

CHAPTER 6

SAINTS, REVELERS AND OFFENDERS: RELATIONSHIPS IN *FESTA* SPACE-TIME

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ABSTRACT

Social interactionism occurs in space-time where the phenomenon morphs from the thematic activity to the geographical space it occurs in and the spatial relationships between the actors. The Maltese *festa* posits a ripe scenario for analysis of such interactionism and the inherent effects on safety and security. Whilst the fundamental *festa* scope banks on the sacred aspect, the activity moved through a village centre to a wider interactive (entire town) secular reality. This study investigates the occurrence of offending during the *festa* and the shoulder weeks for potential relationships between the spaces relevant to the activity through a study of expected and observed offences. The CRISOLA model serves as the basis for this study in the fields of crime, social issues and landuse and their impact on safety and security within the villages hosting the *festa*. The *festa* as a cause of crime by the relevant parties and significant others and its impact on social cohesion and operational requirements serves as a basis for proactive measures to be taken by the religious, secular and enforcement entities.

Keywords: *Festa, urban ecology, spatio-temporal, CRISOLA, Malta, landuse, social structures, crime, integrative analysis, GIS*



Introduction

The *festà* is an established activity in the Maltese Islands serving as a basis for the analysis of space-time interactions that has endured for many years, having moved from a purely liturgical activity to a secular social interactionist phenomenon. As in all such activities pertaining to the sociological constructs that maintain society, inclusive of politics, education, the economy, the family, the religious aspect has managed to maintain its existence through morphing into the diverse societal scenarios, such as leisure and recreational constructs that are experienced today (Boissevain, 1965; Koster, 1984; Inguanez, 1992; Falzon, 2007; Campbell, 2008). Whilst the fundamental *festà* scope banks on the sacred aspect, the activity moved through a village centre to a wider interactive (entire town) secular reality. The sociological functions have been investigated across the disciplines and during recent years through the use of advanced technological constructs, such as spatial information systems, one can study the phenomenon in a digital construct that can investigate relationships where they occur in space and over time, allowing for a morphing from the thematic activity to the geographical space it occurs in and the spatial relationships between the actors. The Maltese *festà* posits a ripe scenario for analysis of such social interactionism and the inherent effects on safety and security.

This study investigates the occurrence of offending during the *festà* and shoulder weeks for potential relationships between the spaces relevant to the activity through a study of expected and observed offences. The CRISOLA model serves as the basis for this study in the fields of crime, social issues and landuse and their impact on safety and security within the villages hosting the *festà*. The *festà* as cause of crime by the relevant parties and significant others and its impact on social cohesion and operational requirements serves as basis for proactive measures to be taken by the religious, secular and enforcement entities.

Exploring New Methodologies

In terms of criminal activity that may occur during the activity under study, researchers need to explore other scientific methodologies to study such phenomena. Environmental criminology takes into account such activities through its study on the boundaries within which people act, such as work spaces, meeting-points and recreational areas. McLaughlin and Muncie (2001, p.133) identified four spatial approaches to the topic: i) mainly the spatial distribution of crime, ii) risk of crime victimisation in space, iii) spatialised fear of crime and iv) particular crime flows from one area to another.

Giddens's theory of Structuration (Giddens, 1984) stated that sociological studies must be based on the analysis of 'social practices ordered across space and time', which theory reflects the take-off point of the Chicagoan School. Interactionist structures result in a practical consciousness that is able to follow regular patterns in space and time. One needs to understand how place, over time, is part of the practical consciousness of social actors who engage in behaviour, including actions defined as criminal (Bottoms and Wiles, 2001, p. 19). This construct is being investigated in terms of the next spatial level, that of virtual environments and online worlds (Toet and van Schaik, 2012). Other theories that have helped structure these schools of thought include Opportunity Theory that looks at crime from the point of view of the offender: the opportunity to carry out an offence and; the level of target attractiveness of the area. Such issues posit fundamental questions, especially in determining what a researcher must look for in determining attractors. Another theory called Routine Activities Theory looks at the day-to-day activities of victims and offenders in relation to the location and timing of offences. Crime is closely related to the offenders' activities as well as the activities of potential victims. New opportunities offer themselves, such as attacks on the elderly or party-goers. The mere fact that an action is a

routine activity implies that there is an element of social activity – there is an interaction that is being portrayed (Cohen and Felson, 1979). Giddens (1984) concept of ‘locale’ looks at a wider aspect than just place, integrating the interactions occurring therein. An analysis of crime in particular areas (by type of crime and activity in that area, for example retail) may bring up specific time-periods when offences occur. This activity might be taken as a function of the convergence of likely offenders and suitable targets in the absence of capable guardians (Cohen and Felson, 1979). The *fiesta* phenomenon may offer such an opportunity for offending due to its complex nature where offenders may be active during the *fiesta* day due to the large congregations at the village center and low dwelling occupancy rates during the *fiesta* activities as well as in the *fiesta* week where various activities are held during that week. This is also accentuated by the previous shoulder week where offenders may explore the locality observing the routine activity of the locality where bands and organisers are assembling various *fiesta* street furniture. The post-*fiesta* shoulder week also partakes to dwelling vacancy in the post-*fiesta xalata* and also in the observance of routine activities during the street furniture dismantling phase.

This study does not attempt to analyse such an activity on an hourly rate, but on a *fiesta*-day and weekly rate. The findings from this study elicit the need to further micro-study the phenomenon on a daily and hourly phase.

The CRISOLA Model

The CRISOLA Model (Formosa, 2007) explores the phenomenon of crime and its relationship to social dynamics within a spatial construct (crime, social and landuse termed CRISOLA). This phenomenon of crime research through horizontal approaches were tackled through a project entitled ‘JANUS: The Spatial and Socio-Physical Faces of Crime – a hotspot approach to crime mitigation’ funded through the ISEC Programme 2009 Action

Grants 'Prevention of and Fight Against Crime'. The research base focused on the theory of social disorganisation, as based on the concept of human urban ecology (Maguire, Morgan and Reiner, 1997, p. 308). Urban ecology theorizes that there is a positive correlation between crime, social issues and land-use (Entorf and Spengler, 2000). Such studies emphasise the vitality of social landscapes and how they impinge on or are impacted by the physical landscapes, which CRISOLA posits for analytic functioning.

This study employs high-end information systems that have a spatial construct using GIS technology and the spatio-temporal techniques it launched due to its versatility in handling large-volume and diverse datasets spread across multi-disciplinary areas. Different methodologies have been investigated as well as an analysis given of the types of measures that GIS employs to analyse crime. Crime is a dynamic and ever flowing river in a socio-economic/socio-cultural highly volatile field as it is based on the psychological makeup of the various actors involved in crime from the offender, through the victim through law enforcers, to the analyst. The only way to analyse such a situation is to use a technology that would allow for fast-track real-time tactical analysis as well as macro long-term strategic analysis, an option serviced by GIS.

