

Exploring Conflict Theories in the Context of Urban Security

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ABSTRACT

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Until today, urban security has been studied from various theoretical perspectives, indicating its cruciality and complexity. However, there is a gap in understanding how conflict theories relate to urban security, particularly how structural injustice and inequalities shape its outcome and determine its consequences. This study explores the significance of conflict theories and how they contribute to understanding the complex issue of urban security. Using conflict theories, this study focuses on the role of power, gender inequalities, and capitalist structures in determining and shaping social structures and relations. According to the study, traditional approaches related to urban security have become insufficient. Hence, conflict theories propose alternative solutions that can provide a more thorough understanding of urban security issues. The study's contribution to the literature is its thorough examination and analysis of different conflict theories and how they relate to urban security, shedding light on the complex interplay and interaction of race, inequality, discourse, power, and colonialism in shaping urban security outcomes. This study opens the door to empirical, comparative, and interdisciplinary studies that will contribute to conflict theories on urban security. In addition, it emphasizes the importance of analyzing governance structures, institutions, and longitudinal data to establish effective interventions and policies in urban security.

Kent Güvenliği Bağlamında Çatışma Teorilerinin İncelenmesi

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Bugüne değin kent güvenliği, çeşitli teorik perspektiflerden incelenmiş, bu sayede konunun önemi ve karmaşık doğası ortaya konulmaya çalışılmıştır. Buna karşın çatışma teorilerinin kent güvenliği ile nasıl ilişkilendirildiği, özellikle yapısal adaletsizlik ve eşitsizliklerin sonuçlarını analiz etme noktasında çatışma teorilerinin anlaşılmasında belirgin bir boşluk bulunmaktadır. Çatışma teorilerinin önemine binaen çalışma, kent güvenliği sorununun değerlendirilmesine söz konusu yaklaşımların nasıl katkıda bulunduğu odaklanmaktadır. Bu bağlamda çalışmada, güç, cinsiyet eşitsizlikleri ve kapitalist ilişkilerin toplumsal yapı ve işleyişi biçimlendirmedeki potansiyeli ele alınmaktadır. Çalışmaya göre, kent güvenliği konusunda geleneksel yaklaşımlar yetersiz kalmıştır. Bu nedenle, çatışma teorileri, kent güvenliği sorununun daha derinlikli ve kapsamlı bir şekilde anlaşılmasını sağlayabilecek alternatif çözümler önermektedir. Çalışmanın katkısı, farklı çatışma teorilerinin ayrıntılı bir şekilde incelenmesi ve analizi ile bunların kent güvenliği ile ilişkilendirilmesidir. Bu, ırk, eşitsizlik, söylem, güç ve kolonyalizmin kent güvenliği sonuçlarını şekillendirmedeki karmaşık etkileşimini aydınlatmaktadır. Çalışma, kent güvenliğine dair çatışma teorilerine katkı sağlayacak ampirik, karşılaştırmalı ve disiplinlerarası araştırmalar için bir kapı aralamaktadır. İlaveten, kent güvenliğinde etkili müdahaleler ve politikalar için oluşturulacak yönetim yapılarının, kurumlarının ve uzun erimli verilerin analiz edilmesinin önemine de vurgu yapılmaktadır.

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INTRODUCTION

Urban security is a complex, intricate, and multifaceted phenomenon that is studied from different theoretical frameworks. A comprehensive understanding of this issue necessitates the study and analysis of various conflict theories. These theories are crucial in understanding the complex issue of urban security and how structural inequalities and injustice shape its outcome and dynamics. This study analyzes how conflict theories relate to urban security and explains the complex issue of urban security by considering various conflict theories, including critical theory, Marxist theory, feminist theory, postcolonial theory, poststructural theory, world systems theory, radical criminology, and critical race theory. This study analyzes these theories' different perspectives on the role of economic structures, power, colonialism, discourse, inequality, and race, emphasizing how they shape social relations, structures, and outcomes related to urban security.

Critical theory is a theoretical perspective that focuses on the role of power and domination in shaping social relations (Xenakis & Cheliotis, 2013), contending that structural inequalities and injustice cause social problems such as urban insecurity. On the other hand, feminist theory emphasizes the gendered aspects of oppression and power (Davies & True, 2019), highlighting how gender intersects or interacts with other forms of inequality and injustice to shape urban security outcomes. Marxist theory is a conflict theory that emphasizes how economic structures shape social relations, arguing that urban security is determined and shaped by class struggle and the capitalist system. Post-structural theory, on the other hand, is a theoretical framework that emphasizes how discourse and language shape social relations (Tang, 2011), asserting that the ways in which different groups construct and contest meanings and identities shape urban security. Postcolonial theory places significant emphasis on the enduring impact of colonialism in molding present-day social interactions and structures (Nuri, 2021), asserting that urban security is shaped by the ongoing effects and influences of colonialism. Radical criminology, as a conflict theory, grounds its viewpoint on the centrality of power dynamics and socioeconomic disparities in influencing the occurrence of crime and the functioning of criminal justice systems within capitalist societies (Noghlehbari, 2017), contending that the urban security phenomenon is a result of how the criminal justice system reproduces social inequalities and injustice. World systems theory is a multidisciplinary approach that emphasizes the role of global economic structures and systems in shaping social relations (Shevchenko et al., 2022). It argues that urban security issues are a result of the global economy's dynamics and the relationship between core, periphery, and semi-periphery countries. Critical race theory, on the other hand, is a cross-disciplinary examination of how race, racism, and ethnicity shape social relations (Xenakis & Cheliotis, 2013), contending that urban security is shaped by how race intersects with other forms of inequality and injustice to produce differential outcomes for different races and ethnicities.

This study is structured into two pivotal sections. The initial section, the literature review, undertakes an extensive examination of the existing literature on the concept of urban security and conflict theories and their inherent relevance to the comprehension of urban security. This comprehensive exploration encompasses an intricate synthesis of the theoretical underpinnings of conflict theories and their practical applications within the urban security domain. The ensuing section will serve as the intellectual crucible in which conflict theories are subjected to a profound and rigorous analysis, underpinning the intricate interplay between these theoretical frameworks and the complex issue of urban security. This critical examination seeks to elucidate the nuances of conflict theories in addressing urban security challenges and offers insights. Based on these theories, it is expected that this study will be an introduction to the limited confrontational perspective in urban security studies.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review section presents a comprehensive examination of the concept of urban security, offering a nuanced understanding of its multifaceted nature and intricacies. Additionally, it critically analyzes the application of conflict theories in the context of urban security, highlighting their significant role in elucidating the complex dynamics inherent to this field. By exploring conflict theories, this section contributes to a deeper comprehension of urban security, uncovering the underlying factors and intricacies that shape the urban security landscape.

