

**THE NATURE AND TYPES OF CRIME ASSOCIATED WITH FEMALE INMATE OF  
OKO CORRECTIONAL CENTRE IN BENIN CITY EDO STATE NIGERIA**

**BY**

**ASIKE Chidimma Jessica**

**MATRIC.NO: SSC2105897**

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY**

**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**UNIVERSITY OF BENIN**

**BENIN CITY**

**OCTOBER, 2025**

**THE NATURE AND TYPES OF CRIME ASSOCIATED WITH FEMALE INMATE OF  
OKO CORRECTIONAL CENTRE IN BENIN CITY EDO STATE NIGERIA**

**BY**

**ASIKE Chidimma Jessica**

**MATRIC.NO: SSC2105897**

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

**OCTOBER, 2025**

## CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research work titled " The Nature And Types of Crime Associated with Female Inmate of Oko Correctional Centre In Benin City Edo State Nigeria" carried out by ASIKE Chidimma Jessica (SSC2105897), is adequate in scope and quality in partial fulfillment for the award of Bachelor of science (B Sc.) Degree in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Benin, Benin City.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Mrs Paula Idehen-agho  
(Project Supervisor)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ass Prof Greg Igbinomwanhia  
(Head of Department)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to God almighty who made the completion of this course possible and a success.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My Absolute and total gratitude goes to God Almighty who's Grace, Mercies, Protection, Provision, unending love and unwavering support saw me through it all and ensuring a perfect completion of this research work. May his name be praised always and forever.

I also want to acknowledge my Mum, Mrs. Nkiru Asike, for her care, love, provision, support, continuous prayers and encouragement, my biggest motivation is to make you proud.

My immense Gratitude to my Uncle, Mr Ikenna Offor, and to my Brother Evans Asike, my grandmother Mrs Cecilia Offor, and all my family members. thank you all for love, care and Financial Support throughout my school years and always.

To my friends Nicole, Boomin, Favour, Jewel, Uche, Derby and Sarah , thank you so much for your love, encouragements, i am so very grateful.

My gratitude goes to my honorable supervisor, Dr. Mrs Paula Idehen-agho, a great, loving and outstanding Supervisor, whose direction and constructive criticism has guided and helped through the course of this research work. Thank you Ma and God bless you and your family.

My humble regards to my outstanding, worthy and able Head of Department (Hod) Ass Prof Greg Igbinomwanhia. My Lecturer, Dr Augustine Alenhke, thank you so much sir for your directions and guidance, i am forever grateful sir, To Dr Dokpesi, thank you so much sir for all that you are to us, a father through and through, I am grateful sir.

Finally, to everyone i failed to mention that has been of impact to my life, i love you no less and I'm grateful for you. Thank you and God bless you all.

## TABLE OF CONTENT

Title page - - - - -	i
Certification - - - - -	ii
Dedication - - - - -	iii
Acknowledgement - - - - -	iv
Table of content - - - - -	v
Abstract - - - - -	viii

### CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study - - - - -	1
1.2 Statement of Problem - - - - -	4
1.3 Research Questions - - - - -	5
1.4 Objectives of the Study - - - - -	5
1.5 Significance of the Study - - - - -	6
1.6 Scope of the Study - - - - -	6
1.7 Definition of Concepts - - - - -	6

### CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Concept of Crime - - - - -	8
--------------------------------	---

2.2 Reason for Women Involvement in Crime	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
2.3 Types of Crimes Associated with Female Inmates	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13
2.4 Socio demographic Factors Contributing to Female Criminality Among Inmates									16
2.5 Policies and Laws to Intervene and Address Female Criminality						-	-		20
2.6 Theoretical Framework	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25

### **CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY**

3.1 Research Design	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28
3.2 Area of study	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28
3.3 Population of The Study	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28
3.4 Sample Size	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	29
3.5 Sampling techniques	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30
3.6 Instrument of data collection	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30
3.7 Validity of Instrument	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30
3.8 Reliability of the Instrument	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30
3.9 Method of Data Collection	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	31
3.10 Method of Data Analysis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	31

3.11 Ethical Considerations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	31
-----------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

#### **CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSES AND INTERPRETATION**

4.1 Introduction	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	33
------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	33
--	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

4.3 Analysis of Data from Survey (Field)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35
--	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

4.4 Discussion of the Findings	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45
--------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

#### **CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.1 Summary	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50
-------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

5.2 Conclusion	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	51
----------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

5.3 Recommendations-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	52
----------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

<b>REFERENCES</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>54</b>
-------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----------

<b>APPENDIX</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>60</b>
-----------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----------

## ABSTRACT

*This study investigates the nature and types of crimes associated with female inmates at the Oko Correctional Centre in Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria. It examines the reasons behind women's involvement in crime, the specific crimes committed, the socio-demographic factors influencing female criminality, and the policies needed to address the issue. The study adopts a descriptive survey design, utilizing both primary and secondary data sources. A total of ninety-two (92) respondents, comprising female inmates and social welfare officers, were sampled from a population of 1,033 using the Yamane (1967) formula. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis within the framework of the Feminist/Gender Pathway Theory. Findings reveal that financial difficulties (43.5%), family problems (21.7%), peer pressure (16.3%), and lack of education (10.9%) are major drivers of female criminality. Theft (38.0%), fraud (21.7%), assault (16.3%), and prostitution (16.3%) emerged as the most prevalent crimes, predominantly motivated by economic survival. The majority of respondents were young (21–30 years), single, poorly educated, and from low socio-economic backgrounds. The study also found that 43.5% of inmates had experienced abuse or trauma, underscoring the intersection between victimization and criminal behavior. Furthermore, 78.3% of respondents considered existing policies inadequate, emphasizing the need for gender-responsive reforms. The study concludes that female criminality in Nigeria is largely a product of socio-economic deprivation, gender-based inequalities, and limited rehabilitation opportunities. It recommends government-funded vocational and educational programs, trauma-informed care, and the development of gender-specific correctional policies aimed at reintegration and crime prevention.*

**Keywords:** Female criminality, Oko Correctional Centre, socio-economic factors, feminist pathway theory, rehabilitation, gender-based crime.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The problem of crime and delinquency has been approached by most scholars from a male perspective tending to focus on male offenders while disregarding the female offenders. In Nigeria, crime has over-time been seen mostly as a "male" problem with no regards to the contribution of female to the phenomenon. For over four decades, there has been profound change in the involvement of women within the criminal justice system. Globally, the rate of arrest and incarceration of women and girls has increased profoundly in recent decades by 50% since 2000 (Ameh, 2013; Chesney-Lind & Pasko,2004; Oatakey, Birai; Jemaku & Ashituabe, 2021; UNODC, 2022; Walmsley, 2023). The Sunday times in 1980 reported female criminals have grown rapidly and in Lagos State alone there has been reports of 81 cases of lynching, Imo 9, Anambra 16, Oyo 6 and Edo 12. Inspite of the above information, a vast majority of those crimes by women goes unreportedy , and of reported crimes perhaps only 15% of alleged perpetrators arrested, most

have their charges dismissed or reduced through plea or bargaining while others released under probation. For every hundred arrest an average of four cases go to final and about thirty percent of these result in acquittal, for every hundred wonen sentenced only about seven one percent spend any time in prison (federal justice statistics,2020).

The phenomenon of female criminality has garnered significant attention in recent years, particularly in the context of Nigeria's correctional facilities. The Oko Correctional Center in Benin City, Edo State, serves as a critical site for understanding the nature and types of crime

associated with female inmates. Female offenders in Nigeria's correctional facilities are often convicted of various offenses, including violent crimes, property crimes, drug-related offenses, and other crimes (Alemika, 2015; Okojie, 2017). Research has shown that women in Nigerian prisons are more likely to be convicted of non-violent offenses, such as theft and fraud, compared to violent offenses (Ebbe, 2017). However, there is a growing trend of women being involved in violent crimes, including murder and assault (Igbo, 2018). The reasons for female criminality are complex and multifaceted, involving factors such as poverty, lack of education and employment opportunities, and family and social problems (Alemika, 2015).

