

FESTSCHRIFT IN HONOUR OF PROFESSOR BASHIRU SALAWU



Unemployment

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SOCIOLOGY AND HUMAN CHALLENGES

**FESTSCHRIFT IN HONOUR OF
PROFESSOR BASHIRU SALAWU**

**SOCIOLOGY AND
HUMAN CHALLENGES**

**PUBLISHED BY THE
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY,
UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN, ILORIN, NIGERIA**

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CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

An Analysis of Ethnic and Gender Magnitudes to Criminal Activities in Nigeria.

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Introduction

Any discussion of deviance remains incomplete without a discussion of crime, which is any act that violates written criminal law. Society sees most crimes, such as robbery, assault, battery, rape, murder, burglary, and embezzlement, as deviant. But some crimes, such as those committed in violation of laws against selling merchandise on Sundays, are not deviant at all. Moreover, not all deviant acts are criminal. For example, a person who hears voices that are not there is deviant but not criminal.

A normative definition views crime as deviant behaviour that violates prevailing norms, and cultural standards prescribing how humans ought to behave normally. This approach considers the complex realities surrounding the concept of crime and seeks to understand how changing social, political, psychological, and economic conditions may affect changing definitions of crime and the form of the legal, law-enforcement, and penal responses made by society.

Crime is a universal phenomenon and differs only in degree among the various nations of the world. The Nigerian crime – the problem is multidimensional and is capable of undermining its corporate existence as well as efforts towards sustainable development. Nigeria's corporate existence can be undermined by a number of factors among which is an escalating and uncontrolled crime problem Tanimu (2006). Security and crime have been deeply rooted in the political history of this country, particularly in recent times, which has emerged as a key concept in Nigeria's struggle for good governance, sustainable democracy and development.

The emergence of the Nigerian Nation into a modern cosmopolitan society in which the citizenry will be free at least economically was the dream of our Nationalists who wrestled sovereignty from the colonialist. With the struggle, came political independence on 1st October 1960, for the Nigerian state and its constituent ethnic Nationalities. With independence, Nigerians acquired the sole right to control their affairs. Nigerians were no more at the political and economic ruling of her imperial majesty. The hopes were high for the attainment of economic greatness given the enormous population and its diversity, the Nationalists had a vision.

Before long after independence, it seemed the heavens were opened up for Nigeria with abundant export crops, crude oil was discovered in commercial quantity in various shores of the nation, this was named "The Black Gold". The land was overflowing with riches from oil as if to alleviate the effect of the human and material plunder (act of robbery) visited on Nigeria and entire Africa by the European colonialists and the other vandal hordes (destroyer). Nigeria looked like a virgin island and truly as at then Virgin Island it was; untapped! The advent of a seemingly buoyant and prosperous post-independent Nigeria ushered in an equally growing public sector to complement the efforts of those established by the colonialists. This developing public sector was meant to cater for the badly needed utilities and infrastructure as urbanization took centre stage at that time. Ministries and Extra- ministerial Departments were established to support government at the centre and in the states to achieve the objectives of governance.

Be that as it may, it is no exaggeration to say that the worst enemies of our society in present times are fraud, corruption and other

criminal activities in all their aspects. Mismanagement and tribalism might have put Nigerians in their present predicament, but it cannot be doubted that fraud, corruption and other criminal activities in the public sector are playing an even greater role in this regard.

It is an obvious correct assertion that more money is stolen in or through the public sector by means of fraud with the pen rather than with physical extortion of money or other vices that is, straightforward theft or robbery. The turn which corruption has taken in the public sector even among our so-called leaders, calls for incessant prayers. Take for example, just recently in the year 2007, it was reported of Senator Iyabo-Obasanjo Bello, was involved in a contract scam worth the sum of Three Billion, Five Hundred Thousand Naira (N3.5 Billion), (The Nations Dec 29, 2007.pg 13). Also, the alleged renovation and furnishing contract scam of the speaker for the House of Representatives and her Deputy, Senator Patricia Etteh and Alhaji Babangida Nguroje, put at the whopping sum of N628 Million (The Nations Dec 29, 2007).

