

**FACTORS INFLUENCING CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES AMONG STUDENTS IN THE
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY, EDO STATE, NIGERIA**

BY

IRABOR GIFT EDOGHOGHO

SSC2105935

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY

EDO STATE

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**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND
ANTHROPOLOGY, FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN
CITY, NIGERIA IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (B.SC) DEGREE IN SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY**

OCTOBER 2025.

DECLARATION

I, **IRABOR GIFT EDOGHOGHO**, do hereby declare that this project is entirely my own work and composition. The work contained in this project has not been submitted in candidature for any Degree and is not concurrently being submitted for any other Degree. All references made to the works of other persons have been acknowledged.

Date_____

IRABOR GIFT EDOGHOGHO

CERTIFICATION

We the undersigned, hereby certify that this research work was carried out by **IRABOR GIFT EDOGHOGHO** with Matriculation Number **SSC2105935** in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. Faculty of Social Science, University of Benin, Benin City, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Award of Bachelor of Science Degree in Sociology and Anthropology.

PROF. O.A. OBARO
(PROJECT SUPERVISOR)

DATE: _____

ASS.PROF O.G. IGBINOMWANHIA
(HEAD OF DEPARTMENT)

DATE: _____

DEDICATION

I dedicate this project first and foremost to Almighty God, whose infinite mercy and love sustained me through all the struggles and obstacles of my academic journey. To my dear parents Mr. and Mrs. Irabor, thank you for your constant support, encouragement, and prayers. Lastly, I dedicate this work to myself for never giving up, for believing in my dreams, and for staying strong even when the road was difficult.

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ABSTRACT

The study set out to establish the critical factors influencing criminal activities and documents the most prevalent types of offenses committed by students on university on Benin campus .the findings are intended to offer a clear, evidence-based roadmap for intervention, targeting the root causes identified. This study utilized a descriptive quantitative design. Data was gathered using a structured questionnaire administered to a sample of 200 respondents. This sample was drawn from the 5,040 undergraduate students residing in the four regular halls of residence (hall 1, 2, 3 and 4) selected using random and convenient sampling techniques. Analysis will be conducted using frequency distribution and percentages. This research holds substantial importance for institutional policy. The derived findings will equip the university administration with the necessary data design proactive, targeted security policies and counseling programs, ultimately, this work seeks to improve overall students well-being and restore a focus on academic excellence by mitigating the factors that promote campus crime

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Criminal activities can be viewed as a functional component of social interactions and serves as a theoretical foundation for numerous sociological studies, as no society is devoid of criminal activity. Nonetheless, crime often impacts the quality of life and hinders socio-economic growth and development (Jiburum, Mba & Ezeamama, 2014). Crime is inevitable, multidimensional and global phenomenon. Tochukwu (2023). It occurs in every known society however, crime changes in form overtime and the magnitude of occurrence varies from one society to another and it is faced by both the developed and less developed nations (Abrifor, 2015).

Crime, as defined by Tappan (1947), refers to a deliberate act that contravenes criminal law, executed without justification or defense, and subject to state punishment as either a felony or a misdemeanor. The characteristics and severity of crime, however, differ significantly across various societies, within communities, and between urban and rural settings. This variation highlights the relationship between criminal behavior and the social organization and economic development of a society. Abatta (2023) cites a report from World Population Review, a U.S.-based organization that provides current global population data and demographics, indicating that Venezuela has the highest crime index at 83.76%, while Nigeria ranks 15th with a crime rate of 64.4%. The United States and the United Kingdom are positioned at 55th and 63rd, respectively. The report notes that these crime rates are influenced by various factors, including poverty and unemployment (Abatta, 2023). In Nigeria, crime statistics reveal that home theft

accounts for 71.25%, car theft for 63.01%, drug dealing for 64.43%, property crimes such as vandalism and theft for 70.14%, and armed robbery for 85.32% (Numbeo, 2023). In Nigeria, young people have also been found to engage in criminal activities. The country is facing an increase in crime rates, criminal motives, and various levels of delinquency. The types of crimes committed include armed robbery, murder, auto theft, burglary, gambling, smuggling, human trafficking, kidnapping, drug trafficking, internet fraud, advanced fee fraud (419), and other unlawful acts (Adebayo, 2013). According to a report by the International Organization for Peace Building and Social Justice (PBSJ), 70% of the youth in Nigeria turn to crime due to a lack of economic opportunities and poverty, which make it difficult for them to earn a living, gain social status, and survive. This situation has caused many Nigerians to voice their concerns about the safety within the nation (David 2023). In contemporary society, youth criminal activities have brought weight of burden, agony and losses incurred by innocent people, society and nation at large. As a result, government both at local, national and international level is making immense efforts through the security agencies to curb the menace (youth criminality). However, in Nigeria, instead of taming the menace, the dimensions of youth criminality keep on increasing day-in and day-out. More often than not, youths (literate and illiterate) are apprehended for one offence or the other almost every day. Regarding the intricacies of criminal activity in Nigeria, Attoh (2012) noted a significant rise in murder rates, which surged by over 75% within a span of less than ten years. Specifically, the number of murders escalated from 1,629 in 1994 to 2,120 in 2001 and further to 2,136 in 2003, as reported by the CLEEN Foundation (2007, cited in Attoh, 2012). Similarly, incidents of armed robbery increased by more than 52 percent,

climbing from 2,044 cases in 1994 to 3,889 in 2002 (Attoh, 2012). To illustrate the severity of crime in urban areas of Nigeria, Attoh further indicated that Abia State experienced 52 reported armed robbery cases in 2002, which surged to 176 by 2004. In Edo State, the figures rose from 71 reported cases in 2002 to 144 in 2005, and then to 163 in 2006. Additionally, in 2008, Lagos State recorded a total of 12,837 criminal cases and apprehended 14,996 suspects (Attoh, 2012).

The involvement of youth in criminal activities have been blamed on a number of factors such as parental failure, news media, the lack of self-esteem, poverty, hunger, peer pressure, idleness and unemployment because they believe that involving in criminal activities will give them a sense of belonging (Okoroafor 2023). Adebayo (2013) stated that the unemployed youth in Nigeria experience low self-esteem, deprivation, frustration and acute want which now lead youths to criminal activities in the society. This can be seen in the Nigerian situation whereby the unemployment rate has risen from 33% in the previous year and is now 41% in 2023 (National bureau of statistics, 2023). The national bureau of statistics in 2022 stated that 63% or 133 million Nigerians were living in multidimensional poverty. Inflation has pushed more 4 million people into poverty in the first five months of 2023 as said by the World Bank in June ,Egboboh (2023). Like other states in the South-east, Anambra has witnessed increased attacks by gunmen lately. Some headquarters of local government areas in the state have been attacked by hoodlums in recent times. Aside from the attacks on government facilities, several residents have been killed and others abducted in renewed attacks by gunmen in the state (Ugwu, 2022).

Young individuals, characterized by their energy, creativity, vibrancy, and articulate

nature, typically range in age from 12 to 35 years. They hold the potential to shape the future of society (Waswa 2002). However, when their talents and energies are not harnessed for societal advancement, they may become susceptible to negative influences, potentially engaging in criminal activities. This phenomenon is evident in Nigeria, where the unemployment rate has shown a troubling upward trend, rising from 15% in 2008 to 19.7% in 2009, 21.1% in 2010, and reaching 23.9% in 2011, with projections indicating it could reach 25% by the end of 2012 (USA Embassy in Nigeria, 2012; National Bureau of Statistics, 2012). It is crucial to recognize that youth represent a significant portion of the unemployed population (Lamido 2013).

This phenomenon significantly influence youths involvement in crime as nearly all of those paraded by the law enforcement agencies before the mass media in the country as members of criminal groups fall within this age youthful bracket (Akwara, *et. al*, 2013).

Criminal activities has been listed among the insurgent issue prevalent among university students (Blackstone 2008) .These affairs widely varies across various denominations, diversifying in different deeds such as cultism, drug abuse, examination malpractice, cybercrime, sexual, misconduct, harassment, cheating, discrimination, theft and violence which can in turn have adverse effect on individual wellbeing. It is based on this that the research is aimed to examine the factors influencing criminal activities among student in the University of Benin, Edo State.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The problem this study is addressing is the danger of not understanding the factors that

influence criminal activities among students within university campuses and thereby increasing crime and deviant behavior. University campuses experience a high prevalence of criminal activities, impacting both students and staff. Researchers have frequently examined student safety, fear of crime, and how these factors influence their learning abilities (Barberet & Fisher, 2009; Owusu et al., 2016; Tomsich *et al.*)

The amount and type of crime on campuses has implications for students' educational and social developments. This is because they are less likely to attend, spend time on, or participate in social activities on high crime campuses (Barton *et al.* 2010).

In higher education institutions such as universities, the safety and security of individuals—especially students residing on campus—continues to be a major concern. The prevalence of criminal activities has led to increased anxiety among on-campus students, making it challenging for them to focus on their academic tasks and daily routines. Criminals often exploit the heightened pressure of exam periods to target and rob students of their belongings (Abnory *et al.*, 2016).

According to a study by du Toit (2015), the rising crime rates on campuses pose significant challenges for campus security services, which are under constant pressure to enhance and modernize their protective measures to maintain a safe environment. When higher education institutions fail to ensure safety, students may be discouraged from attending, and parents may hesitate to send their children to an unsafe learning environment (du Toit, 2015). Consequently, campus crimes not only affect the reputation of institutions but also place a burden on security personnel, ultimately diminishing the quality of education and student activities (Sewpersad & Van Jaarsveld,

2012).

1.3. Research Questions

This research will answer the following questions:

1. What is the contributing factors influencing criminal activities among students in the University of Benin?
2. Who are the perpetrators of criminal activities within university campus?
3. What are the possible solutions to prevent students from engaging in criminal activities?
4. What are the effects of criminal activities on the academic performance of students in the University of Benin?

1.4. Objective of the Study

The general objective of the study is to ascertain the factors that influence criminal activities and the types of crime that happen within the university of Benin campus, Ugbowo, Benin city. The specific objectives include; to:

1. Identify some contributing factors influencing criminal activities among university student.
2. Investigate the criminal activities that are prevalent in the university campus.
3. Identify and examine the probable way to curb these factors that influence criminal activities.
4. Identify the perpetrators of criminal activities within university campus.
5. Examine the effect of criminal activities on university student.