Female criminality has become a pressing concern globally, with Nigeria experiencing a notable increase in women's involvement in crime. Recent statistics indicate a significant rise in female incarceration rates, with women accounting for 2.2% of the prison population in Nigeria, totaling 78,621 inmates. Although men still dominate crime statistics, the growing trend of female criminality warrants attention. Studies have shown that female offenders in Nigeria are often socio-economically disadvantaged, poorly educated, and have histories of substance abuse and experiences of violence and sexual abuse. The types of crimes committed by women in Nigeria vary, including violent crimes like murder and assault, property crimes like theft and fraud, and organized crime like drug trafficking. Research has identified several factors contributing to female criminality in Nigeria, including:

- Poverty and Economic Exclusion: Limited economic opportunities and social exclusion can drive women to crime.
- Trauma and Abuse: Experiences of domestic violence, child abuse, and sexual victimization can contribute to women's involvement in crime.

- Lack of Empowerment: Limited access to education and economic resources can increase women's vulnerability to crime.

- Societal and Cultural Factors: Changing roles of women in society and the quest for materialism can also influence female criminality.

Feminist scholars has provided the feminist theory as a useful framework for understanding female criminality in Nigeria. This theory emphasizes the role of patriarchal structures and social inequality in shaping women's experiences and behaviors. It suggests that women's involvement in crime is often a result of their marginalized position in society, including limited access to education, employment, and economic resources. Some key feminist scholars and how they influenced the understanding of female crime through various perspectives:

- Patriarchal Oppression: Scholars like Simone de Beauvoir and Mary Daly highlight how patriarchal structures and societal expectations can drive women to crime as a means of survival or resistance.

- Intersectionality: bell hooks' work on intersectionality helps understand how women from different backgrounds and experiences are disproportionately affected by crime and the criminal justice system.

- Gender Roles and Expectations: Judith Butler's concept of gender performativity can be applied to understanding how women may engage in criminal behavior as a way to conform to or challenge traditional gender roles.

- Empowerment and Agency: Germaine Greer's work on female empowerment can be seen as relevant to understanding how women may turn to crime as a means of asserting their agency in a society that often limits their choices.

These scholars' work can inform research on female crime by:

- Challenging Stereotypes: Highlighting the complexity and diversity of women's experiences and crimes.
- Understanding Root Causes: Identifying the social, economic, and cultural factors that contribute to female crime.
- Informing Policy: Providing a framework for developing policies and interventions that address the specific needs and experiences of women in the criminal justice system. By applying feminist theory to the study of female crime, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the complex issues surrounding women's involvement in crime and develop more effective solutions to address these issues.

#### **1.4 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM**

Despite the growing number of female inmates in Nigeria's correctional facilities, there is a dearth of research on the nature and types of crime associated with female offenders. The lack of understanding about the specific needs and experiences of female inmates hinders the development of effective interventions and programs to address female criminality. This study aims to fill this knowledge gap by investigating the nature and types of crime associated with female inmates at the Oko Correctional Center in Benin City, Edo State. By exploring the socio-demographic characteristics, types of crime committed and factors contributing to female criminality, it also seeks to address the question of whether any crime could still be found sex specific. Crime as earlier mentioned is not the exclusive domain of males and more than certain types of offences including prostitution are not peculiar to the females (Ebbe,2017).

This work will also provide empirical evidence to inform policy decisions and develop effective interventions to address female criminality in Nigeria.

## **1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The following research questions will guide this study:

1. What are the reasons for women involvement in crime in Oko correctional centre in Benin city, Edo state.
2. What types of crimes are committed by female inmates at the Oko Correctional Center, Benin city, Edo state?
3. What socio-demographic factors contribute to female criminality among inmates at the Oko Correctional Center, Benin city, Edo state?
4. What policies and laws can be formulated to intervene and address female criminality in Oko correctional center in Benin city, Edo state?

## **1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The general objective of this study is to examine the Nature and Types of crime associated with female inmates of Oko correctional centre in Benin City, Edo state . Nigeria. The specific objectives are to :-

1. Examine the reason for women involvement in crime in Oko correctional centre in Benin city, Edo state.
2. Analyze the types of crime women commit in the society in Oko correctional centre in Benin city, Edo state.
3. Investigate the socio-demographic factors that contribute to female criminality in Oko correctional center, Benin city Nigeria

4. Identify the policies and laws that can be formulated to intervene and address female criminality in Oko correctional center, Benin city, Edo state.

### **1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

In Nigeria, crimes pose an immediate threat to many individuals, as everyone is aware of the consequences of crime. It is a complex phenomenon and its commission over the years has assumed multi-ferrous sophistication. It has gained attention and prominence in political debates, mass media programme and legislation in Nigeria as well as other countries of the world. This study is significant because it will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on female criminality in Nigeria. The findings of this study will inform policymakers and practitioners about the specific needs and experiences of female inmates, enabling the development of targeted interventions and programs to address female criminality. Additionally, this study will highlight the importance of addressing the root causes of female criminality, such as poverty and lack of education and employment opportunities.

### **1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

This study will focus on female inmates at the Oko Correctional Center in Benin City, Edo State. The study will examine the socio-demographic characteristics of female inmates, the types of crimes committed, and the factors contributing to female criminality.

### **1.7 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS**

1. Female criminality: Refers to the involvement of women in criminal behavior.
2. Correctional facility: A place where individuals are detained or imprisoned for committing crimes.

3. Inmate: An individual who is detained or imprisoned in a correctional facility.

4. Crime: an act that has been formally prohibited by authority through the enactment of law.

5. Criminals: There is legal definition of criminals, the criminals could be said to be a person whose behaviour violates the criminal law. A good definition of a criminal therefore is that of a person who after court proceedings, is found to have broken the criminal law. It is this law that a person can legally be called criminals.

6. Prison: Is a place defined and declared as such by the law of the state and created to ensure restraint and custody of individuals accused or convicted of violating the criminal laws of the state, civil prisoners, prisoners of war and the state detainees are also received and kept in prison.

7. Correctional centre: A correctional center, also known as a custodial center or prison, is a facility where individuals are held under state authority, typically as punishment for crimes or while awaiting trial.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter reviews related literature under the following subheadings:

- Concept of Crime
- Reason for Women Involvement in Crime
- Types of Crimes Associated with Female Inmates
- Sociodemographic Factors That Contribute to Female Criminality Among Inmates
- Policies and Laws that can be Formulated to Intervene and Address Female Criminality
- Theoretical Framework

#### 2.1 Concept of Crime

The concept of crime is multifaceted, encompassing legal, social, and psychological dimensions. Crime is typically defined as an act or omission that violates established laws and results in punishment by the state (Siegel, 2021). Crime is a socially constructed phenomenon, defined by legal frameworks but influenced by cultural, economic, and political contexts (Siegel, 2021). Feminist criminology has challenged traditional, male-centric definitions of crime, arguing that women's criminal behaviour is often a response to gendered social conditions, such as patriarchal oppression and economic marginalization (Belknap, 2020). Societal perceptions also shape the concept of crime for women. Women offenders are often stereotyped as either victims acting in self-defence or deviant individuals defying gender norms (Russell, 2022). These stereotypes influence how crimes committed by women are reported, prosecuted, and punished, often leading to harsher or more lenient treatment depending on the context. Crime is

broadly defined as behaviour that violates legal norms and results in sanctions by the state, encompassing a range of acts from minor offences to serious felonies (Siegel and Worrall, 2022). The concept of crime is socially constructed, and shaped by cultural, economic, and political contexts, which influence how behaviours are criminalized and punished (Agoff, Sandberg, and Fondevila, 2020). For female inmates, the concept of crime is often intertwined with gendered social factors, such as economic marginalization, victimization, and societal expectations of gender roles. Feminist criminology highlights that women's criminality is frequently a response to structural inequalities, including poverty, lack of access to resources, and experiences of abuse (Okafor, 2020). Biosocial criminology also suggests that interactions between biological predispositions and social environments, such as trauma or socioeconomic stressors, contribute to criminal behaviour among women (Barnes, Nedelec, and Raine., 2020).

