

EXPLORING THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN COMMUNITY COHESION AND CRIME IN THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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—Abstract —

Studies have shown that community cohesion is an important factor in crime reduction. Community cohesion has thrived in societies where there is a common goal and a mutual sense of belonging. Such sense of belonging and common vision has been shown to help reduce the likelihood of becoming a victim of violent crime such as robbery and assault, regardless of socioeconomic status, lifestyle and neighbourhood characteristics. This study examines the nexus between community cohesion and crime in South Africa. This secondary data analysis involved the 2014/2015 South African Victims of Crime Survey from Statistics South Africa. Using a descriptive statistics and multivariable logistic regression analysis, findings indicate that the percentage of female respondents with community cohesion was higher than the male (96.9% vs. 95.7%; $p < 0.005$). A higher proportion of unemployed respondents had community cohesion than the employed (97.8% vs. 94.6%; $p < 0.001$). The higher the level of violent crime in an area, the less the community cohesion (AOR: 0.97; $p = 0.016$). Also, there was no significant difference in community cohesion between the black, coloured and Indian households. However, white households were less likely to have community cohesion compared to blacks (AOR: 0.55; $p < 0.001$). Those who reported corruption in the public service as the non-violent crime occurring mostly in their areas were less likely to have community cohesion compared to who did not (AOR: 0.59; $p = 0.023$). The findings show that there is a high prevalence of community cohesion among the Black, Coloured and Indian populations compared to the White community in South Africa.

Key Words: *Community cohesion, crime, South Africa*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Crime is presumably a reverberating issue of concern in most transitional societies and South Africa is not an exception (Shaw, 2000; Pridemore, 2007). However, the groundswell of criminal incidences springing out of several South African communities in recent times, have made the development of effective strategies on how to reduce crime a top priority issue to the nation's policy makers. Unfortunately, community cohesion is one of the relatively unembraced strategies often deployed to mitigate against this mantra. It is a crime reduction strategy that dates back to antiquity. The notion of community cohesion is not only prevalent in South Africa, or Africa; it is also a common denominator in Europe, America, and other parts of the world, as expressed in literature (Robinson 2005; Alexander 2004; Mount & Cabras 2016; Parliament of Australia, 1998; Harrison *et al.*, 2005). For instance, community cohesion was first launched in the United Kingdom, in the wake of persistence disturbances accruing from discriminations on the basis of race, faith and ethnicity, in the streets of Northern England in the early 1920's, (Harrison *et al.*, 2005:5). These disturbances snowballed into residential segregations and widened the gap in social interactions on a cross-cultural scale, thereby breeding suspicion, intercommunity tensions and crime (Demack, *et al.*, 2010:10).

Of utmost concern in South Africa is that though community cohesion exists, its deployment to crime theatre as a veritable strategy for crime reduction has not yielded the desired results, given the spate of crimes emanating from communities in the national landscape, in recent times. Moreover, most of the previous studies (Palmary 2015; Barolsky; 2016) on community cohesion in South Africa have largely explored the concept as a strategy for achieving local solidarity against the apartheid regime and for nation building in post-apartheid era (Anderson 2012; Palmary 2015; Barolsky; 2016). Unfortunately, in contemporary times, the nature of cohesion in several South African communities still wears the pre-democracy outlook, where racial apathy is the determinant of communal solidarity, and not necessarily common interest. Such position speaks volumes in undermining national quest for crime reduction, notwithstanding the various policy initiatives introduced to mitigate against crime in the Republic. Why has it been challenging

for South African communities to embrace cohesion in contemporary times? Is there a link between community cohesion and crime reduction? Can community cohesion be an effective strategy for crime reduction when deployed in contemporary crime theatre?

