



GENDER GAP IN CRIME: ANALYSIS OF MALE AND FEMALE VICTIMS IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES IN CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The main thrust of the paper is to examine: GENDER GAP IN CRIME: ANALYSIS OF MALE AND FEMALE VICTIMS IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES IN CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA. Correctional Facility is an integral part of the criminal justice system and serves as a custodial for inmates. Correctional Facility is an essentially institution for rehabilitating, Correcting and re-integrating an inmate into the larger society. The Correctional Facility rehabilitate both males and females. Data have shown that there is gender gap in admission and rehabilitation of inmates in most of te Facilities in Nigeria. That is, crime records for males differs from that of the females. For instance, the National Bureau of Statistics reports that females have lower rates of crime record than males for all crimes except prostitution. Females have lower representation than males do in serious crime categories. Crime opportunities are prerequisites for crime to manifest and most societies have structure to be vulnerable to committing crime. Some of the push factors for gender gap in crime include: gender socialization, Opportunities for Criminal Behaviour and Secretive Nature of Female Offence among others. The paper recommends that the structural disposition of any society that promote gender gap in crime should be discouraged. Gender roles and socialization that predisposes male to crime should be checked to promote ideal and gender gap crime free society.

Keywords: Gender, Crime, male, female, Victim and Correctional facilities

1 Introduction

Gender socialization influences male and female involvement in crime. Criminologists have argued that females commit less crime and then males in any society whether simple or complex, developed or underdeveloped. Crime is a wrongdoing which violates the law of state or any socially disapproved behaviour in the society. There is gender variation in the act of “wrongdoing” in any given society. In pre-industrial era, crime rate was not high. But in modern society, there is geometric rate of crime. The changes in crime rate has also introduced gender gaps in committing crime. Gender gap in crime has been one of few undeniable truths in the field of criminology that men are more vulnerable in committing crime at significantly proportion than women across the world. The physical prowess of a man has fashioned him to crime committing while females are reluctant to do that in an insignificant proportion. Males commit much more crime than females, this is because some schools of thought have argued that the societal structure and demands placed on the male child is a propelling force to men committing crime in any society where there is gender gap in the process of child socialization. According to the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR, 2019). Crime rates between men and women might be due to social and cultural factors, crimes going unreported, or to biological factors. The nature and environment of crime determine gender involvement in crime perpetuation. Statistics have been consistent in reporting that men commit more criminal acts than women especially crime that needs techniques and advanced intelligence.

2 Gender difference in crime

Gender is seen as a social definition of maleness and femaleness. Sociologists have argued that Sex is difference from gender. This is because sex is biological while gender is social. Therefore, there is variation between biological and social orientation in committing crime. According to Sulaiman, Abdul, Muhammed, Raji, Olatunji, and Abdulbaqi, (2016) gender can be considered as an economic, social, political, and cultural attributes and opportunities and constraints associated with being female and male. Hence, gender is the socially and culturally constructed roles for men and women in any society. The role

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allocation varies from one society to another. Mason (1984) notes that there is hardly any society where men and women occupy equal status. The status inequality also manifests in crime involvement. Therefore, crime is any actions or inactions that violates the law of the state. There is an interconnection between gender and crime as a result of the biological variation between men and women, the variance also occurred in their criminal behaviour and criminal dispositions. According to the Nigerian National Bureau of Statistics (NBC, 2014) majority of criminal cases are committed by men, and when women offend, they tend to commit low-level, nonviolent offences which pose little risk to society. It is apposite to argue that there are social and biological factors of criminal behaviour among male and females. Felson (2002) argued that the motives for female and male crime is similar, while Blanchette and Brown (2006) maintained that the motivating factors that lead to criminal behaviour may be different for female offenders based on their social orientation. Criminologists and social researchers have identified the following factors as the cause of differences in crime and gender.