According to Encyclopædia Britannica (2025), crime is an unlawful act punishable by a state or authority, with definitions shaped by statutory laws and societal norms. Criminological theories, such as social control theory and strain theory, highlight how social structures, economic pressures, and deviance contribute to criminal behaviour (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2025). Feminist criminology further argues that crime is gendered, with women's criminality often linked to systemic inequalities, including patriarchy and economic marginalization (Fuentes, 2024). Historically, crime was associated with sin or moral transgressions, particularly in religious contexts, but modern definitions emphasize harm to society or individuals (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2025). For women, the concept of crime is complicated by gender stereotypes, which portray female offenders as anomalies who violate societal expectations of femininity (SpringerLink, 2023). These stereotypes influence how crimes committed by women

are reported, prosecuted, and perceived, often framing female offenders as "bad mothers" or "deviant women" (PMC, 2021).

## **2.2 Reason for Women Involvement in Crime**

Women's involvement in crime is influenced by a complex interplay of social, economic, psychological, and structural factors. The reasons are organized into thematic categories for clarity.

### **1. Economic Factors and Poverty**

Economic hardship is a significant driver of female criminality, as women often face financial strain due to systemic inequalities, such as lower wages and limited access to resources. Many women engage in crimes like theft, drug trafficking, or prostitution to meet basic needs or support dependents.

**Poverty and Survival:** Women in impoverished conditions may resort to crime as a survival mechanism. For instance, single mothers or those in precarious economic situations may engage in shoplifting or drug-related offenses to provide for their families (Jones et al., 2018).

**Unemployment and Lack of Opportunities:** Limited access to stable employment can push women toward illegal activities. Research highlights that women with lower educational attainment or job prospects are more likely to engage in property crimes or illicit economies (Smith and Thompson, 2019).

## **2. Social and Structural Inequalities**

Gender-based inequalities, including discrimination and marginalization, contribute to women's involvement in crime. Structural barriers often limit women's options, pushing them toward illegal activities.

**Gender-Based Violence and Coercion:** Women who experience domestic violence or exploitation may be coerced into criminal activities by partners or traffickers. Studies show that women in abusive relationships are sometimes forced into drug trafficking or theft (Brown and Miller, 2020).

**Discrimination in Legal and Economic Systems:** Systemic biases, such as unequal access to legal protections or economic resources, can lead women to crime. For example, women of color face disproportionate economic exclusion, increasing their likelihood of engaging in survival-based crimes (Davis, 2021).

## **3. Substance Abuse and Addiction**

Substance abuse is a significant factor in women's criminal behavior, often linked to underlying trauma or socioeconomic challenges. Women may commit crimes to sustain addictions or become involved in drug-related offenses.

**Addiction-Driven Crime:** Women with substance use disorders are more likely to engage in crimes like theft or prostitution to fund their habits. Research indicates that women are more likely than men to commit crimes directly tied to drug dependency (Wilson, Brown, and Lee, 2019).

**Trauma and Self-Medication:** Many women turn to drugs to cope with trauma, such as sexual abuse or domestic violence, which can lead to criminal involvement. Studies link trauma-informed addiction to higher incarceration rates among women (Garcia and Lee, 2022).

#### **4. Psychological and Relational Factors**

Psychological factors, often tied to relationships or mental health issues, play a role in women's criminality. These factors are often gendered, reflecting societal expectations and pressures.

**Co-Offending with Partners:** Women are more likely than men to commit crimes with romantic partners, often under influence or coercion. Research shows that women may participate in crimes like robbery or fraud to maintain relationships or avoid abuse (Taylor and Johnson, 2018).

**Mental Health Issues:** Untreated mental health conditions, such as depression or PTSD, can contribute to criminal behavior, particularly when combined with substance abuse or economic stress (Nguyen and Patel, 2023).

#### **5. Criminal Justice System and Recidivism**

The criminal justice system itself can perpetuate women's involvement in crime through harsh sentencing, lack of rehabilitation, and stigmatization, leading to recidivism.

**Inadequate Rehabilitation Programs:** Women often face limited access to gender-specific rehabilitation programs in prisons, increasing the likelihood of reoffending. Studies emphasize the need for tailored interventions to address women's unique needs (Rodriguez and Carter, 2020).

**Stigmatization and Social Exclusion:** Post-incarceration, women face significant stigma, making reintegration difficult. This can lead to recidivism, as women struggle to find employment or stable housing (Lee and Thompson, 2024).

### **2.3 Types of Crimes Associated with Female Inmates**

The types of crimes committed by female inmates can be categorized into three primary groups: property crimes, drug-related offences, and violent crimes, with variations by demographic and region.

#### **Property Crimes**

Property crimes, including theft, burglary, and fraud, are among the most common offences for female inmates. Sawyer and Bertram (2022) report that approximately 30% of female inmates in the U.S. are incarcerated for property crimes, often driven by economic necessity. These crimes are typically non-violent and linked to poverty or substance dependency.

#### **Drug-Related Offenses**

Drug-related crimes, such as possession, trafficking, or distribution, account for a significant portion of female incarcerations. The Council on Criminal Justice (2024) notes that drug trafficking is a leading cause of female imprisonment globally, particularly in countries like Brazil, where legislative changes have increased female arrests for drug-related offences (Redalyc, 2021). Women often act as low-level couriers or sellers, driven by economic desperation or coercion.

## **Emerging Trends: LGBTQ+ Female Inmates**

Lesbian and bisexual women are overrepresented in the female incarcerated population, with one-third of women in prison identifying as non-heterosexual (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024). These women face higher rates of sexual victimization during incarceration, with 9% reporting abuse from other inmates and 3% from staff, compared to 4% and 1% for heterosexual women, respectively (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024). Transgender women in male prisons face unique risks, often engaging in gender practices to navigate heteronormative environments (Jenness and Fenstermaker, 2021).

### **Non-Violent Offenses:**

**Property Crimes:** Women are disproportionately involved in property crimes such as theft, shoplifting, and fraud, often linked to economic marginalization and the need to provide for dependents (Okafor, 2020). For example, single mothers with limited employment opportunities may resort to shoplifting to meet basic needs.

**Drug-Related Offenses:** Drug possession, use, and trafficking are prevalent among female inmates, frequently tied to addiction or coercion by partners involved in drug networks (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024). Women of colour, particularly Black women, are overrepresented in drug-related incarcerations, with one in 39 Black female inmates serving life without parole in 2020 (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024).

**Fraud and Financial Crimes:** Forgery and fraud are common, often motivated by financial instability or pressure to support families (Siegel and Worrall, 2022).

## **Violent Offenses:**

**Domestic and Relational Violence:** Violent crimes by women, such as assault or homicide, are often committed against intimate partners or family members, frequently in response to abuse (Pecino-Latorre, Santos-Hermoso, Pérez-Fuentes Patró-Hernández, and González Álvarez., 2020). A 2020 study found that 52% of female sex offenders displayed behaviours classified as "Involvement," indicating relational motivations, compared to 15% showing "Hostility" (Pecino-Latorre, Santos-Hermoso, Pérez-Fuentes Patró-Hernández, and González Álvarez., 2020).

**Homicide and Manslaughter:** Women serving life sentences for homicide often cite histories of intimate partner violence as a contributing factor, with many cases involving self-defence (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024).

**Child-Related Offenses:** Some female inmates are incarcerated for crimes involving children, such as neglect or abuse, often linked to mental health issues or substance dependency (Curti, Lupariello, Coppo, Praznik, E. J., Racalbuto, 2020).

## **Sex-Related Offenses:**

**Female Sex Offenders (FSOs):** Although rare, female sex offenders represent a growing area of study. Pecino-Latorre, Santos-Hermoso, Pérez-Fuentes Patró-Hernández, and González Álvarez. (2020) identified three behavioural themes among FSOs: Hostility (15%), Control (17%), and Involvement (52%), with most offences occurring in relational contexts, such as with minors under their care. These crimes challenge traditional gender stereotypes, as they are less likely to involve physical force compared to male offenders (Curti, Lupariello, Coppo, Praznik, E. J., Racalbuto, 2020).

**Sexual Victimization in Prison:** Women in prison are at high risk of sexual victimization, with estimates of 149,200 to 209,400 incidents annually in U.S. prisons and jails (Pimlott, Kubiak, and Kernsmith., 2020). This victimization often goes unreported due to fear of retaliation or stigma.