In the *festa* study, the horizontal dynamics established by the social interactions resulted in the identification of an understanding of the study areas' dynamics and the relative impact on the social capital and social cohesion; that on security and safety and that on spatial capital. The analytical results would in turn aid the researchers to propose policy change. This is accommodated by social change, criminological change and landuse change as based on the main finding of the area under study.

In Search of Perspectives on Crime

The JANUS (Formosa, Scicluna, Azzopardi, 2013) project that was based on the CRISOLA model approach to the analysis of crime in these Islands, sought to identify the offence-social relationship through fieldwork and interviews with local councils and policy makers. They were interviewed on social, landuse and criminological constructs and identified phenomena down to street level realities. Findings point towards the fact that local councils hold monthly meetings with the police, thus communication-wise, the local council as an administration entity does feel that efforts of serving their residents are met. However, residents seem to feel helpless when faced with specific behaviours such as drug-abuse and drug-abuse-related crime that goes on in certain localities. Most residents claim that police presence only increases during the village *fešta* season. The latter phenomenon also culminates in diverse outcomes that disrupt the social norms, such as the strong rivalry experienced between the devotees/supporters of the two major village feasts, that have led to squabbles and disorder (and that sometimes compelled the Church authorities to cancel the outside festivities). The councils state that this rivalry and subsequent offences occurring during the *fešta* period constitute a threat to the tranquility and security of the villages. Typical, village-feast-related offences (rowdy, unruly behaviour, fights and possibly indecent exposure) are committed during the feast-periods.

Methodology

The study of a thematic aspect such as crime cannot be isolated from the interactive aspects it is embedded in, as crime does not stand alone: it interacts within a wider and more complex environment. Formosa (2007) identified various elements that are required for the understanding of crime and its horizontal inputs and outputs. The need to bring together each aspect

and build a mindmap that helps set out a process to depict a basic and generic model on how crime, social and landuse issues interact together was identified. This resulted in a review process that also identified techniques and datasets required for such an analytical process. The use of these datasets resulted in the creation of a conceptual model that is relevant to **CR**ime and to the **SO**cial and **LA**nduse aspects, herein embedded as the acronym **CRISOLA**.

The methodology partaken to in this study is based on offences reported to the Police between 2013 and 2014. The process employed two distinct processes that entailed the analysis of offences on the specific *festa* dates and those pertaining to weekly descriptors.

Specific *Festa* Day

The specific *festa* day analysis employed a listing of all the *festa* dates pertaining to all towns and villages. Some villages hosted more than one feast and thus each was computed within this research. The scope of this section is to analyse whether the specific *festa* day elicited offence rates that were different to the mean offence rates. The process entailed the study of offences as spread over the islands pertaining to each year, then a mean is extracted for every day, which process renders the expected offences pertaining to each day. This process was further refined through the calculation of the expected offences as based on every individual town or village. This ensures that any differential analysis pertains to a specific town, which process accounts for offence rate changes that may be experienced in such recreation towns as Valletta, Sliema, San Pawl il-Baħar and San Ġiljan. These towns serve as outliers should one employ a national daily expected rate as the same outlier towns would weigh down the data and rendering a skewed result. Taking each expected rate for every town based on that town's mean ensures that the *festa*-related data pertaining to each town relates to that same town

and changes between each day within that town represents real changes as against a national mean that may 'pull' the data towards the main recreational towns and dampen the relatively small offence incidents reported within the villages.

The process employed to analyse the *fiesta* day offence analysis took into account those offences reported during the *fiesta* day; 24-hour period. In order to analyse whether there are any other time-related factors that may contaminate the data and to posit all reports on the same level, where *fiestas* are cross-related to normal non-*fiesta* days, a control group was introduced in the study. The control group took the form of an analysis of offences on a related phenomenon that exhibits special interactivity during a 'holiday' context but controlled for across the nation. Malta is party to a series of national days and such were employed to gauge offence rates during these days of festivities against those registered during the village *fiesta* days and the mean expected offence rate. This process ensures that the study factors in whether any differences were experienced during the *fiesta* phenomenon in its wider context, whilst focusing on the particular activities generated through national and village festivities.

***Fiesta* Week and Shoulder Weeks**

The second part of the study involved the analysis of offences within a weekly construct, which construct enables the study to build a robust method based on extended *fiesta* period. These periods were split into three 7-day periods pertaining to the: a) the *fiesta* week starting from the Monday before the feast should such fall on a Sunday and flowing according to the day of the feast should such fall on another day of the week, b) a pre-*fiesta* shoulder week that precedes the *fiesta* week, where the festivities may have not yet started but occur during the preparatory phase. The third period pertains to the shoulder week following the *fiesta* conclusion, which period pertains to the *fiesta xalata*

and the cleanup/dismantling period. The process entailed the statistical analysis of the observed offences as against the expected offences, which methodological process is based on the Craglia et al. (2001) method as enhanced within the Maltese context in Formosa (2007).

The data inputting process was based on the spatial georeferencing of all offences registered within the years 2013 and 2014 where those that fell within the periods under study were tagged according to the space, time and location they operated within. The phenomenon approach to spatialisation depicts a reality where the study brings spatial statistics into social research where statistics is not yet considered the mainstay for scientific analysis in the local scene, and the spatial dimension may yet prove the jolting kick to make researchers aware of the potential of visual statistics. The study creates its own crime-specific spatial maps, crime-landuse analytical maps as well as crime-social analytical maps and statistics based on a GIS analysis.

Craglia, Haining and Wiles (2000), used address point data as their main spatial level, where they state that problems with 'fuzziness' occurred when data was not located in the correct location. Another problem also included the locations of crime that are given an 'extended' address rather than a specific point. For example car thefts are usually designated a street location, rather than the exact spot they occurred in. This poses a problem since streets can stretch practically right across a town or village, such as in the Maltese situation. Does one locate the crime at the exact centre of the street line potentially misplacing the location and creating crime areas where they do not exist with the resultant diversion of services (Ireland, 1998; Hirschfield and Bowers, 1997)? The methodology used in this study was based on random dispersal along a street centreline buffer.

Base Findings

Formosa (2007) identified zones offence changes across space where the relationship between crime and the officially designated areas, focusing on the issue of village cores was investigated. This base study served as the basis for the final part of the *fešta* study. Analysing offences based around the village cores and their 100m buffer areas, the results show that the village core areas host most offences with decreasing rates the further out one moves from the boundaries. The results show that there is a similar trend for offences reported to the police and offences committed by convicted offenders.