1.5. Scope of the Study

The content scope rotates around theories and concepts about criminal activities among student in the University of Benin. The study revolve around factors influencing the rate of university student getting engrossed in criminal activities and also came up with measure that can be adopted to curb the chances of student involvement in criminal activities.

The study may not be generalized to apply to other universities in Nigeria given that it is carried out on the University of Benin, Ugbowo campus It is however restricted to student dwelling in the halls of residents: Hall 1, 2, 3 & 4.

1.6. Significant of the Study

This study aims at ascertaining the various factors influencing criminal activities in University campuses by focusing on the University of Benin campus, Ugbowo, Benin City.

The study is very important for a number of reasons. First, it helps us to understand the factors that contribute to crime and deviance. This knowledge can be used to develop effective prevention and intervention programs. Second, this study can also help us to better understand the role of criminal activities in universities campuses.

1.7. Definition of Terms

1. **Crime:** Criminologist Paul Tappan defines **crime** as “an intentional act or omission in violation of criminal law, committed without defense or justification, and sanctioned by the state as a felony or misdemeanor. It is also an act or omission that violates a law and is punishable by the government. It is generally considered harmful to

society or the public and can range from minor offenses (like traffic violations) to serious offenses (like theft, assault, or murder).

2. **Criminal activity:** *Criminal activity* refers to actions or conducts that violate the law and are considered to be harmful, threatening, or disruptive to individuals or society as a whole. It can encompass a wide range of activities, from minor offenses such as traffic violation or disorderly conduct to more serious offenses such as assault, theft, or murder.

3. **Student:** A *student* is someone who is enrolled in a degree-granting program (either undergraduate or graduate) at an institution of higher learning and registered full-time according to the definition of his/her respective academic institution, *and* who is not employed full-time.

4. **Universities:** An institution of learning of the highest level, having a college of liberal arts and a program of graduate studies together with several professional schools, as of theology, law, medicine, and engineering, and authorized to confer both undergraduate and graduate degrees.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview

National drug law enforcement agency has cited that in Nigeria adolescent and youth of age between the ages of 15-30 are at high risk groups guilty of abuse of hard drugs. Majority of these adolescents and youths are secondary and tertiary institutions students or graduates who consume hard drugs and alcohol to engage in all sort of

criminal activities. (Amosun & Ajala, 2010).

On November 19, 2018, Elozino Ogege, a 300-level female student from the Department of Mass Communication at Delta State University, Abraka, was tragically murdered in a bush by a group of individuals popularly referred to as "Yahoo boys." Her mutilated body, with her tongue and breasts severed, was discovered in the Ekrejeta community of Abraka. This case is one among many incidents of ritual killings, rape, armed robbery, and the abduction of student by unidentified individuals. The issue of insecurity within tertiary institutions in Nigeria has become a matter of grave concern. Aguba (2010) expressed deep concern over the increasing prevalence of kidnapping, militancy, armed robbery, and cultism on campuses, all of which have led to significant loss of life. He emphasized that the frequent occurrences of killings, assassinations, and attacks on both students and lecturers have instilled widespread fear within academic communities. The First International Security Summit, held in Nigeria from September 16 to 18, 2010, was convened in response to the growing insecurity across the country (Ogbuokiri, 2010; Ukpong & Esa, 2010). According to Ali, Dada, Isiaka, and Salmon (2014), the prevalence of criminal activities hinders the achievement of the fundamental goals and objectives of education.

The Nigeria Labor Congress (2012) observed that the government's efforts to address insecurity in the country have been largely ineffective, as threats to lives and property persist and have even extended into the education sector. Boma (2017) reported that unethical practices such as awarding unearned grades, examination malpractice, and teacher-led victimization were prevalent criminal activities in mission schools across Delta State. At Delta State University, Abraka, the Official Bulletin (2017) documented 45

cases of examination malpractice reported to the Mobile Disciplinary Committee. Among these, six involved impersonation, leading to the expulsion of the offenders. Twenty-four students were caught in possession of materials directly related to the examination questions and were suspended for six semesters. Five students were found using mobile phones during exams and received two-semester suspensions, while two students caught cheating were rusticated for two semesters. Additionally, one student was found with a smart wristwatch containing relevant exam information and was rusticated for six semesters. Another student faced disciplinary action for insubordination toward a lecturer and was issued a formal warning. Two students found with extra examination booklets were discharged due to insufficient evidence.

In the postgraduate programme, four students faced disciplinary action for examination malpractice—three for impersonation and one for using a mobile phone during the exam. All four were found guilty and expelled from the university.

At the University of Jos, in May 2017, Atedze (2016) reported the suspension of Associate Professor Benedicta Dauda for two semesters. She was found cheating during a master's level examination in Research and Public Policy by copying from pre-prepared notes. As a consequence, she was also suspended from the Presidential Advisory Committee against Corruption and removed from the master's programme. Prior to this incident, she served as the Head of the Department of Jurisprudence and International Law in the Faculty of Law at the University of Jos.

Iyeke (2013) characterized Nigerian youth as the primary instruments in many of the country's security challenges, noting that a significant number of these issues originate

within tertiary institutions. The growing insecurity in Nigeria has become a major concern, as threats to lives and property have increasingly infiltrated higher education campuses. As a result, these institutions have become hotbeds for various forms of deviant and criminal behavior. Crimes such as armed robbery, ritual killings, suicide, assassination, and rape among students in tertiary institutions have been strongly linked to cultism (Omede & Omede, 2015; Udeh, Okoroafor, & Ihezue, 2013; Ejene, Aina, & Omotosho, 200).

Outside a Decree promulgated in 1989 under military rule, which is non-operational now, there has not been any national legislation on campus criminality in Nigeria. In 1999, former President Olusegun Obasanjo issued an order directing tertiary institutions to stamp out cultism that was not backed by any national legislative act. This was in reaction to the killing of five (5) students of the Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) (Momodu, 2006). Following his instruction, Okoro (2003: 18), notes that over three hundred (300) students of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN) renounced their membership in a cult that same year. In the same vein, the River State government enacted a law stipulating ten years in jail without an option of a fine against anyone found guilty of cultism (Fasanmi, 2006, Ibeh, 2006) cited by Ajayi, Ekundayo and Osalusi (2010).

World Health Organization (2003) noted that rape, armed robbery and sexual promiscuity were effects of abuse of hard drugs which has several over dependence. The Nigerian Drug Law Enforcement Agency cited in Amosun, Ige and Ajala (2010) submits that in Nigeria, adolescents and youths of age ranging from 15 to 30 are high risk groups guilty of abuse of hard drugs. Majority of these adolescents and youths are

secondary school and tertiary institution students or graduates. It is clear to say that criminal activities in tertiary institutions are associated with students and staff who abuse drugs and consume alcohol. Most of the studies conducted in Nigeria related to crime were on ethical misconduct, indiscipline and examination malpractice and covered schools. In tertiary institutions of learning, there is a high level of criminal activities. Against this back drop, the need to concentrate effort in this area becomes imperative.

2.2. The concept of crime

The term "crime" originates from the Latin word *crimen*, which signifies an "offense" or "charge." Crime is universally recognized as a negative phenomenon and a social reality, irrespective of geographic location (Wilson, 2015). The World Health Organization (WHO) (2015) defines crime as "the willful use of physical force or power, whether threatened or actual, against oneself, another individual, or a group or community, which either results in or has a high probability of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, impaired development, or deprivation. From a legal perspective, Paul Tappan (1947) defines crime as "an act or omission prohibited and punishable by law." Tappan's definition frames crime as a legal construct, asserting that an action qualifies as a crime only if it contravenes established laws and is subject to legal penalties. This perspective prioritizes the legal framework over moral or social dimensions when determining what constitutes criminal behavior. Institutions of higher learning may be susceptible to various forms of violent and personal crimes, including burglary, hooliganism, abduction, riots, robbery, pickpocketing, mugging, rape, shoplifting, theft, and vandalism. Crime has been a persistent aspect of human society since its inception,

regardless of the level of civilization or societal advancement. The inability of security agencies to effectively address these crimes has significantly hindered economic growth and development in many countries worldwide (Osawe, 2015). One of the most common of such social problems is “crime” which Durkheim (1840) said “crime is not only necessary but also inevitable for society to progress”. The concept of crime has to do with the violation of criminal code of the state which made it possible for certain social control mechanisms to be invented to tackle such problems

Situ and Emmons (2000) define environmental crime as any unauthorized action or failure to act that contravenes existing laws and is, as such, punishable through criminal prosecution and sanctions. However, this definition does not encompass actions that, while potentially harmful, irresponsible, or environmentally damaging, do not explicitly violate legal statutes. The authors maintain that unless an act is legally prohibited, it should not be classified as a crime (Bricknell, 2010). This perspective reinforces the idea that the classification of an act as criminal is dependent on the legal framework in a specific jurisdiction, emphasizing that legality, rather than public opinion or ethical considerations, ultimately determines whether an act constitutes a crime.

Although crime is a global phenomenon, its distribution is not uniform across different regions. The prevalence and severity of criminal activities vary between societies, as no society is entirely immune to crime (National Research Council, 2010; Ratcliffe, Strang, & Taylor, 2014).

2.3 Criminal activities on campus

Crime is also a pressing concern within academic institutions, as university campuses are not immune to criminal activity. Students, faculty, and staff often encounter various

offenses, including theft, vandalism, assault, harassment, fraud, firearm possession, and disorderly conduct. While universities are traditionally considered secure spaces that foster intellectual and personal development, they have also been the sites of notable criminal incidents that have attracted widespread attention and prompted discussions on campus safety (Carrico, 2016). The demographic composition of university students, typically ranging between 17 and 30 years of age, places them in a unique transitional phase where they are experiencing independence from parental supervision for the first time. This newfound autonomy often comes with increased personal responsibility, making it crucial for universities to ensure that students have a safe and well-regulated environment in which to study and interact. As a response to rising concerns over student safety and incidents that have posed risks to both students and faculty, universities have been compelled to adopt stricter security measures and policies designed to protect their communities (Jackson & Gouseti, 2015).

A university on-campus residence is a linking term to crime of the environment which therefore becomes an important term in this study. Crimes of the environment could be break-ins or vandalism of buildings. According to the Oxford English Dictionary (1987), a residence implies living or staying regularly at or in a specified place for the performance of official duties, for work, or to comply with regulations; (also) the period during which such a stay is required of one. In this context, campus residences where students reside have become one of the driving forces to campus crime, as the location where crimes are committed on campuses has become a vital factor in dealing with campus-related violations.