## **Cybercrime**

Cybercrime is an emerging area, though women are underrepresented due to male-dominated tech norms (UNODC, 2020). Women's involvement in cybercrime, such as fraud, is growing but understudied (Fuentes, 2024)

## **2.4 Sociodemographic Factors Contributing to Female Criminality Among Inmates**

Female criminality is shaped by a complex interplay of sociodemographic factors that reflect systemic inequalities and gendered experiences. Unlike male offenders, women's pathways to crime are often rooted in social and structural disadvantages, including poverty, victimization, and limited access to resources (Adebayo and Ojo, 2024).

## **Gender and Gendered Pathways**

Gender is a primary sociodemographic factor influencing female criminality, as women's crimes are often shaped by societal expectations and structural inequalities. Feminist criminology emphasizes that women's pathways to crime differ from men's due to gender-specific experiences, such as victimization and caregiving responsibilities (Fuentes, 2024). Women are more likely to commit non-violent crimes, such as theft or drug offences, driven by economic necessity or relational dynamics (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024). For example, women may

engage in shoplifting or fraud to support their families, reflecting their roles as primary caregivers in many households (Bucerius, Berardi, and Haggerty, 2022).

Victimization is a critical gendered factor, with studies showing that 78% of female inmates serving life sentences have experienced physical abuse, and 60% have faced sexual abuse, often beginning in childhood (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024). These traumatic experiences increase the likelihood of criminal behaviour, particularly in intimate partner violence cases, where women may act in self-defence or retaliation (UNODC, 2018). Gender socialization also plays a role, as societal norms discourage women from violent crime but stigmatize their involvement in any criminal activity, framing them as "deviant" or "bad mothers" (Yasmin, Naseem, and Sohail, 2021).

### **Race and Ethnicity**

Race and ethnicity significantly influence female criminality, with women of colour, particularly Black and Hispanic women, being overrepresented in prison populations due to systemic biases in the criminal justice system (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024). In the U.S., Black women are incarcerated at a rate 1.7 times higher than White women, with one in 39 Black women serving life sentences compared to one in 59 White women (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024). Intersectionality highlights how race intersects with gender and class to exacerbate criminalization, as women of colour face disproportionate policing, harsher sentencing, and limited access to legal resources (SpringerLink, 2023).

For example, Black women are more likely to be arrested for drug-related offences, despite similar rates of drug use across racial groups, due to targeted policing in marginalized communities (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024). Similarly, Indigenous women in countries like

Canada face higher incarceration rates for violent crimes, often linked to intergenerational trauma from colonial policies (UNODC, 2022). These disparities reflect structural racism and the criminalization of poverty, which disproportionately affect women of colour (Adebayo and Ojo, 2024).

### **Socioeconomic Status**

Socioeconomic disadvantage is a primary driver of female criminality, as women are more likely to commit crimes linked to economic survival, such as theft, fraud, or drug trafficking (Adebayo and Ojo, 2024). Women in poverty face limited access to education, employment, and social services, increasing their vulnerability to criminal behaviour. In Nigeria, for instance, female inmates, who make up 2.2% of the prison population, are often incarcerated for property crimes driven by economic marginalization (Adebayo and Ojo, 2024). In the U.S., the number of women incarcerated for drug offences rose by 635% from 1982 to 2018, largely among low-income women attempting to support themselves or their families (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024).

Economic dependence, particularly in patriarchal societies, further exacerbates women's risk of criminality. Women may engage in illegal activities, such as prostitution or drug trafficking, at the behest of male partners or to meet financial obligations (UNODC, 2022). The lack of affordable childcare and social safety nets compounds these challenges, pushing women toward crime as a means of survival (Bucerius, Berardi, and Haggerty, 2022).

### **Education**

Low educational attainment is a significant risk factor for female criminality, as it limits access to stable employment and economic opportunities. Women with less than a high school

education are overrepresented in prison populations, particularly for non-violent offences like theft and drug possession (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024). Limited education often correlates with poverty and restricts women's ability to navigate legal systems or access rehabilitation programs (UNODC, 2018).

For example, a study of female inmates in California found that those with lower educational levels were more likely to recidivate due to a lack of job skills and social support (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024). Education also intersects with other factors, such as race and socioeconomic status, as women of colour are less likely to have access to quality education, further entrenching cycles of poverty and criminality (SpringerLink, 2023).

## **Age**

Age influences the types and motivations of crimes committed by women, with younger women being more likely to engage in property and drug-related offences, while older women may commit crimes linked to long-term victimization or economic desperation (Fuentes, 2024). In the U.S., women aged 25–34 represent the largest group of female inmates, often driven by substance abuse or economic pressures (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024). Younger women, particularly those with histories of teenage pregnancy, face heightened risks due to early motherhood and limited economic prospects (Bucerus, Berardi, and Haggerty, 2022).

Older female inmates, though fewer in number, often face unique challenges, such as health issues or prolonged exposure to abusive relationships, which may lead to violent crimes like homicide in self-defence (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024). Age also interacts with sentencing disparities, as younger women may receive harsher penalties for non-violent crimes due to perceived recidivism risks (UNODC, 2022).

## **Family Structure**

Family structure significantly shapes female criminality, particularly for women who are primary caregivers. Many female inmates are mothers, and the fear of losing custody or being unable to provide for their children can drive criminal behaviour, such as drug trafficking or theft (Bucerius, Berardi, and Haggerty, 2022). In a study of women in Mexico and Canada, participants identified their children as their primary motivation for desistance, highlighting the centrality of maternal roles in their lives (Bucerius, Berardi, and Haggerty, 2022).

Dysfunctional family structures, including exposure to domestic violence or parental incarceration, also increase women's risk of criminality. Women who grow up in unstable households are more likely to experience trauma, substance abuse, or economic instability, all of which are linked to criminal behaviour (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024). Additionally, women in abusive relationships may commit crimes under coercion or as a means of escaping violence, further illustrating the role of family dynamics (UNODC, 2018).

## **2.5 Policies and Laws to Intervene and Address Female Criminality**

### **Prevention Policies**

Preventing female criminality requires addressing root causes such as poverty, victimization, and lack of education, which disproportionately drive women into crime (UNODC, 2022). The following policies can mitigate these risk factors:

**Economic Empowerment Programs:** Laws mandating government-funded job training and microfinance programs for low-income women can reduce economic desperation, a key driver of property crimes and drug trafficking (Adebayo and Ojo, 2024). For example, vocational training

initiatives in Nigeria have been shown to decrease women's reliance on illegal activities by providing sustainable income sources (Adebayo and Ojo, 2024).

**Access to Education:** Legislation ensuring free or subsidized education for women, particularly those from marginalized communities, can address low educational attainment, a significant risk factor for criminality (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024). Programs targeting teenage mothers, who are at higher risk due to early motherhood, can prevent cycles of poverty and crime (Bucerius, Berardi, and Haggerty, 2022).

**Anti-Violence Initiatives:** Policies strengthening domestic violence prevention, such as mandatory trauma-informed support services and safe housing for survivors, can reduce women's involvement in crimes linked to self-defence or coercion by abusive partners (UNODC, 2018). For instance, 78% of women serving life sentences report prior physical abuse, underscoring the need for early intervention (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024).

### **Diversion and Alternatives to Incarceration**

Given that many female inmates are incarcerated for non-violent offences, diversion programs and alternatives to incarceration can reduce prison overcrowding and address underlying issues (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024). Proposed laws and policies include:

**Community-Based Sentencing:** Laws promoting community service, probation, or restorative justice for non-violent offences, such as theft or drug possession, can prevent the disruption of women's family roles, particularly for mothers (UNODC, 2022). In the U.S., community-based programs have reduced recidivism by 15% among women by addressing economic and social needs (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024).

**Pretrial Diversion Programs:** Legislation expanding pretrial diversion for women unable to afford bail can address the fact that 60% of women in U.S. jails are held pretrial, often due to financial constraints (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024). These programs could include mental health or substance abuse treatment, which are critical given the high prevalence of trauma among female inmates (UNODC, 2018).

**Decriminalization of Certain Offenses:** Laws decriminalizing behaviours disproportionately affecting women, such as prostitution or low-level drug possession, can reduce incarceration rates. The UNODC (2022) highlights that criminalizing sex work exacerbates gender-based discrimination, pushing women into cycles of poverty and crime.

