**SOCIO-ECONOMIC DETERMINANTS OF FEMALE CRIMINALITY AMONG UNDERGRADUATES STUDENTS IN AE-FUNAI**

**TABLE OF CONTENT**

**CHAPTER ONE**

**INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Background of the Study

1.2 Statement of the problem

1.3 Objectives of the study

1.4 Research Questions:

1.5 Research hypothesis

1.6 Significance of the study

1.7 Scope of the study

1.8 Limitation

1.9 Organization of the study

1.10 Definition of Term

**CHAPTER TWO**

**REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

2.1 Conceptual Framework

2.2 Theoretical Framework

**CHAPTER THREE**

**RESEARCH METHODODLGY**

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Research Design

3.3 The area of the study

3.4 Population of the study

3.5 Sample size and sampling techniques

3.6 Validity of instruments

3.7 Reliability of instruments

3.8 Method of data analysis

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

4.1 Data Presentation

4.2 Data Analysis

4.3 Test of hypothesis

4.4 Discussion of findings

**CHAPTER FIVE**

**SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

5.1 Summary

5.2 Conclusion

5.3 Recommendation

**ABSTRACT**

This research work examines the socio-economic factors that contribute to female criminality among undergraduate students at Alex Ekwueme Federal University. The focus of this study was to provide a comprehensive description of female involvement in crimes, including the types of crimes they are most visible in. Additionally, it aimed to analyse the socio-economic attributes of women involved in criminal activities and identify the factors that contribute to their criminal behaviour. This research work utilised the descriptive research method. The study utilises the convenience sampling method to select a total of 250 students who took part in the study. The study findings indicate that the type of upbringing a person had during their childhood can have a significant impact on their behaviour and development in adulthood. It was observed that a majority of the women involved in crime were first-time offenders. Company that influences criminal behaviour is another contributing factor. Peer groups exert a significant impact on individuals. The family in which a person is raised has a significant impact on their life. Many women involved in crime are either in the informal sector or unemployed. The immense strain brought on by financial struggles can drive individuals to engage in criminal behaviour. There is a significant involvement of females in criminal activities.

**CHAPTER ONE**

**INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 Background of the Study**

Over the years Nigeria has been witnessing unprecedented rise as well as sophistication in criminal activities. The new wave cuts across all sections of the society, involving men, women and children. The society overtime, has devised means of controlling crime and dealing with those who deviate from its norms and values. In pre-colonial times women were more or less restricted to their traditional social roles. The communal system of living added to the internal and external mechanism for crime control (mainly of ridicule and public disgrace) kept the level of criminal activities by women low. With the introduction of a money economy and emergence of private property during the colonial period, some women began to seek employment outside the home. With increased labour force participation for them, some had the opportunity of getting involved in criminal activities (Adler, 2013; Simon 2015). The tilt in female crime became apparent after independence and particularly during and after the Nigerian civil war. It has since assumed different forms and styles. Women have been known to be accomplices to criminals. They no longer come as accomplices, but as active collaborators and sometimes leaders of the gang. They no longer contend themselves with hiding weapons for male counterparts but operate with the weapons as well (Sunday Champion, May 9, 2005). This shift may not be unconnected to the economic situation in the country where there is the quest for materialism and the get-rich-quick syndrome.

**1.2 Statement of the problem**

Nigeria in fact has a complex political history; frequent abrupt changes in government have led to sharp changes in economic and social policies. These have for most part impacted adversely on the population and have worsened income distribution. The exploitation of the nation’s oil resources and management of the great oil windfall have significantly influenced the evolution and perception of poverty. Criminality among females which has been on the increase has been fostered and encouraged by socio economic factors such as poverty, hardship, unemployment, illiteracy, bad influence and cultural prejudice and domestic responsibilities which disadvantaged them from getting employed in stable and well paid jobs. Women however play a very crucial role of socialization in the overall national development process; hence their involvement in criminal acts has negative impacts on the nation’s socio economic development. This prompted the researcher to embark on the study female criminality.

**1.3 Objectives of the study**

This research work focuses on socio-economic determinants of female criminality among undergraduates students in AE-FUNAI. However, this study specifically aims:

1. To describe the extent and type of female involvement in crimes and analyse the types of crimes in which women have been most visible.
2. To determine the socio-economic attributes of women in crime.
3. Identify factors predisposing women to criminality.

**1.4 Research Questions**

1. To what extent are females involve in crimes?
2. What type of crimes are women Most visible?
3. What are the factors predisposing women to criminality?
4. What are the socio-economic attributes of women in crime?

**1.5 Research hypotheses**

H0: Poor socialization process does not influence criminality in individuals

H1: Poor socialization process does influence criminality in individuals

H0: Economic conditions are not contributory factor to criminality.

H1: Economic conditions are contributory factor to criminality.

**1.6 Significance of the study**

This study will be of great importance to future researchers in the area of criminology and it will be a way out from social deviance. Academicians and students will find the result of this study useful since it will serve as an additional source of information in the discipline. The study will also be significant to the general public. Practically, it will encourage adequate care of citizen and unveil reasons behind derail of societal norm.

**1.7 Scope of the study**

The study looks into the socio economic correlation of female criminality in Nigeria. It critically examines the influence of female criminality in Nigeria. The research work will identify the socio economic factors related to female criminality in our society.

**1.8 Limitation**

The limitation involved in this work includes the wide nature and time constraint of the study, which resulted in narrowing down the study to female students of Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu- Alike, Ikwo. The following are the limitation that hinders the study of this research work.