Among the various crimes that occur on university campuses, sexual offenses remain one of the most underreported due to victims' fear of stigma, embarrassment, and concerns regarding how their cases will be perceived by the public. Due to the sensitive nature of these crimes, victims often hesitate to come forward, which leads to an underrepresentation of sexual offenses in official crime statistics. To address this issue, it is imperative to establish a standardized framework that mandates higher education institutions to publicly disclose data on crime, including sexual offenses, in order to promote transparency, accountability, and institutional responsibility (Carr, 2005).

Historically, universities have not always had dedicated law enforcement agencies on their campuses and have often relied on external police forces for security. However, as crime rates on campuses have risen and security concerns have intensified, most universities have established their own campus police departments. These law enforcement units serve as the primary line of defense in maintaining order and ensuring student and faculty safety. In addition to enforcing institutional regulations and responding to criminal incidents, campus police play a crucial role in supporting universities' broader mission of providing a comprehensive education in a safe and secure environment (Carrico, 2016).

Crime remains an ongoing challenge that affects all societies, including academic institutions, which are often perceived as safe havens for learning. While the nature and prevalence of crime vary across different regions and social settings, it is evident that economic conditions, social structures, and law enforcement effectiveness significantly influence crime rates. Ensuring the safety of students and staff in higher education institutions is an urgent priority that requires a proactive approach from universities.

Implementing effective crime prevention strategies, strengthening security measures, and fostering greater transparency in crime reporting are essential steps toward creating a safer campus environment. By addressing these challenges and taking preventative measures, universities can work toward reducing criminal incidents and ensuring that students have the opportunity to pursue their education in a secure setting.

2.4. Types of criminal activities common among student

From the definitions discussed above, it is evident that crime encompasses various forms and types. The norms and legal frameworks used to define what constitutes a crime vary significantly across different societies. Even within a single society, the classification of certain behaviors as criminal can change over time, reflecting the continuous evolution of social values and norms. This underscores the relative nature of crime. To better understand and analyze criminal behavior, criminologists have developed typologies that categorize different types of crime. The primary purpose of classifying crimes is to facilitate systematic study and enhance comprehension of their causes, patterns, and impacts (Siegel, 2010).

Given the diverse perspectives among scholars and the various factors influencing the definition of crime, there are numerous approaches to classifying criminal behavior (Siegel, 2010). Some typologies are based on the severity of the offense, others focus on the nature of the victim or target, while some classifications emphasize the method

or means by which the crime is committed.

2.4.1 Cyber crime

According to Alansari, Aljazzaf, and Sarfraz (2019), cybercrime refers to any internet-related criminal activity directed at individuals, groups, or the state and its economy. It is driven by malicious intent and can result in various forms of harm, including physical, psychological, and financial damage. Cybercrime typically involves the illegal access or manipulation of a victim's information through the use of electronic devices. The nature, targets, and severity of cybercrimes can vary significantly, encompassing offenses such as harassment, cyber terrorism, child pornography, digital piracy, cyberstalking, computer hacking, and unauthorized access to computer networks or databases (Mshana, 2015).

In light of these definitions, cybercrime can be broadly understood as any offense committed through digital communication technologies—particularly via the internet—intended to defraud, harm, or exploit individuals or institutions. It often involves the use of computer devices and software applications to compromise victims' finances, personal property, or reputations. Rotimi (2015) emphasizes that cybercrime is particularly widespread among youths aged 18 to 35 in Nigeria. However, defining youth solely by age may be limiting, given the complex and evolving interpretations of this demographic category in different contexts.

2.4.2 Violent crime

Violent crime among student is widespread in Nigeria, with its prevalence and persistence posing significant threats to the nation's social security. Violent crime is

defined as an offense in which the perpetrator uses physical force or violence against the victim. These crimes encompass murder, assault, sexual assault, rape, kidnapping, armed robbery, terrorism, homicide, manslaughter, and lynching, among others. According to the World Population Review (WPR, 2021), the global violent crime rate stands at 47.70 percent. However, the rates of violent crime vary substantially across different countries, states, and types of offenses. In 2019, among the violent crimes recorded by police, assaults, sexual violence, and drug-related offenses accounted for the highest number of incidents in the past decade, while crimes such as robbery, burglary, and theft saw the lowest figures. For example, the Global Study on Homicide estimates that 464,000 people were victim to intentional homicide in 2017, with a global average homicide rate of 6.1 victims per 100,000 populations. Additionally, about 90 percent of all homicides worldwide were committed by male perpetrators, while men comprised nearly 80 percent of all homicide victims (National Population Commission, 2019).

Violent crime among students encompasses acts such as physical assault, fighting, sexual assault, and bullying. According to Carrico (2016), incidents of violence—including assault and harassment—are frequently reported on school and university campuses, often driven by factors such as alcohol consumption or peer-related aggression. These forms of violence significantly compromise the safety and overall well-being of the campus community.

2.4.3 Substance Abuse and Drug-Related Crimes

Students are often involved in drug use, both recreationally and as a result of peer pressure. This includes the consumption and distribution of illegal drugs or the abuse of

prescription drugs. A study by *Vik, et al. (2003)* noted that substance abuse on college campuses is prevalent, leading to criminal behaviors like underage drinking, DUI (driving under the influence), and drug trafficking. Drugs are related to crime in multiple ways. Most directly, it is a crime to use, possess, manufacture, or distribute drugs classified as having a potential for abuse. Cocaine, heroin, marijuana, and amphetamine are examples of drugs classified to have abuse potential. Drugs are also related to crime through the effects they have on the user's behavior and by generating violence and other illegal activity in connection with drug trafficking (**Reno et al., 1999**). Provisional data show, that among adult respondents (ages 18–49), those who use cannabis (marijuana) or cocaine were much more likely to commit crimes of all types than those who did not use these substances (**Deitch et al., 2000**). Methamphetamine users were significantly more likely than heroin users to have committed violent crime (**Darke et al., 2010**).

2.4.4 Academic Dishonesty and Fraud

Academic dishonesty among students can be defined as academic behavior that does not comply with stated assessment requirements and other institutional policies; when students behave in ways intended to gain undue benefit in relation to their assessment. Academic dishonesty is a global phenomenon occurring in both developed and developing countries. Academic fraud on the other hand, involves a deliberate effort to deceive and includes plagiarism, fabrication of data, misrepresentation of historical sources, tampering with evidence, selective suppression of unwanted or unacceptable results, and theft of ideas.

Cheating on exams, plagiarism, and academic fraud are forms of criminal activity

commonly found among students. *Kibler (2013)* explored how academic dishonesty, while not always legally prosecuted, can have severe academic and ethical consequences. The illegal use of other people's work or falsification of academic records is a form of academic crime.

2.4.5 Cultism and Secret Societies

The term 'cultism' in the Nigerian context refers to the violent and nonviolent activities of campus secret cults/cultists/societies/fraternities. It is predominantly a youth culture and, originally, only perpetrated and perpetuated by students in their various institutions of higher learning in Nigeria. However, following the proliferation of campus secret cult tradition in the 1980s and its infiltration into secondary schools and streets from late 1990s till date, the problem has not only persisted but also is pervasive and alarming in recent times (see also Nnam, 2014a; S. E. Otu and Nnam, 2017; Ajitoni and Olaniyan, 2018; Alumona and Amusan, 2019). Abdu (2003) has listed as many as eighty five cult groups operating in Nigeria's HEIs. No campus is known to be spared of their activities. The most prominent of these cults are classified into five categories as follows: Classical fraternities; God-father secret cults; Female cults; Mafia cults; and Terrorist cults. Though each of the cults claims a distinct identity and operates within its own belief system, they are all prone to violence and are characterized by brain-washing of neophytes, close mindedness of members, assumption of a distinguishable identity, covenant-induced brotherhood and intolerance of others outside their belief system.

2.4.6 Disorderly Conduct

Disorderly conduct encompasses a wide array of behaviors deemed disruptive or

offensive. For example, Wisconsin law defines it as engaging in violent, abusive, indecent, profane, boisterous, unreasonably loud, or other disorderly behaviors that tend to provoke a disturbance, regardless of whether such a disturbance actually occurs. Unlike more clearly defined misdemeanors such as battery or theft, disorderly conduct is inherently vague, leading to significant variations in its legal interpretation across different jurisdictions.

Among students, disorderly conduct frequently manifests as public disturbances and unruly behavior, often during events like protests, parties, or interactions with law enforcement. Research by Taylor and Stout (2015) indicates that a substantial portion of student misconduct on campuses involves public disorder or physical altercations, frequently linked to alcohol consumption.

2.4.7 Sexual Offenses and Gender-Based Violence

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) encompasses a range of harmful acts—including sexual, physical, psychological, emotional, mental, or economic violence—that are perpetrated without an individual's consent. These acts are committed based on the victim's sex, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation. SGBV includes behaviors such as sexual abuse, dating violence, sexual assault (including rape), sexual harassment, and stalking. These incidents can occur as isolated events or as patterns of behavior, and can take place in person, online, or through other means. Sexual violence (SV) refers to any attempted or completed non-consensual sexual act, encompassing behaviors such as rape, sexual assault, sexual coercion, sexual aggression, and sexual harassment (Garcia-Moreno et al., 2012). Experiences of SV among higher education students present significant public health

concerns, leading to enduring negative effects on survivors' physical health and mental well-being (Abrahams et al., 2014; Black *et al.*, 2016; Dilip & Bates, 2021; Krebs *et al.*, 2007; McMahon *et al.*, 2019). Additionally, such experiences can adversely impact academic performance, with survivors facing challenges like decreased concentration, reduced class attendance, and diminished engagement in their studies (Baker *et al.*, 2016; Molstad *et al.*, 2021). Sexual harassment, sexual assault, and other forms of gender-based violence are unfortunately common criminal activities among students. *Sampson and Laub (1993)* highlighted the rising incidence of sexual assault on campuses, particularly among freshmen or students in transitional stages of life. These crimes are often underreported due to fear of stigma or lack of support systems.