3 Gender Socialization

The difference in the process of gender socialization of males and females have a nexus with gender criminal behaviour. The female socialization promotes the “expressive roles, emotion, submissiveness and withdrawal disposition” while the male socialization encourages men to be aggressive and bold, thus they are more likely to act violently when solving their problems. Hagan, In some homes, male socializations are given less parental monitoring because the male child is allowed and expected to take more risks than the females and this can be said to be one of the reasons for the gender disparity in criminal behaviour and manifestation (Hagan, Gillis, & John, 2009). Gender socialization is one of the leading factors of gender differences in crime.

4 Opportunities for Criminal Behaviour

Opportunity and crime has been familiarized in criminology in relation to the anomie hypothesis. The unequal opportunities between males and females present an unequal disposition to gender and crime. The relationship between crime and opportunity has been contentious in sociological discourse. The nexus between crime and opportunities has been placed in relation to the proposition that the social and economic diversity of modern society has increased its criminogenic potentials between males and females. Openings for criminal behaviour determine the rate of crime between male and female. The absence of criminal opportunities produce absence for criminal behaviour among males and females. Gender exposure to criminal behaviour predisposes male and female to crime. If opportunity is denied for both males and females, the occurrence of crime will be very minimal; hence, such society will be very safe and secured for all genders. The structural disposition of male to opportunities has propelled greater involvement of males in crime than females.

5 Secretive Nature of Female Offence

In most developing countries of the world, crime reports and statistics under report female crime rates. The secretive nature of crime committed by females is one of the dynamics accounting for the differences in gender crime. There is absence of gender specific analysis on official statistics on convictions. Most of the crime records only classified the numbers arrested, the nature of crime, place of offence and convicted for crimes. Nigerian self-report and victim surveys (2019) suggest that there is a large amount of crime that is never reported to the security agencies and some societal norms does not promote open reports of crime especially among the female victims, this make female crime secretive and unreported. Female crime secretiveness has created gender gap in crime. Pollack (1950) asserted that men are not more criminal than women but women are very secretive and are naturally good at hiding their actions. Hence, female crimes are under-reported, creating a gap in gender crime.

6 Comparative analysis of males and females in crime involvement

Crime rate (2012-2016)

Year	Male	Female	% Female
2012	51,161	975	1.87
2013	54,151	885	1.61
2014	54,933	1,103	1.97
2015	63,668	1,365	2.10
2016	67,329	1,357	1.98
TOTAL	291,242	5,687	1.92

Source: NBS, 2020

Table 6.3: Distribution of Prison Admission by Type of Offences and Sex (2013 – 2016)