The offence categories sees the core of the towns and villages as having the highest rate of offences occurring therein. The figures range from 33% of all offences reported to the police with another 21% and 10% in the immediate 100m and 200m boundaries totaling 64% of the offences registered within 1km from the town centre. This figure is nearly replicated by the known offenders' offences which totaled 78% in the same areas with 49% committed within the cores, thus indicating a higher propensity for these offenders to predate in the centres. Considering that offences within the core boundaries comprise 90% of all registered crime, the village cores are the main attractors for the larger part of all offences, particularly so for known offenders. The 2007 study identified that inner sectors of the village cores host most offences, however further detailed analysis shows that offences do diminish in number the further one moves from the cores, namely away from the social and community centres, retail areas and moves into the residential areas of a town. Offences gradually die out by the tenth duffer indicating that most offences in reality occur within a very short distance from the centre where up to 73 percent of offences occur within 300m of a core. This finding is an effective tool for decision makers to concentrate their efforts in a relatively small area in comparison to the rest of the islands, considering that

this area totals 70 sq.km (inclusive of entire areas Valletta and the Three Cities) from the total 316 sq.km. In terms of offence types in these areas, the highest remain violence against the person, serious and slight wounding, burglary dwelling, ‘theft other’, fraud and forgery and criminal damage. This indicates that a relatively large number of serious offences are found within the village cores. Such results to some extent indicate adherence to the Broken Windows Theory that can be further analysed through a study of the old cities’ crime situation.

The requirement for an analysis of the impact of the village feast on the surrounding zones was further investigated for the years 2013-2014.

A total of 35,198 offences were investigated, of which 5,859 pertained to offences occurring during the periods under study and another 1,231 pertaining to the national days. In effect 20% of all offences occur during the *festa* periods.

***Festa* Main Findings**

Laying the groundwork

The main findings of the study show that the *festa* period is characterised by highly concentrated offences that through visual interpretation show that the offences are located into specific zones. Figure 1a depicts the offences for 2013-2014 and shows that whilst some isolated incidents are reported in some villages, others are found in proximity to each other, pointing to a common factor through the pivots that may be accentuating such proximity. Interestingly, the *festa* weekly spatial points (Figure 1b) depict an even higher density concentration of offences in proximity to each other within the towns under study. The pre-*festa* week (Figure 1c) and post-*festa* week (Figure 1d) and shoulder periods identify varying incident totals across the villages.

Figure 1a: Village Festa Day 2013-2014



Figure 1b: *Festa* Week 2013-2014b



Figure 1c: Pre-Festa Week 2013-2014

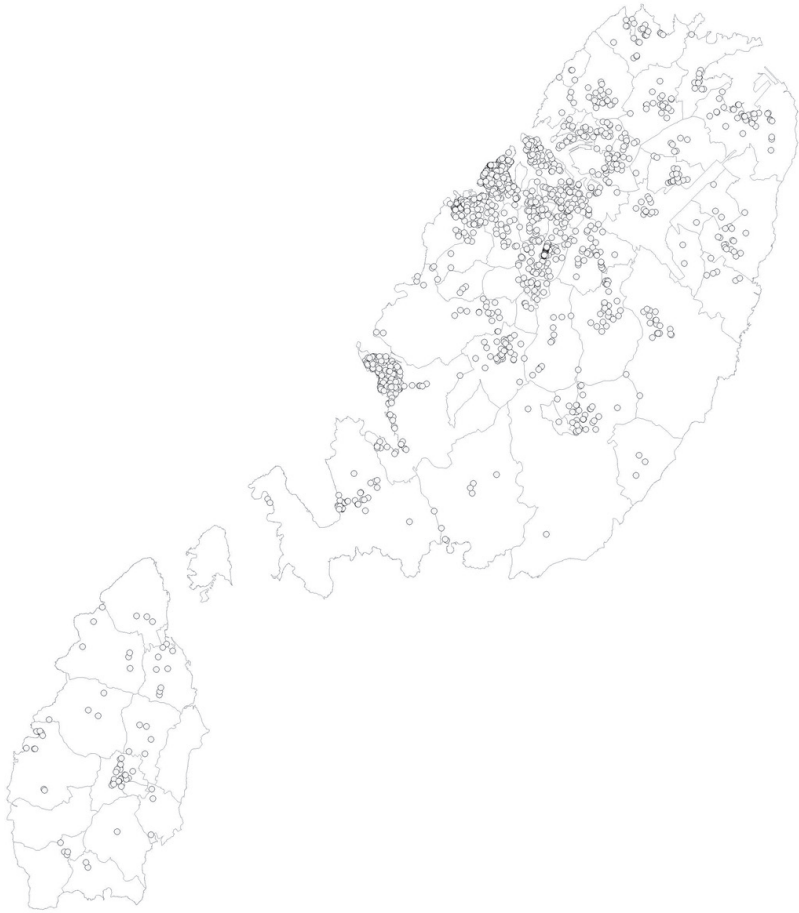


Figure 1d: Post-Festa Week 2013-2014



Offences During the *Festa* Day

The *festa* day analysis shows that the offences (observed) occurring during the feast day ranged from no offences in some councils that did not register any reports to a reporting maximum of 36 times (36x) the expected rates (Craglia et al., 2000). This is highly problematic for such areas as the offending issue is concentrated in a small time period where enforcement or surveillance is limited. Għasri, Birgu and Pietà topped the 2014 top of the league whilst Munxar, Għarb and Mqabba topped the 2013 rates. The three localities topped the 10x the daily expected rate for the same towns in each year under study. This finding is significant even more so when compared to the national days rates that registered very low rates ranging from 0 to 3 times the mean rate. This issue highlights the use of the control since when compared to the expected rate show both a very large rate of offences occurring in a very short number of hours but also are very high even when compared to the control findings. The national rate does not attract high numbers of offences, however the fact that the study included this factor, the more pronounced is the difference with the *festa* day rate, when one would expect and offence rate the similar between the study group a and the control. Table 1 depicts the data for 2014 as an example of the offence rates experienced by each locality on the daily and weekly rates.

Whilst nearly all towns and villages experiences relatively high rates of offending than the expected figures, the results show that Gozo suffers heavily from *festa*-related offences as depicted in Figures 2a and 2b (left bars in both figures). Whilst one may read with caution the figures experienced by the main recreation towns of San Pawl il-Baħar, Sliema, San Ġiljan and Valletta, the model factored in such potential skews through the method described earlier, thus the relative change experienced by the towns is consonant with the experiences of the other

town. Interestingly, the southern and harbour towns experience higher rates than the surrounding villages.

In contrast, the national days control rates, whilst showing slightly higher rates than the expected figures, their effect on offending is relatively low or inexistent (Figures 2a-2b right hand bars).