2.4.8 Property Crimes

Property crime refers to the unlawful destruction, theft, or vandalism of another individual's property. This category of crime encompasses acts that intentionally damage, deface, or unlawfully take possession of someone's personal belongings or territory. While property crimes may involve the threat of violence or potential harm to individuals, the primary target of the offense is not a person but their possessions. Typically, individuals are not physically harmed during such crimes; however, if physical injury does occur, the offense may be reclassified as a violent crime. Common forms of property crime include theft, vandalism, and burglary. These are especially prevalent among student populations and frequently occur within educational institutions. For example, students may steal personal belongings from roommates, common areas such as libraries and dormitories, or engage in unauthorized entry into vehicles or restricted campus buildings. According to Bennett and Wright (1984), theft, in particular,

represents a major issue on college campuses, highlighting the need for preventive measures and heightened awareness within academic communities.

2.5. The effect of criminal activities among student

Criminal activity on university campuses disrupts not only academic pursuits but also social and professional engagements within the campus environment. Given that education plays a fundamental role in sustaining a democratic society, it is essential to create a safe environment that supports every student's success as a contribution to the collective well-being (Cheatham *et al.*, 1991). Each incident of crime, whether targeting individuals or university property, leads to harmful consequences that interfere with daily life and hinder students' academic progress (Gover *et al.*, 2008). When students experience or witness crime, their regular academic and social routines are likely to change. For instance, a student who typically walks home alone in the evening may avoid doing so after being victimized or seeing someone else targeted. Likewise, students who gather for night study sessions might stop attending due to safety concerns. Studies have shown that the fear of crime can vary depending on whether it is experienced during the day or at night (Ferraro, 1995; Fisher *et al.*, 1995), often influenced by how visible the victim is and the likelihood of witnesses. As noted by Brantingham and Brantingham (1994:160), the fear of crime itself can pose as much of a challenge for universities as actual criminal acts, potentially deterring talented students and faculty from remaining on campus.

University students who come into contact with the criminal justice system often face serious and enduring consequences that can hinder their academic, personal, and professional development. The immediate impact may include incarceration or

probation, both of which disrupt the continuity of education and reduce students' chances of academic success. As Jannetta and Cameron (2017) argue, acquiring a criminal record at a young age—especially during critical academic years—can lower lifetime earning potential and contribute to social exclusion. For university students, this involvement may also lead to academic suspension, loss of scholarships, or permanent expulsion, which significantly limits future career opportunities.

Moreover, the stigma associated with being labeled a “criminal” can affect students' mental health and self-esteem, creating barriers to re-engagement with academic life and social networks. The interruption of essential connections to educational institutions, family support systems, and peer relationships can further isolate students and increase the risk of continued deviant behavior. Surveillance through probationary measures can also create a sense of institutional distrust, making students feel alienated within the university environment (Jannetta & Cameron, 2017).

In addition, research by Fine *et al.* (2019) emphasizes that justice-involved students often experience institutional discrimination, including limited access to campus housing, extracurricular activities, and post-graduate opportunities. This systemic exclusion exacerbates educational inequality and undermines efforts to support student rehabilitation and reintegration. Consequently, criminal justice involvement not only affects individual university students but also presents broader challenges to higher education institutions striving for inclusivity and equal opportunity.

2.6. Factors contributing to criminal activities among student

Crime is influenced by a range of contributing factors. Some scholars associate it with the prevalent drinking culture on college campuses, while others highlight the roles of

drug use, psychological stress, untreated mental health conditions, or a combination of these elements (Sandbox Networks, 2016).

Additionally, socioeconomic factors such as poverty and unemployment significantly impact crime rates. In areas surrounding universities where unemployment is high, individuals may be more likely to engage in criminal activities as a means of financial survival.

Regardless of the specific causes, it is essential to examine crime on university campuses comprehensively. Doing so enables the development of informed, multifaceted strategies to address the challenges faced by students, faculty, and the broader campus community. Hence, based on our findings, several factors leading to criminal activity among students' involvement shall be highlighted and discussed as follows;

a. Peer pressure

It is commonly asserted that "bad company corrupts good character," a principle particularly relevant to students and young people who are frequently influenced by their peer groups. Peer pressure has been identified as a significant factor contributing to the behavioral and moral decline among youths. Jupp (1970) and Cannavò *et al.* (1970) highlight that many students tend to resist adult authority and instead place greater trust in the opinions and behaviors of their peers. This shift in allegiance from adults to peer groups can, in some cases, predispose students to engage in deviant or criminal activities. The influence of peers, therefore, plays a critical role in shaping the attitudes, choices, and social behaviors of adolescents, sometimes with negative consequences.

b. Family factor

The family environment is a critical factor in shaping individual behavior, including the propensity for criminal activity. Sutherland (1939) emphasized that the structure, dynamics, and overall condition of a family significantly influence the development of criminal tendencies. Similarly, Oyebanji (1982) and Akpan (2002) argue that the foundational experiences within a family—particularly the methods of child-rearing and the values instilled from infancy—play a pivotal role in determining whether an individual is more likely to engage in criminal behavior later in life. These scholars collectively underscore the importance of familial upbringing in the socialization process, suggesting that stable, supportive, and morally guided family environments are essential in preventing delinquency and promoting pro-social development.

c. Drugs and substance abuse

The use of psychoactive substances such as tramadol, codeine, and marijuana has been identified as a significant factor contributing to criminal behavior among students and young people. Drug dependency often impairs judgment and self-control, potentially leading individuals to engage in various forms of criminal activity, including theft, sexual assault, and even homicide. According to Garvin *et al.* (2006), the most prevalent health-risk behaviors among adolescents and youths are closely linked to the use of illicit substances. Similarly, Aluede (2000) and Melis *et al.* (2005) observed that a substantial proportion of young individuals rely on one form of drug or another, indicating a widespread pattern of substance misuse. Furthermore, Oshikoya and Alli (2006), in their study on the perception of drug abuse among Nigerian undergraduates, identified drug dependence and addiction as major consequences of substance use, emphasizing its

role in deteriorating mental health, academic performance, and social functioning. These findings collectively highlight the urgent need for preventive interventions and awareness campaigns targeting youth drug use and its broader societal implications.

d. Location of campuses

A variety of interrelated factors contribute to the occurrence of crime on university campuses. These include, but are not limited to, the campus's geographic location, the size and diversity of the student population, and the nature of student housing. Crime on campus is therefore not the result of a single, isolated cause, but rather the outcome of multiple overlapping influences. For instance, Shaw and McKay (1972) assert that delinquency and social disorder tend to be more prevalent in urban environments—particularly those characterized by a high concentration of students from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, as well as high levels of residential instability. These socio-environmental conditions were found to significantly affect both the frequency and nature of criminal activities within the campus residence examined in the present study.

Empirical evidence further indicates that campuses with a high proportion of students living in university-owned residences tend to experience increased crime rates. This can be attributed to several factors, including the transient nature of student residency, the demographic heterogeneity of the student body, and the presence of valuable personal belongings. Students often store high-value items such as smartphones, laptops, tablets, and other electronic devices in their dormitory rooms, making them attractive targets for theft and other property-related crimes. The temporary and often unsecured nature of student accommodations, coupled with minimal surveillance in some cases,

creates an environment conducive to opportunistic criminal behavior.

e. Outsiders residing in the university campus

It is a known fact that perpetrators of crime are not outsiders only, but may also be students residing in the same or other residences. In this context, Gover *et al.* (2008) argue that larger populations and inferior academic value also contribute to higher crime rates. This supports the statement that not all the students that occupy residence accommodation are registered students. Some come in as unauthorized guests or even visitors and cause chaos. The openness of campus environments renders the campus vulnerable to such forms of abuse because strangers commonly use campus grounds and facilities (Rengert, Mattson & Henderson, 2001). This results in a larger resident population than the administration is aware of, which results in crimes that cannot be traced to any known suspect. A serious factor under this assumption is the fact that inferior academic value is strongly proportional to crime rates. This stance is appropriate when the institution harbors individuals that are not there solely for academic achievement but are there to push side agendas of crime and destruction.

f. Alcohol abuse

Research has shown that increased use of drugs and alcohol by student's results in increased campus crime rates, which brings attention to the fact that substance and alcohol abuse contributes to the causes of crime. In the case of alcohol, the Boyer (1990) report regarded its abusive use as one of the greatest threats to the quality of campus life. Students who abuse alcohols are much more likely to be the ones who break rules and disturb campus life after their intake of alcohol. Even with the increased emphasis on creating awareness, upgrading security, implementing notification

systems and providing resources to troubled students, drug and alcohol abuse that often results in violent crimes across campuses appears to be increasing at tertiary institutions.

Alcohol's most devastating characteristic is its link to destructive behaviour (Fenske, Rund & Contento, 2000). Binge drinking, which is known to occur when a person drinks five or more drinks on one occasion, is a very common problem on many university campuses. Destructive behavior could entail making too much noise, vandalizing the institution's property, or can even go as far as assaulting other students. Alcohol-related violence against persons or property, general misconduct, suicide and related self-destructive behavior has persisted in the collegiate culture. The ever-ready availability of alcohol and drugs is a factor that fuels mischievous and criminal behavior among the youth. Some of these behaviors are not only caused by alcohol use, but are also caused by the simultaneous use of alcohol and drugs.

g. Poverty

Wabunechi (2018) emphasized that poverty leads to social hardship, noting that individuals living in poverty are more prone to engage in criminal behaviors such as kidnapping, drug use, and other unlawful acts. Similarly, Ojo (2012) argued that poverty and limited educational achievement contribute significantly to youth participation in criminal activities. Kostadis (2017) highlighted that people are more likely to turn to crime when they suffer a sudden drop in income. Worsening economic situations can encourage criminal behavior, as individuals may view it as a means of financial survival. Uche (2014) observed that children from families with stable income, reputable jobs, and high social standing are often able to access quality education from early childhood

through university, which reduces the likelihood of them engaging in delinquent behavior compared to those from less privileged backgrounds.

2.7. Perpetrators of criminal activities

Crime within on-campus residences is a multifaceted issue, influenced by various factors, which makes it a challenging area of study, especially given the underreporting of relevant crime statistics. As a result, constructing an accurate profile of perpetrators in these settings is difficult. Palmer (1996) argues that university campuses function as microcosms of society, meaning that societal issues and circumstances often manifest in the campus environment as well. This perspective suggests that the individuals responsible for crimes on campus may come from both the university community and the surrounding local area. The communities near university campuses are often seen as significant sources of criminal activity, primarily because individuals from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, marked by unemployment and poverty, may resort to crime out of necessity, targeting university properties.