Urban security is defined as the state of being free from dangers or risks to individuals, communities and urban systems inside a city or metropolitan area. It is a broad term that covers various topics essential to the infrastructure and population safety of urban areas. Protecting both people and the urban environment is the focus of this definition. Urban security encompasses multiple aspects, such as physical security, which includes countering criminal activity and responding to natural catastrophes, acts of terrorism, and crimes (Jeffery, 1973); social security, aimed at promoting community well-being, inclusivity, social cohesion, and reducing urban tensions and conflicts (Neal, 2009); economic security, which pertains to the stability and resilience of the urban economy, encompassing job opportunities, the prevention of economic disparities, and access to basic necessities (Horrigo, 2012); and environmental security, which involves safeguarding the natural environment within urban areas, ensuring access to clean air and water, dealing with climate change challenges, and addressing environmental hazards (Orsini et al., 2013). The definition of urban security is influenced by various factors, including the city's size, location, historical context, socio-cultural diversity, and unique challenges as well as the broader political, economic, and technological landscape (Zainuddin et al., 2023; Allan et al., 2018; Romero-Lankao & Gnatz, 2016).

Conversely, conflict theories offer a basic framework for comprehending how conflict shapes social dynamics and structures. They are based on both classical and modern sociological perspectives (Trakšelys, 2018). Marx's perspective is one of the main tenets of conflict theory; it emphasizes the perpetual struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, which is rooted in class conflict and economic inequality (Hodgetts & Griffin, 2015). In addition, Dahrendorf highlighted the role that authority and social positions have in forming conflicts in society, suggesting that power dynamics among different social roles and institutions also play a role in determining conflicts rather than just class (Kühne, 2020). These conflict theories are crucial for comprehending the intricate issue of urban security. Conflict theories illuminate the underlying dynamics of power, social injustices, and structural elements that lead to crime and violence in urban settings. They emphasize how issues such as poverty, prejudice based on race, and unequal access to resources can lead to tensions and conflicts that eventually affect urban security. Furthermore, conflict theories offer important insights into how government policies, community dynamics, and law enforcement may either exacerbate or lessen these security concerns. The following are various conflict theories and how they play a role in understanding or explaining urban security.

Critical theory, based on the works of the Frankfurt School scholars, is a foundational perspective for analyzing and understanding urban security through a critical lens. It focuses on how power, ideology, and social structures play a role in perpetuating urban conflicts (McArthur, 2021). This perspective challenges traditional approaches to urban security, which often focus on crime control and surveillance (Débord, 2020). Critical theory exposes the underlying power relations that define urban life and security, emphasizing the necessity for social and political change. One fundamental component of critical theory is its critique of power structures and social inequalities. Critical theorists contend that understanding urban security requires considering the broader social, political, and economic contexts in which it operates (Klikauer, 2015). Frankfurt School scholars, such as Herbert Marcuse, argued that prevailing ideologies and the media are key forces in shaping public opinion and maintaining the status quo (Débord, 2020). This perspective casts doubt on the notion that security is an objective and neutral concept and instead emphasizes the necessity of closely examining the discourses and power structures that shape how we conceptualize security (Vogelmann, 2021).

Marxist theory, as developed by Marx and Engels, holds that societal change results from class struggle and seeks to establish a classless society through a working-class revolution. It provides a lens through which to examine the economic determinants of urban security. According to this theory, the economic structure of society, particularly the mode of production and the distribution of wealth, plays a crucial role in shaping social relations and power dynamics (Marx, 2002). One central idea in this theory is the concept of class struggle. It contends that society is divided into two main classes: the bourgeoisie, who possess the means of production, and the proletariat, who supply the bourgeoisie with labor. This class struggle is driven by the inherent contradictions of capitalism, where the pursuit of profit by the bourgeoisie leads to exploitation and inequality (Herod, 1994). Within urban security,

Marxist theory sheds light on how economic inequalities and class divisions affect access to resources and safety (Peterson, 2017). Understanding urban security through a Marxist lens underscores the need to address economic disparities and advocate for policies that prioritize social welfare over profit.

Feminist theory, in all its forms, contributes a great deal to the understanding of urban security by drawing attention to gender-based inequalities and violence. Gender dimensions of violence, particularly women's experiences in urban settings, have been the focus of significant feminist studies (Moura & Cerdeira, 2021). Feminist theory also challenges urban planning and design, emphasizing how gendered built environments have historically been tailored to the demands of men. This critique highlights that urban planners have traditionally designed and created spaces that fail to consider the safety and needs of women (Qasim, 2022). It emphasizes the importance of considering women's experiences and viewpoints in security studies, highlighting the prevalence of gender-based violence and the requirement for gender-sensitive security policies (Carpenter, 2006).

Postcolonial theory, a theoretical concept of postcolonialism, illustrates the legacy of colonialism based on political and socio-cultural practices as a reaction to the colonial past (Abubakar et al., 2021). It offers a key paradigm for analyzing urban security considering colonial legacies, imperialism, and the impacts of globalization. This theory underscores how the historical and contemporary effects of colonialism continue to influence urban environments, often perpetuating insecurity for marginalized populations (Datta, 2018). One aspect of postcolonial theory relevant to urban security is the examination of power structures and how colonialism has shaped urban development in postcolonial societies. Matamanda (2020) explored Mugabe's urban legacy in Harare, Zimbabwe, from a postcolonial perspective. The author contends that colonialism, power, and authority are key concepts in postcolonial philosophy and that Mugabeism heavily borrows from these ideas. Another study by Mustapha and Imam (2021) argues that the colonial legacy is to blame for Africa's security issues. They argue that particular subjects, societies, and states that colonization purposefully created are what keep security issues on the continent alive.