### **Rehabilitation and Prison Reform**

For incarcerated women, gender-responsive rehabilitation programs are essential to address the unique challenges they face, such as trauma, substance abuse, and separation from children (Bucerius, Berardi, and Haggerty, 2022). Proposed policies include:

**Trauma-Informed Care:** Laws mandating trauma-informed rehabilitation programs in prisons can address the high rates of victimization among female inmates (UNODC, 2018). For example, 60% of women serving life sentences report sexual abuse, and trauma-focused therapy has been shown to reduce recidivism by improving mental health outcomes (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024).

**Substance Abuse Treatment:** Policies requiring comprehensive drug rehabilitation programs in prisons can address the 635% increase in women incarcerated for drug offences in the U.S. from 1982 to 2018 (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024). Gender-specific treatment, which considers

women's roles as caregivers, has proven effective in countries like Canada (Bucerius, Berardi, and Haggerty, 2022).

**Child-Friendly Prison Policies:** Laws allowing children to stay with incarcerated mothers in designated facilities, as implemented in some European countries, can mitigate the emotional impact of family separation and support desistance (UNODC, 2022). In Mexico, such policies have helped women maintain maternal bonds, reducing recidivism (Bucerius, Berardi, and Haggerty, 2022).

### **Reintegration and Post-Release Support**

Successful reintegration is critical to preventing recidivism, particularly for women who face stigma and economic barriers post-release (Adebayo and Ojo, 2024). Proposed policies include:

**Reentry Programs:** Legislation funding reentry programs that provide housing, employment, and childcare support can ease women's transition back into society. In California, reentry programs focusing on job placement reduced recidivism among women by 20% (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024).

**Expungement of Records:** Laws simplifying the expungement of non-violent criminal records can improve women's access to employment and housing, addressing the socioeconomic factors that drive recidivism (UNODC, 2022).

**Family Reunification Support:** Policies ensuring access to social workers and legal aid to help women regain custody of their children can address the emotional and social barriers to

reintegration. Studies show that maintaining family ties reduces women's likelihood of reoffending (Bucerius, Berardi, and Haggerty, 2022).

### **Addressing Systemic Inequalities**

Systemic biases, particularly racial and economic disparities, exacerbate female criminality, necessitating broader legal reforms (SpringerLink, 2023). Proposed laws include:

**Racial Equity in Sentencing:** Legislation requiring regular audits of sentencing practices to address racial disparities can reduce the over-incarceration of women of colour, who are 1.7 times more likely to be imprisoned than White women (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024).

**Gender-Responsive Policing:** Policies training law enforcement in gender-responsive approaches can reduce discriminatory practices, such as targeting women of colour for drug-related offences despite similar usage rates across groups (SpringerLink, 2023).

**Universal Basic Income (UBI):** Experimental UBI programs targeting low-income women could address economic desperation, a key driver of crimes like theft and drug trafficking. Pilot programs in low-income communities have shown promise in reducing criminal behaviour (Adebayo and Ojo, 2024).

### **International and Human Rights Frameworks**

International guidelines, such as the UN Bangkok Rules (2010, reaffirmed in UNODC, 2022), provide a framework for gender-responsive policies. Proposed laws should align with these standards, including:

Non-custodial measures for pregnant women and mothers of young children.

Gender-specific healthcare in prisons, addressing reproductive and mental health needs.

Training for prison staff on gender-based discrimination and women's rights (UNODC, 2022).

## **2.6 Theoretical Framework**

### **Feminist/Gender Pathway Theory**

The term 'pathway' is frequently used in sociological and epidemiological research to explain the linkages and connection between a risk factor or exposure, and an outcome. In feminist criminology, the context of events and experiences of offending women/girls are examined to understand how these events interact and shape women's and girl's subsequent criminal behaviour. The feminist pathways model provides an understanding of how the past traumatic experiences of females influence their propensity to commit crimes and delinquent acts. The gender pathways approach emerged from the feminist pathway perspective and was further developed by Kathleen Daly (1992), the leading proponent of the theory.

The theory emphasises the interconnectedness between the lives of females and their subsequent offending behaviour, particularly, childhood and adulthood victimization and subsequent criminality in explaining female criminality. In addition, the theory also maintains that female criminality is different from male criminality, stressing that the journey of women into criminality is different from that of male offenders. Feminist/gender pathway theory is based on the premise that sexual victimization, physical abuse, parental neglect, substance abuse, dysfunctional family background, trauma, and economic deprivation are defining features and factors that influence women's pathway into criminality.

It is imperative to note that socio-cultural gender norms significantly influence female pathways into crime through the construction of masculinity script and femininity script. Gender belief systems and gender structure influence and shape women's experiences and lives. Men, however, are raised to enact their masculinity using aggression, violence and harsh approaches. The femininity programmed into women through gender socialization and further reinforced through gender norms makes women passive, vulnerable and susceptible to victimization perpetrated by their male counterparts. According to gender pathway theory, the harmful effects of abuse, victimisation and gender oppression influence women's identity and experiences and consequently influence their coping and survival mechanisms which are usually drug use, delinquency and crime.

Gender pathway theory identified five different pathways of women into criminality and deviancy which are physical and sexual abuse, running away from home, drug addiction, and economic marginalization. These identified pathways provide an understanding of the criminological pathways and criminogenic needs of offending women. According to Daly (1992), the first pathways involve running away from home which is characterized by abuse and violence. Daly described those females as street women who are entering street life. The crimes that follow may be drug-related offences, prostitution, or property crimes. The second pathway involves contact with recreational drugs and/or drug addiction, and these women are referred to as drug-connected women. Daly is of the view that these women see drugs as a coping mechanism to manage the strain and other challenges which are often gender-related. Women who are using drugs may be coerced by intimate partners or family members to traffic drugs.

The third gender pathways involve serious victimization and experience of child abuse, sexual abuse, physical abuse and neglect, therefore entering into the world of crime or causing criminal behaviour. Daly (1992) referred to such women as harmed and harming women. The fourth pathway, however, has to do with battering and subjection to dehumanization. This pathway usually involves battered women who are abused by intimate partners but are unlikely to have committed a crime before the abuse. The crime that follows is geared towards coping and survival. The fifth pathway highlighted by Daly (1992) involves economic strain and economic offending. Women on this economic offending pathway can be separated into two categories, poor women offending for survival, and women who commit crimes because of luxury or greed. The latter may have no history of abuse, addiction or violence (Daly 1992; Daly, 1994).

However, most of the pathways highlighted are motivated by survival. For the majority of female criminals, abuse and trauma are involved, making their criminological pathways and correctional needs different from those of male inmates. These pathways represent the majority of female offenders in Nigeria and the reality of their difficult lives. The works of other feminist criminologists (Artz., Hoffman, and Moulton, 2012; Belknap, 2007; Modie-Moroka, 2003) have helped to shed light on the pathways of females into crime in furtherance of the gender pathways theoretical framework.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter addresses various aspects including the research plan, study population and sample, data sources, theoretical framework, variable measurement, data analysis, method of data collection, Decision rule, etc.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The research design adopted for this study is the descriptive survey research design. The descriptive survey is a quantitative research approach that allows researchers to thoroughly investigate the background of a research problem.

#### **3.2 Area of study**

The research will be conducted at the Oko Correctional Centre, located Oko, 7HWV+7MQ Ogba Road, Oka, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria. This federal facility, established in the late 1980s, is part of the Nigerian Correctional Service (NCoS) under the Ministry of Interior. It houses both male and female inmates, with a focus in this study on the female population. The centre has faced challenges such as overcrowding (designed for 680 inmates but reported to hold 1,033 in a past SERVICOM evaluation) and a notable jailbreak in 2020, which may influence the context of female incarceration.

#### **3.3 Population of The Study**

The population of the study is the total number of objects, subjects, or individuals that conform to a set of specifications about the research area (Omoera and Nwaoboli, 2023). In this research, the population of this study will consist of female inmates and social welfare officers at

the Oko Correctional Center in Benin City, Edo State Nigeria. Data available claim that there are about 1033 inmate at the Oko Correctional Center in Benin City (Nigerian Correctional Service. 2024).

### 3.4 Sample Size

The sample size for the study will be made up of participants which will be drawn from the female inmates and social welfare officers at the Oko Correctional Center in Benin City, Edo State.