Against the above backdrop, this article explores the nexus between community cohesion and crime in South Africa. The rationale behind the concept of *community cohesion* especially in a multiracial society such as South Africa is driven by the necessity for common or shared values, accommodating differences, and in developing the capacity to manage cultural diversities, as practiced in other parts of the world (Alexander 2004:540; Worley 2005:484). Community cohesion is intended at fostering a sense of belonging to a particular place, locality or community. It is also to ensure people get along in their localities, and ultimately help to maintain social control. A community where there is no cohesion will undoubtedly be prone to crime cyclically.

2. CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

The term 'community cohesion' often resonates in most public policy debates, especially in relation to crime reduction. However, it is often ambiguous, and relatively very difficult to define. The vagueness in its definition has further been blurred by its muddle-up and misinterpretation for similar concepts like 'social cohesion', or 'social capital'. Moreover, these concepts are not clearly differentiated or uniformly defined in literatures. In point of fact, in much of the writings on cohesion in South Africa (Palmary 2015; Barolsky; 2016), there is no clear distinction between community cohesion and social cohesion, as the concepts are often used interchangeably, with no distinct clarification.

Social cohesion is a broad concept that encapsulates all formal and informal factors that help to hold communities together. While the concept of social cohesion is often fluxed around, or applied to large communities, like nations (Parliament of Australia, 1998; Markus 2012), community cohesion is associated with micro-level communal sense of belonging and togetherness (Colic-Peisker & Robertson 2015:76). Hence, the differences between the two concepts can best be explained from the micro-macro dichotomy. While community cohesion represents the micro-perspective to cohesion, social cohesion could best be understood from the broader macro-community, or national perspective. Buttressing this argument, Ratcliffe, Newman and Fuller (2008:15) argued that

social cohesion “is broader and more inclusive than community cohesion”. It encompasses both intra and inter community spheres (Engel, *et al*, 2013).

Social cohesion in South Africa is often synonymously equated with the issue of nation building (Palmary, 2015:63). This assertion can be argued from the title of the draft policy document in 2012: *A national strategy for developing an inclusive and cohesive South Africa*. It was evident from the document that the idea of social cohesion in South Africa is to achieve the goal of nation building, especially in post-apartheid era. Unfortunately, such stand is in contrast to the conception and application of term ‘social cohesion’ in other parts of the world.

In several climes, social cohesion is generalised, and where it is linked to the State, it is to assess the attitudes and perceptions of people about their States; rather than of each other, as expressed in South Africa (Palmary 2015:63). What is often conceived as social cohesion in South Africa is more of community cohesion. Social cohesion, rather than community cohesion has often been embraced by policy makers in the Republic as an instrument for peaceful coexistence, reduction in violence and crime, but it has relatively not been effective, fundamentally due to the inappropriate application of the concept.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1. Crime in South Africa

Since apartheid era, South Africa has been enmeshed in violent crimes. Although, there was momentary reduction in crime rate between 1994 and 1996 (Berg &Schärf 2004:61). However, there has been a relapse in violent crimes from 1996 till date. Generally, crimes are worrisome to South Africans, but of much concern to the populace are those of violent configurations. The South African Police Service (SAPS) reported in 2011 that one third of recorded crimes in South Africa are classified as violent (SAPS, 2011). More so, a time series survey conducted by Statistics South Africa (SSA 2015) on household perception about violent crime levels between 2008 and 2014 signposted an increase. From the results, most households (43.6%) of the total sample, were of the view that violent crime in their locality had increased between 2011 and 2014 when compared to 31.2 percent for the period between 2008 and 2010 (SSA, 2015:3). These statistics portend that violent crime had increased steadily from 2008 to 2014. Similarly, from the same survey, household perception on crime in their locality between 2011 and 2014/15 revealed that 65.9 percent of the total sample perceived

housebreaking/burglary as the commonest crime, followed by house or home robbery, street robbery, and pick-pocketing or bag snatching (SSA, 2015).