Poststructural theory questions traditional notions of power and identity, focusing on the fluid and socially constructed nature of these concepts. It asserts that power is not a static object held by individuals or institutions, but rather a dynamic and relational force that functions through discourses and practices (Cohen, 2019). In a similar vein, it sees identity as a social construct formed by discourses and practices within specific historical and cultural settings (Norton & Toohey, 2011). To identify the underlying power structures and oppressive institutions that influence security measures, poststructuralism strongly emphasizes dismantling current discourse and practice (Wojczewski, 2019). Poststructural theory permits a critical analysis of the presumptions and biases that underpin security measures by contesting prevailing narratives, leading to a more nuanced understanding of urban security concerns.

World systems theory, developed by Wallerstein, is an approach to understanding the global economy and its structure. It emphasizes the unequal distribution of power and resources among countries and regions and how this shapes economic and social relationships on a global scale (Machida, 2011). According to Wallerstein, the capitalist world system is divided into core, semi-peripheral, and peripheral regions. Core regions, which are economically dominant, exploit peripheral regions for resources and labor. This theory also explores the impact of global economic and political systems on urban security. It contends that exploitation can lead to social and economic inequalities, which in turn can contribute to urban security challenges (Lawson & Wallerstein, 1978). This perspective emphasizes the interconnectedness of the world and the consequences of global capitalism on urban areas. World systems theory highlights how international power dynamics and economic forces influence urban security, underscoring the need for global cooperation in addressing urban challenges (d'Amour et al., 2016).

Radical criminology is a theoretical perspective within the field that applies a critical approach to the study of crime and social control (Greenberg, 1982). It challenges conventional criminological perspectives and examines how social structures and economic disparities contribute to crime and insecurity. This makes the case that the criminal justice system frequently discriminates against

marginalized groups and upholds preexisting power structures. This perspective is supported by Reiman's work, "The Rich Get Richer and the Poor Get Prison: Ideology, Class, and Criminal Justice," which highlights how the criminal justice system disproportionately targets and punishes the poor while allowing the wealthy to escape accountability (Reiman, 1980). Another important aspect of radical criminology is its examination of the impact of social and economic factors on crime and insecurity. Twain's article, "The Politics of Law and Order: Street Crime and Public Policy," explores how political decisions and policies can contribute to crime rates and feelings of insecurity in communities (Twain, 1986). In urban security, radical criminology emphasizes that crime and security issues are deeply rooted in structural inequalities (Reiner et al., 1978). According to this viewpoint, resolving security and criminal issues necessitates tackling the underlying political, social, and economic systems that support inequality (Copson, 2013). To better understand crime and justice, radical criminologists support a political economics approach that examines how class disparities and power structures shape both criminal behaviors and the criminal justice system (Lynch, 2013).

Critical race theory (CRT) is a framework that examines the intersections of race, racism, and power dynamics, and it is particularly relevant for understanding urban security in racially diverse settings (Delgado & Stefancic, 2013). CRT recognizes the importance of acknowledging and analyzing the experiences and perspectives of marginalized groups and minorities to understand and address racial subordination (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). It emphasizes the need to challenge and dismantle systems of racial inequality and oppression (Delgado & Stefancic, 2013). This theory highlights how racial inequalities, discrimination, and systemic racism impact security experiences within urban communities.

2. ANALYSIS OF CONFLICT THEORIES IN UNDERSTANDING URBAN SECURITY

In this section, a comprehensive exploration and critical examination of a variety of conflict theories will be conducted. This in-depth examination involves analyzing the intricate connections between these conflict theories and the complex issue of urban security. Each individual conflict theory will undergo particular analysis, with a focus on dissecting its unique role in enhancing our understanding of the multifaceted challenges that characterize urban security. Through the systematic analysis of these theories and their respective implications, the objective is to shed light on the various aspects that collectively contribute to a more profound understanding of the dynamic landscape of urban security.

2.1. Examining Urban Security Through a Critical Theory Perspective

Critical theory is a social philosophy that uncovers the impact of power and ideology on social relations and structures in society and culture. It attempts to understand how social, economic, and political systems operate and how they can be transformed to enhance social equality and justice. In the context of urban security, critical theory argues that urban security is not neutral but contentious and reflects the values and interests of different social groups (Tulumello, 2017). Urban security is about preventing crime, making the urban environment safe, and addressing the multiple economic and social factors that contribute to urban insecurity, such as discrimination, inequality, and poverty. Critical theory also focuses on the significance of community participation in government decision-making processes on urban security (Allan et al., 2021). By adopting such a participatory approach, urban planners and policymakers can gain a comprehensive understanding of the dynamic and complex nature of urban security and develop more effective, just, and equitable policies and practices to address the underlying issues.

The inception of critical theory can be attributed to Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer, who were part of the Frankfurt School. Critical theory is a reformulation of Marxist theory that combines empirical social inquiry with philosophical argumentation (Bernstein, 2017). The proponents of this theory question the established epistemology of urban geography. They generate innovative methodologies, original conceptual frameworks, and expansive perspectives to contemplate and engage with the realm of urbanity (Welsh, 2018). Critical theorists argue that reasonability regarding measures of security is crucial for public space. They assert that public space holds a pivotal role within the framework of democracy, and its preservation necessitates a delicate balance that is not achievable

through unregulated practices or an overly securitized environment with excessive state presence (Mirjam Sági, 2022).

Critical theory examines the relationship between power and urban security by analyzing how cities and urban spaces are involved and implicated in practices of power (Dovey, 2011). The fundamental goal of critical theory is to challenge and deconstruct the systems and frameworks that uphold, legitimize, or validate established societal configurations and structures. This includes addressing the numerous and diverse acts of dispossession, injustice, degradation, displacement, and irrationalities upon which these arrangements are built (Welsh, 2018b). Urban security is a politically contentious issue. The tripartite essence of this concept derives from three key factors: the fundamental right to avoid becoming victims of criminal acts, societal demands, and the objectives delineated by policy frameworks. A vital aspect in comprehending the intricate relationship between urban security and planning processes lies in adopting a critical perspective toward crime prevention (Tulumello, 2017). Critical theory contends that the direction of urban growth and decline is determined by the decisions of large and powerful institutions, including corporations, governments, and developers. These powerful institutions are key actors in the urban political economy (Shlay, 1999).