Furthermore, the alleged money laundering by the Bayelsa State Governor Chief Alameisigha is another issue that boils in the stomach of the Nigerian economy. This phenomenon of crime has permeated the basic structure of Nigerian society, it has become prominent, and it has resulted in distorted orientation and other pervasive tendencies fill or excessive in our system. Criminal activities have made a mockery of Nigeria and its people. Consequently, rich Nigeria has become a beggar Nation.

Looking at the pathetic scenario above, one would be tempted to believe that there was no effort on the part of the government which is the custodian of these public sector institutions to check criminal activities. In Nigeria today, most of the public sectors are crime and corruption-ridden, Nigerians and non-Nigerians are increasingly finding it difficult to transmit genuine business with our public sector because of the extortionate tendencies of the operators of the system (Agbaye 2000). This is one of the major reasons why crime has become endemic in our system such that there is hardly anything that could be done both officially and unofficially without gratification. Crime has seriously comprised the administrative competence, tendering procedure, costing techniques and probity of the entire government of our public life.

The Concept of Crime

Crime is like other concepts in social sciences, which have no generally accepted definition. According to Oxford Dictionary of Sociology (2009), "a crime is held to be an offence, which goes beyond the personal and into the public sphere, breaking prohibitory rules or laws, to which legitimate punishments or sanctions are attached, and which requires the intervention of a public authority... for crime to be known as such, it must come to the notice of, and be processed through an administrative system or enforcement agency. It must be reported and recorded by the police (or other investigators); it may then become part of criminal statistics; may or may not be investigated; and may or may not result in a court case." Dambazau (1994) defined crime as an act or omission against public interest which is prescribed by law enacted by the legislature in the overall interests of the society, and to which prescribed punishment is attached in the event of violation and it involves four major principles which are public wrong, moral wrong, law and punishment for the criminal. Crime is also seen as a violation of the rules agreed to be respected by all members of the society, and upon which the rest members of the society mete sanction upon those guilty of the violation. It is for the same reason that the legal system views crime as a public and moral wrong.

The prevalence of crime in the world today is a cause for serious concern for all and sundry. It undermines the social fabric by eroding the sense of safety and security. Crime impacts society in a variety of ways according to the nature and extent of crime committed. It constitutes a problem when its incidence is as rampant in society as to constitute a threat to the security of persons and property, as well as social order and solidarity (Onoge, 1998).

Crime is a threat to the economic, political and social security of a nation and a major factor associated with underdevelopment; because it discourages both local and foreign investments, reduces the quality of life, destroys human and social capital, damages relationships between citizens and the states, thus undermining democracy, the rule of law and the ability of the country to promote development.

The development in societies with particular references to Westernization has not helped matters; instead, it has been destructive to the social and cultural values of the society. Reasons for the increase in crime in Nigeria include urbanization which is spreading more

widely and rapidly than improvement in the social and economic condition. Crime is a huge threat to public safety. It causes great personal suffering, and vast material damage, and places an enormous burden on the urban social network. Globally, every five years, 60% of city inhabitants have been victims of one type of crime or another while over half of these crimes have involved personal crime (arson, fraudulence, cheating, 419 syndrome, forgery, etc). It has been noted that Nigerian cities are conducive areas for criminal activities because they provide the anonymity needed for criminal activities (Okafor, 2011).

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Crime is a huge threat to public safety. It causes great personal suffering, and vast material damage, and places an enormous burden on the urban social network. Globally, every five years, 60% of city inhabitants have been victims of one type of crime or another while over half of these crimes have involved personal crime (arson, fraudulence, cheating, 419 syndrome, forgery, etc) It has been noted that Nigerian cities are conducive areas for criminal activities because it provides the anonymity needed for personal crime as well as environment for a specialized and organized underworld. Theft, fraudulence, arson, forgery and other criminal activities become a means of survival.

In recent times, Nigeria has become worried and disturbed by the menace of crime. A report revealed a "training school" for armed robbers in the Ajegunle area of Lagos. The said training school according to that report includes planning strategies of cooperation, launching an attack and escaping with loot. Their ages range between eighteen and twenty-eight years. The 'training school' also conduct an interview for the recruit. It was also revealed that the training school was where the bandits prepare programmes on which area to raid and plan how to operate different types of firearms and ammunition. Suspects were nabbed during their morning training session where they were working out modalities on a number of houses to be raided

for the week. (Daily Sketch 1990). The above scenario signifies serious danger in our cities.