In response to the upsurge in crime level in the country, the South African government introduced a number of mitigatory policies and strategies. Prominent among these strategies/policies are the National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS) of 1996 and the 1998 White Paper on Safety and Security. To complement these two national strategies, the State further strengthened the capacity of the South African Criminal Justice System (CJS). Notwithstanding the appropriateness of these initiatives, they have considerably failed to produce the anticipated results of ensuring that crime is reduced in South African communities, even in contemporary times.

There is no gainsaying the assertion that crime and its causes are both hydra-like-complex and multi-dimensional. Hence, it is instructive to state that before any mechanism can be apposite for the containment, reduction or prevention of any category of crime; first, it will require an in-depth understanding of its ramifications. Crime is a phenomenon with interlocking factors, forces and processes, often in a dynamic milieu (Olutola, 2014, Bello, 2015). It cannot be eradicated, but can only be contained, controlled and reduced, subject to effective combating strategies (Bello, 2015).

The milieu in which a crime is committed comprises the physical environment or location, persons residing in such environments, including the activities carried out in such places, which can either prevent or encourage a person to commit crime (NCPC 2000:4). To this end, it will be unrealistic to expect any agency of the State, especially the police to 'perform a magic' in terms reducing crime. Increases or decreases in crime levels as contained in yearly national crime statistics are not comprehensive yardsticks for evaluating police performance. Effective evaluation of police performance requires the consideration of a number of factors that are embedded in current socio-economic, cultural and technological environment (Olutola, 2014, Bello, 2015). Moreover, since crime sprouts out of communities (environment), it is logical that effective response to it should be directed at communities. This standpoint lends credence to the argument of Chipkin and Ngqulunga (2008:69) on cohesion in South Africa, that more than 80 percent of crimes take place between people who know each other.

A number of factors that influence crime in South Africa were discovered in literature. They include: high level of inequality, in addition to regular domestic

violence in homes, neighbourhoods, and schools (ISS, 2014:7). Holtmann and Domingo-Swartz (2008:113) further contest that crime flourishes where there is an amalgamation of societal complications or problems such as unemployment, acute poverty accruing from wide disparity between the rich and poor, history of violence, amongst others. On their part, Rasool *et al.* (2002) were of the view that high rates of substance abuse, unrestricted possession of firearms, consolidated by inadequate access to social services, form part of the factors that breed a vulnerable community with high rates of victimisation and pools of offenders. Such vulnerabilities may accentuate the rate of crime in the country on one hand, and erode communal solidarity on the other.

A typical milieu comprises diverse components. Most communities in South Africa housed a combination of the affluent or the relatively wealthy, the middle-class, the lower income class, and the poor (SSA, 2015). Such variations in classes often reflect in local commitments to the maintenance of social control, and security. Distinctive features of the affluent houses in South African communities are heavily gated houses, electric fences / high walls, including automated access (Holtmann & Domingo-Swartz 2008:118). Meanwhile, the poor in such communities often lack access to few of the afore-stated sophisticated security measures; not necessarily out of dislike for such technologies, but essentially due their impoverished conditions. Undoubtedly, there will be low level of communal solidarity in such localities, and ultimately result in an absence of cohesion. Hence, what this portends for South Africa is that crime of violent configurations seems to be concentrated in poor neighbourhoods or impoverished communities, and often affects the female gender than their male counterparts. According to Chipkin and Ngqulunga (2008:69), if criminality is indicative of an absence of communal cohesion, then these positions suggest that frontline efforts in the fight for community cohesion in South Africa should be targeted at poor communities. This is fundamental because if those socio-economic nuances are not addressed, the clamour for community cohesion will be an effort in futility.

3.2. Community cohesion and crime reduction: the nexus

The notion of community cohesion has been associated with number issues in literatures, much of which are geared towards similar goals of achieving communal solidarity and fostering a sense of belonging (Hipp & Steenbeak 2015:2; Anderson 2012:4; Lev-Wiesel 2002:39; Kasarda & Janowitz 1974:328). Studies have demonstrated that increase in the 'sense of belonging in the

community' will often result in crime reduction (Wedlock 2006: Laurence & Heath 2008:17).