**Financial Constraint:** There are not enough funds to fuel the study of this research work. The researcher has access to a very little source of fund

**Time Constraints:** Due to the limited time available to carry out this research work, it is not possible to carry out the research extensively as anticipated by the researcher.

**1.9 Definition of Term**

Criminality: behaviour that is contrary to or forbidden by criminal law.

Female: belonging or relating to women or girls

Socio economic: the interaction between the social and economic habits of a group of people

**CHAPTER TWO**

**REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

**Conceptual Framework**

**The Concept of Crime**

Crime is described by the Oxford Dictionary as a major offence that is committed and is subject to legal consequences, or as an entire criminal act. One example that can be considered is drug crime, which encompasses various activities such as the use, transportation, purchase, and sale of illegal drugs. Another category is violent or street crime, which includes offences like rape, robbery, assault, burglary, kidnapping, larceny, and auto-theft. Additionally, organised crime refers to the unlawful activities carried out by members of criminal organisations involved in the supply of illegal goods and services. Political crime is another typ Nevertheless, it is imperative to acknowledge that violent crimes, including but not limited to murder, armed robbery, kidnapping, and terrorism, persistently afflict Nigeria, thereby exemplifying the epitome of inhumane acts. Recently, there has been a notable prominence of kidnappings for ransom and acts of terrorism, which have become the focal point of attention. These unfortunate events have resulted in both loss of life and negative impacts on the economy. The causes of the incessant increase in violent crime are not farfetched, as numerous studies have established a strong association between family roots and this phenomenon. Above all, what is truly remarkable is the active participation of women in perpetrating these offences. During the formative years, the notion of female criminality presented a distinctive concern within society due to its male-dominated nature, which limited women's opportunities to engage in activities traditionally associated with men. The primary responsibility assigned to women during this time period was the management of household tasks and the nurturing of their offspring. Given their confinement indoors, the notion of criminal activity eluded their understanding, thereby instilling a sense of trepidation towards engaging in any unlawful endeavours. However, as a result of the temporal progression and advancements within the realm of science and technology, the previously prevalent negative and domineering disposition towards women commenced its gradual dissipation. Today, it is noteworthy to observe that women have emerged as the most rapidly expanding demographic within the criminal population, experiencing a substantial growth of nearly one-third during the 1990s. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that approximately one-third of all incarcerated women have disclosed their previous reliance on welfare assistance in the period immediately preceding their apprehension. However, notwithstanding the seemingly conspicuous surge in the criminal conduct exhibited by women, it is imperative to note that the examination of women's involvement in criminal activities is still at a nascent stage, particularly in the context of Nigeria.

**The concept of Female Criminality**

The concept of female criminality pertains to criminal behaviour that is exclusively perpetrated by individuals of the female gender. Until a few decades ago, there was a prevailing belief that crime was predominantly a male phenomenon, leading to the notion that the world of crime was exclusively a domain for men. The topic of female crime has been egregiously overlooked in the past, however, in recent times, there has been a notable shift in attention towards the subject of female criminality. This shift is primarily due to the alarming escalation in the rate of female criminal activity. The women have undergone a transformation in their perception of themselves, no longer perceiving themselves as inferior to men. Consequently, they actively participate in various activities alongside men, including those that entail a certain level of risk and illegality, such as engaging in criminal behaviour. It is commonly observed that females are not typically the primary actors in the commission of these crimes. Rather, they are often influenced by situational factors such as psychological and social causes, which prompt them to engage in such criminal activities (Schwartz, 2006).

It has been found in various studies that there is a correlation between female criminality and certain factors such as poor socio-economic background, low self-esteem, unemployment, and peer pressure (Young, 2008; Reisig, Holtfreter, & Morash, 1994). Although females historically have had lower involvement in criminal activities compared to males, empirical data indicates that their level of participation is currently on the rise (Young, 2008). This emerging trend necessitates a collective effort to address the issue at hand. Given the evident escalation in the level of female criminality, it becomes imperative to delve into the primary factors that contribute to this disconcerting phenomenon. In order to provide a comprehensive response to this inquiry, the present investigation shall examine the psychological and sociological variables that are commonly perceived as influential factors in the manifestation of criminal behaviour among females. The biological theory of female criminality posits that the female physiognomy is believed to have the greatest influence on her criminal propensity. According to the perspective of Thomas Williams (1907; 1923), women exhibit a greater inclination towards passivity and a diminished capacity for criminal behaviour. Nevertheless, it is posited that their pursuit of excitement, wealth, and luxury stems from a dearth of social approval and affection. Sociological theory, as proposed by Adler in 1975, posits that the rise in female criminality can be attributed to the process of women's emancipation. The theory of Blocked Opportunity, pertaining to female criminality, posits that adolescent individuals are compelled to engage in delinquent behaviour due to the presence of obstructed opportunities. The Strain Bond theory, as proposed by Merton in 1938, posits that female engagement in criminal activities is attributed to a perceived "weakness" rather than being a consequence of limited opportunities. The Social Bond theory, as proposed by Hirsch in 1969, posits that the propensity for female individuals to engage in criminal behaviour is predominantly influenced by their social class. The economic theory of female criminality posits that economic conditions play a significant role in shaping female criminal behaviour. According to Aristotle, the primary motivation behind the commission of crimes is the acquisition of unnecessary possessions. The labelling theory of crime posits that criminal behaviours acquire the status of crime when they are assigned the label of crime by others. The theory of labelling, as proposed by Lemert in 1951, posits that the prevalence of female criminality can be attributed to the perception that women are less likely to be seen as delinquents compared to men. According to Sutherland's seminal work in 1947, it is evident that various structural variables, including but not limited to poverty, place of residence, and social associations, play a significant role in shaping the extent of female engagement in criminal activities. The theories of crime liberation posit that the involvement of females in illicit activities may be linked to the pursuit of social equity, thereby deviating from their traditional societal roles. The concept of power is a fundamental aspect that permeates various domains of study. Power can be defined as the ability or capacity to The control theory of female criminality posits that the propensity for females to engage in delinquent behaviour is influenced by socialisation and parental control mechanisms within the household. The theories surrounding the Gender Ratio of female criminality posit that the oppression experienced by women is a crucial factor contributing to the escalation of violent criminal behaviour among females. There has been a limited amount of research conducted on the subject of female criminality. However, the existing research findings suggest that factors such as broken homes, domestic violence, and various psychosocial elements play a significant role in contributing to the violent criminal behaviour observed among female individuals in contemporary society. There has been a limited amount of research conducted on the subject of female criminality, and the existing research findings suggest that factors such as broken homes, domestic violence, and various psychosocial factors mentioned in the questionnaire have contributed to the manifestation of violent criminal behaviour among women in contemporary society.