In numerous ways, critical theory challenges the mainstream notions of urban security. First, critical theory recognizes that urban spaces are implicated in practices of power (Dovey, 2011). As such, it attempts to undermine formations and structures that justify existing socio-spatial arrangements and the myriad injustices upon which they are grounded (Welsh, 2018). Second, the critical theory contends that the direction of urban growth and decline is determined by the decisions of large and powerful institutions, including corporations, governments, and developers, which are the key agents of an urban political economy (Shlay, 1999). Finally, the critical theory recognizes that urban security is a contested issue and not neutral (Tulumello, 2017).

Critical theory's perspectives on urban security are shaped by its strong understanding and emphasis on equity and social justice, which brings attention to the political contestation surrounding the issue of urban security. Critical theory asserts that urban security is affected by regularly changing political approaches and paradigms. It contends that urban security is embedded in planning practices (Tulumello, 2017). An ecological perspective based on the theory of communication argues that communication plays a key role in promoting equity advocacy and organizing for social justice in cities. When it is an intentional process that activates or enhances multi-stakeholder engagement in urban neighborhoods year-round, advocating for equity is the most important and best (Villanueva, 2022). A balanced spatial allocation of municipal or urban services is a paramount indicator of social justice within an urban environment (Darvish et al., 2016).

2.2. Feminist Theory and Urban Security: Gender, Violence, and Intersectionality

Feminist theory is an interdisciplinary perspective that seeks to understand and address gender inequality by exploring the social roles and real-life encounters of women (Yang Han-yu, 2014). Feminist studies have drawn attention to the gender dimensions of violence, particularly emphasizing women's experiences in urban settings plagued by violence. Feminist theory places a notable emphasis on the significance of gender when conducting comprehensive analyses of security and urban violence, addressing the root causes of the problem, and fostering positive change (Moura & Cerdeira, 2021). Feminist security studies have questioned the preconceived notions and connotations associated with gender roles that dominate urban security studies (Gasztold, 2017).

Feminist security theorists have shown that security is not just about the subject of security but also the complex dynamics of security politics (True, 2012). Feminist territorial strategies actively address a range of concerns that encompass women's diverse experiences, with a particular emphasis on perceptions of safety and distinct manifestations of violence targeting women (Saraiva Gil Antunes, 2018). Feminist researchers have also shed light on the importance of men's construction of masculine identities and how these constructed identities are questioned and challenged in times of violence. They highlighted the presence of positive and decolonial reactions that occur within urban spaces and their peripheries, which encompass the exploration of non-violent and feminist cultural and artistic pathways (Moura & Cerdeira, 2021).

Among the founders of feminist theory is Simone de Beauvoir, renowned for her famous quote "One is not born but rather becomes a woman" (Kumar, 2021). Other influential thinkers who played a key role in feminist theory include Judith Butler, bell hooks, and Gloria Steinem. The study of urban security is greatly influenced by feminist theory, which highlights the significance of gender in a thorough and comprehensive analysis of urban violence and security (Moura & Cerdeira, 2021). Feminist studies have asserted that gender is crucial in grasping the concept of security and is important in finding solutions to global political insecurity (Sjoberg, 2016). In the realm of international security and global politics, feminist perspectives have also been developed, leading to the reevaluation and reformulation of security theory (Tickner & Sjoberg, 2020). Feminist theory has also been used to foster a holistic and comprehensive understanding of women's access to social services and to develop gender-sensitive urban welfare services (Hatiboğlu Kısacık & Odabaş, 2023).

Using gender lenses to bring attention to gender dynamics in international security, feminist theory examines the interplay between gender and urban security (Sjoberg, 2018). Feminist studies emphasize gender as an essential factor in conducting a comprehensive analysis of urban violence and security, as well as in promoting solutions and facilitating positive changes (Moura & Cerdeira, 2021). Feminist theory seeks to integrate gender within the discussions and discourses of human security to foster broader, more holistic, and comprehensive security (Churruarín Muguruza, 2017). Feminist research underlines the fact that organized violence in times of armed conflict affects both men and women in different ways. Through feminist studies, it has been demonstrated that there are both visible and concealed elements of urban violence. A gap in the existing literature on gender dimensions is the exploration of men's construction of masculinity and how these constructions are challenged in periods of violence (Moura & Cerdeira, 2021). In addition, feminist studies have shed light on the dangers associated with masking differences under the rubric of the term "human" and have addressed the politics surrounding multiple overlapping and complex identities (Hudson, 2005).

Feminist territorial strategies involve numerous issues that impact the diverse lives of women, particularly emphasizing perceptions of urban security and unique forms of violence experienced by women (Saraiva Gil Antunes, 2018). Feminist theorists critique the marginalization of women and gender perspectives in the realm of urban security studies, arguing that the domain of politics remains predominantly masculine, resulting in fewer women in decision-making positions (Siddiqui, 2013). Within the realm of feminist IR scholarship, there has been a long-standing emphasis on how gender relations and identities are shaped on a global scale through the influence of securitization, militarization, governance, and globalization (Elias, 2015). Feminist theorists strive to break the silence surrounding the gender issue, including women as a category of identity within urban security discussions and discourses and incorporating gender as a holistic unity of analysis (Churruarín Muguruza, 2017).

By questioning and challenging traditional approaches to urban security in several ways, feminist theory proposes numerous alternatives. Feminist studies have shed light on the gender dimension of violence and the specific experiences of women in urban areas (Moura & Cerdeira, 2021). Using gender lenses, feminist approaches examine and observe gendered dynamics in urban security (Sjoberg, 2018b). According to feminists, urban security is shaped by a model of masculinity domination, which leaves limited opportunities for substantial questioning (Farneubun, 2018). Feminist scholars critique traditional power politics embedded in realist or neorealist analyses and interpretations of conflicts and assert the notion that war is evitable. They promote the belief that human beings can resolve conflicts using nonviolent approaches (Sharoni, 2017). Feminist viewpoints on security focus on the broader concept of security beyond the confines of the state and incorporate it into community-level considerations, challenging dominant forms of knowledge, and embracing a holistic approach to security (Popescu, 2021). Feminist theory presents alternative solutions to traditional approaches to urban security, advocating non-violent and feminist cultural and artistic interventions. It also analyzes the factors that contribute to men resisting dominant, violent, and masculine constructs (Moura & Cerdeira, 2021). Feminist scholars advocate the idea of a gender-neutral conception of security, demonstrating that security is not solely a men's realm (Farneubun, 2018).