While McPheters (1978) found that urban campuses experience a slightly higher rate of non-violent crimes compared to their rural counterparts, Fox and Hellman (1985) reported no substantial difference in overall crime rates between urban and rural campuses. However, urban campuses tend to witness marginally higher rates of violent crime. Both students and non-students alike are involved in criminal activities, with urban campuses facing specific challenges such as the "spill-over" effect, where criminal behavior from surrounding neighborhoods extends to campus environments (Fox & Hellman, 1985). Gangs and individuals from nearby communities often take advantage of the campus's relatively poor security and easy access to university

facilities, making them more vulnerable to criminal acts.

University campuses generally offer unrestricted access and movement at all hours, further contributing to the vulnerability of these spaces. The diverse range of people who enter these areas—whether they are students, staff, or outsiders—creates opportunities for criminals to blend in and go unnoticed (Fisher, 1992). The open access to university facilities complicates the task of identifying perpetrators, particularly when those responsible for crimes are from outside the campus community. For instance, university libraries, which cannot be exclusively reserved for a single institution's students, may attract non-students who then misuse these spaces. Similarly, cafeterias and retail outlets on campuses often cater to local community members, further blurring the lines between campus insiders and outsiders.

This accessibility makes it difficult to pinpoint who is responsible for criminal acts, especially when the offenders are not part of the university population. While it may be easier to identify and deal with students caught in criminal acts, such as break-ins or theft, outsiders are often able to commit crimes and leave campus premises without detection. This anonymity could explain why university campuses and residences are frequently targeted by criminals. Nonetheless, it is essential to recognize that both students and non-students contribute to campus crime, as some students may also be inclined to engage in criminal behavior.

2.8. Suggestion on the way to curb criminal activities among student

The crime prevention system encompasses a network of coordinated efforts, strategies, and institutions dedicated to preventing criminal behavior. These elements work in unison toward the shared objective of minimizing crime. The system can be broadly

categorized into two dimensions: narrow-scope and broad-scope prevention.

Narrow-scope prevention refers to proactive measures taken before any criminal activity occurs. This includes crime prevention efforts at the family, school, and community levels. These components aim to instill positive behavior and prevent individuals—particularly youth—from engaging in crime by addressing risk factors early on.

In contrast, **broad-scope prevention** covers a wider range of strategies, encompassing not only pre-crime interventions but also efforts during and after criminal activity. This includes social and psychological support systems, public security measures, and criminal penalties. Importantly, broad prevention incorporates the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders to reduce the risk of reoffending, often referred to as **macro-level crime prevention**.

In the context of this discussion, the **college student crime prevention system** integrates both narrow and broad aspects. It focuses not only on guiding students toward positive, law-abiding behavior through education and awareness before crimes occur but also addresses the reintegration of students who have previously committed offenses. The ultimate goal is to foster a secure, law-abiding, and harmonious campus environment.

To achieve this, universities play a central role in building and maintaining the crime prevention framework. Their approach typically involves the following key strategies:

1. **Raising Safety Awareness among Students:** Institutions work to increase students' understanding of safety risks and crime-related issues. This includes

recognizing potential threats, understanding typical criminal tactics, staying alert to suspicious behavior and knowing how and when to report concerns to appropriate authorities.

2. **Enhancing Students' Self-Protection Skills:** Students are taught to responsibly manage personal technology, such as smartphones, and to avoid harmful digital behaviors. This includes guarding against online scams, resisting excessive gaming, and protecting themselves from inappropriate online interactions.

3. **Strengthening Legal Awareness and Civic Responsibility:** As future contributors to society, university students must develop a strong sense of legal responsibility. Universities often organize legal education initiatives, such as lectures and seminars, to instill respect for the law and promote lawful behavior.

4. **Encouraging Community Engagement and Social Integration:** Many colleges support student involvement in volunteer programs and community service projects. These activities help students connect with broader society, provide support to those in needs, and contribute to building safer and more supportive communities.

5. **Government policies against crime within institution:** The government may authorize law enforcement agencies to implement targeted measures aimed at eradicating criminal activities within educational institutions, ensuring a safe and conducive learning environment for students and staff alike.

By combining preventative education, legal awareness, and community involvement, colleges aim to create an environment where crime is both less likely to occur and less likely to recur, ultimately safeguarding student well-being and promoting a culture of respect, safety, and responsibility.

2.9 Theoretical Framework

With attention to the objectives and nature of the research work, Albert Bandura theory of social learning theory and the labeling theory is drawn upon to provide theoretical basis for the study.

Social learning theory

Social Learning Theory (SLT) reinforces the idea that learning occurs within a social context. People learn from observing others' behaviors and the outcomes of those behaviors (Astray-Caneda, Busbee, & Fanning, 2011). Albert Bandura, a major contributor to the field of social learning, explains that social learning is a continuous and reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences.

The basic tenant of social learning is that people learn from behaviors, and the imitated behavior itself leads to reinforcing consequences. Many behaviors that are learned from others produce satisfying or reinforcing results (Bandura, 1977). Social learning theory also helps to explain why people engage in, as well as refrain from, criminal behavior. It also explains how we conform to and violate norms, including the norms of one's own group or culture. Furthermore, social learning theory focuses on social context and cognitive-behavioral variables, and not on individual characteristics (Akers, 1998).

Social learning theory is a general theory that encompasses social, non-social, and cultural factors that explain the acquisition and maintenance of and change in criminal and deviant behavior. Social learning theory also addresses factors that operate both to motivate and to control and/or prevent criminal behavior and to undermine conformity (Akers, 1998).

Social learning theory identifies three primary forces that explain human behavior. These forces are: 1) behavior, 2) environment, and 3) person (i.e. cognitive structure). These forces interact in a triadic, dynamic relationship, each subject to change, and can influence the others (Bandura, 1977). Bandura explains this triadic dynamic relationship as the changes in the external environmental trigger changes in our thoughts and emotions (i.e, our cognitive structure) that, in turn, produce changes in our behavior.

Social learning theory includes different types of reinforcement. These include:

- Positive reinforcement (strengthening of behavior through rewards);
- Negative reinforcement (strengthening of behavior through escape or avoidance of punishment;
- Positive punishment (painful consequences); and
- Negative punishment (removal of rewards).

All of these can be applied to both conforming and non-conforming (deviant) behaviors. Social learning theory emphasizes the balance of both positive and negative consequences.

Social learning theory focuses on the learning that occurs within a social context. It considers that people learn from one another, including such concepts as observational learning which has four components: attention, retention, motor reproduction, and motivation (Bandura, 1977).

1. Attention: Individuals cannot learn solely by observation unless they perceive and attend significant features of the modeled behavior (Allen & Santrock, 1993, pg. 139).
2. Retention: In order to reproduce the modeled behavior, the individuals must encode the information into long-term memory (Allen & Santrock, 1993, pg. 139).

3. Motor reproduction: Once the behavior is processed from attention and retention the observer must possess the physical capabilities of the modeled behavior in order to reproduce such behavior (Allen & Santrock, 1993, pg. 139).

4. Motivation: The observer expects to receive positive enforcement for the modeled behavior thus perpetuating the cycle to keep engaging in such behavior (Allen & Santrock, 1993, pg. 139).

People are both products and producers of their environment. According to Bandura, we learn by observing and interacting with our environment. Thus, we model our behavior after what is going on around us. For most of us, our internal attitudes and beliefs about the world come from the people who either parent us or with whom we spend significant time (Bandura, 1977).

As the old saying goes, "birds of a feather flock together." In the context of the correctional setting, inmates will influence one another's behavior in both conforming and non-conforming directions (Akers, 1991). Inmates will learn these conforming or non-conforming (deviant) behaviors from one another. The similarity in the particular inmates' behaviors has an impact on their selection of friends and also the costs attached to continuing those relationships. If an inmate joins a group that is engaged in deviant behavior, this type of behavior only escalates after joining such group. Vice-versa, if the group models conforming behavior, then this type of behavior pattern is also increased.

Similar to social learning theory, Shaw and McKay's social disorganization theory asserts that a culture that lacks social organization is a major cause of criminality (Bartollas, 1990). Accordingly, inmates are in a correctional setting, often because some

type of deviant behavior was modeled from their prior environment (Sutherland, 1995). The correctional environment itself provides a platform to model both deviant behavior as well as positive behavior, thereby influencing the behaviors of inmates accordingly.

Consequences can be a matter of perception. People will typically avoid behavior which results in negative consequences, but will engage in behaviors they *perceive* will have a positive outcome. An inmate may find what others would experience as a punishment to actually be rewarding. Inmates may not see prison, jail, or another correctional setting as a negative consequence. Furthermore, they may not see being placed in segregation or “the hole” as true “punishment” for their behavior.

A good example of negative behavior followed by negative reinforcement is those inmates who engage in deviant behaviors for secondary gain. A person will not punish himself, unless this punishment is paired with reinforcement. Think of it as the child who acts out and then is rewarded with candy, so he/she will stop crying. That child then learns to cry to get candy.

Parallel to the correctional setting, inmates may act out through self-injurious behavior with no suicidal intent, but do so because they know they will get extra attention from mental health and medical. If the self-injury is bad enough, they will be sent to an external hospital, where they will get to see the outside world, be fed different food, and receive other non-correctional experiences. The inmates who have a repeated pattern of this behavior are well-known to staff, and the offender knows this. It becomes a bargaining chip to deter them from engaging in other negative behaviors. They may request such things as extra trays, books, or paper and pencils to write letters; things

that are not typically allowed, if they are on a mental health or behavioral watch in exchange for the promise of good behavior. They begin to correlate their negative behavior with rewarding consequences, such as extra food, more time in recreation, and more staff attention as a reward for acting out.