Socio-economic factors

Poverty

While Olukolade and Adeyemo (2013) assert that socioeconomic and political factors serve as the antecedents to poverty and crime, Alemika (2014) concedes that the upsurge in instances of female criminality can predominantly be attributed to poverty, which is exacerbated by urbanisation. It is evident that there exists a correlation between poverty and crime, which in turn contributes to the occurrence of female criminality (Simpson, 1985). One perspective posits that the phenomenon of urban feminization, which became prominent in the 1990s and resulted in a significant increase in the number of women engaged in informal employment (Naila, 2003), played a pivotal role in the emergence of female criminal behaviour. Within the context of this investigation, it is noteworthy to highlight that this particular study is in accordance with the perspective put forth by Alemika (2014). Alemika posited that the prevalence of female criminality could potentially be reduced through the provision of economic empowerment.

Unemployment

The concept of unemployment, as elucidated in this study, encompasses the condition of being without gainful employment or the insufficiency of resources to secure paid work or pursue self-employment. Identified as a causative factor for a significant number of documented instances of female criminality, unemployment represents a grave and pervasive phenomenon on a global scale, with particularly dire consequences in the developing regions of the world. According to Agnew (1992), the presence of unemployment can be attributed to the occurrences of violent behaviours. This is due to the fact that unemployment serves as a catalyst for feelings of frustration and anger, which are the primary contributors to the development of criminal tendencies (Felson, 1998).

Materialism

The pursuit of material possessions is an intrinsic inclination of contemporary individuals. Nevertheless, as posited by esteemed scholars such as Adler (1975), Simon (1975), and Ameh (2013), the inclination to acquire material possessions is compelling a significant number of individuals, including females, to partake in illicit activities solely to gratify these desires. Nevertheless, according to the scholarly work of Igbo (2007), it has been posited that the involvement of women in the labour force may contribute significantly to their engagement in criminal activities. This assertion is based on the premise that women, due to their exposure to the challenges associated with providing for their families, may be more inclined towards such illicit behaviour. In his seminal study titled "Change in pattern of female crime in Owerri, Nigeria 1980 – 2000," Chukuezi (2009) underscores the significance of various factors that contribute to female criminality. These factors encompass the expanded responsibilities assumed by women within the family structure, the intricate workings of the social system, and the presence of property ownership within the contemporary capitalist society. This study, therefore, arrives at the conclusion that the participation of females in criminal activities can be attributed to their unregulated aspiration to acquire financial resources, possess material possessions, and achieve a level of material comfort comparable to that of their peers (Merton, 1938).

Socio-political Factors

Lack of Political Power

Contrary to the deluge of scholastic and legal arguments advocating for women empowerment in Nigeria and their rightful inclusion in the realms of politics and economics, the actual participation of women in politics remains woefully inadequate (Anyanwu & Anyanwu, 2008; SAGE, 2019). The dearth of political power experienced by the majority of women can be readily perceived as a harbinger of discontentment towards the male gender, and consequently, the broader societal structure. The observed inequality or imbalances in question have a profound impact on the individuals' pattern of behaviour, leading some to exhibit untoward acts that frequently manifest in criminal forms. It is suggested that in light of the fact that political power provides the means for negotiation, it would be advisable to grant women an equal share in both elective and appointive positions. By doing so, they would be able to utilise these platforms to harness their economic potentials and consequently mitigate the underlying factors that drive them towards engaging in criminal activities (Naila, 2003; Chukuezi, 2009).

Lack of Social Power

Warraich and Farooq (2015) argue that the absence of social power among women leads to an escalation in their involvement in criminal activities. In previous scholarly works, esteemed researchers such as Adler (1975), Cohen and Felson (1979), Collier (1998), Greenfeld and Snell (1999), and Okin (1999) have posited the notion that an increase in the disenfranchisement of women and their relegation to the lowest rungs of the social hierarchy has resulted in a corresponding rise in their arduous efforts to secure a satisfactory means of livelihood. During the course of this endeavour, certain individuals discovered that they possessed the ability to effectively rival their male counterparts in numerous domains that were previously considered the sole domain of men. Upon further examination of the constricted social circumstances experienced by women, a notable development emerged - the documentation of female criminality (Imai & Krishna, 2001; Mahmood & Cheema, 2008; Tibbetts & Hemmens, 2010; Sweeney & Payne, 2011, 2012; & Hicks & Hicks, 2014).