Figure 2a: Festa Day 2013 - Daily Rates

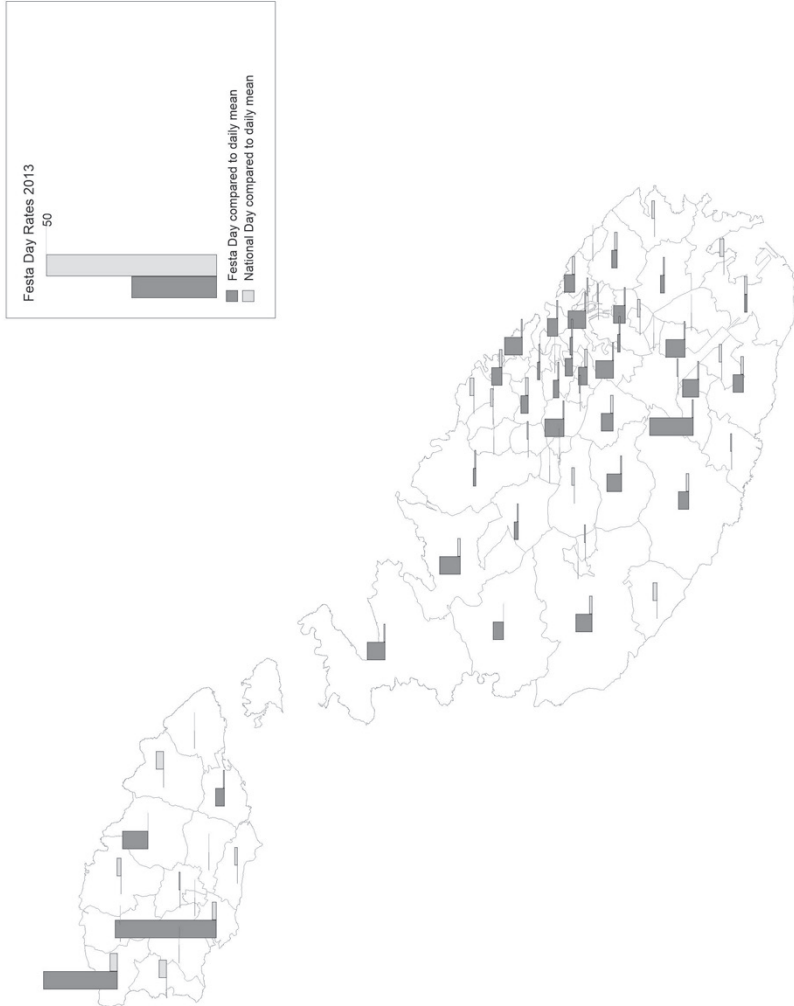
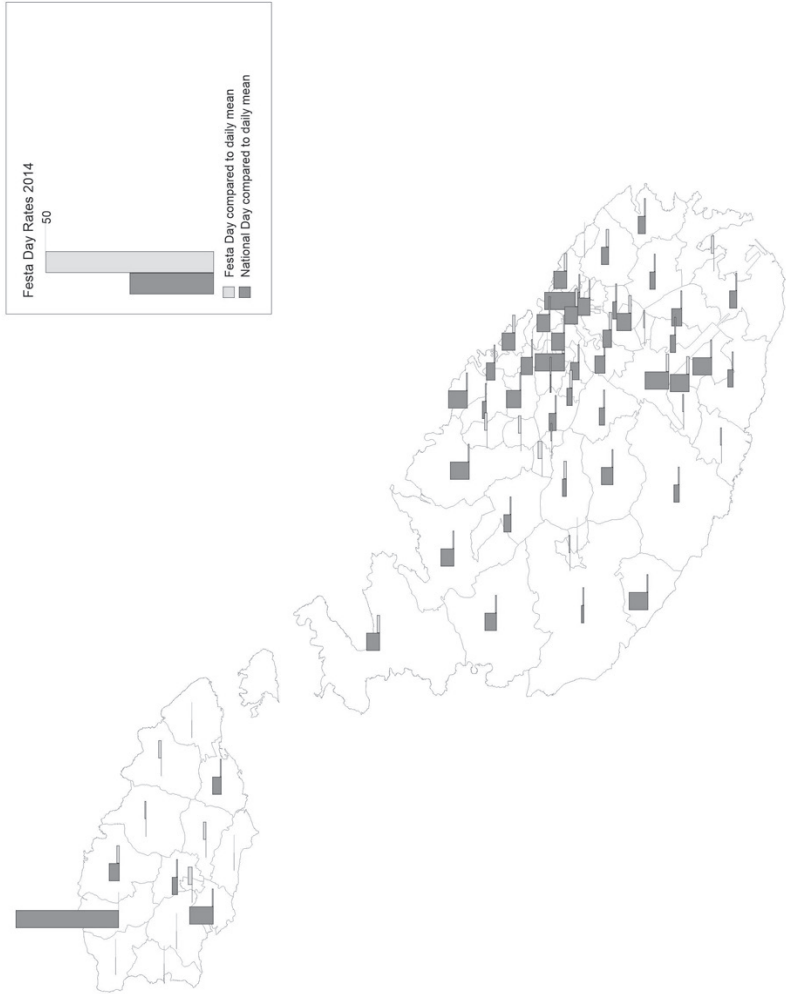


Figure 2b: *Festa* Day 2014 - Daily Rates



Offences during the *Festa* Week and Shoulder Weeks

An analysis of the weekly rates shows that offending during the *fest*a week and the shoulder weeks does result in a significant difference between the expected rates and observed rates. In addition the differences between the three different week periods is very pronounced as depicted in Table 1 and Figures 3a-3b.

The analysis shows that the *fest*a week (weighted by the *fest*a day high rates as described in the section above), also experiences a high rate than that expected. 72% of all localities render more than twice the expected rates with 5 localities registering more than five times (5x) the expected rates. Three of these (Fontana, San Lawrenz and Għasri) are Gozitan localities and gauge 8.0x, 6.1x and 5.2x respectively. These very high rates posit the need to increase enforcement during this specific period both in terms of preparedness and on-the-ground security, something even more important when the routine activity of those attending liturgical and profane activities leave their property unguarded and at risk, whilst also risking themselves in their aggregation in high-density areas are offered as an opportunity for offences such as bodily harm, pick-pocketing and theft.