The sample size of the study will be derived from the population study using the Yamani (1967) formula:

$$n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$$

Where:

n = sample size

N = population size (1033)

e = margin of error (0.10 for 10%)

Calculation:

$$n = 1033 / (1 + 1033 \times 0.10^2)$$

$$n = 1033 / (1 + 1033 \times 0.01)$$

$$n = 1033 / (1 + 10.33)$$

$n = 1033 / 11.33$

$n \approx 91.17$

Therefore, the sample size for this study is 92

### **3.5 Sampling Techniques**

Simple random sampling is a technique used in research where every member of a population has an equal chance of being selected. This method involves randomly choosing participants without any bias, often using tools like random number generators or drawing lots. Using the simple random technique, ninety-two respondents will be selected for the study.

### **3.6 Instrument of Data Collection**

Data Collection for this research will be derived from different sources and these include both primary and secondary data. They will be collected through the following instrument: structured questionnaire for the primary data, while the secondary data will be collected from journals, newspapers, textbooks and unpublished work.

### **3.7 Validity of Instrument**

The questionnaire designed by the researcher will be presented to the project supervisor to cross-check for content validity. Her opinion and observations will be incorporated into the instrument before it will be administered to the respondents.

### **3.8 Reliability of the Instrument**

To enhance the reliability of the research instrument, the researcher will carefully avoid ambiguously framed questions that could lead to varying interpretations. Likewise, questions

will be structured to prevent conveying different meanings, which could result in unreliable responses upon repeated use of the instrument. The researcher will also maintain objectivity with no direct leading suggestions as to the answers desired.

### **3.9 Method of Data Collection**

The data for the study will be obtained using structured questionnaires. Self-completion questionnaires will be given to inmates at the Oko correctional centre. The copies of the questionnaires will be given to each respondent by hand, using the drop-and-pick method

Given the nature of the study, the researcher will gather data from both primary and secondary sources.

**Instrument:** Structure questionnaire are for primary data and secondary data journals, Newspapers, textbooks and unpublished work of individuals are for secondary data.

### **3.10 Method of Data Analysis**

The data obtained will be analyzed using descriptive statistics; mean and standard deviation at 2.5 criteria means in order to the assessment prison rehabilitation programmes on female inmates. The secondary data will be analysed using thematic analysis.

### **3.11 Ethical Considerations**

The study will observe relevant ethical guidelines and obligations requisite for research of this nature. Along this line, the interest and welfare of the subjects will be taken into consideration in collecting the data. Specifically, the process will be carried out in such a manner that ensures that not only the privacy of the respondents will be adequately protected, but also that no real or potential harm or distress, physical or psychological, will come upon the research subjects and

care will be taken to ensure that they are not put in a compromising position that may expose them to latent or manifest danger. In that vein, no one will be asking for a name or other identification. In addition, the researchers will ensure there are no elements of misrepresentation as the nature and purpose of the research will be not concealed from the subjects. Moreover, necessary steps will be taken to ensure that personal biases or preconceptions do not influence the conduct and findings of the research.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSES AND INTERPRETATION

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter dealt with data analysis and presentation of results. The data were primarily sourced from the administered questionnaires and interviews. A total of one hundred and twenty (92) questionnaires were administered to respondents across Faculty of Social Sciences University of Benin.

#### 4.2 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency (f)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Age</b>	18-20 years	15	16.3
	21-25 years	30	32.6
	25-30 years	24	27.2
	30 years - above	22	23.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Marital Status</b>	Single	50	54.3
	Married	30	32.6
	Divorced	12	13.0

	<b>Total</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Religion</b>	Christianity	60	65.2
	Islam	25	27.2
	Traditional/Other	7	7.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Educational Qualification</b>	None	10	10.9
	Primary	20	21.7
	Secondary	45	48.9
	Tertiary	17	18.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Occupation Before Incarceration</b>	Unemployed	30	32.6
	Trader	25	27.2
	Artisan	20	21.7
	Other	17	18.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Family Socio-Economic Status</b>	Low	50	54.4

	Middle	35	38.0
	High	7	7.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Field Survey 2025**

**Table 1** shows that the study is composed of respondents from incarcerated females. The table shows that the study was composed of respondents with various age distributions. It indicates that a greater proportion of the respondents, representing 32.6% are between the ages of 21 and 25 years. The table shows that the study is also composed of marital status. However, the majority of the respondents were single at the time the questionnaire was administered. The table indicates that the study comprised respondents with various religious affiliations. However, respondents who were Christian at the time the questionnaires were administered were more involved in the study, as shown in the study, with a representation of 65.2% as seen above. The table shows that the study was composed of respondents with education qualification. However, respondents who were secondary school graduate are more involved in the study, as shown in the study, with a representation of 48.9% as seen above. The table indicates that the study comprised respondent’s occupation before incarceration. However, respondents who were unemployed at the time the questionnaires were administered were more involved in the study, as shown in the study, with a representation of 32.6% as seen above. The table shows that the study was composed of respondents with socio-economic status. However, respondents who belongs to low class are more involved in the study, as shown in the study, with a representation of 54.3% as seen above.

**4.3 Analysis of Data from Survey (Field)**

**Research Objective 1:** Examine the reason for women involvement in crime in Oko correctional centre in Benin City, Edo state

**Table 2:** Distribution of responses on the reason for women involvement in crime

S/N	Question	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1.	What Led to Involvement in Crime?	Financial difficulties	40	43.5
		Family problems	20	21.7
		Peer pressure	15	16.3
		Lack of education	10	10.9
		Other	7	7.6
2.	Influence of Economic Factors	Very High	30	32.6
		High	25	27.2
		Moderate	20	21.7
		Low	10	10.9
		Very Low	7	7.6
3.	Role Models/Mentors Encouraging Crime	Yes	25	27.2
		No	67	72.8
4.	Influence of Substances	Yes	20	21.7

		No	72	78.3
5.	Pressured by Someone Else	Yes	30	32.6
		No	62	67.4
6.	Circumstance vs. Deliberate Choice	Circumstance	50	54.3
		Deliberate Choice	20	21.7
		Both	22	23.9

**Source: Field Survey 2025**

The data from Table 2 indicates that financial difficulties were the most significant factor leading to women's involvement in crime, with 43.5% of respondents citing this as the primary reason. The prominence of financial difficulties suggests that poverty and lack of economic opportunities are critical drivers of female criminality in this context. Family problems (21.7%) and peer pressure (16.3%) were also notable contributors, indicating that social and relational factors play a significant role. The influence of family problems may reflect dysfunctional family dynamics or lack of familial support, which can create vulnerabilities leading to criminal behavior. Peer pressure, particularly among younger respondents (32.6% aged 21–25 years, as shown in Table 1), suggests that social networks can either exacerbate or mitigate criminal tendencies, depending on the nature of the influence. The influence of economic factors was rated as "very high" or "high" by 59.8% of respondents, reinforcing the centrality of economic challenges. However, the role of substances (21.7%) and pressure from others (32.6%) indicates that external influences, such as substance abuse or coercion, also contribute to criminality, though to a lesser extent. Interestingly, 54.3% of respondents attributed their involvement in crime to circumstances rather

than deliberate choice, suggesting that many women may feel compelled to engage in criminal activities due to external pressures rather than personal intent.

**Research Objective 2:** Analyze the types of crime women commit in the society in Oko correctional centre in Benin City, Edo state.

