COMPARING THE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL & SPATIAL FACTORS ON CRIME PATTERNS
AT MACRO LEVEL OF A LONDON BOROUGH

INTRODUCTION

It is unclear whether spatial or socio-economic factors are responsible for higher crime rates in more integrated and central areas.

The fact that higher crime rates in integrated and central areas may simply imply that these areas have higher densities of population and properties and greater mixes of use, and thus higher crime opportunities. But they also tend to have less advantaged populations who are known to be more vulnerable to crime in general.

RESEARCH PROCEDURE

1. Prima Facie Effects

There appears to be a slight tendency for overall crime rates to be higher in more integrated areas (Fig. 1 & 10).

The patterns in Figure 2 & 12 suggest that space seems to go with crime though not significantly, and so does deprivation index. But space also seems to go with deprivation index (Fig. 2(a) and Fig. 12(a)).

2. Effects of Social Factors on Crime Rates

A strong relationship is observed between social factors in the wards and the average crime rates (Fig. 2 and Fig. 3).

The spatial factors of wards when considered alongside socio-economic and demographic factors in a multivariate analysis, the effects disappear, and with certain spatial variables even seem to be reversed.

3. Effects of Social and Spatial Factors on Crime Rates

The study aims to examine how far spatial or socio-economic factors are responsible for apparent higher crime rates in more integrated and central areas.

AIM OF STUDY

The evidence suggests that crime rates are higher in integrated areas, they are also high in deprived areas. Also, space and social factors relate to each other, so that integrated and central areas have disadvantaged populations. This means the effects of space on crime can be hidden in a multivariate analysis which also include social factors.

In conclusion, the study has confirmed the difficulty of separating social and spatial influences, and multivariate analysis at this level was of limited use. Future studies could include: micro-level analysis; regional-level analysis; focusing on residential layouts or morphology; focusing on particular types of crime, and investigating further the relationship between social and space factors.

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