Preponderantly, community cohesion has been fluxed around the issue of discrimination on grounds of race and ethnicity (Worley 2005:488; Anderson 2012:4). Anderson particularly argued that community cohesion is a remedial for peacebuilding in communities of misplaced foreign nationals that were cut in web of xenophobic violence (citing the example of South Africa in 2008). A violence crime that generated a large pool of displaced persons, refugees, amongst others will obviously erode a sense of communality and togetherness and nurture reprisals in the minds of the victims, whether overtly or covertly. The ideology of community cohesion has also been utilised by States as a peace- building mechanism in post-conflict era (Lev-Wiesel 2002:39).

There are obvious gender dimension to community cohesion discourse (Worley 2005:490; Alexander 2004). Studies have shown that there is more bonding and a high sense of togetherness among women than men in most communities. Riots, crime and violence have often been levelled against young men in communities, as exemplified in Asian communities in the United Kingdom (Alexander 2004:542). This assertion is however not to disregard the fact that crime of violent nature are also perpetrated by women.

Literatures have inextricably linked disadvantaged communities with crime (Bourguignon, 2001; Bowers, 1997; Chiu & Madden 1998; Hirschfield & Bowers, 1997). Ehrlich (1973), Chiu & Madden (1998), and Bourguignon (2001) all submit that economic inducements for crimes are higher in areas with larger inequality in the community. Hirschfield and Bowers (1997), while exploring the linkages between social cohesion (as defined as levels of social control and ethnic heterogeneity) and crime, found out that the rates of crime are significantly lower than anticipated in communities that are disadvantaged but possess high level of social cohesion. This finding suggests that community cohesion exceeds the usual socioeconomic issues attributed to fuel crime in societies such as poverty, unemployment, deprivation, to mention a few.

From the community attachment model as postulated by Kasarda and Janowitz (1974), increase in demographic configuration due to urbanisation and industrialisation are considered to major exogenous factors influencing the patterns of social behaviour. They further predicted using the same model that increase in local integration will foster a sense of shared values and goals, thereby

resulting in the reduction of crime. Of utmost importance among these goals is the capacity to ensure neighbourhoods and communities become a safe haven from crime.

From the study conducted by Sampson and Groves (1989) using the 1982 and 1984 British Crime Survey, in investigating the nexus between community cohesion and victimisation; they discovered a direct link between community cohesion and a reduction in 'mugging, street crime and stranger violence'. Sampson and Raudenbush (1999) also discovered from their study that community cohesion helps to bring people together in order to form social control, and as a form of communal intervention against criminal activities, and for public good. They exposed that collective efficacy is linked to reduction in crime and social disorder.

The nexus between community cohesion and reduction in crime rates in societies is not only a common denominator in the United States and Europe, it is also prevalent in other regions of the world. For instance, Lee (2000) discovered from a study conducted on the linkages between community cohesion and crime, using data from 15 different countries in 1992, that high levels of cohesion in communities have corresponding impacts on crime reduction. However, much of these cohesions were achieved through social control inherent in those communities, notwithstanding the socioeconomic nuances affecting them. Hence, this finding suggests a strong tie between social control and community cohesion.

The feelings and notion of belonging will often enhance social control. Such sense of belonging enables people in similar communities to get to know other people in their neighbourhood. Such indicator foster cohesion and also stand as a strong determinant of crime reduction (Wedlock 2006:9). To this end, a sense of community is what predicts crime reduction and not necessarily a sense of attachments. This assertion contradicts the theory propounded by Kasarda and Janowitz (1974) that a reduction in crime level is facilitated by high levels of attachment which breeds communal integration. Hence, community cohesion, not a sense of attachment is a veritable strategy for crime reduction.

