/her exclusive cost.
- 6.2. The researcher will conduct the research without the disruption of the duties of members of the Service and where it is necessary for the research goals, research procedures or research instruments to disrupt the duties of a member, prior arrangements must be made with the commander of such member.
- 6.3. The researcher should bear in mind that participation in the interviews must be on a voluntary basis.
- 6.4. The information will at all times be treated as strictly confidential.
- 6.5. The researcher will provide an annotated copy of the research work to the Service.
- 6.6. The researcher will ensure that research report / publication complies with all conditions for the approval of research.
7. If approval is granted by your office, for smooth coordination of research process between your office and the researcher, the following information is kindly requested to be forwarded to our office:
 - **Contact person:** Rank, Initials and Surname.
 - **Contact details:** Office telephone number and email address.
8. A copy of the approval (if granted) and signed undertaking as per paragraph 6 supra to be provided to this office within 21 days after receipt of this letter.
9. Your cooperation will be highly appreciated.

- B.** 1. Copy for your information.


**THE HEAD: RESEARCH
DR PR VUMA**

MAJOR GENERAL

DATE: 2019-11-26



Privaatsak Private Bag X94	Pretoria 0001	Faks No. Fax No.	(012) 393 2128
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Your reference/U verwysing:

My reference/My verwysing: 3/34/2

THE HEAD: RESEARCH
SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE
PRETORIA
0001

Enquiries/Navrae: Lt Col Joubert
AC Thenga
Tel: (012) 393 3118
Email: JoubertG@saps.gov.za



Mr DJ Malebati
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SAPS: HOUSE BREAKING/BURGLARY IN CRYSTAL PARK EXTENSION 32: A VICTIM RISK PERSPECTIVE: UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA: MASTERS DEGREE: RESEARCHER: DJ MALEBATI

The above subject matter refers.

You are hereby granted approval for your research study on the above mentioned topic in terms of National Instruction 1 of 2006.

Further arrangements regarding the research study may be made with the following office:

The Provincial Commissioner: Gauteng:

- **Contact Person:** Col Peters
- **Contact Details:** (011) 547 9131
- **Email Address :** petersNS@saps.gov.za/ estebethJ@saps.gov.za
- **Contact Person:** Intern Nenzhelele
- **Contact Details:** (011) 547 9131

Kindly adhere to paragraph 6 of our attached letter signed on the **2019-11-26** with the same above reference number.

MAJOR GENERAL

THE HEAD: RESEARCH
DR PR VUMA

DATE: 2019-12-12

ANNEXURE C: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent Letter

The University of South Africa

College of Law

Department of Criminology and Security Sciences

Researcher: Ditshele Joseph Malebati

Title of Study: Burglary at residential premises in Crystal Park Extension 32: A victim risk perspective.

Dear Prospective Participant

My name is Ditshele Joseph Malebati and I am doing research in the Department of Criminology and Security Science towards a Masters of Arts Degree in Criminal Justice, at the University of South Africa. You are invited to participate in a study entitled: **Burglary at residential premises in Crystal Park Extension 32: A victim risk perspective**

a) What is the purpose of this study?

I am conducting this research to understand the phenomenon of burglary at residential premises in Crystal Park Extension 32. This study aims to fill the gap in addressing the phenomenon of burglary in your area of residence and seeks to conceptualise and understand the problem. The objectives of this study are as follows:

- To provide an in-depth overview of the modus operandi used during burglary incidents in Crystal Park Extension 32.
- To identify factors that put residents of Crystal Park Extension 32 at risk of housebreaking incidents.
- To assess the impact burglary has on victims.
- To, from the findings of this research, recommend preventative measures for housebreaking incidents in Crystal Park Extension 32.

b) Why am I being invited to participate?

You are an individual who has either experienced burglary as a victim or has professional knowledge on the subject matter. The method that was used to obtain your information stemmed from and was guided by the purposive sampling where research participants are purposively chosen to participate in the study because of their knowledge in a particular phenomenon.

c) What is the nature of my participation in this study?