An analysis of the pre-*fest*a week renders this period as more dangerous than the *fest*a week period as the offences reported are higher during this period in nearly all localities. This could be due to the fact that the property posits a higher-rate target due to the number of persons involved in the *fest*a activities such as bands (where applicable), street furniture assembly, which activities necessitate the introduction of third parties where the routine activity and opportunity potential is better studied. Whilst more research is required in order to understand this phenomenon, the interesting aspect is that 76% of all localities experienced more than twice the expected rates (2x), higher than the *fest*a week and the post-*fest*a week. Again, of the 9 localities registering more than 5 times (5x) the national rate, 5 hail from Gozo and 5 from Malta with the highest (San Lawrenz)

registering 9.2x the expected rate, figures that are of concern to safety and security, requiring the necessary surveillance and enforcement.

The post-*festa*, whilst experiencing higher than 2x the expected rates for 67% of the localities, is ranged between 2x and 4x for most town, with 3 villages experiencing more than 5x the expected rate. These are all Gozitan villages with Xewkija at 6.8x, Għasri at 5.2x and Qala at 5.0x. Gozo appears to have a very high experience in offence rate spikes across the entire weekly spectrum. The main issue that is also resultant from the JANUS findings relates to the fact that offending is also related to a feeling of safety that may be displaced in terms of whether it is a perceived one as against an actual issue. The key-in-the-lock phenomenon is still very evident in some towns such as Xewkija and other villages and is in contrast to the realities experienced by facts as identified in the current study. Coupled with the fact that some towns also organize the *xalata* (a trip to the beach on the day-after the *festa* day) where some towns practically vacate for a day, the opportunities offered are exponential as few guardians are left to safeguard the properties. Again, more studies are required to understand the other CRISOLA pivots such as the landuse aspects and interactions between the social activities, the crime and the location they occur in.