4. METHODS

The data used in this study were obtained from the 2014/2015 South African Victims of Crime Survey (VOCS). The VOCS used a Master Sample (MS) originally designed for the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) as a sampling

frame. The multi-stage stratified samples were drawn from the Statistics South Africa's master samples from the enumeration areas established during the 2001 census. The sample for the VOCS 2014/15 used a stratified two-stage design with Probability-Proportional-to-Size (PPS) sampling of PSUs in the first stage, and sampling of Dwelling Units (DUs) with systematic sampling in the second stage.

A self-weighting design at provincial level was used and MS stratification was divided into two levels-Primary and secondary stratifications. Primary stratification was defined by metropolitan and non-metropolitan geographic area type. During secondary stratification, the Census 2001 data were summarised at PSU level. The Master Sample is based on 3 080 PSUs. The sample size for the VOCS 2014/15 had 31 390 dwelling units from 3 052 PSUs.

The detailed methods used in ensuring standardized data collection, interviews and consent procedures for the 2014/2015 VOCS have been previously published (Victims of Crime Survey 2014/15 (SSA 2015)).

4.1. Measures

Interviewer-administered questionnaires were used to obtain the socio-demographic characteristics such as gender, marital status and race of the respondents.

4.2 Dependent variable

Community cohesion was defined as knowing the names of next-door neighbours, ability to ask the neighbour to watch the respondent's house when not around and being able to trust neighbour with the respondent's children.

4.3. Independent variables

Socioeconomic characteristics

Employment: During the last week (Monday to Sunday), did you work for a wage, salary, commission or any payment in kind (including paid domestic work), even if it was for only one hour? (1) Yes and (2) No. Education was categorised into (a) No schooling (b) Grades 1-11 (c) Grade 12 (d) More than grade 12. Other variables measured were safety walking during the day or night, trust in the police, involvement in religious groups, stokvel, burial society, sports group, satisfaction with police services, perception of the levels of property and violent crime, experience of household crime such as car theft, housebreaking, murder,

theft out of motor vehicle, deliberate damaging of dwelling, motor vehicle vandalism.

4.4. Statistical analysis

Data were analysed using STATA Release 12 (Stata Corporation, College Station, Texas, USA), with appropriate weighting of selection probabilities and taking into consideration the complex sample design used in the GHS. Group differences were assessed using chi-square statistics and t-test. Multi-variable adjusted logistic regression was carried out using a backward deletion approach, starting with a full model of factors significantly associated with community cohesion. Statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$.

5. RESULTS

Of the study participants, 76.8 percent ($n=18,827$) reported trusting the South African police and 57% ($n=13,741$) reported having satisfaction in the police. Those who had community cohesion were older than those who did not have community cohesion (mean: 49.9 years vs. 42.2 years; $p < 0.001$). A higher proportion of those who were involved in a religious group had community cohesion than those who were not in any religious group (96.9% vs. 95.1%; $p < 0.001$). Among the marital status group, the divorced had the highest proportion of community cohesion. However, a lower proportion of male participants had community cohesion than their female counterparts (Table 1).

Compared to respondents who were not part of a stokvel group, those who belonged to this group were less likely to have community cohesion (aOR ; 0.55; 95% Conf. Int: 0.37-0.82). Also, those who trusted in the police were more likely to have community cohesion compared to those who did not (aOR :1.35; 95% Conf. Interval: 1.09-1.68). (Table 2).