Type of Offence	2013			2014			2015			2016		
	M	F	% F	M	F	% F	M	F	% F	M	F	% F
Debt	618	28	4.33	884	50	5.35	642	13	1.98	712	39	5.19
Arson	685	14	2.00	777	31	3.84	730	40	5.19	611	48	7.28
Affray	1,000	12	1.19	844	20	2.31	1,375	183	11.75	1,010	27	2.60
Assault	8,301	681	7.58	7,128	529	6.91	8,177	603	6.87	9,411	343	3.52
Murder	6,852	320	4.46	8,153	407	4.75	8,509	314	3.56	8,141	361	4.25
Treason	387	44	10.21	349	9	2.51	214	22	9.32	278	15	5.12
Sedition	183	5	2.66	162	8	4.71	34	2	5.56	86	4	4.44
Abduction	1,610	79	4.68	1,286	63	4.67	1,094	101	8.45	1,344	112	7.69
Smuggling	621	15	2.36	525	15	2.78	406	18	4.25	663	20	2.93
Immigration	623	15	2.35	520	24	4.41	243	22	8.30	288	23	7.40
Stealing	47,689	2,747	5.45	44,385	2,491	5.31	36,051	2,249	5.87	45,201	2,501	5.24
Robbery	12,920	296	2.24	8,223	282	3.32	9,207	252	2.66	10,969	289	2.57
Armed Robber	11,661	197	1.66	9,987	262	2.56	9,659	54	0.56	5,871	322	5.20
S ex Offences	5,666	131	2.26	4,284	152	3.43	3,603	183	4.83	4,003	145	3.50
Traffic Offence	3,023	65	2.10	1,758	48	2.66	1,040	46	4.24	1,058	41	3.73
Currency Offence	2,662	100	3.62	772	11	1.40	672	10	1.47	423	23	5.16
Indian Hamp Offences	4,225	128	2.94	6,844	216	3.06	4,205	197	4.48	7,201	206	2.78
Contempt of Court Offence	3,784	127	3.25	3,523	169	4.58	3,257	178	5.18	4,186	182	4.17
Unlawful Possession of Arms	2,623	93	3.42	2,564	49	1.88	2,846	92	3.13	3,654	82	2.19
Forgery and Altering	1,587	19	1.18	979	18	1.81	924	38	3.95	1,641	44	2.61
Escaping from Lawful Custody	504	4	0.79	456	-	-	181	1	0.55	202	2	0.98
Offences against Native Law and custom	526	10	1.87	591	19	3.11	148	1	0.67	230	6	2.54
Unlawful Possession of prop	1,481	27	1.79	1,870	39	2.04	1,532	27	1.73	1,644	36	2.14
Economic		30						-	-	186		

sabotage	662		4.34	84	7	7.69	132				5	2.62
Human Trafficking	212	10	4.50	306	9	2.86	41	7	14.58	71	12	14.46
Criminal lunatic	31	-	-	61		-	83	-	-	106	9	7.83
Cultism/Ritual	255	-	-	77	2	1.12	243	-	-	401	2	.50
Breach of peace	233	1	0.43	675	20	2.88	523	8	1.51	948	26	2.67
Other Offence	30,428	2,646	8.00	23,841	1,884	7.32	22,365	1,988	8.16	25,942	1,442	5.27
Total	51,052	7,844	4.94	132,008	6,834	4.92	118,136	6,649	5.33	36,481	6,367	4.46

Source: Nigerian Prisons Service, 2020.

The data above shows that suspects arrested for drug related offences are shown in the above table. The table reveals that over 90 per cent of suspects arrested for drug related offences in 2015, 2016 and 2017 (92.7, 93.5 and 93.8 per cent respectively) are men. While women recorded 7.3, 6.5 and 6.2 per cent for same years respectively. At the special area command level, the percentage of women arrested for drug offences was high in 2015 at 12.1 per cent, dropped to 7.3 percent in 2016, then slightly increased to 8.3 per cent in 2017. The data also revealed that arrests made at the Airport for female suspects on drug related offences was 10.3 per cent in 2015, it increased in 2016 to 17.0 per cent and dropped to 12.0 percent in 2017. Sea port arrest for women drug offenders was zero per cent for 2015 and 2016 but reached 28.6 percent in 2017. Similarly, the percentage of women arrested for drug related offences in Seme - Lagos border accounted for the highest arrest at ports of 7.9, 20.5 and 21.4 per cent in 2015, 2016 and 2017 respectively while at other border posts 7.1, 22.5 and 21.1 per cent were recorded for 2015, 2016 and 2017 respectively.

7 Trafficking in Persons

Number of Trafficked Persons by Age Group, Year and Sex

The reveals the trends of trafficked persons by age group, year and sex from 2013 to 2015. The table shows that overall, the number of trafficked females kept increasing over the observed years. In 2013, proportion of trafficked individuals who were female was 48.65 per cent and it increased to 49.42 per cent in 2014 and reached its highest in 2015 (76.38 per cent). The table also revealed that of trafficked persons who are between age 0 - 5 years 19 were female and 20 were male in 2015 as compared to 2014 (28 and 26 respectively) for female and male.