Feminist Movement

Adler et al (1975) posited that the inception of feminist movements within the United States of America precipitated various consequences, one of which was the emergence of female engagement in criminal behaviours. Warraich and Farooq (2015) concur with the notion that feminism plays a pivotal role in influencing the aggression of women, as evidenced by their research findings which indicate its manifestation in criminal activities. According to SAGE (2019), it has been reported that feminism indeed plays a noteworthy role in the political and social spheres of women. Furthermore, this influence has also had an impact on their engagement in criminal activities.

Women empowerment

Adler et al (1975) postulated that the advent of feminist movements within the United States of America gave rise to a multitude of consequences, among which was the emergence of female involvement in criminal behaviours. Warraich and Farooq (2015) concur with the notion that feminism plays a crucial and influential role in shaping the aggression of women. This assertion is supported by their research findings, which provide evidence of feminism's manifestation in criminal activities. As per the scholarly work by SAGE (2019), it has been duly noted that feminism undeniably assumes a significant role in shaping the political and social domains pertaining to women. Moreover, it is worth noting that this particular influence has also exerted a significant effect on their proclivity towards engaging in criminal activities.

Consequences on the Society

The society is already suffering untold pressure occasioned by the upsurge of female criminality. This study took time to summarize the consequences in two broad perspectives:

I. Moral drift

II. Family disintegration

Moral Drift

There has been a notable absence of a prolonged discourse concerning the ramifications of female criminality in relation to moral degeneration. Within the context of ongoing debates, a significant topic of concern revolves around the intricate relationship among the female gender, the institution of family, and the perpetuation of societal norms. Scholars ponder the consequences of allowing the persistence of female criminality, questioning the potential ramifications for our collective values and cultural identity. By whom shall these virtues be imparted to the youth? What, then, might mothers with criminal inclinations anticipate their impressionable offspring to glean from their actions? What type of society or leaders shall be produced by criminally-minded mothers? These are a myriad of questions that continue to elicit inquiries among esteemed scholars. While Denno (1994/1995) posits that women possess genetic and biological traits that make them better suited to cultivate human moral standards, Chukuezi (2009) concurs that the rise in female criminality has led to a decline in moral values within society, as women have lost the platform from which they could previously challenge and advocate for righteousness.

Family Disintegration

Due to the presence of shame and stigma, it has been observed that numerous families, in which the female partners possess a criminal record of some kind, tend to undergo disintegration. According to Warraich and Farooq (2015), it is argued that in societies where the family institution lacks sufficient bonding to effectively socialise its members in accordance with approved societal norms, there is often a breakdown that leads to an increase in criminal behaviour and indulgence among females who previously viewed the family as their role model. In her seminal study titled "Factors Affecting Female Criminality in Kenya: A Case Study of Lang'ata Maximum Women Prison," Oketch (1999) astutely observed that one of the repercussions of women's incarceration on society is the exacerbation of poverty, increased child mortality rates, and the disintegration of familial structures. The contention put forth is that families who have female members incarcerated bear the burden of disintegration, which in turn often contributes to the prevalence of malnourished street children and the occurrence of child prostitution. The matriarchal role within the African familial structure typically assumes the responsibility of socialisation. Consequently, the absence of this maternal figure, particularly due to criminal activity and subsequent incarceration, often yields profoundly deleterious consequences for the family unit, progeny, and the broader society.

Consequences on the Economy

Economic Stagnation

The significance of women's contributions to economic development, in both developed and developing nations, cannot be overstated (Leka 1997). In his seminal study titled "Discussion on the causes of female crime and its control and prevention," Meixiang (2013) establishes a compelling correlation between female crime and economic stagnation. He astutely argues that the surge in economic development presents a myriad of detrimental challenges that pose a significant threat to the very existence of women. The scholar posited that in light of the exigencies of the contemporary epoch, a significant proportion of the female population find themselves unable to adequately fulfil their material necessities, thereby resulting in a propensity towards engaging in criminal behaviour. Li Meixiang expounded upon the notion that the aforementioned practices or infringements perpetrated by women have a detrimental effect on society, as the allure of material possessions tempts certain educated yet susceptible women into descending into the depths of criminality. Meixiang attributes the widening gap between the affluent and those in squalid conditions to various factors, including the influence of junk culture that is disseminated through the medium of globalisation. The stagnation of society occurs as a consequence of an increasing number of women who choose to partake in criminal activities rather than actively participating in endeavours that contribute to productivity. Due to their illicit actions, the allocation of resources towards safeguarding the individuals affected by their wrongdoings, as well as the subsequent legal proceedings and rehabilitation measures, significantly diminishes the endeavours aimed at societal progress.

Underdevelopment

The outcome of female criminality leads to a state of underdevelopment. In a society that is in the process of development, such as ours, the presence of a high crime rate can pose significant challenges. Criminals possess the ability to impede investment initiatives, hinder the growth of flourishing businesses, and create an environment that is unsafe for the general populace. The concept of development inherently implies a state characterised by a diminished occurrence of criminal activities, as individuals become increasingly self-reliant and consequently have fewer incentives to engage in acts of property theft, which is the offence typically attributed to women. In his scholarly work, Alemika (2014) presents a compelling argument regarding the correlation between female involvement in criminal activities and its impact on violence, security, and development. According to Alemika, the presence of women in criminal activities not only exacerbates levels of violence but also hinders progress in terms of ensuring security and fostering overall societal development.