The emphasis on intersectionality within feminist theory informs its comprehension of the complex issue of urban security and its impact on marginalized societies. It shows the interconnectedness of various dimensions and aspects of identities and contributes to individual experiences (Hou, 2022). Intersectionality serves as a theoretical perspective that examines the intersecting and overlapping oppressions experienced by marginalized communities, focusing on the interconnected nature of race, gender, and class. By focusing on intersectionality, feminist theory guides scholars to examine how intertwined dynamics of race, gender, and class create barriers, challenges, and disadvantages for marginalized groups, specifically women of color (Sanchez, 2019).

2.3. Marxist Theory's Analysis of Capitalism and Its Implications for Urban Security

Marxist theory, a social, political, and economic body of doctrine developed by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, seeks to analyze, scrutinize, and provide critical assessments of capitalism's social and economic structures. Following the principles of Marxist theory, capitalism is an exploitative and oppressive system that inherently creates economic and social inequality. It asserts that the bourgeoisie (capitalist class) engages in the exploitation of the proletariat (working class). It further advocates that the realization of true economic and social equality can be accomplished solely by means of a socialist revolution (Feldman & Feldman, 197). The Structural Marxist Theory of Crime, a Marxist theory described by Colvin and Pauly (1983), elucidates the comprehensive mechanism underlying the genesis of criminal behavior by exploring the covert ramifications of capitalist production relations and the perpetuation of class hierarchy (Kızmaz, 2006).

In the context of urban security, Marxist theory argues that the capitalist system fosters an environment and conditions that produce insecurity and crime in urban settings. It asserts that unemployment, poverty, and inequalities are caused by the oppressive and exploitative capitalist system, and these factors contribute to economic and social conditions that cause insecurity and crime in urban areas (Kızmaz, 2013). Marxist philosophy also maintains that the state, when under the dominion of the affluent capitalist class, places greater importance on safeguarding the interests of the capitalist class rather than addressing the laboring class' grievances and needs. Hence, the state lacks effectiveness in tackling the underlying issues that cause crimes and insecurity in urban settings (Müller & Rohr-Zanker, 1989).

The founders of Marxist theory were Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Through the critique of security studies, Marxist philosophy has immensely influenced the study of urban security. According to Marxist theorists, urban security has been influenced by ideological bias and motivations, leading to the masking of social relations through the lens of environmental determination (Feldman & Feldman, 1978). Within the sphere of Marxist ideology and the examination of urban security, David Harvey, Henri Lefebvre, and Manuel Castells emerged as preeminent and influential scholars in contemporary times (they are called Neo-marxists), engaging deeply with the principles of Marxist philosophy and the field of urbanism (Katznelson, 1993).

When examining the correlation between urban security and social class, Marxist theory underscores the significance of social class in molding and exerting influence over societal mechanisms within urban environments (Musil, 2003). Marxist theory posits that the spatial requirements of industrial capitalism influence the growth, physical structures, and societal landscape of urban areas and interconnections. The early histories of the Western working classes were profoundly shaped by experiences encountered within urban areas (Katznelson, 1993). The tenets of Marxist theory state that the struggle between dominant and subordinate groups is culturally evident in civil society and the market. These realms are largely controlled by private capital (Merelman, 1992). Additionally, it proposes that empirical research on history and the contemporary state of cities was the empirical underpinning for the theoretical insights of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (Hailey, 2018). Marxist theorists acknowledge the critical importance of incorporating an urban-geographical lens when studying the formation of the working class (Katznelson, 1993). Hence, Marxist theory focuses on the role of social class in determining and shaping the dynamics of urban security.

Marxist theorists offer a critical perspective on urban security in several ways. First, Marxist theorists assert that capitalist urban society, as its primary characteristic, is inherently exploitative and

oppressive. Consequently, the ruling class is consistently prioritized over the working class (Liu, 2018a). As a result, urban security measures are designed to preserve the interests of the ruling class rather than those of the wider population. Second, Marxist theory contends that in capitalist urban societies, there is an ongoing challenge of addressing excessive capital accumulation. This struggle necessitates the use of enhanced strategies for temporary relocation and the resolution of capitalist conflicts through the practice of accumulating resources through dispossession (Cvjetkovic, 2015). Consequently, marginalized communities experience displacement and public spaces undergo privatization, exacerbating the already existing urban insecurity. In response to capitalist approaches to urban security, Marxists present alternative solutions. One such solution advocated by Marxist theory is the establishment of more equitable cities, prioritizing factors beyond private capital as the main shaping factors of urban security (Cvjetkovic, 2015). As part of alternative solutions, urban planning is democratized, and the needs of marginalized communities are prioritized. Another solution involves acknowledging the role of workers and institutions in shaping the built environment (Herod, 1994a). This solution would involve granting workers more authority in urban planning and decision-making processes.

When examining urban security issues, the state and economic systems play a crucial role according to Marxist theorists (Feagin, 1984). However, solely employing Marxist economic theory fails to address environmental problems and the complex issues of urbanization more generally (Shmueli, 2008). Marxist urban geographers have predominantly focused their attention on how capital and the state shape the environment, neglecting the role of workers and their institutions in this process (Herod, 1994b). Marx's political theory and urban theory are deeply intertwined, and when examining urban political economy from a Marxist perspective, it is crucial to fully incorporate Marx's political theory (Ellison, 1983). Marxist theory underscores the value of putting ideas into practice and proving the truth of one's thinking in practice (Ye et al., 2019). Within Marxist urban theory, there is an ongoing struggle for the rights of unhoused people and broader class struggles. It argues that during times of crisis – when there are anti-social and anti-urban responses from the state, engaging in "social" actions becomes necessary (Geiger, 2022). The Marxist critique of capitalist urban society integrates geographical knowledge alongside a multidisciplinary approach, underscoring the close ties between social processes and spatial form (Liu, 2018b). Marxist theory does not give sufficient weight to the role ethics play in historical change, and it also allows for interpretations that extend beyond the confines of economic determinism (Knight, 2005). Marxist discourse offers a repertoire of intellectually stimulating methodologies to engender a rigorous critique of urban phenomena within the capitalist paradigm (Vergara Perucich, 2018).