Crime In Nigeria

Crime rate in Nigeria has assumed a worrisome dimension. In light of the worsening crime situation, and the ineffectiveness of the crime control apparatuses, Nigeria can be deemed to have a crime problem. Nigeria is among the developing countries of the world and is experiencing a prevalence of rising crime waves, criminal intentions and varying degrees of delinquency. Nigeria has been on the global crime map since the 1980s (Dambazau, 2007). The nature of these crimes includes armed robbery, murder, rape, car theft, burglary, fraud, bribery and corruption, food and drug adulteration, gambling, smuggling, human trafficking, kidnapping, drug trafficking, money laundering, internet scam, advanced fee fraud (419) and other illegal activities. A report revealed a "training school" for jobless youths as armed robbers in the Ajegunle area of Lagos. The said training school according to that report includes planning strategies of cooperation, launching an attack and escaping with loot. Their ages range between eighteen and twenty-eight years. The training school also conducts interviews for the recruit. It was also revealed that the training school is where the bandits prepare programmes on which area to raid and plan how to operate different types of firearms and ammunition. Suspects were nabbed during their morning training session where they were working out modalities on a number of houses to be raided for the week (Daily Sketch, 1990; Aremu and Ahmed, 2011). Sadly, there are reports of crimes committed mostly by the youths in virtually every corner of the country. Criminality has become an integral part of the nation's daily life.

Criminalization

One can view criminalization as a procedure deployed by society as a preemptive harm-reduction device, using the threat of punishment as a deterrent to anyone proposing to engage in the behaviour causing harm. The State becomes involved because governing entities can become convinced that the costs of not criminalizing (through allowing the harms to continue unabated) outweigh the costs of criminalizing it (restricting individual liberty, for example, to

minimize harm to others).

Criminalization may provide future harm reduction at least to the outside population, assuming those shamed or incarcerated or otherwise restrained for committing crimes start out more prone to criminal behaviour. Likewise, one might assume that criminalizing acts that in themselves do not harm other people ("victimless crimes") may prevent subsequent harmful acts (assuming that people "prone" to commit these acts may tend to commit harmful actions in general). Some see the criminalization of "victimless crimes" as a pretext for imposing personal, religious or moral convictions on otherwise productive citizens or taxpayers.

Some commentators may see criminalization as a way to make potential criminals pay or suffer for their prospective crimes. In this case, criminalization becomes a way to set the price that one must pay to society for certain actions considered detrimental to society as a whole. An extreme view might see criminalization as State-sanctioned revenge.

Ethnic Magnitudes to Criminal Activities in Nigeria

Criminal organizations from Nigeria typically do not follow the mafia-type model followed by other groups. They appear to be less formal and more organized along familial and ethnic lines, thus making them less susceptible by infiltration from law enforcement. Police investigations are further hampered by the fact there are at least 250 distinct ethnic languages in Nigeria. Other criminal gangs from Nigeria appear to be smaller-scale freelance operations. Most Nigerian organized crime syndicates are of Igbo or Yoruba origin. Especially groups from Benin City are notorious for human trafficking.

An example of this is the highly organized confraternities/campus gangs that operate worldwide, for example, the Neo-Black Movement of Africa. In its own words, the Neo-Black Movement of Africa is a "registered non-partisan, non-religious and non-tribal organisation that sincerely seeks to revive, retain and modify where necessary those aspects of African culture that would provide vehicles of progress for Africa and her peoples."

The current worldwide head of the Neo-Black Movement is Augustus Bemigho-Oyeoyibo. A representative of the Neo-Black Movement of Africa has claimed to be separate from the Black Axe groups and has

engaged in charitable giving.