Figure 3a: Festa 2013 - Weekly Rates

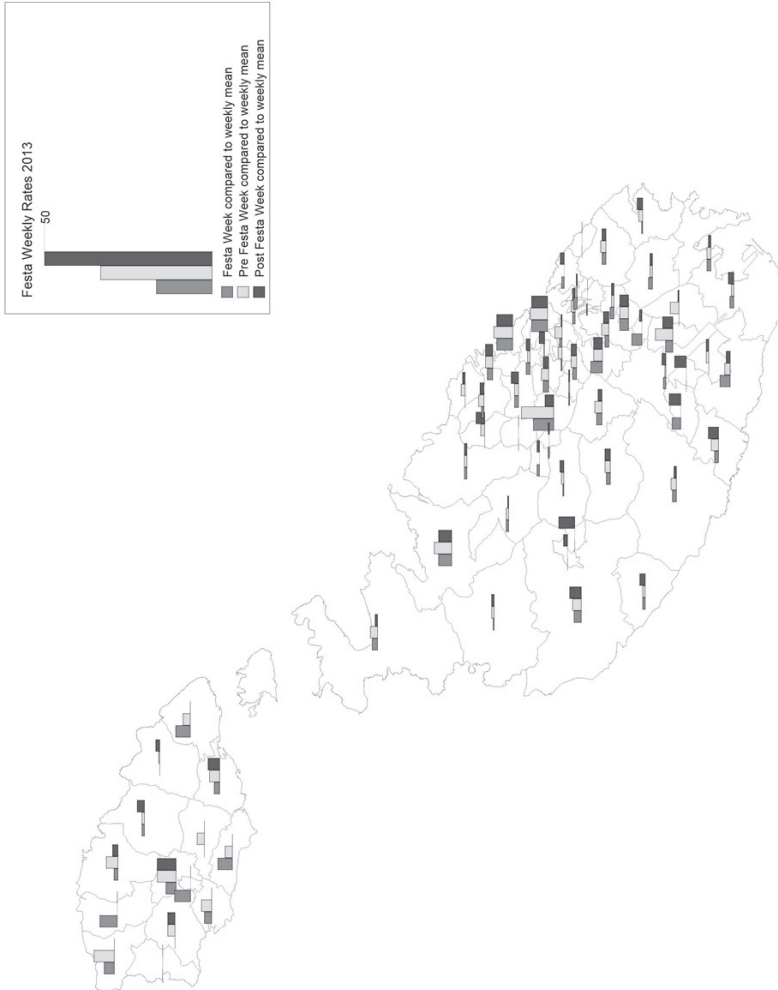


Figure 3b: *Festa* 2014 - Weekly Rates

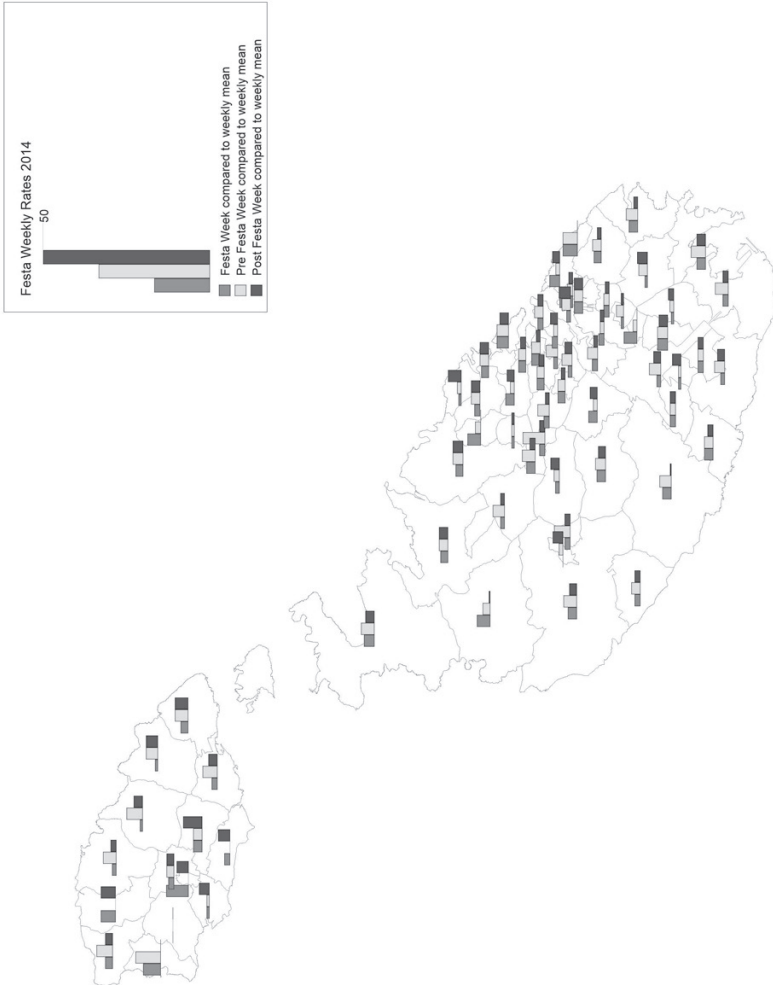


Table 1: Expected and Observed Rates 2014

Locality	Daily Mean (\bar{y}) (expected)	Festa Day compared to daily rate $X(y)$ (observed)	National Day compared to daily rate (based on 18 national days) $X(y)$ (observed)	Weekly Average based on yearly figure (n) (expected)	Festa Week compared to weekly rate $x(n)$ (observed)	Pre-Festa Week compared to weekly rate $x(n)$ (observed)	Post-Festa Week compared to weekly rate $x(n)$ (observed)
ATTARD	0.6	1.6	1.1	4.4	1.6	2.3	3.2
BALZAN	0.2	0.0	0.3	1.3	2.2	8.2	2.2
BIRGU	0.2	12.6	0.7	1.7	4.8	2.4	1.8
BIRKIRKARA	1.5	2.7	0.7	10.6	2.4	4.4	1.8
BIRŽEBBUĠA	1.2	2.5	0.5	8.5	2.1	4.7	1.9
BORMLA	0.6	5.3	0.7	4.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
DINGLI	0.1	6.9	0.4	1.0	2.0	2.9	2.0
FGURA	0.6	1.6	0.6	4.4	2.3	2.1	1.4
FLORIANA	0.8	4.9	0.7	5.7	2.1	1.7	2.8
FONTANA - GHAWDEX	0.0	0.0	1.6	0.3	8.0	0.0	4.0
GHAJNSIELEM - GHAWDEX	0.3	3.3	0.4	2.1	1.9	5.2	3.3
GHARB - GHAWDEX	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	2.9	5.8	2.9
GHARGHUR	0.1	0.0	0.9	0.9	4.5	2.3	0.0

YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE *FESTA* IN MALTA

Locality	Daily Mean (y) (expected)	Festa Day compared to daily rate $X(y)$ (observed)	National Day compared to daily rate (based on 18 national days) $X(y)$ (observed)	Weekly Average based on yearly figure (n) (expected)	Festa Week compared to weekly rate $x(n)$ (observed)	Pre-Festa Week compared to weekly rate $x(n)$ (observed)	Post-Festa Week compared to weekly rate $x(n)$ (observed)
GHASRI - GHAWDEX	0.0	36.5	0.0	0.2	5.2	0.0	5.2
GHAXAQ	0.3	3.9	0.7	1.8	1.1	1.7	2.2
GUDJA	0.5	2.0	0.5	3.6	3.9	3.7	3.1
GŻIRA	1.2	4.3	0.4	8.2	2.7	2.5	2.1
HAMRUN	0.9	3.2	0.4	6.6	1.7	3.5	2.6
IKLIN	0.1	0.0	0.9	0.8	1.2	1.2	1.2
ISLA	0.2	4.7	1.1	1.5	1.4	3.4	4.1
KALKARA	0.2	4.9	0.8	1.4	3.5	1.4	2.8
KERĊEM - GHAWDEX	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
KIRKOP	0.1	7.0	1.2	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0
LIJA	0.1	0.0	1.8	0.9	3.4	4.5	2.3
LUQA	0.5	8.6	1.1	3.3	1.8	4.3	2.5
MARSA	1.1	3.6	0.6	7.8	2.2	3.6	1.4
MARSASKALA	0.8	2.6	0.7	5.4	3.2	4.1	1.9

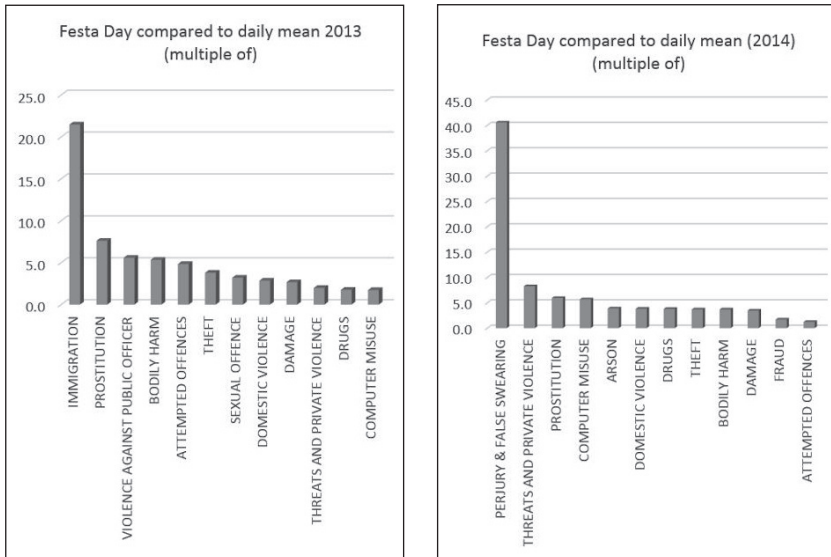
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MARSAXLOKK	0.3	0.0	0.8	2.4	3.0	5.5	3.0
MDINA	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.5	1.9	5.8	1.9
MELIEHA	1.1	4.7	0.8	7.5	3.6	4.5	3.2
MĠARR	0.2	4.0	0.4	1.8	4.6	2.9	0.6
MOSTA	1.1	2.7	0.4	7.9	1.8	4.2	1.8
MQABBA	0.1	0.0	0.4	0.9	2.2	2.2	2.2
MSIDA	1.3	0.8	0.7	9.2	2.7	2.7	2.4
MTARFA	0.1	0.0	0.7	0.6	0.0	1.7	3.5
MUNXAR - GHAWDEX	0.1	8.5	0.5	0.8	1.2	1.2	3.6
NADUR - GHAWDEX	0.2	0.0	1.0	1.2	0.8	4.2	4.2
NAXXAR	0.7	6.8	0.5	5.2	2.5	3.7	3.5
PAOLA	1.0	3.1	0.8	6.8	2.4	1.5	1.5
PEMBROKE	0.3	7.2	0.6	2.0	1.0	1.5	4.6
PIETÀ	0.5	10.8	1.1	3.3	1.5	4.3	1.8