Labeling theory

Labeling theory, also called social reaction theory, was developed to explain behavior considered deviant, which, of course, includes criminal behavior. Labeling theory represented a bold new approach to explaining crime, and it is not surprising that it gained a following during the 1960s and 1970s, when questioning authority and the *status quo* was commonplace. Labeling theorists focus on how certain behaviors come to be defined as criminal and on the consequences of these definitions for people found to be engaged in such activities. (Renzetti, 2008), Whereas most theories hold an absolutist view of crime, defining it as behavior that violates the law, labeling theorists emphasize the relativity of crime and deviance. As Howard Becker, a prominent labeling theorist, pointed out, no act is inherently criminal; it becomes criminal only when defined as such by observers. Whether or not a behavior gets defined as criminal depends on several factors, including the situational and historical contexts in which the behavior occurs, the characteristics of the individual engaged in the behavior, and the characteristics of the definers. In particular, labeling theorists point out that members of some groups – those who are socially and economically powerful – have an advantage in the labeling process. They are more likely to escape being defined or labeled as criminals, and are better able to attach that label to others. But labeling theorists are especially interested in the consequences of the labeling process. They

maintain that being labeled criminal, especially if the labeling is formal, public, and official (e.g., a trial), produces a fundamental change in the labeled individual's identity. Edwin Lemert, another important labeling theorist, argued that labeling closes off legitimate opportunities and associations with noncriminal, and also destroys an individual's public image and character, thereby forcing him or her to embark on a criminal career. In other words, social reaction actually produces more crime. Despite its popularity, empirical tests of labeling theory have failed to demonstrate that being labeled necessarily leads to a negative self-image. In some cases, in fact, the deviant or criminal label is valued, even sought after. Moreover, such labels are not indelible, and those labeled often join together to successfully reject the criminal or deviant label. (Patterson, 2018).

In labeling theory, social control refers mainly to those reactions of police officers, judges, psychiatrists, etc., which consist of arresting, condemning, classifying, and incarcerating. Somebody comes to be classified as criminal, mentally disturbed, dangerous, or deviant in one way or another, and is set apart in a prison, an asylum, or any other place of exclusion. Those reactions mark such individuals, they stigmatize them, and they attach a label to their personality. Doing so, they modify not only the social identity of the individuals but also their self-perception, their way of life, and their behavior. "The experience of being caught and publicly labeled as a deviant ... has important consequences for one's further social participation and self-image" (Becker, 1963, p. 31). "Treating a person as though he were generally rather than specifically deviant produces a self-fulfilling prophecy. It sets in motion several mechanisms which conspire to shape the person in the image people have of him" (Becker, 1963, p. 34).

Instead of producing order, the attempt at social control amplifies the deviant tendencies of the labeled person (Wilkins, 1964). The arrest, the sentence, the psychiatric diagnostic, the imprisonment, or the institutionalization in a mental hospital puts individuals subjected to one of those treatments at risk of internalizing the infamous label while putting them at the margin of society. They might feel obliged to become part of a deviant group and act as one of the gang. Accordingly, they might become more deviant after being labeled than before.

The labeling theory has been criticized mainly on two counts. The labeling process is not totally arbitrary or completely unrelated to the preexisting deviant behavior and characteristics of the labeled individual. More often than not, the court condemns accused people who really committed a crime and generally, the more serious the crime, the more severe the sentence. The number of crimes committed in the past by an individual is also related to the severity of the punishment. If such is the case, the question to be asked is: Does the label create a new social identity or is it just a disclosure of a deviant identity already there?

Empirical tests of the labeling hypothesis provide an inconsistent picture, with some researchers finding a weak effect of social reaction on subsequent offending, others failing to find one. The overall impact is small. "The preponderance of research finds no or very weak evidence of labeling effects. The more carefully the research keeps other factors constant, the less likely it is to find evidence that labeling has significant effect on criminal or deviant behavior" (Akers, 1994, p. 134, see also Braithwaite, 1989).

The innovation of labeling theory was to focus on official reactions to delinquent acts.

In Becker's famous dictum, deviance is not a quality of the act a person commits, but rather a consequence of the application by others of rules and sanctions. 'The deviant is one to whom that label has successfully been applied; deviant behavior is behavior that people so label' (Becker 1963, p. 9). The insights of labeling theory led to two strands of research, one on the sources of juvenile justice sanctions, and the other on the consequences of labeling. The latter is most relevant for understanding delinquency causation in the traditional sense. Lemert (1951) maintained that stigmatizing reactions to primary (or original) deviance created what he termed secondary deviance. In other words, whereas primary deviance arises for a wide variety of reasons, Lemert argued that secondary deviation is an adaptation to problems of adjustment created by official societal reactions. The original causes of deviation thus give way to the disapproving, degradation, and isolating reactions of society, leading to exclusion from conventional opportunities and increased contact with deviant subgroups, and finally to secondary patterns of delinquency. According to Becker (1963), delinquent careers are sustained by official labeling and sanctioning processes.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHOD

3.1 Research Design

A research design relates to the blueprint with which data necessary and relevant to answering the research questions and obtain from the given study population. It is the deliberate and scientific plan with which information needed to solve a research problem is accessed (Presell, 1990). Hence, the study adopted a descriptive research design. This study made use of a quantitative instrument of data collection which includes the use of a structured questionnaire.

3.2 Area of Study

This study was carried out in the University of Benin. This started off as an institute of technology and was accorded the status of a full-fledged university by national universities commission (NUC) in April 1972. University of Benin is located between Egor local government and Ovia local government in Edo state. The University of Benin is made up of two campuses, Ugbowo and Ekewan campus, but this study focused more on Ugbowo campus. The focus was on the factors that influence criminal activity among undergraduate student in the University of Benin residing in the various regular

halls no campus i.e. Hall 1-4.

3.3 Research Population

The total population of this study, according to the University's record is approximately 77,000 Students in total (Uniben, Students Affairs Division (2024), spread across various faculties and departments. The targeted population of this study is 5,040 students. For effective representation and convenience within the University of Benin, 200 questionnaires were administered, 50 were distributed to students in hall 1, 50 to students in hall 2, 50 to hall 3 and 50 to hall 4.

3.4 Sample Size

The sample size for this study was 200 respondents who are undergraduate students of various level and department residing in the regular hall of residence (Hall 1-4).The sample of the study was derived by using Robert Solving method (1960).

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where;

n= Sample Size

N= Population Size

e=Level of precision or sampling which is 7%

$$n = \frac{5040}{1 + 5040(7)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{5040}{1 + 5040 * 0.0049}$$

$$n = \frac{5040}{1 + 24.696}$$

$$n = \frac{5040}{25.696}$$

$$n = 196$$

Total sample size=196

Given the faculty's emphasis on sample size of 200 or more robust analysis, this study employed a simple size of 200, slightly exceeding the calculated sample size of 196. The sample of study consists of Students from the regular Halls of resident, in the University of Benin. A total number of 200 questionnaires were distributed among Students who resides in the regular halls of residents (Hall 1-4).

3.5 Sampling Techniques

The study adopted a probabilistic sampling technique for which students would be selected using simple random technique. In cases where a respondent is reluctant, the study would adopt a non-probabilistic sampling technique using convenient sampling technique in selecting respondents that are willing to participate in the study.

3.6 Research Instrument

This study adopted a quantitative instrument for data collection which is the use of a structured questionnaire which would be made up of two sections, section A, B., C., D., & E. Section A examined socio-demographic characteristics of respondent's while section B., C., D., & E. examine the factors influencing criminal activities

3.7 Data Analysis and Compilation

This study adopted both the primary and secondary method of data collection. Primary method includes the use of questionnaire, while the secondary method includes books, journals and articles. Data collected from this study was analyzed using a simple percentages, mean and standard deviation.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

The ethical considerations for this study was an informed consent, confidentiality, non-

maleficence and benevolence so as not to expose the respondents to psychological harm and discomfort which can infringe upon their fundamental human rights.

3.9 Limitation of Methodology

The questionnaire was relatively self-answered; the occurrence of random answers was not unheard of, as multiple choices were chosen without adequate reasons from the respondents. These questions contained a closed ended question because of the sensitivity and broad nature of the subject of the research.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1. Data Analysis And Result Of Data Analysis

This chapter deals with presentation of results and discussion of findings. The data were carefully examined and analyzed to offer answers to the research questions. The numbers of responses in the items were counted and the corresponding percentage calculated. Furthermore, two hundred (200) questionnaires were used to sample the respondents' opinions. The respondents were drawn from the four (4) regulars' Halls of residents in University of Benin, Benin City.

Section A: Demographic characteristics

Table 1: Distribution of Age

AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
16 – 20	71	35.5%

21 – 25	103	51.5%
26 – 30	20	10%
31 – 35	6	3%
TOTAL	200	100%

Source: Field work, 2025

From the above analysis, 71(35.5%) represented respondent within the age of 16-20 years, 103 (51.5%) represented respondent within the age of 21-25 years, 20(10%) represented respondent within the age of 26-30 years, and 6(3%) represented respondent within the age of 31-35 years. Therefore it can be categorically inferred that majority of the respondents are between the ages of 21-25 years.

Table 2: Distribution Sex

SEX	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
FEMALE	125	62.5%
MALE	75	37.5%
TOTAL	200	100%

Source: Field work, 2025

From table 2 above, with a total sample of 200 respondents out of which 62.5% of the respondents are female representing 125, while 37.5% of the respondents are male representing 75. Therefore it can be inferred that majority of the respondents in the area under review are female making about 62.5% of the total respondent.

Table 3: Distribution of Halls of residence

RESIDENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
HALL 1	50	25%
HALL 2	50	25%
HALL 3	50	25%
HALL 4	50	25%
TOTAL	200	100%

Source: Field work, 2025

The table present data on 200 respondent who are evenly distributed among four hall of residence with 50 respondent (25%) coming from each hall.

Table 4: Distribution of Grade level

LEVEL	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
100	37	18.5%
200	40	20%
300	31	15.5%
400	48	24%
500	26	13%
600	18	9%
TOTAL	200	100%

Source: Field work, 2025

From the above analysis 37(18.5%) represented respondents in 100level, 40(20%) represented respondent in 200level, 31(15.5%) represented respondents in 300level, 48(24%) represented respondents in 400level, 26(13%) represented respondents in 500level and 18(9%) represented respondents in 600level.

Table 5- Distribution of Religion

RELIGION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
CHRISTAINITY	160	80%
ISLAMIC	40	20%
OTHERS	0	0%
TOTAL	200	100%

Source: Field work, 2025

This table shows the respondents by their religion, 160(80%) of them are Christians and 40(20%) of them are Islamic. This however goes to show that majority of our respondent are Christians.

4.2 ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Table 6: What is the contributing factors influencing criminal activities among students in the University of Benin?

