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# Comparative analysis of Defensible Space in CPTED housing and non-CPTED housing

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## Abstract

Pangyo New Town located in Greater Seoul, South Korea was the first new town development in which CPTED has been applied from the planning stage, and they created their own “Crime Prevention Design Guideline” by modifying the existing regulations of the successful cases of UK, US, and Canada developing them to match South Korean culture. However, there is no clear support of the effectiveness and benefits of CPTED in Korea so far, based on the available data. This research could be a good start in finding out its benefits and effects.

In order to pursue this research, two different new towns were selected. Both towns have similar populations and characters, one that has adopted CPTED and the other that has not. Then, crime rates for these selected towns were collected and compared to find out whether there is any evidence that adopting CPTED has positive effects in reducing crime incidents. In addition, qualitative analysis of the new towns was performed with the “CPTED Audit Checklist” and the “CPTED Post-Audit Evaluation Worksheet” to learn how CPTED principles were applied and implemented in the new town development.

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## 1. Introduction

Urban crime has been a big concern for a long period of time (UN-Habitat, 2007) throughout the world and researchers and practitioners alike have sought many ways to prevent and reduce crime in cities. One of the intriguing ways to do that is by designing a city safely using methods such as CPTED (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design) strategies. The term CPTED refers to a multi-disciplinary approach to deterring criminal behavior through environmental design (ICA, [www.cpted.net](http://www.cpted.net)), and it has been an important strategy in urban design since the 1970s. It has been used in various different fields such as urban planning, criminology, architecture, and building construction in an attempt to “design-out” crime in cities.

CPTED strategies have been used in the United Kingdom and United States since the 1970s. Developing and transitional countries in Asia, such as South Korea, are now beginning to adopt these ideas in urban designs and building environments in concert with the increasing rate of serious crime incidents. These incidents give South Korean cities a bad image and tend to affect urban economic values. While crime rates in South Korea are known to be very low compared to other countries, there is a significant variation throughout the country. For example, pick-pocketing, purse snatching, assault, residential burglary, and residential crime occur more frequently in major metropolitan areas, such as Seoul, than elsewhere in Korea (Overseas Security Advisory Council, 2012).

As the population density in Korean urban society has increased in recent decades, so too have crime rates. This is evidenced by the official police crime statistics for the past 3 decades (1976–2005) that demonstrate that Korean who live within urban spaces, where increasing numbers of people are living and working have become more vulnerable to crime (Park, 2010). In addition, with help from the influx of mass media outlets, Korean citizens recently have been exposed to various types of crime such as homicides, child kidnapping and sexual offences, which has caused people to be concerned about their safety in cities.

The government, police agencies, and other interested authorities are seeking solutions to control the growing number of crime incidents and mitigate the fear of crime experienced by citizens. One way to alleviate the increasing number of crime incidents is to predict them, if possible, and prevent them in advance. Therefore, in urban spaces in Korea, the concept of CPTED is being reexamined and applied as a tool for preventing crimes. Despite crime preventing efforts made in Korean urban areas, we have recognized the limitation of the police forces to manage the demand of the citizens. So, it is necessary to adopt crime prevention measures in environmental designs in order to satisfy the public's need, contribute to cities' safety, and eventually reduce the level of the fear of crime that is now growing among Korean citizens.

Since 1970s, many CPTED related studies were being done by researchers throughout countries like United States and United Kingdom, and CPTED is now considered one of the most advanced and effective methods, in some cases, in preventing crime within the living spaces. Due to the recent awareness of crime incidents in South Korea, CPTED is being adopted in the planning stage of new town developments which are spreading out rapidly in order to solve housing problems in the central area, like Seoul. Collaborating with the police, large areas like Seoul and Gyeonggi province are making active movements to fight crimes by installing CCTVs, improving streetlights, and re-arranging the street trees for better observation.

However, most of the research and studies were mainly focused on explaining the current situations of CPTED applications in South Korea and were mostly informative contents about its principles. Unfortunately there are no research papers dealing with the effectiveness of CPTED strategies since its initial application in the newly developed towns. As such, it was difficult to predict the success and failure of adopting these strategies.

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