Theoretical Framework

General Strain Theory (Agnew, 1992)

The theoretical underpinning of this study is predicated upon General Strain Theory (GST) of crime and delinquency, which was promulgated by Robert Agnew during the nascent years of the 1990s. General strain theory, a theoretical framework, emerged as a response to the conceptualization of Merton's (1910-2003) Anomie or Strain Theory of crime. Merton posited that the aetiology of criminal behaviour lies in the inability of individuals to attain their desired material objectives. The author posits that the incongruity between objectives and methods exerts a strain on individuals who diligently labour to attain them, despite the fact that the institutional means are not uniformly accessible to all social strata. The conclusion drawn is that when individuals share common cultural aspirations or goals, but the means to achieve them are not uniformly provided by institutions, it is inevitable that frustrations will arise in the form of strain. In his seminal work, Merton coined the term "anomie" to describe the strain that results in frustration (Adler, Mueller & Laufer, 1995, p.111). In their scholarly discourse, Scott and Marshall (2005) put forth the proposition that the theoretical construct of anomie can be traced back to the intellectual contributions of Emile Durkheim. Durkheim, a renowned sociologist, embarked upon elucidating the societal shift from mechanical to organic solidarity in his seminal work entitled 'The Division of Labour in Society'. As per the scholarly work of Scott and Marshall (2005), it is worth noting that Durkheim employed the concept of anomie in his seminal study on suicide. In this context, Durkheim posited that anomie, as a characteristic of a complex social system, can be attributed to economic determinants rather than any other factors. Indeed, this statement holds true when considering the collective experiences that are commonly encountered by the majority of women.

In order to adequately situate the argument at hand, it is imperative to address two fundamental inquiries pertaining to the relationship between gender and crime:

One must consider various factors when attempting to elucidate the elevated incidence of criminal behaviour among males. It is imperative to delve into the realm of sociological and psychological theories in order to comprehensively analyse this phenomenon. By examining the intricate interplay between biological, social, and cultural factors, we can begin to unravel the complex web of causation behind the disparity in crime rates between genders.

One must consider the factors that contribute to the involvement of females in criminal activities in order to provide a comprehensive explanation. It is imperative to examine various sociological, psychological, and criminological theories that shed light on this phenomenon. By delving into these theoretical frameworks, we can gain a deeper understanding of the underlying reasons behind female criminal behaviour.

Regarding the initial inquiry, it is posited by classical theorists that an examination of gender disparities in the manifestation of strain and the subsequent response to said strain can provide insights into the gender gap observed in criminal conduct (SAGE, 1997, 2019). It can be inferred that within the cultural framework, there exists a prevailing perception that associates criminality with males, thereby rendering it somewhat acceptable, while females are often granted leniency and excuses (Farooq & Warraich, 2015; Mustapha, 2018). Regarding the second inquiry, it is contended that various forms of strain have the potential to result in female criminal behaviour given the appropriate conditions. Within this particular domain, the concept of GST (General Strain Theory) exhibits notable similarities with various theoretical frameworks that elucidate female criminal behaviour through the lens of oppression.

**CHAPTER THREE**

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**3.0 Introduction:**

This chapter therefore, focused on research methodology and techniques used and also on the justification of such methods and techniques in the study

**3.1 Research Design**

A research of this kind demands that the research methods/procedures must be reluctant and acceptable to the study. This becomes important since the bending of the research depends on the quality of information or data collected. The descriptive research method was used in this research work.

**3.2 The area of the study**

Established in 2011, Alex Ekwueme Federal University is a publicly funded, non-profit institution of higher education situated in the municipality of Ikwo, Ebonyi, which has a population ranging from 50,000 to 249,999. Alex Ekwueme Federal University (FUNAI), a coeducational Nigerian higher education institution, is officially recognised by the National Universities Commission of Nigeria. With a uniRank enrollment range of 10,000-14,999 students, FUNAI is a large institution. In a variety of academic disciplines, Alex Ekwueme Federal University (FUNAI) provides courses and programmes that culminate in degrees of higher education that are officially recognised, including pre-bachelor's degrees (i.e. certificates, diplomas, associate or foundation degrees) and bachelor's degrees. The degree levels and fields of study listed in the table below by UniRank provide additional information. The admission policy of this 13-year-old Nigerian institution of higher education is selective and is determined by entrance exams. In addition to academic and non-academic services and facilities, FUNAI provides students with a library and administrative support.

**3.3    Population of the study**

This is the total number of aggregates of all peoples which by virtues of common characteristics may be defined as belonging to the same population. AE-FUNAI has between 10,000-14,999 students.

**3.4. Sample size and sampling techniques**

This study adopts the convenience sampling method to select a total of 250 students who participated in the study.

**3.5. Validity of instruments**

Validity refers to the degree to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to be measuring. The study uses content validity which is usually determined by expert judgement, most often by logical and rational analysis. This was done by sending the prepared research instrument to experts who then vetted the items in terms of relevance to the subject matter, courage of the content areas, appropriate language usage and clarity of purpose.

**3.6** **Reliability of instruments**

Checking the validity of the measures go hand in hand with determining the reliability of the research instruments the test is said to be reliable to the degree that it measures accurately and consistently, yielding comparative results when administered a number of times. The researcher used test-retest method. In the test-retest method the instrument is applied more than once on the same person or group after interval of one week and the same answer was received which made the data gathered reliable for the study.

**3.7 Methods of data collection**

Data for this study was gotten from both quantitative and qualitative methods. Questionnaire was utilized as instrument for quantitative, while in-depth interview was used for qualitative .The questionnaire focuses on the socio-demographic attributes of respondents, perception of the selected sample towards female crime. Also, five (5) in-depth interviews were conducted. Key informants include one youth leader, one women leader, two religious leaders and one traditional leader. Descriptive analysis was carried out on the quantitative data using social science statistical package to obtain the frequency and percentages. Qualitative data was transcribed verbatim to complement the qualitative data.