You will be required to participate in a direct (face to face) interview that will be audio recorded with your permission. The interview will be conducted using a semi-structured interview schedule, creating informal, flexible atmosphere to do an in-depth exploration of the research themes and other information relating to the research topic. The interview will focus on your experience and knowledge as either a victim of burglary or an expert who has information on the subject. The expected duration of the interview is between 30 minutes to one hour and 30 minutes. The guidelines for the interview can be made available to you upon your request.

d) Can I withdraw from this study even after having agreed to participate?

Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time. In the event that you wish to withdraw participation, the data from your interview will be destroyed. The researcher will be the only individual who has access to the raw data from the interviews, thereby ensuring that the data will be treated as confidential and your anonymity will be ensured. However, the data may be made available to the research Supervisor Dr MS Thobane upon request for supervisor purposes only.

e) What are the potential benefits of taking part in this study?

Your participation in this study will assist the researcher to obtain his master's qualification. Over and above this, your participation will make valuable contribution to the scientific research community and to the criminal justice system agencies who can use the information provided by you to come up with preventative strategies for burglary in

residential premises in your area. The researcher additionally hopes that findings from the study will also serve as a document of knowledge to individuals who are not as knowledgeable about burglary at residential premises.

f) Will the information that I convey to the researcher and my identity be kept confidential?

You have the right to anonymity and confidentiality if you participate in this study, unless you wish to waive the right of anonymity by indicating that you wish to be identified in the study. Your name will not be recorded anywhere and no one, apart from the researcher, will know about your involvement in this research if you wish to remain anonymous. Your identity will not be mentioned in the study. You will be referred to with the use of a pseudonym/number.

g) Are there any negative consequences for me if I participate in the research project?

Although this may be a sensitive study, there are no physical harmful risks identified in participating in the study. Moreover, the researcher will take all measures to the best of his ability to assure your anonymity and the confidentiality of the information.

h) How will the researcher(s) protect the security of data?

The researcher will ensure anonymity and confidentiality by scanning the hard copy of transcribed notes into his laptop and destroy the hard copy through shredding after scanning. Electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer. Electronic documents containing your information will be destroyed after 15 years of completing the study as recommended by the UNISA Policy on Ethics.

i) Will I receive payment or any incentives for participating in this study?

There will be no incentives or payments made for your participation in the study. In addition, you, the participant will not need to incur any financial costs by participating in the study.

ANNEXURE D: VICTIM INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Victim Interview Schedule/Guide

SECTION A: Demographic Information

Date

Consent form Signed

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

Interview Number

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

Age

20 – 30	<input type="checkbox"/>
31 – 40	<input type="checkbox"/>
41 – 50	<input type="checkbox"/>
51 – 60	<input type="checkbox"/>
61 – 70	<input type="checkbox"/>
71 – 80	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sex

Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-binary	<input type="checkbox"/>
------	--------------------------	--------	--------------------------	------------	--------------------------

Race

Black	<input type="checkbox"/>
White	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coloured	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other

Marital Status

Married	<input type="checkbox"/>
Single	<input type="checkbox"/>
Separated	<input type="checkbox"/>
Divorced	<input type="checkbox"/>
Widowed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cohabiting	<input type="checkbox"/>

Occupation

.....

SECTION B: Incident Information

1. Have you been a victim of housebreaking or since you moved to Crystal Park extension 32? Yes, or No
2. If your answer to question one is yes, please take me through the incident. Provide as many details as possible based on what you remember?
3. Can you remember if the incident took place during the day or at night?
4. Can you remember if the incident took place on a weekday or over the weekend?
5. How was access gained into your house?
6. Do you have an idea of what tools were used to break into your house?
7. How did the offenders exit your property?
8. During the housebreaking, what items did the offenders steal?
9. What in your opinion are the reasons you were or your house was targeted?
10. Was this your first victimisation or were you ever a victim of housebreaking before in the same house you are living in?
 - 10.1 If yes, how many times?
 - 10.2 What items were stolen in previous incidents?

SECTION C: Victim Risk Factors

1. What measures do you have in place to prevent housebreaking?
2. Is there anyone at home during the day when you are at work?
3. What in, your opinion, contributes to one becoming a victim of housebreaking?
4. Which characteristics related to your area would you, in your opinion, say make residents vulnerable to housebreaking incidents?
5. What household characteristics in your opinion increase one's chances of experiencing a housebreaking?