Behind the welfare facade of the Neo-Black Movement hides indeed the most dreaded Nigerian campus cult, the Black Axe confraternity. NBM usually states that they are not identical to Black Axe for propaganda purposes. While the atrocities committed by campus cult members are well-known, very little is known about other activities of the Neo-Black Movement. Offiong claims that the group's initial goal of promoting black consciousness and fighting for the dignity of Africans and their freedom from neo-colonialism has deteriorated into self-serving behaviour that is "notoriously and brutally violent" (Offiong 2003, 69-70). He maintains that violence has in fact become the cult's official policy (*ibid.*, 70).

Apart from the atrocities in the orbit of NBM, most members of the confraternity are involved in fraud and cybercrime. The main reason to join the confraternity is (besides the pressure and intimidation that is applied to students to join) the fact that the confraternity has infiltrated all spheres of Nigerian society and serves the main purpose of helping its members climb the career ladder and going unpunished for their crimes by means of their nepotistic structure.

Investigations and a number of arrests of members of NBM by the Italian police brought to light various crimes committed by members of NBM. NBM and other cults were found guilty of smuggling drugs, extortion, 419 fraud, prostitution, passport falsification, and cloning of credit cards.

In 2011, eight more members of NBM were arrested in Italy for the same offences mentioned above. They are referred to as an international criminal organisation and the Nigerian Mafia. According to internal documents, the confraternity helps members to immigrate illegally to Europe. Nigerian fraud rings have been exported to Europe, America, and Asia (see external links section). In 2015 a sophisticated car theft ring run by the Black Axe organized crime ring was busted in Toronto, Canada. The ring had stolen more than 500 luxury cars in one year, valued at 30 million US dollars.

Questions of ethnicity and gender were barely looked at by sociologists of crime and deviance until the 1970s. Prior to this, the primary focus was on class. Since the 1970s, sociologists have recognised the need to examine ethnicity and gender. In the early phase

of post-war immigration, there was an assumption that members of ethnic minority groups were no more likely to be offenders or victims than the majority white population. It was also assumed that the criminal justice system treated all ethnic groups fairly. According to a major investigation into police and immigrant relations in 1972 Black people were more law-abiding than the general population and there was little evidence against Black and Asian immigrants with regard to an increase in crime rates (Layton-Henry, 1992). During the next 10 years, however, relations between the police and the black community deteriorated and evidence mounted of increasing racist attacks.

The media pushed the idea that certain ethnic groups within the UK were more likely to commit crimes and end up in prison as a result of this. In 2000 a nationwide study presented the following statistics that appeared to prove that some ethnic groups were more likely to offend:

The white population of the UK made up 94.5% of the total population but only made up 82% of the prison population. The black population made up 1.8% of the UK's total population but made up 12.1% of the prison population. In contrast, the Asian representation in this study showed that they made up 2.7% of the UK's total population and had a prison population of 2.8%.

'Members of ethnic minorities are no more prone to crime than other sections of the population, but are over-represented in crime statistics.' Many members of society assume that ethnic minorities are more prone to being involved in criminal activity than white Caucasian people. This is reflected in official statistics, and we will now question the validity of such claims.

Researchers Lea and Young accept that policing policies and police racism exaggerate the black crime rate. However, they do believe that there has been an increase in the number of crimes committed by blacks and that this is the result of unemployment and discrimination. They find it hard to understand how "left idealists" such as Gilroy can argue that the disproportionate number of black males convicted of crimes in Britain is caused by police racism. They are even more critical of Gilroy's claim that such black crime as there is, results from a continuation of "an anti-colonial struggle". This is not plausible because most first-generation immigrants appear to have been law-abiding and most of the victims of black crime, are

themselves black.

Becker suggests that there is really no such thing as a deviant act. It only becomes deviant when others perceive it as such. Possible effects of labelling ethnic minorities can lead to assumptions being made about certain classes or ethnic backgrounds. The underachievement of Afro-Caribbean boys in school could lead to teachers naturally assuming that any such individual in his or her class would be predisposed to deviance. Such a belief may affect their treatment of such children, which in turn would back up the idea of the "self-fulfilling prophecy". If a child is labelled as deviant, they will behave to fit their label.

Many theories of deviance are based on official statistics provided by the government. These statistics tend to show two main trends: some social groups appear to be more involved with crime than others, namely ethnic minorities. They appear more likely to commit crimes than white people. Sociologists such as Merton and Miller have taken these statistics at face value, and gone on to explain why these groups appear to commit a disproportionate amount of crime. Crime rates in Britain remained low until the 1950s but have increased rapidly since then. Some sociologists have affiliated this rise in crime rates with the continuing influx of immigrants into the United Kingdom.