**3.8   Method of data analysis**

The researcher will use statistical methods of frequency table and percentage to present, analyse and interpret all the data collected for the study. Also discussion of results and findings will be presented.

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

* 1. Data Presentation and Analysis

In this chapter, the researcher uses statistical tools to present and analyse data gathered during the administration of research instruments. The researcher uses frequency tables and percentage to present and analyse data on demographic characteristics of respondents and data. Frequency tables and percentage to test null hypothesis of the study in order to accept or reject them. Finally the researcher presents discussion of findings made during the study.

**Respondents participation and distribution**

A total of 250 students of Alex Ekwueme Federal University was enrolled in this study. A structured questionnaire was administered to them. A total of 236 copies of the questionnaire was validated and analysed in this study while a total of 14 copies were discarded. The discarded copies were uncompleted by the students, mishandled, or left blank.

**Socio-demographics Attributes of Respondents**

This section examines sex of respondents, age, marital status, religion and occupation of the respondents.

**Table 1:** Socio-demographic Attributes of Respondents

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Sex** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| Male | 0 | 0 |
| Female | 236 | 100 |
| Total | 236 | 100.0 |
| **Age** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| 18 – 22 years | 64 | 27.1 |
| 23 – 27 | 86 | 36.4 |
| 28 – 32 | 52 | 22.0 |
| 33 – 37 | 22 | 9.3 |
| 38years and above | 12 | 5.1 |
| Total | 236 | 100.0 |
| **Marital status** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| Single | 142 | 60.2 |
| Married | 70 | 29.7 |
| Divorced | 10 | 4.2 |
| Widowed | 14 | 5.9 |
| Total | 236 | 100.0 |
|  |  |  |
| **Religion** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| Islam | 46 | 19.5 |
| Christianity | 162 | 68.6 |
| Traditional | 28 | 11.9 |
| Total | 236 | 100.0 |
| **Occupation** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |

**Source: field survey, 2024**

From the above table, 54% of the respondents, which is the majority, are males while 46% are females. As for the age distribution of respondents, about 86% of the respondents are between 18 and 32 years. This implies that majority of the respondents are youths. Majority of the respondents are single. The table also reveal that about 69% of the respondents practice Christianity. As regards the occupational status of respondents,100% are civil servant and those who work in the private sector.

Table 2: The type of upbringing one had during his or her childhood influence his or her behavioral conduct and adulthood

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
| Agree | 220 | 93.2% |
| Disagree | 16 | 6.8% |
| Undecided | 0 | 0% |
| Total | 118 | 100% |

Source: field survey, **2024**

From table 2 above, it was observed that 220 (93.2%) respondents, which is the majority, agreed that the type of upbringing one had during his or her childhood influence his or her behavioral conduct and adulthood

Table 3: Most of the female offenders are first offenders

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
| Agree | 176 | 74.6% |
| Disagree | 60 | 25.4% |
| Undecided | 0 | 0% |
| Total | 236 | 100% |

Source: field survey, **2024**

From the analysis of table 3, it was observed that 176 or 74.6% respondents agreed that Most of the female offenders are first offenders.

Table 4: Bad company is another predisposing factor to criminality

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
| Agree | 236 | 100% |
| Disagree | 0 | 0% |
| Undecided | 0 | 0% |
| Total | 236 | 100% |

Source: field survey, **2024**

From the scores of table4, the entire respondents (100%) agreed that Bad company is another predisposing factor to criminality. No respondents disagreed with this opinion.

Table 5: Peer groups have great influence on individuals

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
| Agree | 236 | 100% |
| Disagree | 0 | 0% |
| Undecided | 0 | 0% |
| Total | 236 | 100% |

Source: field survey, **2024**

From the scores of table 5, the entire respondents (100%) agreed that Peer groups have great influence on individuals. No respondents disagreed with this opinion.

Table 6: The family under which one grows up also affects his or her life

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
| Agree | 230 | 97.5% |
| Disagree | 6 | 2.5% |
| Undecided |  | 0% |
| Total | 236 | 100% |

Source: field survey, **2024**

From the scores in table 6, 97.5% respondents agreed that The family under which one grows up also affects his or her life. Only a meagre 2.5% was undecided on the issue. And none was undecided

Table 7: Most of the female offenders are either in the informal sector or unemployed

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
| Agree | 184 | 78% |
| Disagree | 52 | 22% |
| Undecided | 0 | 0% |
| Total | 236 | 100% |

Source: field survey, **2024**

Here 78% of respondents agreed that Most of the female offenders are either in the informal sector or unemployed. While as little as 22% disagreed with this opinion.

Table 8: The frustration caused by economic hardship is enough to make one commit crime

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
| Agree | 100 | 42% |
| Disagree | 110 | 48% |
| Undecided | 26 | 11% |
| Total | 236 | 100% |

Source: field survey, **2024**

As regards whether The frustration caused by economic hardship is enough to make one commit crime, a whopping 48% respondents disagreed. Only 42% respondents agreed. While the remaining 11% respondents were siting over the fence(undecided) on this issue

Table 9: To what extent are females involve in crimes

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
| High | 200 | 85% |
| Moderate | 10 | 4% |
| Low | 26 | 11% |
| Total | 118 | 100% |

Source: field survey, **2024**

From table 9, it was observed that female are involved in crime to a high extent. For instance 85% of the respondents went for high, 11% went for low while 4% went for moderate.

Table 10: Murder and theft are crimes women are Most visible in

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
| Agree | 228 | 97% |
| Disagree | 6 | 3% |
| Undecided | 0 | 0% |
| Total | 236 | 100% |

Source: field survey, **2024**

From table 10, it was observed that the prevalent and most visible crime committed by women are murder and theft crime.