Number of Trafficked Persons by Age Group, Year and Sex

Age group	2013			2014			2015		
	F	M	% F	F	M	% F	F	Male	% F
0 – 5	3	9	25.00	28	26	51.85	19	20	48.72
6 – 15	156	351	30.77	180	393	31.41	214	108	66.46
16 – 25	275	133	67.40	259	88	74.64	358	51	87.53
26 – 35	40	15	72.73	38	11	77.55	75	28	72.82
36 & above	13	6	68.42	2	1	66.67	10	2	83.33
Total	487	514	48.65	507	519	49.42	676	209	76.38

Source: NAP TIP, 2016

Correctional Facilities in Cross River State

The history and development of Correctional Facilities in Cross River State is dated back to the period of 1890. The first of it was the Federal Correctional Facility Adim Farm, Calabar, Cross River State for the purpose of rehabilitating inmates. The Calabar Correctional Facility has changed its status to meet the modern standard of Correctional Facility. The structural modification put in place in some of the Correctional Facilities is due to the increasing number of inmates. As a result of population growth and increase in crime wave, there emerged other Correctional Facilities in other parts of Cross River State to include: Federal Correctional Facility Ikom, Federal Correctional Facility Obubra and Federal Correctional Facility Ogoja. Available data across these correctional Facilities shows that there are gender gaps in the number, type and rate of crimes committed by male and female inmates in these correctional Facilities. Also, the data shows that men are convicted more than women in these correctional Facilities in Cross River State.

8 Methodology

The study was conducted in Cross River State, Nigeria. The data depend for the paper were obtained from the Secondary sources. Specifically, data Statistics on gender crimes were obtained from the National Bureau of Statistics. It is crucial to note that there are 241 Correctional Facilities in Nigeria and data across all the 241 Correctional Facilities were obtained. But special focused on the Correctional Facilities in Cross River State, Nigeria.

9 Results

Nigerian Correctional Facility Inmates Population as of 30 April 2019

	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Convicted Inmates	17,402	254	17,656	32
Unconvicted Inmates	37,444	835	38,279	68
Total	54,846	1,089	55,935	100

Source: Nigerian Prison Service (2019)

The table above shows that gender distribution of the inmates across all the Correctional Facilities in Nigeria as 2019. The data revealed that the total population of the inmates was 55,935 with men accounting for 54,846 which is 98%, while women were 1,089 which is 2%. The data shows that the total number of people awaiting trial was 38,279; males constitutes 37,444 representing 98%, while women stands for 835 representing 2%. The total number of convicted inmates were 17,656 out of which men stood for 17,402 which is 98.6%, while 1.4% (254) were women. The above data from the Nigeria Correctional Facilities shows that there is gender gap in crime across all communities and societies in Nigeria and Cross River in particular.

10 Conclusion and Recommendations

In African society and Nigerian in particular, women are shielded and closely monitored from committing crime during the formative age of child socialization. Therefore, when opportunities and factors that contain people from committing crime differ across gender, crime rates will ultimately differ across gender too and rates at which crimes are committed. Gender gap in criminal behavior has been analyzed from many different perspectives like biological/genetic approach to differential socialization process. Unfortunately, many theories that attempt to explain individual differences in crime frequently ignore gender differences biologically. Crime statistics have consistently shown comparably higher rates of crime by males than by females, and especially higher rates of violence by males.

The gender differences in the socialization process and moral decency of men and women should be bridged. Males should also be socialized heavily towards greater empathy, sensitivity to the need of others and fear of separation from loved ones. This is because love bondage between people of opposite sex discourages crime and criminal behaviour. Crime, which is an action or omission that violates a law of the state and which results in punishment is perpetrated by both males and females, although the rate varies between genders. The paper recommends thus, the structural disposition of any society that promote gender gap in crime should be discouraged. Gender roles and socialization that predisposes male to crime should be checked to promote ideal and gender gap crime free society.

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