Self-report studies indicate that there may be police bias against ethnic minority delinquents. Policemen are five times more likely to arrest or stop a person of an ethnic minority on suspicion of drug-related crime, than they are to stop a white person. These claims back up the idea of "the canteen culture" whereby police officers are openly racist when off duty.

Marxists argue that crime is widespread in all parts of society. Snider argues that many of the most serious deviant acts in modern society are corporate crimes. She claims that corporate crime cost much more in terms of loss of money and loss of life than crimes such as burglary and robbery. She believes that these crimes are generally assumed to be mainly committed by members of ethnic minorities. They are severely over-represented in the media.

Some researchers argue that the greater likelihood for ethnic minority groups, particularly Black ethnic groups, to be criminalised (arrested and imprisoned, for example) reflects their greater involvement in crime. Other researchers argue that ethnic differences

in criminalisation stem from institutional racism within the criminal justice system.

Institutional racism (also called structural or systemic racism) is any form of racism occurring specifically within institutions such as public government bodies, private business corporations, and universities (public and private). Institutional racism is one of three forms of racism: (i) Personally-mediated, (ii) internalised, and (iii) institutional. The term institutional racism was coined by Stokely Carmichael of the Black Panther Party, who, in the late 1960s, defined institutional racism as "the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin".

In the UK, the inquiry about the murder of the black Briton Stephen Lawrence concluded that the investigating police force was institutionally racist. Sir William Macpherson of Cluny used the term as a description of "the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin", which "can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes, and behaviour, which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness, and racist stereotyping, which disadvantages minority ethnic people".

The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report, and the public's response to it, were among the major factors that forced the Metropolitan Police to address its treatment of ethnic minorities. More recently, the former Metropolitan Police commissioner, Sir Ian Blair, said that the British news media is institutionally racist, a comment that offended journalists, provoking angry responses from the media, despite the police association welcoming Sir Ian's assessment.

In May 2010, London's Metropolitan Police Service faced a racism case as a senior black officer claimed he was sidelined. A top black officer sued the Metropolitan Police for race discrimination amid claims that senior police covered up a damaging report alleging racism in the ranks.

The Macpherson Inquiry analysed and assessed claims of racism against the Metropolitan Police. Its report suggested major changes in the ways the Metropolitan Police handles members of an ethnic minority.

Gender Magnitudes to Criminal Activities in Nigeria

Recently, criminology has gradually begun to understand how fundamental forms of social issues, influence crime, for example, race, ethnicity, class and gender. Earlier efforts to tackle this limitation included dividing offenders into sets to see whether the main theories of criminality explained their offences. A common fear among feminist criminologists is that main criminological philosophies arose without focusing on gender differences and that most research used for such theories is conducted without taking account of female offenders (Chesney-Lind, 1989).

One explanation for the absence of revolutionary work into female crime is that previous investigations in criminology either disregarded possible differences between males and females or, held misconstrued beliefs that females were not involved in crime. Previous attempts to define and clarify who was a criminal and what is defined as a crime did little to study gender differences. Upon scrutiny of previous research, it is apparent that researchers on the whole used biological deficiencies or other abnormalities to explain why females committed crimes. Cesare Lombroso (1895) deemed females, on the whole, to be undeveloped, and he described female crime by the fact that female criminals were lacking the usual characteristics innate to them and therefore displayed more masculine characteristics. Lombroso (1920) offered a biological explanation for female criminality. He believed individuals who possessed genes which cause females to commit crimes should be prevented from breeding. This was his solution to eliminate female criminality. This view is supported by researchers such as Cowie, Cowie and Slater (1968) who asserted that physical characteristics such as having a large body, meant the individual will be more likely to be aggressive and therefore delinquent.