Table 11: economic hardship that has befallen Nigeria is the factors predisposing women to criminality

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
| Agree | 196 | 83% |
| Disagree | 40 | 17% |
| Undecided | 0 | 0% |
| Total | 236 | 100% |

Source: field survey, **2024**

In table 11, it is evident that economic hardship that has befallen Nigeria is the factors predisposing women to criminality

Table 12: Poor socialization process does influence criminality in individuals

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
| Agree | 220 | 93% |
| Disagree | 16 | 7% |
| Undecided | 0 | 0% |
| Total | 236 | 100% |

Source: field survey, **2024**

Whopping 93% respondents agreed that Poor socialization process does influence criminality in individuals. While as low as 7% disagreed with this opinion.

Table 13: Economic conditions are contributory factor to criminality.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
| Agree | 184 | 78% |
| Disagree | 50 | 21.186% |
| Undecided | 2 | 0.0084% |
| Total | 236 | 100% |

Source: field survey, **2024**

As regards whether Economic conditions are contributory factor to criminality, 78% agreed, 21% disagreed while only 1 respondents was undecided over the issue

Table 14: Illiteracy is a factor that predispose female into criminal act

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
| Agree | 170 | 72% |
| Disagree | 66 | 28% |
| Undecided | 0 | 0% |
| Total | 236 | 100% |

Source: field survey, **2024**

It is clearly observed from the analysis of table 14 that Illiteracy is a factor that predispose female into criminal act. From the scores 72% agreed, while only 28% disagreed.

* 1. **Test of hypothesis**

In this section the researcher tested the research Hypothesis using frequency tables and percentage to accept or reject the null hypothesis of the study.

**Test Hypothesis one**

H0: Poor socialization process does not influence criminality in individuals

H1: Poor socialization process does influence criminality in individuals

Hypothesis one seek to determine the awareness of people on dividends of politics. The position of the hypothesis is that respondents share opinion on the issue. The researcher tested the hypothesis one in order to either accept or reject the hypothesis based on the data gathered from administration of research instrument and computation of x2 using chi- square formula as follows:

Table 15: Test of hypothesis one

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Response | Fo | Fe | Fo-fe | (fo-fe)2 | (fo-fe)2/fe |
| Agree | 220 | 78.6 | 70.7 | 4998.49 | 127.19 |
| Undecided | 0 | 78.6 | -39.3 | 1544.49 | 39.3 |
| Disagree | 16 | 78.6 | -31.3 | 979.69 | 24.93 |
| Total | 236 | 236 |  |  | X2=191.42 |

Source: field survey, **2024**

Data on chi- square table above shows that x2= 191.42, df= 5-1=4 at 0.05 level of significant.

Decision rule

The analysis presented on table above shows that computed value of chi- square(x2)= 191.42 is greater than critical table value of 9.488 at 0.05 significance level and df=4. Therefore the researcher rejected the null hypothesis one which state that Poor socialization process does not influence criminality in individuals. And accept the HI: Poor socialization process does influence criminality in individuals.

**Test of hypothesis two**

H0: Economic conditions are not contributory factor to criminality.

H1: Economic conditions are contributory factor to criminality

Hypothesis two seek to determine if economics conditions are contributory factor to criminality. The position of the hypothesis is that respondent’s share opinion on the issue. The researcher tested the hypothesis two in order to either accept or reject the hypothesis based on the data gathered from administration of research instrument and computation of x2 using chi- square formula as follows:

Table 16: Test of hypothesis two

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Response | Fo | Fe | Fo-fe | (fo-fe)2 | (fo-fe)2/fe |
| Agree | 184 | 78.6 | 52.7 | 2777.29 | 70.67 |
| Undecided | 2 | 78.6 | -38.3 | 1466.89 | 37.36 |
| Disagree | 50 | 78.6 | -14.3 | 204.49 | 5.20 |
| Total | 236 | 118 |  |  | X2=113.25 |

Source: Field survey, **2024**

Data on chi- square table above shows that x2= 191.42, df= 5-1=4 at 0.05 level of significant.

Decision rule

The analysis presented on table above shows that computed value of chi- square(x2)= 113.25 is greater than critical table value of 9.488 at 0.05 significance level and df=4. Therefore the researcher rejected the null hypothesis two which state that Economic conditions are not contributory factor to criminality. And accept the HI: Economic conditions are contributory factor to criminality.

**4.3 Discussion of findings**

Finding reveals that, The type of upbringing one had during his or her childhood influence his or her behavioral conduct and adulthood. Most of the female involved in crime were noted to be first offenders. Bad company is another predisposing factor to criminality. Peer groups have great influence on individuals. The family under which one grows up also affects his or her life. Most of the female involved in crime are either in the informal sector or unemployed. The frustration caused by economic hardship is enough to make one commit crime. Females are involve in crimes to a high extent. Murder and theft are crimes women are Most visible in. Economic hardship that has befallen Nigeria is the factors predisposing women to criminality. From the test of hypothesis it was observed that Poor socialization process does influence criminality in individuals. And also, Economic conditions are contributory factor to criminality.

The study revealed a high variability in the degree, pattern and trends of female criminality in the study area. There is therefore a need to improve the socio-economic status of female in the study area and in Nigeria as whole. Acquisition of higher educational qualifications, acquire in relevant vocation and entrepreneurial skills relevant to their social and cultural practices should be encouraged.