Locality	Daily Mean (y) (expected)	Festa Day compared to daily rate $X(y)$ (observed)	National Day compared to daily rate (based on 18 national days) $X(y)$ (observed)	Weekly Average based on yearly figure (n) (expected)	Festa Week compared to weekly rate $x(n)$ (observed)	Pre-Festa Week compared to weekly rate $x(n)$ (observed)	Post-Festa Week compared to weekly rate $x(n)$ (observed)
QALA - GHAWDEX	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.4	2.5	5.0	5.0
QORMI	1.4	2.1	0.6	10.2	3.3	1.7	2.7
QRENDI	0.1	0.0	0.4	1.0	3.0	3.0	2.0
RABAT	0.8	1.2	0.7	5.7	3.4	4.6	2.5
RABAT - GHAWDEX	0.5	2.1	0.5	3.4	2.0	2.9	2.9
SAFI	0.1	6.9	0.8	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
SAN ĠILJAN	7.5	3.3	0.8	52.7	2.9	3.2	3.0
SAN ĠWANN	0.8	5.2	0.4	5.4	3.2	1.9	2.4
SAN LAWRENZ - GHAWDEX	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	6.1	9.2	0.0
SAN PAWL IL-BAHAR	3.6	5.0	0.6	25.4	2.5	3.3	3.1
SANNAT - GHAWDEX	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.5	2.1	0.0	4.2
SANTA LUĊIJA	0.1	0.0	0.7	0.6	5.0	1.7	0.0
SANTA VENERA	0.5	2.1	0.8	3.3	2.7	2.7	1.8
SIGĠIEWI	0.4	2.3	0.8	3.0	3.3	4.0	0.7

Locality	Daily Mean (y) (expected)	Festa Day compared to daily rate $X(y)$ (observed)	National Day compared to daily rate (based on 18 national days) $X(y)$ (observed)	Weekly Average based on yearly figure (n) (expected)	Festa Week compared to weekly rate $x(n)$ (observed)	Pre-Festa Week compared to weekly rate $x(n)$ (observed)	Post-Festa Week compared to weekly rate $x(n)$ (observed)
SLIEMA	3.2	5.0	0.8	22.3	4.4	4.4	3.0
SWIEQI	0.7	1.4	0.6	5.2	2.3	3.1	3.3
TA' XBIEX	0.3	0.0	0.2	1.9	3.2	3.2	1.6
TARXIEN	0.4	5.5	1.1	2.5	1.2	2.8	1.2
VALLETTA	1.8	4.5	0.5	12.4	2.3	3.3	2.3
XAGHRA - GHAWDEX	0.1	0.0	0.4	0.9	1.1	5.7	3.4
XEWKLIJA - GHAWDEX	0.1	0.0	0.9	0.9	3.4	3.4	6.8
XGHAJRA	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.8	5.2	5.2	0.0
ŻABBAR	0.8	2.5	1.0	5.6	2.9	3.0	1.4
ŻEBBUĠ	0.7	4.1	0.5	5.2	3.1	3.5	2.9
ŻEBBUĠ - GHAWDEX	0.3	3.8	0.9	1.8	1.6	4.9	2.2
ŻEJTUN	0.9	2.2	0.7	6.3	1.3	3.3	3.8
ŻURRIEQ	0.5	1.9	0.4	3.7	1.6	3.8	2.4
Grand Total	45.6	3.6	0.8	320.3	2.7	3.3	2.6

Offences by Crime Categories

This aspect of the analysis elicited some skewed figures that are both interesting for their occurrence and also for the fact that they happened during the *festa* day. The analysis of 2013 and 2014 offences reported during the *festa* day (Figure 4) depicts a situation where the commonalities between the two years include prostitution, bodily harm, theft, domestic violence, damage, drugs, threats and private violence. The spikes experienced in immigration (20x the expected rate) in 2013 and perjury in 2013 (40x the expected rates) are deemed as outliers due to the fact that they occurred in specific areas and instances that required micro-studies to elicit the specific occurrence within which they operated. The other cases that are analysed offer an interesting outcome from this study and are experienced in both years showing a consistency in the activity occurrence. Violence against public officer, whilst increasing in 2013 on a national scale is also reflected in the highest categories for 2013, though not at the highest ranking in 2014, thus not figuring in Figure 4. However it is interesting to note that prostitution registered 7.6x and 5.9x respectively for the two years under study. Further study by location and space-time would elicit how this activity operates. Bodily harm, theft and domestic violence rate at 2.9x to 5.3x, whilst threats and private violence rate up to 8.3x in 2014. Drugs is also nearly higher at 1.8x and 3.8x respectively. Interestingly also is that during feast days computer misuse is ranked from 1.7x and 5.7x.

Figure 4: Festa Day offence categories

In terms of the weekly analysis of 5,532 cases (Table 2), offence categories are mainly related to theft from person and from property, damage, fraud, bodily harm, domestic violence and violence against public officers. The spread across the weeks shows that the highest ranking offences on a weekly basis refers to theft which has a greater component in the post-*festa* week followed by the *festa* week and then by the pre-*festa* week. Theft has a 50+ % component of all offences.

However, damages are slightly higher for damages during the pre-*festa* week followed by *festa* week and post-*festa* week. Other main offences include fraud, followed by bodily harm, domestic violence, attempted offences and bodily harm. These figures show that the *festa* day offences differ significantly from the weekly spreads as they are more detailed in terms property-related as against person-related that is evident in the *festa* day offences.

Table 2: Offences by Rates (percentage of total reported)

Category	Feast Week	Pre-Feast Week	Post-Feast Week	Grand Total
THEFT	52.2	50.8	54.6	52.4
DAMAGE	21.3	21.4	20.8	21.2
FRAUD	6.0	8.7	3.6	6.3
BODILY HARM	6.3	4.7	5.5	5.4
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	5.2	5.1	5.2	5.2
ATTEMPTED OFFENCES	2.8	3.2	3.3	3.1
VIOLENCE AGAINST PUB. OFFICER	1.3	1.1	1.5	1.3
COMPUTER MISUSE	1.0	1.2	1.1	1.1
THREATS AND PRIVATE VIOLENCE	1.3	0.7	1.4	1.1
DRUGS	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.9
SEXUAL OFFENCE	0.3	0.5	0.8	0.5
PROSTITUTION	0.6	0.7	0.2	0.5
ARSON	0.1	0.6	0.2	0.3
...

This finding points towards the analysis of *festa* day offences by spatial graduated outputs where a visualisation analysis shows that whilst theft follows the national generic patterns related to landuse and social and commercial activities (Figure 4a), in terms of bodily harm, the villages have higher rates during the *festa* day activities (Figure 4b). Figure 4c highlights the issue that violence against public officers is very high in Birkirkara, Fgura, Gżira and San Ġiljan. Damages (Figure 4d) are also diffused across most villages reflecting the higher presence of revelers, visitors, patrons and their property such as cars in the locality. The opportunity offered by the localities serves as an attractor for incidents as related to higher density aggregation and spatial proximity.