**Table 3:** Distribution of responses on types of crime women commit in the society

S/N	Question	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
6.	Types of Crime?	Theft	35	38.0
		Assault	15	16.3
		Fraud	20	21.7
		Prostitution	15	16.3
		Other	7	7.6
7.	Frequency of Crime	Daily	10	10.9
		Weekly	20	21.7
		Monthly	25	27.2
		Rarely	37	40.2
8.	Involvement in Other Crime	Yes	25	27.2
		No	67	72.8

9.	Crime Committed Alone or With Others	Alone	55	59.8
		With Others	37	40.2
10.	Financial Gain	Yes	50	54.3
		No	42	45.7
11.	How Caught	Arrested by police	60	65.2
		Caught by family/friends	10	10.9
		Turned myself in	15	16.7
		Other	7	7.6

**Source: Field Survey 2025**

Table 3 reveals that theft (38.0%) was the most common crime committed by female inmates, followed by fraud (21.7%), assault (16.3%), and prostitution (16.3%). The prevalence of theft and fraud underscores the economic motivations behind female criminality, as these crimes are often committed for financial gain (54.3% of respondents confirmed financial gain as a motive). This finding is consistent with the high prevalence of financial difficulties noted in Table 2, suggesting that economic desperation drives women to commit property-related crimes. Assault and prostitution, each reported by 16.3% of respondents, point to additional dimensions of female criminality. Assault may be linked to interpersonal conflicts or self-defense in abusive situations, given that 43.5% of respondents reported experiencing abuse or trauma (Table 4). Prostitution, on the other hand, may reflect economic survival strategies, particularly among

women from low socio-economic backgrounds (54.4%, Table 1). The fact that 59.8% of respondents committed crimes alone suggests a degree of independence in their actions, though 40.2% committed crimes with others, indicating the influence of social networks or organized crime in some cases. The frequency of crime was reported as "rarely" by 40.2% of respondents, suggesting that many women may not be habitual offenders but rather engage in crime sporadically, possibly in response to acute economic or social pressures. The high percentage of arrests by police (65.2%) indicates effective law enforcement in detecting these crimes, though the 16.7% who turned themselves in suggests some level of remorse or desire for rehabilitation among the respondents.

**Research Objective 3:** Investigate the socio-demographic factors that contribute to female criminality in Oko correctional center, Benin city Nigeria

**Table 4:** Distribution of responses on the socio-demographic factors that contribute to female criminality

S/N	Question	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
13.	Influence of Family Background	Very High	20	21.7
		High	20	27.2
		Moderate	30	32.6
		Low	10	10.9
		Very Low	7	7.6
14.	Abuse or Trauma	Yes	40	43.5
		No	52	56.5
15.	Influence of Educational Level	Very High	15	16.3
		High	20	21.7
		Moderate	30	32.6
		Low	20	21.7
		Very Low	7	7.6
16.	Urban vs. Rural Upbringing	Urban	60	65.2
		Rural	32	34.8

17.	Average Monthly Income	Below N50,000	50	54.3
		N50,000–N100,000	25	27.2
		N100,000–N200,000	12	13.0
		Above N200,000	5	5.4
18.	Children	Yes	45	48.9
		No	47	51.1

**Source: Field Survey 2025**

Table 4 highlights several socio-demographic factors contributing to female criminality. A significant 43.5% of respondents reported experiencing abuse or trauma, which is a critical risk factor for criminal behavior. Abuse or trauma may lead to psychological distress or economic dependence, increasing the likelihood of criminal behavior as a coping mechanism or survival strategy. Family background was rated as a "moderate" to "high" influence by 59.8% of respondents, suggesting that dysfunctional family environments or lack of familial support may exacerbate criminal tendencies. Educational level was also a significant factor, with 32.6% rating its influence as "moderate" and 21.7% as "high." The high proportion of respondents with only secondary education (48.9%, Table 1) indicates that limited educational attainment may restrict access to legitimate economic opportunities, pushing women toward crime. The majority of respondents (65.2%) were raised in urban areas, which may expose them to higher crime rates, peer influences, or economic disparities compared to rural settings. Additionally, 54.3% reported an average monthly income below N50,000, reinforcing the link between poverty and criminality.

The presence of children (48.9%) may further complicate economic pressures, as women with dependents may resort to crime to provide for their families.

**Research Objective 4:** Identify the policies and laws that can be formulated to intervene and address female criminality in Oko correctional center, Benin city, Edo state.

**Table 5:** Distribution of responses on the policies and laws that can be formulated to intervene and address female criminality

S/N	Question	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
19.	Adequate Policies and Laws	Yes	20	21.7
		No	72	78.3
20.	Effective Policies	Education/job training	40	43.5
		Family support	25	27.2
		Mental health services	20	21.7
		Other	7	7.6
21.	Government Efforts	Yes	15	16.3
		No	77	83.7
22.	Challenges in Rehabilitation	Lack of education/job skills	35	38.0
		Social stigma	30	32.6
		Family rejection	20	21.7

		Other	7	7.6
23.	Separate Correctional Facilities	Yes	60	65.2
		No	32	34.8
24.	Beneficial Support Services	Counseling	30	32.6
		Education/job training	35	38.0
		Family support	20	21.7
		Other	7	7.6

**Source: Field Survey 2025**

Table 5 provides insights into potential interventions to address female criminality. A striking 78.3% of respondents believed that adequate policies and laws to address female criminality were lacking, highlighting a gap in the current criminal justice system. The most frequently cited effective policies were education and job training (43.5%), family support (27.2%), and mental health services (21.7%). The majority of respondents (83.7%) felt that government efforts to address female criminality were inadequate, pointing to a need for more proactive and targeted interventions. Challenges in rehabilitation included lack of education or job skills (38.0%) and social stigma (32.6%), which can hinder reintegration into society post-incarceration. The strong support for separate correctional facilities for women (65.2%) suggests that gender-specific rehabilitation programs could better address the unique needs of female inmates, such as trauma-informed care or parenting support. Beneficial support services identified by respondents included education/job training (38.0%), counseling (32.6%), and family support (21.7%). These services align with the socio-demographic factors identified in Table 4, such as low educational

attainment and family-related challenges, indicating that comprehensive rehabilitation programs should prioritize these areas.

#### **4.4 Discussion of the Findings**

In this section, the data collected from a survey on the topic "the nature and types of crime associated with female inmates of Oko correctional center Benin City Edo State Nigeria. The data was contained in one hundred and twenty (92) fully complete copies of the questionnaire retrieved and found usable from the respondents.

**Research Objective 1:** Examine the reason for women involvement in crime in Oko correctional.

The findings indicate that financial difficulties were the predominant driver of female criminality at Oko Correctional Centre (43.5%), followed by family problems (21.7%), peer pressure (16.3%), and lack of education (10.9%). Economic factors were rated as having a very high or high influence by 59.8% of respondents, with 54.3% attributing their actions to circumstances rather than deliberate choice. Pressure from others was acknowledged by 32.6%, while substance influence (21.7%) and negative role models (27.2%) played lesser roles. These findings resonate with, Okafor and Uzoh (2020) analyzed socioeconomic determinants among female inmates in South-East Nigeria and found that poverty and unemployment accounted for over 60% of property-related offenses, mirroring the current study's emphasis on financial difficulties. Similarly, Adeyemi et al. (2021) employed spatial modeling of crime patterns and identified unemployment rates as a significant positive predictor of theft and fraud among women, with a correlation coefficient of 0.45 ( $p < 0.01$ ), aligning with the 43.5% attribution to economic hardship here. This consonance reflects the broader socio-economic context in Nigeria, where the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated female unemployment, rising from 23.8% in 2019 to

33.1% in 2021, pushing women toward survival crimes (National Bureau of Statistics, 2021, as cited in Omotor, 2022).

In disagreement to the findings, Ndu et al. (2025) examined women's roles in Boko Haram insurgency and banditry in Northern Nigeria, revealing that 25–30% of female participants engaged in logistics and intelligence roles due to ideological alignment or peer networks, rather than pure circumstance. This contrasts with the Oko sample's circumstantial framing, potentially attributable to regional differences—Edo State's urban-rural mix versus the North's conflict zones—or the study's focus on non-violent economic crimes. Substance influence also shows partial alignment; Tade and Udechukwu (2020) linked drug use to 18% of female arrests in Lagos, but lower than the study's 21.7%, suggesting underreporting in correctional surveys due to stigma.

**Research Objective 2:** Analyze the types of crime women commit in the society in Oko correctional centre in Benin City, Edo state.

The data portray a profile dominated by economic and opportunistic offenses: theft (38.0%), fraud (21.7%), assault (16.3%), prostitution (16.3%), with "other" at 7.6%. Most crimes (40.2%) occurred rarely, with 59.8% committed alone and 54.3% motivated by financial gain. Involvement in multiple crimes was low (27.2%), and arrests primarily involved police (65.2%). These findings accord with Aborisade and Oni (2020) profiled female convicts in Kirikiri Prison, Lagos, finding theft and fraud comprising 55% of offenses, attributed to economic marginalization—a direct consonance with the 59.7% economic focus here. The U.S. Department of State's 2023 Human Rights Report on Nigeria corroborates this, noting that 62% of female inmates were held for economic crimes like theft, compared to 28% for violent

offenses, echoing the study's low assault rate (16.3%). Frequency patterns also align; a 2022 analysis by the Council on Criminal Justice (adapted to Nigerian contexts in local reports) indicated that 65% of female crimes were infrequent "survival" acts, consistent with the 40.2% "rarely" category.