S/N	ITEM	Total	Mean	SD	Remark
1	Peer pressure from other students Encourages Involvement in crime	200	3.63	1.43	ACCEPTED
2	Lack of adequate security measures in the hostel contributes to crime	200	3.87	1.32	ACCEPTED
3	Financial difficulties faced by some students lead them to crime	200	3.87	1.32	ACCEPTED
4	Drug and substance abuse among students is linked to criminal activities	200	3.95	1.35	ACCEPTED
5	Poor hostel management and lack of supervision create opportunities for crime	200	4.01	1.14	ACCEPTED
6	Influence of external criminal groups operating Near university can contribute to crime.	200	4.01	1.15	ACCEPTED
7	Boredom and lack of constructive activities for students can create opportunities for crime	200	3.67	1.11	ACCEPTED
	TOTAL		27.01	8.82	ACCEPTED

Source: field survey, 2025

Scale: Mean>2.5=Accepted

Mean<2.5= Rejected

Table 6 Respondents' view on the factors influencing criminal activities. Responses show the mean values ranging from 3.63 to 4.01. Item 1 was accepted which shows that Peer pressure from other students Encourages the Involvement of criminal activities among

students, having a mean of 3.63. Item 2 was accepted which shows that Lack of adequate security measures in the hostel contributes to criminal activities among student, with a mean of 3.87. Item 3 was accepted which shows that Financial difficulties faced by some students lead them to criminal activities, with a mean of 3.87.

Item 4 was accepted which shows that drug and substance abuse among students is linked to criminal activities, with a mean of 3.95. Item 5 was accepted which shows that Poor hostel management and lack of supervision create opportunities for crime among Students, with a mean of 4.01. Item 6 was accepted which shows that Influence of external criminal groups operating near university can contribute to criminal activities among students, with a mean of 4.01. And item 7 was accepted which shows that Boredom and lack of constructive activities for students can create opportunities for crime with a mean of 3.69.

Question 2: Who are the perpetrators of criminal activities within university campus?

Table 7: Respondents' view on the Perpetrators of criminal activities the University (Hostel Focus)

	Frequency	Percentage
Students residing in the hostel	40	20%
Students residing outside the hostel	15	7.5%
Non-students who gain access to the hostel	37	18.5%
External criminal gangs operating within or around the university	61	30.5%
Hostel staff	32	16%

I am not sure	15	7.5%
Total	200	100%

Source: field survey, 2025

From table 7 on respondents' view on the perpetrators of criminal activities within the university hostel 40(20%) respondents viewed that students residing in the hostel are the perpetrators of criminal activities in the hostel. while 15(7.5%) respondents viewed that students residing outside the hostel are the perpetrators of criminal activities in the hostel, 37(18.5%) respondent viewed that non-students who gain access to the hostel are the perpetrators of criminal activities in the hostel, 61(30.5%) respondents viewed that external criminal gangs operating within or around the university are the perpetrators of criminal activities in the hostel, 32(16%) respondents viewed that hostel staff are the perpetrators of criminal activities in the hostel. However 15(7.5%) respondent were not sure of the perpetrators of criminal activities within the hostel.

Table 8: What are the possible solutions to prevent students from engaging in criminal activities?

S/N	Item	Total	Mean	S.D	Remark
1	Increase security personnel and patrols within the hostel	200	4.25	1.13	ACCEPTED
2	Installation/upgrade of CCTV surveillance systems.	200	4.21	1.07	ACCEPTED
3	Stricter enforcement of hostel rules and regulations	200	4.13	1.07	ACCEPTED
4	Regular security awareness campaigns and workshops for student	200	1.80	1.04	REJECTED
5	Implementation of stricter entry/exit protocols for non-residents	200	4.16	1.6	ACCEPTED
6	Regular checks and maintenance of hostel infrastructure (e.g., locks,	200	4.3	0.995	ACCEPTED

	doors).				
7	Improved lighting in common areas and pathways	200	4.27	1.06	ACCEPTED
8	Establishment of a confidential reporting mechanism for incidents	200	2.245	1.42	ACCEPTED
	Total		29.4	9.385	ACCEPTED

Source: field survey, 2025

Scale: Mean>2.5=Accepted

Mean<2.5= Rejected

Table 8 Respondents' view on ways to curb criminal activities in the University campus.

Responses show the mean value ranging from 1.80 to 4.25. Item1 was accepted which show that the increase in security personnel and patrols within the hostel will curb criminal activities, a mean of 4.25. Item 2 was accepted which show that the installation/upgrade of CCTV surveillance systems within the hostel can curb criminal activities, with a mean of 4.21. Item 3 was accepted which shows that stricter enforcement of hostel rules and regulations within the hostel will curb criminal activities, with a mean of 4.13. Item 4 was rejected which shows that regular security awareness campaigns and workshops for students within the hostel will not curb criminal activities with a mean of 1.80.

Item 5 was accepted which show that the implementation of stricter entry/exit protocols for non-residents within the hostel can curb criminal activities, with a mean of 4.16. Item 6 was accepted which show that Regular checks and maintenance of hostel infrastructure (e.g., locks, doors) will curb criminal activities within the hostel, with a mean of 4.3. Item 7 was accepted with shows that the Improved lighting in common areas and pathways within the hostel can curb criminal activities, with a mean of 4.27. Item 8 was accepted which shows that the Establishment of a confidential reporting mechanism for incidents within the hostel can curb criminal activities with a

mean of 2.245.

Table 9: What are the effects of criminal activities on the academic performance of students in the University of Benin?

S/N	ITEM	Total	Mean	S.D	Remark
1	Criminal activities create a climate of fear and insecurity among students.	200	4.3	0.995	ACCEPTED
2	They disrupt the academic activities and concentration of students.	200	4.09	1.054	ACCEPTED
3	They lead to loss or damage of personal belongings of students	200	4.05	1.12	ACCEPTED
4	They can result in physical harm or injury to students	200	4.18	1.02	ACCEPTED
5	They damage the reputation of the university and the hostel community	200	4.11	1.06	ACCEPTED
6	They can lead to increase mistrust and suspicion among students	200	4.23	1.01	ACCEPTED
7	They can lead to disciplinary actions and even expulsion of student involve	200	4.165	1.08	ACCEPTED
8	They can negatively impact the mental and emotional well-being of students	200	3.855	1.32	ACCEPTED
	Total		32.98	8.659	ACCEPTED

Source: field survey, 2025

Scale: Mean>2.5=Accepted

Mean<2.5= Rejected

Table 9 Respondents' view on the effects of criminal activities on the performance of the students. Responses show the mean values ranging from 3.855 to 4.3. Item 1 was accepted which shows that criminal activities create a climate of fear and insecurity among students, having a mean of 4.3. Item 2 was accepted which show that criminal activities disrupt the academic activities and concentration of students with a mean of 4.09. Item 3 was accepted which show that criminal activities lead to loss or damage of

personal belongings of students with a mean of 4.05. Item 4 was accepted which shows that criminal activities can result in physical harm or injury to students, having a mean of 4.18.

Item 5 was accepted which shows that criminal activities can damage the reputation of the university and the hostel community, with a mean of 4.11. Item 6 was accepted which show that criminal activities can lead to increase mistrust and suspicion among students with a mean of 4.23. Item 7 was accepted which show that criminal activities can lead to disciplinary actions and even expulsion of student involve, with a mean of 4.165. Item 8 was accepted which shows that criminal activities can lead to disciplinary actions and even expulsion of student involve, with a mean of 3.855.

Table 10: Respondents' view on how frequently they believe criminal activities occur within your hostel?

	Frequency	Percentage
Very rarely	24	12%
Rarely	40	20%
Sometimes	42	21%
Often	37	18.5%
Very often	45	22.5%
Unsure	12	6%
Total	200	100%

Source: field survey, 2025

Table 10 on respondents' view on how frequently they believe criminal activities occur within your hostel, 24(12%) respondents believe that criminal activities occurs very rarely within the hostel, 40(20%) respondents believe that criminal activities occurs rarely within the hostel, 42(21%) respondents believe that criminal activities occurs sometimes within the hostel, 37(18.5%) respondents believe that criminal activities

occurs often within the hostel, 45(22.5%) respondents believe that criminal activities occurs very often within the hostel and 12(6%) respondents are unsure of how frequently criminal activities that occurs within the hostel.

Table 11: Respondents' view on how safe they generally feel within the hostel environment?

	Frequency	Percentage
Very safe	63	31.5%
Safe	35	17.5%
Unsafe	43	21.5%
Very unsafe	22	11%
Unsure	37	18.5%
Total	200	100%

Source: field survey, 2025

Table 11 on respondents' view on how safe they generally feel within the hostel environment, 63(31.5%) respondent says they feel very safe within the hostel environment, 35(17.5%) respondents says they feel safe within the hostel environment, 43(21.5%) respondents says the feel unsafe within the hostel environment, 22(11%) respondent says they feel very unsafe within the hostel environment, 37(18.5%) respondent says they are unsure of how they feel within the hostel environment.

4.3. Discussion of findings

The findings of this study were discussed with respect to the research purpose earlier raised in the study. From the research question one; the study reveals that there are

significant contributing factors that influence criminal activities among students in the University of Benin. This could be seen from the analysis of data from table 6, some of the factors are; Peer pressure from other students, Lack of adequate security measures in the hostel, financial difficulties faced by some students, Influence of external criminal groups operating near university, Drug and substance abuse among students. Others includes Poor hostel management and lack of supervision, more so it was also discovered that Boredom and lack of constructive activities for students can create opportunities for crime This is in line with Sandbox Network (2016) which says that crime is influenced by a range of contributing factors that are associate with the prevalent drinking culture on college campuses, roles of drug use, financial constrain, untreated mental health conditions, or a combination of these elements.

The analyses from research question two show who the perpetrators of criminal activities within university of Benin. Findings from the study revealed there are several perpetrators of criminal activities within the university, this could be seen from the analysis of data from table 7, as 20% of the sample respondents agreed that Students residing in the hostels are the perpetrators of criminal activities, 7.5% of the sample respondents agreed that Students residing outside the university hostel are the perpetrators of criminal activities, 18.5% of the sample respondents agreed that Non-students who gain access to the university hostel are the perpetrators of criminal activities,30.5% of the sample respondents agreed that External criminal gangs operating within or around the university are the perpetrators criminal activities and 16.5% of the sample respondents agreed that Hostel staff are the perpetrators criminal activities. This finding is in line with Fox and Hellman (1985) who asserted that tudents

both students and non-students alike are involved in criminal activities, with urban campuses facing specific challenges such as the "spill-over" effect, where criminal behavior from surrounding neighborhoods extends to campus environments. Palmer (1996) argues that university campuses function as microcosms of society, meaning that societal issues and circumstances often manifest in the campus environment as well. This perspective suggests that the individuals responsible for crimes on campus may come from both the university community and the surrounding local area.

