

## **Brief summary of the research strategy in criminology**

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The current research group in criminology at Mid Sweden University has recently started its scientific labor with the commitment to develop basic (i.e. related to theory testing and theory building) and applied research in specific areas of the criminological discipline. We will work primarily on a micro-level analysis focused on the individuals' violent and delinquent behavior. Nevertheless we plan also to develop macro-level analysis mainly for theory development. The ultimate goal is to better understand the causes and consequences of crime and violence in our time. This will provide the basis to develop new strategies and tools, and improve old ones, to fight against these phenomena and to decrease its consequences on victims and on the society. Therefore we can describe our profile as an evidence-based approach.

The research group has two priority areas in which rely all the studies we are planning. They provide the foundation that give our research a logical structure. These two areas are crime prevention and theoretical criminology.

Researching in crime prevention is motivated by a social and institutional growing interest in making strategic investments in youth in order to prevent the development of lifetime offenders, instead of continuing to institute harsher punishments that lead to costly mass incarceration. At Mid Sweden University we plan to perform studies at the four levels

(1) Primary crime prevention: The target population are children and youths from schools in our region. With these line of research we plan to test hypothesis at a theoretical level that innovate the ways we look upon delinquency processes in youths. This line of research is mixed basic and applied.

(2) Secondary crime prevention: Focused on children victims of maltreatment the field is closely related with victimology and the results can be look on both sides. This line of research have a more basic research approach.

(3) Tertiary crime prevention: The objective is to evaluate the care programs delivered to youth offenders in custody. This relates with evaluation research since we test the impact of juvenile offenders' treatment models and practices. These line of research is more close to evidence-based criminology.

(4) Quaternary crime prevention: Focused on the prevention of recidivism in the community when youths finish their sentence time. These will provide insight in the study of criminal careers and desistance processes and is closer to basic research.

Developing research on the area of theoretical criminology is motivated by the complexity of its subject matter. Illuminating what causes crime is a daunting task that benefits from efforts to view its origins from many angles and through different colored lenses. Within Mid Sweden University this line of research is closely related with hate crime and extremist violence and has an analytical approach. We plan to test a recently developed theory in criminology, namely The Situation Action Theory (SAT; Wikström, 2014) According to SAT the causes of human actions are situational rather than individual or collective. Individuals do what they do because of whom they had become during their years of personal development and the features of the environment in which they take part. We choose to test theory through case-study methodology.

Finally, at Mid Sweden University we are work on theory building. Based on both basic research and an analytical approach we study the origins of violent behavior in humans and analyze what motivates the ignition of violent societies in a global world.