Figure 4a: Festa Day 2013-2014 Theft

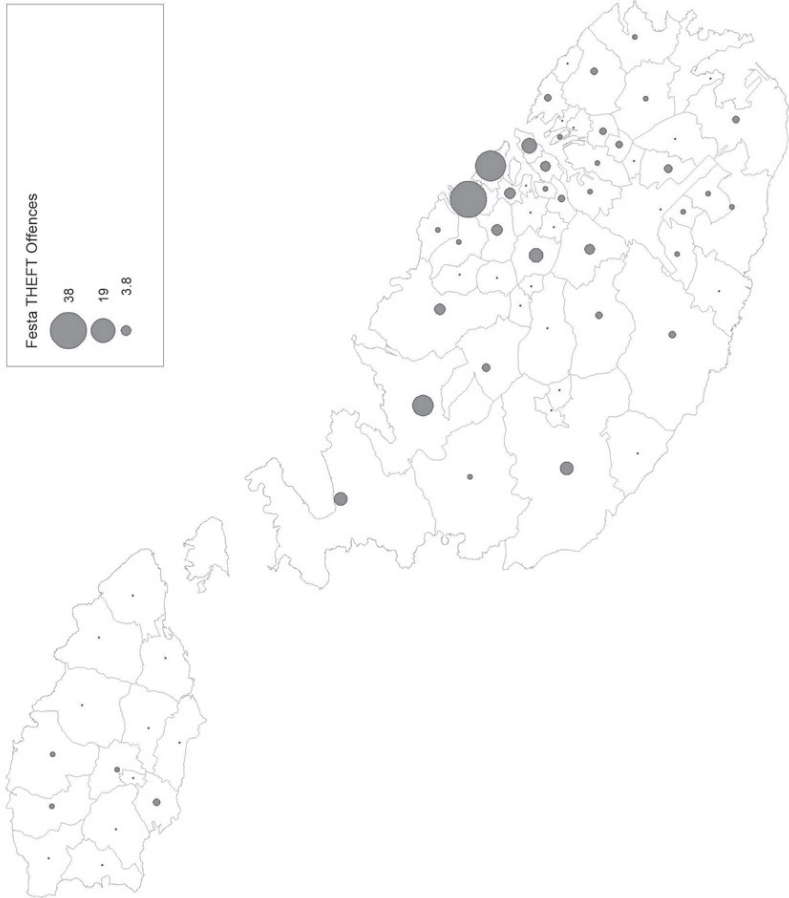
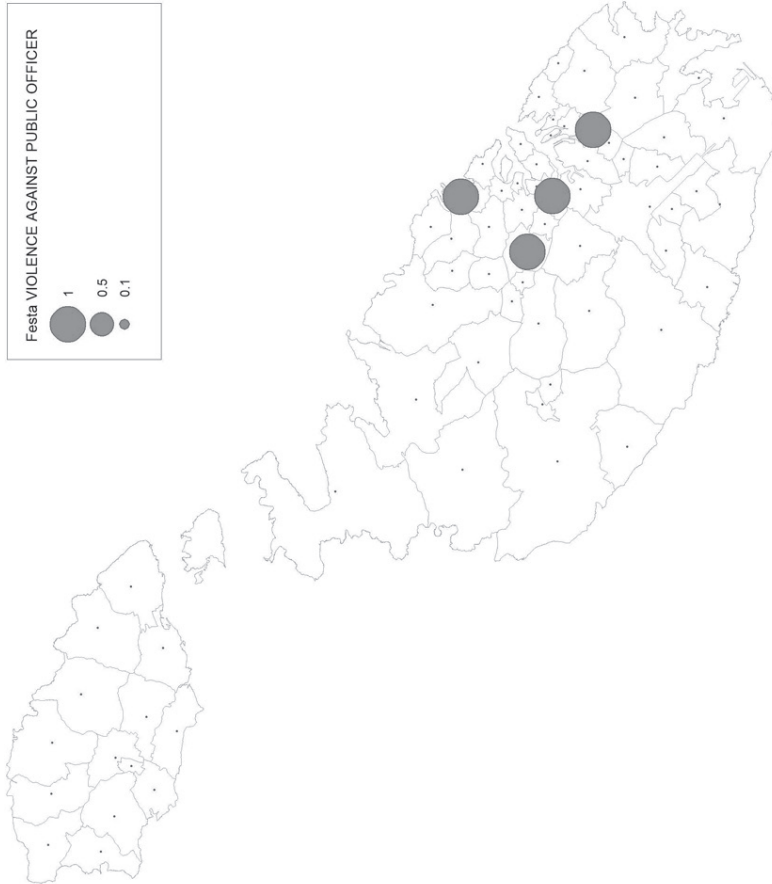


Figure 4c: Festa Day 2013-2014 Violence Against Public Officer



In order to understand how far offenders are willing to go to commit their offences as related to the pivotal village centre as identified by the church and the spatial proximity of the surrounding social and community facilities, the final analysis carried out in this study looks at the distance fragmentation of offences through space. Table 3 depicts the distance travelled for those crimes that are located within the 1km designated buffer zone employed in this study. Such a buffer zone pertains to the distance travelled from the core and reflects the effect that the high intensity presence of activities in the village centre. The analysis was based on a 100m buffer from the centre and the results show that the highest offence density falls within the first 100m from the centre, whilst over 65% fall within the 300m from the centre, distant enough to encompass most band clubs, retail, social and community facilities. Interestingly 97% fall within the 600m buffer zones. Figure 5 depicts the degradation of offence density by distance. Offences occurring during the *fest*a period but outside of the 1000m zones were not included in this study as they may be unrelated to the *fest*a activities.

Table 3: Offences during *fest*a periods by distance from cores

Ring Zone	Radius (m)	Distance Units	Incidents	Offences_ sq_km	% Offences
1	100	Meters	270	110	30
2	200	Meters	517	70	19
3	300	Meters	705	57	16
4	400	Meters	898	54	15
5	500	Meters	824	41	11
6	600	Meters	555	25	7
7	1000	Meters	963	10	3
All Rings			4732	367	100

Figure 5: Degradation of offence density by distance from the village centre



Conclusion

The study of the Maltese *fešta* phenomenon posits a ripe field for the investigation of social interactionism, in this case analysed through the offence incidences as they occur in a spatial construct. Whilst the main *fešta* activity pivots around the liturgical aspect, the actuality of the profane activities takes the *fešta* to an alternate aspect. Interactionism, instigated through the activities occurring outside the church walls but within the environs of the immediate buffer zones is directly related to an increase in offending and reduction of safety and security. With offences highly evident on the feast days, particularly in the rural Gozitan villages, the phenomenon takes a varied perspective in the wider analysis of offences reported over the *fešta* weeks and the shoulder weeks. Offences, whilst high for revelers, patrons and visitors alike in the *fešta* day, takes an offence structure that is spread across the offence categories, operating on a dynamic that caters for the distance from the core social and community areas into the retail and residential areas. This study catered for the what, when and where approach to *fešta*-related offending, a micro-study approach is recommended for the analysis of the offender-offence dynamic in order to further investigate why, how and who is involved in the actuation of the offences and the social and operation reaction required to mitigate offences.

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