Lombroso's (1920) views influenced and inspired later theories. For example; Lombroso's primary view of females was that they are amoral. Thomas (1923) elaborates on this view in his theory that females manipulate males for ulterior purposes. Freud (1933) was also influenced by this view and believed females punish men due to a lack of a penis. Pollack (1950) concludes that females are intrinsically untrustworthy. Freud (1933) believes that females are born without a penis due to being punished. As a result, girls grow up to become bitter

women. Men also realise that females are lacking a penis and are awaiting punishment. Therefore, Freud explains that women are constantly trying to be like men by committing crimes. Freud believes that women need to be cared for to learn to act as women should be acting. Vedder and Somerville (1970) believe that it is important to study offending women to try and change them as women become wives and mothers, and raise families. Klein (1973) believes that researchers attempting to introduce new theories to understanding gender differences in offending, should look at traditional theories and avoid introducing similar ideas which are no longer accepted nowadays.

Lombroso's beliefs about females adopting male characteristics due to not being evolved are not supported by modern researchers, however, some researchers do hold biology responsible for female criminal behaviour. For example, Pollack (1950) suggests that the beginning of menstruation and pregnancy is related to criminality and that women use their sexuality to receive positive treatment. This has influenced psychological theories to use gender differences in explaining personality changes and evolution. Commonly studies on predictors of crimes have studied males because it is a shared belief in criminology that males are more likely to offend than females and male offending is thought to be more persistent and violent (Lanctot and LeBlane, 2002).

There are arguments that the differences in the gender gap in offending have changed. Steffensmeier (1993) believes that this gap is estimated by looking at the stability over time whereas scholars such as O'Brien (1999) stress that the differences between males and females can be small, depending on the offence. The media also reports this difference in the gender gap by labelling offending women as 'wild' (Scelfo, 2006). However, there is little information in the media informing researchers whether the gender gap in violence has lessened and whether women have begun to offend more over time. Crime statistics report that females began offending slightly more in the late 1980s, and the figure rose until the late 1990s when both male and female offending rates decreased. It is unanimously agreed by criminologists that females are not more violent than before nor are they wild (Steffensmeier et al., 2005).

Early research on female offending lacked clarity as arrest and conviction data of females was only primarily used to assess female offending (Box and Hale, 1983; Steffensmeier, 1980). Researchers recognised the methodological problems and began to adopt a comparative approach in studies by involving both males and females in their studies to assess the changes in the gender gap. Researchers also acknowledged that gender gap changes were sensitive to time periods. For example; Steffensmeier (1980) noted that offending in the United States was noticeable in the 1960s and increased slightly more in the 1970s. The type of offending was mainly property crimes. This study is compared to Simon (1975) who also found an increase in property crimes during the 1960s-1970s but noted that there were little increases in female arrests. This finding was echoed by Steffensmeier and Cobb (1981) and Steffensmeier (1993). However, during the same timeframe a study found reductions in the gender gap in a range of offenses, which included violent offences in a study of arrests in the state of Ohio from 1890 to 1976 (Giordano, Kerbel and Dudley, 1981).

Farrington and Painter (2004) conducted research investigating the risk factors associated with offending for males and females. This was a longitudinal study exploring the differences between males and females by using brothers and sisters as participants. By using siblings from the same families the researchers had advantages as they were able to control factors such as neighbourhoods and communities influencing the offending rate. A limitation of this study is that the siblings are from a different time frame (1960s) and another limitation is that offending is measured according to convictions. Therefore the researchers ignored cases where the participants were caught by the police for offending but given a warning instead. As hypothesised by the researchers, the males in this study were most likely to commit crimes (44%) than females (12%) and initial results showed that there were differences in the offences committed. For example, males were most likely to commit burglary (20%) whereas females were most likely to commit shoplifting (28%). Overall females were imprisoned for a short amount of time compared to males; 4.4 years for females and 6.6 years for males. The common predictor for offending between the males and females in the present study was low household income, attending a school where criminal behaviour is high and poor discipline by

parents. However, after further scrutiny, researchers found gender differences. Females were more likely to offend when they were praised less by their parents and when their parents showed little interest in their schooling. For males, the most striking factor predicting their offending was whether the parents were law-abiding and whether they had normal mental health.

Globally, there are more male offenders compared to their female counterparts in prison custody. There is little doubt that the single predictor of crime is gender. Wilson and Herrnstein (1985) opined that in virtually every society for which crime records exists, the prevalence of crime and violence is greater among males compared to female offenders.