Table 1: Prevalence of community cohesion by socio-demographic factors in South Africa

Characteristics	Prevalence %(n)	p-value
Gender		0.002
Male	95.7 (13390)	
Female	96.9 (10277)	
Race		<0.001
Black African	96.9 (18534)	
Coloured	97.6 (2545)	
Indian/Asian	92.7 (539)	

Characteristics	Prevalence %(n)	p-value
White	90.4 (2049)	
Education		<0.001
No schooling-Grade 11	98.2 (13196)	
Grade 12	94.9 (4105)	
>Grade 12	90.4 (3626)	
Employment		<0.001
No	97.8 (12947)	
Yes	94.6 (10697)	
Marital status		<0.001
Married/living together	95.6 (11163)	
Divorced	98.1 (5524)	
Single	95.8 (6888)	
Home robbery in households in the past 5years		0.035
No	96.2 (22752)	
Yes	94.1 (821)	
Theft out of motor vehicle		0.005
No	96.3 (22865)	
Yes	93.4 (610)	
Motor vehicle vandalism		0.004
No	96.2 (23224)	
Yes	90.5 (224)	
Murder in the area		<0.001
No	95.8 (19313)	
Yes	97.8 (4333)	
Street robbery in the area		0.004
No	95.7 (13993)	
Yes	96.8 (9646)	
Livestock/poultry theft		<0.001
No	95.7 (19956)	
Yes	99.4 (3659)	
Home burglary		<0.001
No	94.4 (7789)	
Yes	97.1 (16201)	
Car theft in area		<0.001
No	96.5 (20956)	
Yes	94.6 (3192)	
Bicycle theft in area		0.024
No	96.1 (23110)	
Yes	98.1 (1170)	
Religious group		<0.001
No	95.1 (10461)	

Characteristics	Prevalence %(n)	p-value
Yes	96.9 (13166)	
Burial society		<0.001
No	95.1 (14812)	
Yes	98.1 (8825)	
Stokvel/savings group		<0.001
No	95.7 (19357)	
Yes	98.4 (4274)	
Trust in police		<0.001
No	94.6 (5381)	
Yes	96.6 (18575)	
Safety during the day		0.019
Very safe	96.5 (13896)	
Fairly safe	96.0 (6534)	
A bit unsafe	95.6 (2041)	
Very unsafe	94.2 (1071)	

Table 2: Prevalence of community cohesion by crime factors in South Africa

Characteristics	Prevalence %(n)	p-value
Home robbery in households in the past 5years		0.035
No	96.2 (22752)	
Yes	94.1 (821)	
Theft out of motor vehicle		0.005
No	96.3 (22865)	
Yes	93.4 (610)	
Motor vehicle vandalism		0.004
No	96.2 (23224)	
Yes	90.5 (224)	
Murder in the area		<0.001
No	95.8 (19313)	
Yes	97.8 (4333)	
Street robbery in the area		0.004
No	95.7 (13993)	
Yes	96.8 (9646)	
Livestock/poultry theft		<0.001
No	95.7 (19956)	
Yes	99.4 (3659)	
Home burglary		<0.001
No	94.4 (7789)	
Yes	97.1 (16201)	
Car theft in area		<0.001
No	96.5 (20956)	

Yes	94.6 (3192)	
Bicycle theft in area		0.024
No	96.1 (23110)	
Yes	98.1 (1170)	

The prevalence of community cohesion was higher among respondents who reported that they had street robbery in their neighbourhoods than those who did not (96.8% vs. 95.7%; $p=0.004$). (Table 2).

Table 3: Prevalence of community cohesion by community interactive factors in South Africa

Characteristics	Prevalence %(n)	p-value
Religious group		<0.001
No	95.1 (10461)	
Yes	96.9 (13166)	
Burial society		<0.001
No	95.1 (14812)	
Yes	98.1 (8825)	
Stokvel/savings group		<0.001
No	95.7 (19357)	
Yes	98.4 (4274)	
Trust in police		<0.001
No	94.6 (5381)	
Yes	96.6 (18575)	
Safety during the day		0.019
Very safe	96.5 (13896)	
Fairly safe	96.0 (6534)	
A bit unsafe	95.6 (2041)	
Very unsafe	94.2 (1071)	

A higher proportion of those who were involved in a religious group had community cohesion than those who were not in any religious group (96.9% vs. 95.1%; $p<0.001$). Also, respondents who reported that it was very safe or fairly safe to walk in their neighbourhoods during the day reported higher levels of community cohesion than those who reported that their neighbourhoods were unsafe (Table 3).