2.4. Poststructural Theory and Urban Security: Language, Discourse, and Power

Poststructural theory is a philosophical theory that emerged between the 1960s and 1970s in response to structuralism. According to Schneider-Sliwa (2015), post-structuralism is a theoretical framework that focuses on discourse, language, and power relations in constructing social reality. In terms of urban security, the post-structural approach proposes that security is a socially constructed reality, but not an objective, that is shaped by discourses and power relations. As Simone Tulumello (2017d) asserts, urban security is a contested issue, rather than neutral, and it involves the right to not be a victim of social demands, policy objectives, and crime. As such, post-structural theory provides insights into how urban security is socially constructed and perpetuated through power relations and discourses.

Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida are the key figures credited with the foundation of poststructural theory. Their viewpoints and ideas have immensely contributed to the study of urban security, questioning the traditional concepts of knowledge and power. Archive, the concept of Michel Foucault, has been applied to the study of urban security as a site of knowledge and power. Derrida's ideas on the instability of meaning and language have also been used to challenge and question the dominant discourses on urban security. It is used to explore alternative solutions to the issue of urban security (Head, 2007). These thinkers' post-structuralist ideas played a vital role in understanding the complex issue of urban security (Ljungkvist, 2021a).

The poststructural approach emphasizes the relationship between discourse, power, and urban security, exploring how power is constructed and perpetuated through discourse and language (Gunder, 2005). Poststructural theorists contend that power is a fluid, rapidly shifting force that is constructed and maintained through discourse, instead of being a fixed entity (Kolaković-Bojović & Paraušić, 2020). In the field of urban security, post-structural theorists contend that discourses shape and influence how urban security is constructed and defined, arguing that power relations shape the discourses themselves (Mosselson, 2019).

The poststructural approach challenges and critiques traditional approaches to urban security. It challenges the concept and notion of objective and fixed reality that traditional approaches emphasize. Per poststructuralism, the reality of urban security is a socially constructed phenomenon that is maintained through discourse and language. Therefore, the understanding and meaning of urban security are socially constructed but not fixed. This implies that traditional approaches to urban security, which emphasize fixed meaning and objective measures of security, fail to understand the diverse accounts and issues in urban settings (Ljungkvist, 2021). The poststructural framework also questions how control and power are used in traditional approaches to urban security. It argues that existing traditional approaches marginalize certain societal groups and empower existing power structures. To overcome such marginalization, this theory proposes more participatory and inclusive approaches to urban security that consider the diverse experiences and perspectives of all community levels (M.-M. Müller, 2014).

The poststructural approach focuses on the fluidity of social structures, highlighting its understanding of the complex and multifaceted issue of urban security. According to Ruth Fincher (1987), social theories have long been used to gain insights and understand intricate urban security issues. Debates on this issue focused on the social construction of gender roles, the structure of human agency, and the use of social theories to explain realities in contemporary times. Proponents of post-structuralism acknowledge that social structures are changing and are not fixed, which shows that the issue of urban security is not static and fixed but changes over time. Michael A. Hirst (2010) stated that changes in society's social structures are an evolutionary phenomenon that changes over time and gradually with changes in urban structures. As such, the focus of post-structural theory on the fluidity of social structures shows the theory's understanding of the complex phenomenon of urban security, acknowledging that social structures change over time and should not be seen as a fixed and static issue.

2.5. Postcolonial Theory and Urban Security: Examining Colonial Legacies and Power Relations

Postcolonialism is a critical academic perspective that explores the effects and long-standing legacies of colonialism (Adeniyi Ogunyankin, 2019). It critiques the Eurocentric master narratives and explores the legacies of Western colonialism in all dimensions (Busbridge, 2021). Postcolonial theory offers a range of studies on the issue of urban security, which is critical to urban theory (Ren, 2020). This theory emphasizes the empowerment of sociopolitically and economically marginalized and subjugated communities to reclaim their voice (Jenjekwa & Barnes, 2017). In the domain of urban security, the application of postcolonial theory assumes a pivotal and indispensable role in elucidating the complexities inherent in urban security issues, particularly in relation to the manifestations of racialized ideologies and the stratified social constructs established by Western powers within colonized communities. This theory challenges the racialized identities generated by colonial empires and questions their imperial viewpoint (Go, 2018). Therefore, postcolonial theory presents critical arguments against Western colonial established or left exploitative and discriminative practices regarding both time and space (Rukundwa & Van Aarde, 2007).

Among the key founding fathers of postcolonial theory are Homi Bhabha, Edward Said, and Gayatri Spivak (Elam, 2018). Bhabha is an important figure in contemporary postcolonial studies and is known for his immense contribution to postcolonial studies, successfully combining psychoanalysis, history, and post-structuralism in the context of British rule in South Asia (Elam, 2018). His concepts and terms "hybridity" and "ambivalence" have been widely adopted in different disciplines, especially in postcolonial and diasporic studies (Elam, 2018). Postcolonial theory seeks to offer insights into the hybrid nature of subjects, their behaviors, and ways of thinking in former Western colonies, particularly

the British Empire (Zhou, 2019). Postcolonial urbanism contains a range of works in the field of urban studies that explore the relationship between postcolonial theory, political dimensions of postcoloniality, and postcolonial criticism of urban theory (Ren, 2020). Therefore, postcolonial theory offers a comprehensive lens through which the concept of urban security can be understood, providing a robust framework for analyzing the intricate interplay between Western colonial powers and postcolonial societies.

Postcolonial theory illuminates the intricate interplay of global, historical, and colonial dimensions within race relations, particularly when scrutinizing the intricate linkages between colonialism, globalization, and the domain of urban security (Go, 2018). It asserts that a profound understanding of urban security necessitates a comprehensive examination of the historical legacies of imperialism and colonial governance (Elam, 2019). Postcolonial theory seeks justice for marginalized communities, women, and children in the Global South (Abraham, 2008). It also seeks to raise the voices of marginalized and subjugated communities (Jenjekwa & Barnes, 2017). Therefore, postcolonial theory provides insights into understanding the interplay among urban security, colonialism, and globalization, seeking to analyze the long-standing legacies of colonialism and its effects on postcolonial societies (Adeniyi Ogunyankin, 2019).

Postcolonial theory challenges the conventional narrative of world history based on Westphalian sovereignty, which shapes the understanding of security studies (Laffey & Nadarajah, 2022). Recent claims of urban theory downgrade postcolonial theory's role in urban security studies, but postcolonial theory presents key flows in its basic formulations (Roy, 2016). Postcolonial theory is an intervention regarding issues of concern – both places and issues. The poor people living in newly settled areas face constant victimization and subjugation, exposing them to urban insecurity and hindering their aspiration to achieve sustainable development of safe and resilient cities and settlements (Ren, 2020). Therefore, considerable solutions to urban security must consider the effects of colonialism and the colonial experiences of the subjugated and marginalized groups.