In Nigeria, apart from the fact that male commits more crime compare to their female counterparts, the rate at which the male gender return back to prison (Recidivism) after their release is also higher compare to the female gender from study.

Female Criminality

In examining sentencing policy, Farrington and Morris (1983) conducted a study of sentencing in magistrate courts, they started by noting that some official figures did imply more leniency towards women, For example in 1979 6.6 per cent of men but only 2 per cent of women found guilty of indictable crimes were imprisoned. Also in the same year data on sentencing for 408 offences of theft in Cambridge were examined. Some 110 of these offences were committed by women, and although men received more severe sentences than women, the research found that the differences disappeared when the severity of offences was taken into account, he concluded.

According to a PRAWA (2000) publication, there are significant differences between male and female offence rates (in some cases the ratio is as high as 16:1) in indictable offences. This has kept the number of women in prison custody in Nigeria and elsewhere in the world relatively low compared to the men. It needs to be noted, however, that this relatively low figure often leads people to forget that there are women behind bars (Hess 1988). Several reasons account for the low rate of female criminality. One of the reasons is the apparent underreporting of criminality in the country. Another reason is that

women have been ignored as a result of the low status the society accords them, especially as they are more prone to committing non-violent crimes.

Available data revealed that women were placed in custody for offences ranging from prostitution, quarrel, theft, and friendship with armed rubbers (Akumadu 1995).

As Rotimi (1993) further revealed in cases where women have been found to commit certain offences, extrajudicial measures may be taken to punish them viz, the use of ridicule, embarrassment and other forms of traditional sanctions etc, they have increasingly involved in sophisticated crimes such as armed robbery, drug trafficking or forgery. Women have been found to be engaged in frauds and related crimes, In a review of some of these crimes by

Rotimi (1993), it revealed that a woman was caught carrying \$19,000 that she intended to smuggle abroad as reported in the West African Journal of January 21, 1985. While the Punch of December 12, 1984, reported a woman sentenced to death for illegally exporting crude oil and the Evening Times of January 23, 1984, reported a female cashier who had forged the signature of her bank manager with the intention of stealing N24, 000.

Gender and Recidivism

In Benda's (2005) study of 300 female and 300 male graduates of a boot camp, he noted that there are noteworthy gender differences in predictors of tenure in the community without criminal recidivism in a 5-year follow-up. The Cox proportional hazards models show that urban residence, childhood and recent abuses, living with a criminal partner, selling drugs, stress, depression, fearfulness, and suicidal thoughts are stronger positive predictors of recidivism for women than for men. Men are more likely to return to prison because of criminal peer associations, carrying weapons, alcohol abuse, and aggressive feelings. Job satisfaction and education lengthen the time in the community more for men than women, whereas the number of children and relationships are more important to tenure in the community for women.

McElfresh, Yan and Janku (2009) observed that nearly 41 per cent of recidivating juvenile offenders re-offended within the first three months of their initial offence disposition date and nearly 29 per cent of

male offenders re-offended within 12 months, compared with 19 per cent of females. Their findings of the logistic regression analysis for the juvenile offenders from calendar 2007 indicated that Male offenders had greater odds of being recidivists than female offenders.

Renauer and Henning (2005) compared the recidivism rates of samples of male and female perpetrators of intimate-partner violence processed in the criminal justice systems of Memphis and Portland. Their study found no gender difference in the likelihood of involvement in a future police report of domestic violence, either as a victim or a suspect (43 per cent of the men and 44 per cent of the women). Males were significantly more likely to recidivate as suspects-only (31 per cent compared to 6 per cent), and females were more likely to recidivate as victims-only (26 per cent compared to 3 per cent). A smaller percentage of males (10 per cent) and females (12 per cent) were both suspects and victims in future incidents.

According to these authors, men were more likely than women to be repeated recidivists, and women were more likely to have multiple offence reports that listed them as victims.