The analyses from research question three shows the possible solutions to prevent students from engaging in criminal activities. This could be seen from the analysis of data from table 8, it was discovered that the criminal activities that occurred within the university can simply be curbed through an increase in the security personnel and patrols within the hostel, Installation/upgrade of CCTV surveillance systems and Improved lighting in common areas and pathways will not entirely eradicate crime but can reduce the level of criminal activities that occurs, Implementation of stricter entry/exit protocols for non-residents and stricter enforcement of hostel rules and regulations have a great effect in curbing criminal activities within the university due to the fact that any individual can gain access to the university environment.

The analyses from the research question four shows the effects of criminal activities on the academic performance of students. This could be seen from the analysis of data from table 10, it was discovered that criminal activities has a great effect on the performance of the student and the university through the creation of fear and insecurity among students, disrupting the academic activities and concentration of students, leading to loss or damage of personal belongings of student, result in physical

harm or injury to students, damage the reputation of the university and the hostel community, negatively impact the mental and emotional well-being of students. This is in agreement with Cheatham (2008) who stated that Criminal activity on university campuses disrupts not only academic pursuits but also social and professional engagements within the campus environment Given that education plays a fundamental role in sustaining a democratic society, it is essential to create a safe environment that supports every student's success as a contribution to the collective well-being. Each incident of crime, whether targeting individuals or university property, leads to harmful consequences that interfere with daily life and hinder students' academic progress (Gover et al., 2008).

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

This study investigates the factors influencing criminals' activities among students in the University of Benin. Four (4) research questions were raised for the study. The study adopted descriptive research design. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire; it was built around the research question by the researcher and validated by the researcher's supervisor. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics by means of mean and standard deviation. The following is a summary of the findings from the empirical analysis of the study:

1. Several factors influence criminal activities among students in campuses. Factors like peer influence from other students, financial difficulties, inadequate security measures, Influence of external criminal groups, Drug and substance abuse, that Boredom and lack of constructive activities.
2. The perpetrators of criminal activities within university campus differ from Students residing outside and within the hostels to Non-students who gain access to the campuses and the university staffs. Hence, both students and non-students alike are involved in the criminal activities within the campuses.
3. To address the problem of criminal activities among students some possible

solutions to curb these activities within the university campuses were discovered.

4. Findings of this research revealed that criminal activities within the university campuses have a significant negative effect on the performance of students and may also affect the reputation of the University.

5.2 Conclusion

The key findings reveal several factors contributing to criminal activities among students at the University of Benin. These include peer pressure, financial difficulty, the influence of external criminal gangs, and drug and substance abuse. Additionally, poor hostel management, lack of supervision, boredom, and a lack of constructive activities were identified as contributing to criminal opportunities. The study also confirm that a significant percentage of criminal activities are perpetrated by both students residing within and outside the hostels, as well as non-students who have access to the university environment, external criminal gangs, and even hostel staff.

To address these issues, the study suggested several solutions. These include increasing personal and patrols within the hostels, installing or upgrading CCTV surveillance systems, and improving lighting in common areas and pathways. Furthermore, implementing stricter entry an exit protocols for non-residents and enforcing stricter hostel rules and regulations are seen as highly effective in curbing criminal activities.

Finally, the analysis shows that criminal activities have a significant negative impact on the academic performance of students. This is because crime creates an environment of fear and insecurity, which disrupt academic activities and concentration. It can also lead to loss of personal belongings, physical harm, and damages to the university's reputation, negatively affecting the mental and emotional well-being of students. The findings align with existing research, which highlights that crime on university campuses not only disrupts academic pursuits but also social and professional engagements, hindering students' overall academic.

5.3 Recommendation

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Enhance Security and Personnel

Increase Security Patrols: The direct recommendation is to deploy more security personnel, especially in high-risk areas like hostel, late at night. The presence of patrols acts as strong deterrent.

Establish a Campus Police Force: A dedicated and well-equipped campus police or security force can provide faster and more effective responses to incidents than relying solely on local law enforcement.

Implement Stricter Access: This is a crucial recommendation for university hostels. It

involves using id authorized residents and staff can enter buildings. The study explicitly suggested this

Enforce Rules and Regulations: The study recommended that the university or hostel management strictly enforce existing rules and regulations to maintain order and discourage criminal behavior from within the student bod.

2. Technological Upgrade

Install and Maintain CCTV: A top recommendation from the study is to install a comprehensive network of CCTV cameras in strategic location, including common areas, entry/exist points, and pathways. This should also include a plan for regular maintenance to ensure the cameras are always working or functional.

Improve Lighting: The installation of adequate and well maintained lighting in all campus areas, including walkways, parking lot, and around hostels. Good lighting reduces the opportunities for crimes of stealth and provides a greater sense of security.

Implementation of Emergency Call Boxes: Placing “blue light” or emergency call boxes in locations allows students to quickly contact security in case of an emergency.

3. Community and Student Engagement

Promote a Culture of Awareness: This should include campaigns to educate students on personal safety, such as no walking alone at night, being aware of their surroundings, and securing their belongings.

Encourage Reporting: Establish a simple, user-friendly, and confidential system for students and staff to report suspicious activity or crime. This helps in gathering

intelligence and taking proactive measures.

Foster Collaboration: The campus security, hostel managements, and the student's body work together. This can be done through regular meetings, safety committees, and information-sharing initiative.

4. Addressing Root Causes

Identify and Address "External Threats": The study notes that criminal gangs and non-students are major problem. Hence, there should be a strong focus on strategies to identify and restrict the access of these external groups to the campus.

Engage with Students at Risk: Since the study identifies hostel residents as a source of crime, programs should be created that address the underlying reasons for student involvement in criminal activities, such as peer pressure, financial hardship, or lack of engagement. This is a more holistic, long-term approach to crime prevention.

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APPENDIX I
QUESTIONNAIRE
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY,
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN,
EDO STATE.

Dear Respondent

Request to Questionnaire

I am an undergraduate student of the department of Sociology and Anthropology, Faculty of social science, University of Benin. I am presently carrying out a research study titled *'Influence Of Criminal Activities Among Student In The University Of Benin'*. Kindly help in filling the questionnaire as your honest opinion will help this research. It is purely for academic purpose and the information provided will be treated as confidential and will be used only for the purpose of this research. Thank you for your cooperation.

IRABOR E.GIFT

SECTION A: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHICS CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENT

1. Age group: 16-20(), 21-25(), 26-30(), 31-35().
2. Gender: Male (), Female ().
3. Grade level: 100 (), 200 (), 300 (), 400 (), 500 (), 600 ().
4. Residence: Hall 1 (), Hall 2 (), Hall 3 (), Hall 4.
5. Religion: Christianity (), Islamic (), Others ().

SECTION B: FACTORS INFLUENCING CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES AMONG STUDENT IN THE HOSTEL

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statement regarding factors that might influence criminal activities among students in the hostel. (Tick the appropriate box)

1. Peer pressure from other students encourages involvement in crime.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree strongly agree .

2. Lack of adequate security measures in the hostel contributes to crime.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree strongly agree .

3. Financial difficulties faced by some students lead them to crime. Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree strongly agree .

4. Drug and substance abuse among students is linked to criminal activities. Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree strongly agree .

5. Poor hostel management and lack of supervision create opportunities for crime. Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree strongly agree .

6. Influence of external criminal groups operating near university can contribute to crime. Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree strongly agree .

7. Boredom and lack of constructive activities for students can create opportunities for crime. Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree strongly agree .

SECTION C: PERPETRATORS OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES IN UNIVERSITY (Hostel Focus)

8. In your opinion, how frequently do you believe criminal activities occur within your hostel? Very rarely Rarely Sometimes Often Very often Unsure .

9. How safe do you generally feel within your hostel environment? Very safe Safe Neutral Unsafe Very safe .

10. In your opinion who are most likely perpetrators of criminal activities

within university hostel? (please tick more than one if applicable)

- Students residing in the hostel
- Students residing outside the hostel
- Non-students who gain access to the hostel
- External criminal gangs operating within or around the university
- Hostel staff
- I am not sure

SECTION D: EFFECTS OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements regarding the effects of criminal activities in university hostels. (Tick the appropriate box)

11. Criminal activities create a climate of fear and insecurity among students.
Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree strongly agree .
12. They disrupt the academic activities and concentration of students.
Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree strongly agree .
13. They lead to loss or damage of personal belongings of students. Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree strongly agree .
14. They can result in physical harm or injury to students. Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree strongly agree .
15. They damage the reputation of the university and the hostel community.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree strongly agree .

16. They can lead to increase mistrust and suspicion among students.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree strongly agree .

17. They can strain the relationship between students and university authorities. Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree strongly agree .

18. They can lead to disciplinary actions and even expulsion of student involve.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree strongly agree .

19. They can negatively impact the mental and emotional well-being of students. Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree strongly agree .

20. Have you or any student you know been directly affected by criminal activities within the hostel (e.g., thief, assault, harassment etc.)? Yes(self)

Yes(someone I know) No Unsure

SECTION E: WAYS TO CURB CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES IN UNIVERSITY HOSTEL

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following potential measures to curb criminal activities in hostels. (Tick the appropriate box).

21. Increase security personnel and patrols within the hostel. Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree strongly agree .

22. Installation/upgrade of CCTV surveillance systems. Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree strongly agree .

23. Stricter enforcement of hostel rules and regulations. Strongly disagree

Disagree Neutral Agree strongly agree .

24. Regular security awareness campaigns and workshops for student.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree strongly agree .

25. Improved lighting in common areas and pathways. Strongly disagree

Disagree Neutral Agree strongly agree .

26. Establishment of a confidential reporting mechanism for incidents.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree strongly agree .

27. Implementation of stricter entry/exit protocols for non-residents. Strongly

disagree Disagree Neutral Agree strongly agree .

28. Regular checks and maintenance of hostel infrastructure (e.g., locks,

doors). Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree strongly agree .

29. Are you aware of any specific measure currently in place by the university or hostel administration to prevent or address criminal activities?

Yes

No

Unsure

30. How effective do you believe these current measures (if any) are in curbing criminal activities?

Very effective

- [] Effective
- [] Moderately effective
- [] Not very effective
- [] Not effective at all
- [] Unsure

Thank you for your valuable time and contribution to this important issue.