SECTION D: Impact of crime on victims

1. What impact has the incident of housebreaking had on you personally and your family (i.e. physically, financially, emotionally/psychologically, and socially)?

SECTION E: Recommendations on preventative measures

1. What strategies would you recommend that can be used to reduce or prevent housebreaking in your area?
2. After the burglary, what measures did you put in place to decrease the possibility of being targeted again?

Thank you ☺

ANNEXURE E: SME INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

SME Interview Schedule/Guide

SECTION A: Demographical information

Date

Consent form Signed

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

Interview Number

--	--	--

Sex

Male		Female		Non-binary	
------	--	--------	--	------------	--

Occupation

.....
.....
.....

Years in the current position/policing area

.....
.....

SECTION B: Modus operandi

1. Do perpetrators who commit housebreaking in this area plan the incidents?
 - 1.1 If yes how long the planning does takes place, in your opinion?
 - 1.2 What does the planning entail?
2. Do the incidents mostly take place during the day or night?
3. Do incidents mostly take place on a weekday or over the weekend?
4. Which season or on which month of the year would you say housebreakings mostly take place in Crystal Park Extension 32?
5. How do perpetrators enter the property (i.e., the yard and then the house)?
6. Which technique(s) are often used to get entry into the property? (e.g. lock picking, breaking the door, window, etc)
7. What instruments are mostly used to commit the crime? What resources are required to successfully commit housebreaking? (i.e. cell phones, vehicles, etc.)
8. How do offenders usually execute housebreakings (modus operandi)?
9. What is usually the number of suspects involved in the housebreaking?
10. In your opinion, are there any roles assigned to each perpetrator in the group?

- 10.1 If yes what are the roles and what does each role entail?
11. What, in your opinion, is the estimated time taken during housebreaking/burglary
 12. What types of items are often stolen during housebreakings/burglaries?
 13. What exit methods are often used after housebreaking/burglary? (e.g. roof, window, etc.)
 14. How are the stolen goods transferred from the house/yard to the vehicle (e.g. carried over the fence, etc.)?
 15. How do the burglars escape after the burglary?
 16. After the incident, how do perpetrators get rid of the stole items?

SECTION C: Victim Risk Factors

1. In your opinion, what criteria do offenders use to select victims/households?
2. What, in your opinion, are the reasons why housebreaking is committed in this area?
3. What are the victim risk factors associated with housebreaking in Crystal Park Extension 32?

SECTION D: Impact of crime on victims

1. What impact does housebreaking have on the victim and their family?

SECTION E: Preventative Measures

1. What preventative strategies would you recommend for housebreaking?

Thank you ☺

ANNEXURE F: TURN-IT-IN SIMILARITY REPORT

Criminology Dissertation

ORIGINALITY REPORT

11 %	9 %	3 %	5 %
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	uir.unisa.ac.za Internet Source	1 %
2	researchspace.ukzn.ac.za Internet Source	1 %
3	Submitted to University of South Africa Student Paper	<1 %
4	www.statssa.gov.za Internet Source	<1 %
5	repository.up.ac.za Internet Source	<1 %
6	abbrokers.co.za Internet Source	<1 %
7	hdl.handle.net Internet Source	<1 %
8	methods.sagepub.com.suss.remotexs.co Internet Source	<1 %
9	Encyclopedia of Criminology and Criminal Justice, 2014. Publication	<1 %

**ANNEXURE G: LANGUAGE AND TECHNICAL EDITING
CERTIFICATE**

Barbara Shaw
Editing/proofreading services
18 Balvicar Road, Blairgowrie, 2194
Cell: 072 1233 881
Email: barbarashaw16@gmail.com
Full member of The Professional Editors' Guild

To whom it may concern

This letter serves to inform you that I have done language editing, reference checking and formatting on the thesis

HOUSEBREAKING IN CRYSTAL PARK EXTENSION 32:

A VICTIM RISK PERSPECTIVE

By

DITSHELE JOSEPH MALEBATI



Barbara Shaw

06/02/2024