Postcolonial theory's focus and examination of the legacy of colonialism is evident in its comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted issue of urban security and its impacts on postcolonial societies and marginalized groups, showing inequalities and power relations existing in postcolonial societies (Sohier, 2016). Both physically and culturally, colonialism played a significant role in restructuring cities in postcolonial societies, shaping urban settings (Myers, 2020). This theory examines the role of colonial legacies in postcolonial societies and their effects on environmental and spatial structures (Adeniyi Ogunyankin, 2019), which play a key role in urban security. As such, postcolonial theory is a deep examination and emphasis on the long-standing and enduring colonial legacies that play a crucial role in understanding the complex issues of urban security.

2.6. Reimagining Urban Security: A Radical Criminology Perspective

Radical criminology represents a criminological perspective that offers a critical assessment of conventional approaches within the realm of criminal justice and crime (Güven, 2018). It contends that crime emerges due to the prevailing economic, social, and political circumstances within society, rather than being solely attributed to individual factors (Chao, 2022). According to Bohm(1982), radical criminology contends that laws are designed for the interests of the powerful political and economic class and reflect the power structures in society. In the context of urban security, radical criminology argues that crime is a result of economic and social conditions in society.

Radical criminology emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Çakmak, 2015), responding to the limitations of traditional approaches to criminology. Richard Quinney, Herman Schwendinger, Tony Platt, William Chambliss, and Paul Takagi are among the prominent theorists associated with the term "radical criminology". Radical criminology has played a pivotal role in the examination of urban security because it facilitates a holistic comprehension of the criminal justice system and its contribution to the perpetuation of social inequalities. According to Platt and Takagi (1981), radical criminology questions the existing governing structures and advocates social justice. It extensively covers a wide range of topics including crime, sexual deviance, law, various social problems, and deviances. Radical

criminology has also significantly contributed to the advancement and development of green criminology, which significantly examines environmental harm (Das, 2020; Lynch et al., 2021).

Radical criminology as an approach that provides a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between urban security, power, and inequality (Kindynis, 2018) emerged between the 1960s and 1970s as a response to the limitations of traditional approaches of criminology, which largely emphasized criminal behaviors at the individual level rather than focusing on the social, political, and economic structures that contribute to criminal behaviors (Friedrichs, 2018). It argues that criminal behavior results from a criminal justice system that serves the interests of the ruling class and inequality in society (Pavlich, 1999). This theory also pays attention to the importance of understanding the political dynamics of crime and its control as well as the lived experiences of urban space (Kindynis, 2018).

Radical criminology critiques traditional approaches to urban security by emphasizing the importance of understanding the social and political structures that contribute to crime (Friedrichs, 2018b). As traditional criminology focuses on individual criminal behavior (Pavlich, 1999), radical criminology proposes alternative solutions for the issues causing crimes and criminal behaviors, such as increasing access to resources in urban environments and reducing social inequality (Friedrichs, 2018). Radical criminology provides a more comprehensive and critical understanding of the urban environment by significantly emphasizing the social, economic, and political structures that contribute to crime.

To understand the complex issue of urban security, radical criminology advocates for systemic and structural change, acknowledging that criminal acts can not only be solved through crime prevention approaches but also address the root causes of crime, which are inequality, poverty, and injustice in society (Cheng & Chen, 2021). It argues that urban security issues cannot be solved through traditional policing techniques but require a broader approach in which different segments of society play a key role, such as community participation, political action, and social programs (Platt & Takagi, 1981). Furthermore, radical criminology offers valuable insights into the imperative of addressing the unequal distribution of opportunities and resources within urban areas as a means to effectively address the issue of urban security (Ceccato, 2021).

2.7. World Systems Theory for Understanding Urban Security

World systems theory, a multidisciplinary approach, is characterized by its emphasis on the socioeconomic development trajectories of societies, contingent upon their positioning within the global economic system. This theory employs a categorization framework that divides countries into core, semi-periphery, and periphery based on their respective economic relationships with the global market. Core countries are those with advanced economies and well-developed industrial bases, whereas periphery countries are the least developed third world countries that rely heavily on exporting raw materials to developed and industrialized countries. Semi-periphery countries are the buffer zone between the least and most developed countries (Benna & Benna, 2018). This theory plays an important role in understanding the urban security issue, asserting the economic disparities between core, semi-periphery, and periphery countries. It also focuses on how these economic disparities contribute to urban insecurity. For instance, urbanization in the least developed countries can cause food insecurity, which in turn could negatively affect urban security (Sheludko, 2018). Additionally, urbanization can exacerbate urban insecurity in both the periphery and semi-periphery countries (Grasham & Neville, 2021). Therefore, comprehensively understanding countries' positions in the global economic system is important for addressing urban security issues.

Immanuel Wallerstein is attributed to the foundation of this theory, broadening the geographical scope of Marxist economics to include worldwide dynamics. Wallerstein synthesized elements of Marxism and postmodernist frames of reference that resonate with the ideals of a classical Marxist utopia (Savchenko, 2007). This theory emerged during the global revolution of 1968, attempting to contemplate the meaning and essence of Latin American dependency theory for African countries (Chase-Dunn & Grell-Brisk, 2019). This theory contends that the lack of urban security in semi-periphery and periphery countries can be attributed to unplanned migration, poverty, and

unemployment. Utilization of agricultural lands for non-agricultural purposes, coupled with the concurrent decline of rural areas, engenders substantial pressure on natural resources. This phenomenon exacerbates food insecurity and amplifies the complexities associated with climate change, thereby contributing to the exacerbation of these interrelated challenges (Dölekoğlu & Gün, 2017); this, in turn, could worsen urban security. Technological and scientific advancements have also increased the pressure on urban residents (Wang et al., 2019). In addition, a lack of social security has increased migrations from urban areas to urban areas (Zhang et al., 2022a), which causes urban insecurity and crime (Noghlehbari, 2017b).