**CHAPTER FIVE**

**SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMEDATION**

* 1. **SUMMARY**

This study has been able to look into the contributions of different scholars on the issue of female criminality. It has been able to relate findings as they affect the research problem. The problem of the study was specifically aimed:

* 1. To describe the extent and type of female involvement in crimes and analyze the types of crimes in which women have been most visible;
  2. To determine the socio-economic attributes of women in crime. And finally identify factors predisposing women to criminality.

The findings show that most of the female offenders are first offenders. This means that most of these female offenders find themselves in prison once in their life. But there is also a few cases of recidivist of whose frequency does not exceed three times. These recidivists could fall into the category that Lombroso (1894) termed the occasional criminal’ a more frequent criminal type who commits crime at the suggestion or by the influence of a male probably a lover.

Data collected revealed that the types of crime females are involved in are armed robbery, kidnapping, murder, theft, assault, cheating, drugs, criminal bridge trust, and conspiracy. But the crimes of which the respondents have been most visible are murder and theft.

Based on the findings, it was discovered that a high percentage of these female offenders resided in the rural areas. This is a good enough reason why they engaged in criminal acts or activities. The rural area is known for its homogeneity. Relationships are more at the inter-personal level, and the bond between individuals becomes strong. In the rural areas, everybody knows virtually what his or her neighbour is doing and as result one can can easily offend the other and in the cause of retaliation one gets hot.

Civilization which is more evident in the urban areas has opened the eyes of many.  
Bad company is another predisposing factor to criminality. Peer groups have great influence on individuals. When an individual continues to associate more with a group that sees the societal norms of offensive, the individual also tends to violate the values of that society. Hence, a good percentage of the offenders are introduced into criminal activities by their friends.

In addition to this, most of the female offenders were brought up by their parents. The family under which one grows up also affects his or her life. The type of upbringing one had during his or her childhood influence his or her behavioural conduct and adulthood. The inference here is that parents no more carry out their responsibilities of inculcating morality in their children. There is laxity in the socialize children. It also serves for religious and moral training. If the family does not carry out these functions, the resultant problem will be moral decadence. The above point seems to agree with the hypothesis that poor socialization process is likely to influence criminality in individuals.

Economic conditions are another contributory factor to criminality. Most of these female offenders are either in the informal sector or unemployed, thus they have no stable means of income. Even those in employment earn meager salary. Where would this get them, with the economic hardship that has befallen Nigeria? The frustration caused by this hardship is enough to make one commit murder.

**5.2 CONCLUSION**

The basic assumption of the major work on female criminality than seeing it as a physiological or psychological problem. For instance, from the findings, the educational level or attainment of the female inmates countered the argument of Lombroso that female criminals look and behave like the primitive males that lacked formal education.

However, it does not mean that these assumptions are totally wrong in themselves. The various scholars must be credited for their attempt in trying to understand the issue of female criminality.

The main argument in this study is that criminality is caused by social factors and not biological factors. As such, there is a need to carry out a new study on women and crime. And to this, it is necessary to understand the assumptions made by the traditional to understand the assumptions made by the traditional writers and break away from them. Crime should not be seen as caused by factors within the female, rather, crime should be seen as caused by factors external to the females.  
In conclusion, this study is not claiming superiority over the already existing literature nor is the argument absolute and perfect. The study is equally open to criticisms and modifications

**5.3RECOMMENDATIONS**  
This project is not only meant to find out the type and factors that lead to female criminality. It also meant to recommendation because it is not only to study a social problem that matters, there has to be a way to study a social problem that matters, there has to be a way out of the problem. Thus the recommendation is in two angles:

1. To the family which is the smallest unit of the society where socialization first begins and,
2. The government whose policies affect the individuals in the society.

In as much as civilization has contributed to the decay of the family function, the family should still see it as its primary function to socialize children, to inculcate sound moral values in them. This sound moral value starts right from childhood.

On the other hand, unemployment causes a lot of problem in the society. The provision of job opportunities for Nigerians may be one way of stemming crime rate. The government should review its policies so as to create job opportunities for members of the society. All hand must be on deck. The government should review the salary scales of workers also. This should be done in such a way that the monthly salaries are able to meet the financial demands and obligation of individuals.  
If there is anything the government can do to improve the standard of living of individuals in reducing hardship, the government should do it. At least this effort can go along way in reducing or curbing crime and female criminality particularly, in Nigeria. Thereby, giving the country a face lift.

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**Questionnaire**

1. The type of upbringing one had during his or her childhood influence his or her behavioral conduct and adulthood

Agree

Disagree

Undecided

1. Most of the female offenders are first offenders

Agree

Disagree

Undecided

1. Bad company is another predisposing factor to criminality

Agree

Disagree

Undecided

1. Peer groups have great influence on individuals

Agree

Disagree

Undecided

1. A good percentage of the offenders are introduced into criminal activities by their friends

Agree

Disagree

Undecided

1. The family under which one grows up also affects his or her life

Agree

Disagree

Undecided

1. Most of the female offenders are either in the informal sector or unemployed

Agree

Disagree

Undecided

1. The frustration caused by economic hardship is enough to make one commit crime.

Agree

Disagree

Undecided

1. To what extent are females involve in crimes

High extent

Moderate extent

Low extent

1. Murder and theft are crimes women are Most visible in

Agree

Disagree

Undecided

1. economic hardship that has befallen Nigeria is the factors predisposing women to criminality

Agree

Disagree

Undecided

1. Poor socialization process does influence criminality in individuals

Agree

Disagree

Undecided

1. Economic conditions are contributory factor to criminality.

Agree

Disagree

Undecided

1. Illiteracy is a factor that predispose female into criminal act

Agree

Disagree

Undecided