Table 4: Multivariate logistic regression of factors associated with community cohesion. South African police

Characteristics	Odds ratio (95% Conf. Interval)
Age	1.03 (1.02-1.04)
Race	

Black African	1.0
Coloured	1.40 (0.96-2.06)
Indian/Asian	0.71 (0.45-1.11)
White	0.55 (0.41-0.74)
Education	
No schooling-Grade 11	1.0
Grade 12	0.51 (0.39-0.67)
>Grade 12	0.29 (0.22-0.39)
Employment	
No	1.0
Yes	0.76 (0.61-0.96)
Corruption in the public service	
No	1.0
Yes	0.59 (0.37-0.93)
Livestock/poultry theft	
No	1.0
Yes	3.37 (1.82-6.22)
Home burglary	
No	1.0
Yes	2.05 (1.68-2.52)
Car theft in area	
No	1.0
Yes	0.75 (0.59-0.97)
Bicycle theft in area	
No	1.0
Yes	2.43 (1.24-4.77)
Violent crime	0.96 (0.94-0.99)
Burial society	
No	1.0
Yes	0.76 (0.57-0.99)
Stokvel/savings group	
No	1.0
Yes	0.55 (0.37-0.82)
Trust in police	
No	1.0
Yes	1.35 (1.09-1.68)

Compared to respondents who were not part of a stokvel group, those who belonged to this group were less likely to have community cohesion (*aOR*; 0.55; 95% Conf. Int: 0.37-0.82). Also, those who trusted in the police were more likely to have community cohesion compared to those who did not (*aOR*: 1.35; 95% Conf. Interval: 1.09-1.68). (Table 4).

5. DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

In this article the study examined the nexus between community cohesion and crime in the Republic of South Africa. A distinction was made between community cohesion and social cohesion. The former being micro and the latter being macro. The study used a secondary data collected in the periods of 2014 to 2015 by the South African statistics office of the victims of crime survey. Sample size of the study population was twenty three thousand, seven hundred and seven (23,707) out of which twenty two thousand and seventeen (22,017) completed and returned the questionnaire. Questions asked included but not limited to whether they would asked their neighbours to look over there house if they were going away.

In the data analysis, it was revealed that cohesion was higher among female respondents than the male (96.9% versus 95.7%). Community cohesion was also higher among the unemployed than the employed (97.8 versus 94.6%). This might be due to the fact that unemployed people see themselves regularly than the employed. Employed people all things being equal are likely to leave home early in the morning only to return late in the day; probably when the neighbours are fast asleep. The data revealed a connection between community cohesion and crime; the higher the level of violent crime in an area, the lesser the community cohesion. In other words, community cohesion is conversely proportional to the level of crime. Thus, if community cohesion is high, crime rate is likely to be low.

The data confirmed that those that reported or experienced corruption in their area were less likely to have community cohesion compared to those who did not report or experience cohesion. The findings from the data also revealed different level of community cohesion among different racial groups. From the literature, it was noted that cohesion in communities has corresponding effects on crime reduction. There is also a nexus between social control and community cohesion.

Community cohesion enables people in similar communities to know other people in the communities and is a strong determinant for crime reduction. Unfortunately, the situation in South Africa is devoid or contradicts some of the literatures. According to the literature eighty per cent (80%) of the domestic violence crimes take place between people who know each other (Chipkin & Ngqulunga, 2008:69). There are several factors which vitiate enhancement of community cohesion in South Africa, among which are high level of inequality, violence in homes, neighbourhoods and dysfunctional family settings (ISS,

2014:7, Olutola, 2014). An important issue that can assist in the enhancement of community cohesion is eradication of corruption especially in the public sector of South Africa. Unfortunately, with all the happenings and realities in the socio-political and economic spheres of the country in recent times, eradicating corruption may be a tall dream

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