World systems theory highlights how developed countries can assist developing countries in urban security. According to Szabo (2016), rapid urbanization across developing countries has become an issue of great interest to scholars. The movement of people from rural areas to urban areas affects the security of developing countries. Sonnino (2016) stated that food insecurity has assumed a “bimodal” nature, characterized by a dualistic manifestation encompassing concerns on both quantity and quality of food. This multifaceted phenomenon encompasses challenges related to underconsumption and overconsumption, and its impact transcends traditional boundaries, affecting both developing and developed nations. According to Zhang et al. (2022), social attitudes and security have significantly impacted migration from rural to urban areas. Hence, core countries can help improve urban security in semi-periphery and periphery countries, providing social and food security.

World systems theory accounts for the role of globalization in shaping urban security dynamics. It acknowledges an interdependent and interconnected world under globalization, which causes unique urban security issues (Kourtit & Nijkamp, 2013). World cities are deeply affected by globalization and urbanization (Li et al., 2018), which draws more attention to how it affects urban security. Cities themselves are not static; they are constantly changing, and the developmental changes are not identical. Governing such complex urban areas is a complicated task because cities are fast-growing and face different and complex challenges. To effectively address these challenges, a rigorous exploration and comparative examination of the fundamental determinants shaping urban dynamics are necessary (Kourtit, 2014).

2.8. Critical Race Theory and Urban Security: Understanding Injustice and Promoting Transformation

Critical race theory (CRT) is an interdisciplinary framework that emerged in the late 1980s, serving as a response to the shortcomings of the Civil Rights Movement in addressing persistent institutional racism. CRT focuses on exposing and challenging systemic injustices embedded within social structures and institutions, aiming to promote transformative change. This theory argues that racism is not an exceptional case but a routine issue that liberal accounts failed to adequately address (Delgado & Stefancic, 2007). It focuses on how race shaped the media, political and social movements, and legislation (Gundry, 2023). In the context of urban security, critical race theory offers a significant understanding of how structural racism, power, and race shape injustice in urban areas. According to critical race theory, urban spaces are intentionally designed to perpetuate the systematic exclusion and marginalization of racial minority groups. Critical race theory can play a key role in creating equitable discourses and documenting inequalities in urban areas, presenting significant narratives on how power and race shape urban injustice (Fernandez et al., 2021).

A group of legal scholars in the United States, including Derrick Bell, Kimberlé Crenshaw, and Richard Delgado, are credited with the foundation of critical race theory in the late 1970s and early 1980s. This theory challenged and exposed chronic racism embedded in state institutions and legal systems (De Oliveira, 2010). While this theory emerged as a response to racism and race issues in the legal system, it later expanded to other fields, including psychology, sociology, and education (Green, 2010). The background of the founders of critical race theory played a critical role in shaping the ideas of urban security in several ways. For instance, Bell’s experiences as a law professor and civil rights lawyer allowed him to critique the legal system for failing to address racial inequalities in urban areas (De Oliveira, 2010). Crenshaw’s scholarly investigations into intersectionality have been instrumental in advancing the comprehension of the intricate dynamics between gender and race within the context

of multifaceted urban security concerns. His work examined how different forms of oppression intersect in urban areas (Luna, 2016). Delgado also extensively studied how urban schools perpetuate racial inequalities (Cole, 2017).

Critical race theory critiques traditional approaches to urban security. It emphasizes how race and racism shape urban security and politics. The conventional analytical frameworks of growth machine theory and urban regime theory have proven insufficient in their capacity to critically examine and encompass the intricate dynamics of race within the context of urban security (Seamster, 2015). This theory contends that urban security is about protecting marginalized communities but not the physical infrastructures (Paraušić, 2021). It also critiques traditional approaches to urban security that do not address the existing power structures and inequalities but often reinforce them (Seamster, 2015). For example, traditional approaches support increasing policing in certain areas, which could lead to the criminalization of people of color (Xenakis & Cheliotis, 2013). Critical race theory proposes that urban security should be addressed through the lens of social justice, fixing the root causes of urban insecurity, including inequality and racism (Paraušić, 2021).

CONCLUSION

Urban security is a complex issue that requires a comprehensive understanding of its underlying social, economic, and political factors. This study explored conflict theories and their contributions to understanding urban security dynamics. By analyzing critical theory, feminist theory, Marxist theory, poststructural theory, postcolonial theory, radical criminology, world systems theory, and critical race theory, we have gained valuable insights into the complexities of urban security.

Critical theory emphasizes power dynamics and domination as key contributors to urban insecurity, highlighting the political nature of urban security and the need for equitable decision-making processes. Feminist theory sheds light on the intersectionality of gender, race, and class, advocating for inclusive and non-violent notions of security that prioritize the needs and experiences of marginalized communities.

Marxist theory exposes the influence of capitalism and economic structures on urban security, emphasizing the importance of equitable cities and the empowerment of the working class. Poststructural theory challenges fixed and objective notions of security, highlighting the role of discourse and language in shaping social reality and urban security dynamics. Postcolonial theory examines the ongoing effects of colonialism on urban security, calling for justice and empowerment of marginalized communities.

Radical criminology critiques traditional approaches and focuses on addressing systemic social inequalities as a means of effectively tackling urban security. World systems theory highlights the economic disparities between countries and their impact on urban insecurity, emphasizing the need for global cooperation and addressing the root causes of urban security challenges. Critical race theory exposes structural racism and power dynamics as the underlying causes of urban injustice, calling for transformative change and social justice in urban areas.

This study has contributed to the understanding of urban security by providing a comprehensive analysis of conflict theories and their relevance to urban security dynamics. By highlighting the complexities of urban security and challenging traditional approaches, this study emphasizes the need to consider social, economic, and political factors in addressing urban security issues. The findings underscore the importance of promoting equity, social justice, and inclusive decision-making processes in urban environments.

However, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of this study. The analysis focused on selected conflict theories, and further research could explore additional perspectives to gain a more comprehensive understanding of urban security. In addition, the absence of empirical data and case studies limited the practical application of the findings. Future research should incorporate empirical studies to validate and expand the theoretical analysis.

Moving forward, future research can explore several avenues to advance the understanding of conflict theories in relation to urban security. Empirical studies can investigate the practical implications

of conflict theories, comparative studies can assess their applicability across different contexts, and interdisciplinary research can combine conflict theories with other theoretical frameworks to provide a more holistic understanding of urban security. Additionally, exploring the role of governance structures and institutions, as well as conducting longitudinal studies, can contribute to the development of effective and sustainable interventions and policies.

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