Renauer and Henning's (2005) findings suggest that female offenders most often fit the profile of abused women who were arrested a single time for fighting back against male perpetrators in self-defence. The Memphis sample consisted of 880 suspects (440 men and 440 women) identified in police reports as having committed a domestic-violent offence against a current or former heterosexual intimate partner in 1997. Suspects were included regardless of whether they had been arrested or not. The Portland sample consisted of 6,010 individuals (5,289 men and 721 women) who were identified in police reports as suspects in a domestic-violence offence in the year 2000. The Pearson Chi-Square statistical analysis was used in all the analyses to measure the association between the variables of interest, for example, gender and recidivism.

Research conducted by Menard, Anderson and Godboldt (2007) shows that women also perpetrate Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and that their pattern of offending differs from that of men. This study examines demographic (such as age, race, employment status, victim-offender relationship) and offence characteristics (for example presence of children during assault, use of death threats, drug use) as predictors of recidivism in a five-year follow-up among IPV offenders. Using court

records from a large Midwestern city, this study examined 607 cases of IPV, 15.5% of which were perpetrated by women. The chi-square and t-test indicate that men and women differed significantly on most variables, logistic regression models were run separately for men and women.

Menard, Anderson and Godboldt's (2007) results suggest that there are both similarities and differences in factors that predict recidivism. However, the model provides more frequent correct classification for women (91.5%) than it does for men (60%), who recidivate. Among both men and women, non-whites as compared to whites, and those with evidence of drug use as compared to those without such use, were significantly more likely to recidivate. However, only women were more likely to recidivate when their relationship with their victims had previously ended.

Criminal Activities of Gender and Recidivism in Nigeria

Research conducted by Abrifor and Atere (2010), findings reveal that the identified determinants influencing the prevalence of recidivism among inmates in Nigerian Prisons are complex and offender-specific. The overall analyses of the rate of recidivism among convicted inmates from 2001-2005 indicated a total of 194,926 prison inmates, out of which, 72,707 (37.3%) were recidivists. This figure is in line with Soyombo's (2009) findings which estimated the cumulative prevalence rate of recidivism in Nigeria to be 37.3% in 2005. However, the subsequent estimations from 2006-2008 put the cumulative prevalence rate of recidivism in Nigerian Prisons to be 52.4%. Based on these findings, it is concluded that there is a constant increase in the rate of recidivism among inmates in Nigerian Prisons, especially among male inmates and young offenders. Furthermore, the analyses based on gender, age and marital status indicate that there were more male recidivists than their female counterparts and that the prevalence of recidivism is high among the age group between 26-36 years and also high among single recidivists. The crimes committed by recidivists were mostly theft and other minor stealing and burglary, while few of the respondents had crime history as juveniles.

Abrifor and Atere's (2010), findings suggest that Gender was statistically significant as a determinant influencing recidivism among

inmates in the Nigerian Prisons. The reasons for the larger proportions of male recidivists in Nigerian Prisons compared to their female counterparts can be linked to the fact that male convicts have a higher tendency to recidivate into crime than female convicts. This can be attributed to the fact that male criminals are likely to be more adventurous and involved in a variety of anti-social activities than females. This finding can equally be linked to the masculine nature of male criminal recidivists compared to their female counterparts. This finding corroborates Benda's (2005) findings that there are noteworthy gender differences in predictors of criminal recidivism and that men are more likely to return to prison because of criminal peer associations, carrying weapons, alcohol abuse, and aggressive feelings. Job satisfaction and education level more on men than women. While Renauer and Henning's (2005) findings concluded that men were more likely than women to be repeated recidivists as suspects and women were more likely to have multiple offences reports that listed them as victims and Menard, Anderson and Godboldt's (2007) findings indicate that male offenders had greater odds of being recidivists than female offenders.

Oluwadare and Agboola's findings revealed that women commit lesser crimes than men; that the causes of crime are numerous and multidimensional depending on the situation such criminal found himself or herself; that no differential punishment was given to either sex of the inmates. However, in terms of Labour, it is different because female inmates do not go out for Labour as their male counterparts do, the female inmates were not exposed to hard Labour, and they were not being led by warders outside the prison yards, this has to be looked into because of the signal it sending to the public that: maybe women are not criminals but men, though the percentage of men is greater then criminal is criminal either male or female and so equal treatment was supposed to be given to criminals irrespective of the sex.

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