In dissonance to the findings, the inclusion of prostitution (16.3%) hints at sex work, but omits explicit trafficking, which Wikipedia's 2025 update on Nigerian crime identifies as a major issue, with women comprising 70% of victims-turned-perpetrators in forced labor or sex exploitation rings in Edo State. This gap may stem from definitional issues prostitution as "voluntary" versus coerced or respondent reluctance, as noted in the U.S. State Department's Trafficking in Persons Report (2021), where 40% of Edo inmates faced unreported trafficking charges. Solo commission (59.8%) contrasts with Nwangwu et al. (2020), who found 45% of female bandits in the North-West operated in groups, suggesting urban Edo women may face less organized crime networks.

**Research Objective 3:** Investigate the socio-demographic factors that contribute to female criminality in Oko correctional center, Benin city Nigeria.

Demographic analysis revealed a young (60% aged 21–30 years), predominantly single (54.3%), Christian (65.2%), secondary-educated (48.9%), unemployed (32.6%), low socio-economic (54.3%) profile. Table 4 highlighted moderate family background influence (32.6%), abuse/trauma (43.5%), moderate educational impact (32.6%), urban upbringing (65.2%), low income (<N50,000/month: 54.3%), and near-equal parenthood (48.9%). The profile's emphasis on low SES and urban origins aligns with Omotor (2022) used panel data (2010–2020) to demonstrate that female unemployment and poverty rates positively correlate with criminality ( $\beta$

= 0.38,  $p < 0.05$ ), explaining 52% of variance in property crimes among low-income women—mirroring the 54.3% low SES here. Ebobo (2022) profiled female armed robbers in Lagos prisons, finding 58% from urban, low-income backgrounds with secondary education, linking this to disrupted family bonds and trauma (45% prevalence), consonant with the study's 43.5% abuse rate. Educational level's moderate role (32.6%) echoes Adeyemi et al. (2021), where higher enrollment reduced crime risk by 22% but only for tertiary levels, leaving secondary graduates vulnerable to underemployment.

In discord to the findings, the high single rate (54.3%) contrasts with married women's overrepresentation in Northern studies (Ndu et al., 2025), where 40% of insurgent females were spouses coerced into crime, possibly due to Edo's matrilineal influences. Christianity's dominance (65.2%) aligns with Southern patterns but dissones with Northern Islamic contexts, where faith-based stigma deters reporting (Tade & Udechukwu, 2020). Parenthood's balance (48.9%) challenges assumptions of maternal deterrence; Aborisade and Oni (2020) found 55% of mothers committed crimes for child support, suggesting desperation over protection.

**Research Objective 4:** Identify the policies and laws that can be formulated to intervene and address female criminality in Oko correctional center, Benin city, Edo state. Respondents overwhelmingly rejected current policies' adequacy (78.3%) and government efforts (83.7%), prioritizing education/job training (43.5%), family support (27.2%), and mental health services (21.7%). Challenges included skill gaps (38.0%) and stigma (32.6%), with strong support for separate facilities (65.2%) and counseling/training (70.6%). This critique harmonizes with policy evaluations post-VAPP Act (2015). The U.S. State Department's 2023 report praised VAPP's expansion to 34 states by 2022 for addressing gender violence but noted implementation gaps, with only 20% of Edo cases leading to convictions—aligning with the 78.3% inadequacy rating.

Okongwu (2021) argued for non-policy measures like community rehabilitation, finding that job training reduced recidivism by 35% in pilot programs, directly supporting the 43.5% endorsement here. NAPTIP's 2020–2024 anti-trafficking efforts rescued 420 women but faced funding shortfalls, echoing the 83.7% government dissatisfaction (U.S. State Department, 2021).

In disagreement to the findings, Amnesty International's 2021 report on rape survivors highlighted overcrowding in mixed centers as worsening abuse, but warned segregation could isolate women from family visits, increasing stigma (32.6% here). Mental health's lower priority (21.7%) contrasts with Tade and Udechukwu (2020), who linked trauma to 50% of offenses, advocating integrated services.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

## 5.1 Summary

This study investigated the nature and types of crimes associated with female inmates at the Oko Correctional Centre in Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria, with a focus on understanding the reasons for their involvement in crime, the types of crimes committed, socio-demographic factors contributing to female criminality, and potential policies to address this issue. The research adopted a descriptive survey design, targeting a sample of 92 respondents, including female inmates and social welfare officers, derived from a population of 1,033 inmates using the Yamane (1967) formula. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and secondary sources, analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis, and guided by feminist/gender pathway theory.

### **Key Findings:**

**Reasons for Women's Involvement in Crime:** Financial difficulties were the primary driver (43.5%), followed by family problems (21.7%), peer pressure (16.3%), and lack of education (10.9%). Economic factors were rated as highly influential by 59.8% of respondents, with 54.3% attributing their crimes to circumstances rather than deliberate choice. External pressures, such as coercion (32.6%) and substance abuse (21.7%), also played a role, though negative role models were less significant (27.2%).

**Types of Crimes:** Theft was the most prevalent crime (38.0%), followed by fraud (21.7%), assault (16.3%), and prostitution (16.3%). Most crimes were committed for financial gain (54.3%), with 59.8% of respondents acting alone and 40.2% reporting crimes as rare occurrences. Police arrests accounted for 65.2% of apprehensions, indicating effective law enforcement, while 16.7% of inmates turned themselves in, suggesting potential remorse or desire for rehabilitation.

**Socio-Demographic Factors:** The respondents were predominantly young (60% aged 21–30), single (54.3%), Christian (65.2%), secondary-educated (48.9%), unemployed (32.6%), and from low socio-economic backgrounds (54.3%). Abuse or trauma was reported by 43.5%, with family background (59.8%) and educational level (54.3%) rated as moderate to high influences. Urban upbringing (65.2%) and low income (<N50,000/month, 54.3%) were significant, with 48.9% having children, highlighting caregiving pressures as a factor.

**Policy Interventions:** A significant 78.3% of respondents viewed current policies as inadequate, and 83.7% criticized government efforts. Preferred interventions included education/job training (43.5%), family support (27.2%), and mental health services (21.7%). Challenges to rehabilitation were lack of education/job skills (38.0%) and social stigma (32.6%). Support for separate correctional facilities (65.2%) and services like counseling (32.6%) and training (38.0%) underscored the need for gender-specific approaches.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

The research provides a comprehensive understanding of female criminality at the Oko Correctional Centre, highlighting the interplay of economic, social, and structural factors. Financial difficulties, driven by poverty and unemployment, emerged as the dominant reason for women's involvement in crime, reflecting Nigeria's broader socio-economic challenges, where female unemployment rose significantly. The prevalence of non-violent crimes like theft and fraud underscores the survival-driven nature of female offending, while the notable presence of assault and prostitution points to relational and economic pressures. Socio-demographic factors, particularly low socio-economic status, limited education, and histories of abuse or trauma, create pathways to crime that are distinctly gendered, as articulated by feminist/gender pathway

theory. The lack of adequate policies and government efforts, coupled with rehabilitation challenges like skill deficits and stigma, highlights systemic gaps in addressing female criminality. These findings suggest that female inmates are not habitual offenders but often victims of circumstance, compelled by economic desperation, trauma, or social pressures. The study underscores the urgent need for targeted interventions that address these root causes to break the cycle of female criminality and facilitate successful reintegration.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed to address female criminality at Oko Correctional Centre and beyond:

1. Implement government-funded vocational training and microfinance initiatives targeting low-income women to reduce reliance on survival crimes like theft and prostitution. These programs should prioritize skills relevant to local job markets, such as tailoring, agriculture, or digital literacy. Introduce pilot universal basic income (UBI) programs for vulnerable women, particularly single mothers, to alleviate economic desperation and prevent criminal behavior.
2. Enact policies ensuring free or subsidized education for women, focusing on secondary and tertiary levels, to improve employability and reduce vulnerability to crime. Integrate educational programs within correctional facilities, offering literacy, vocational, and life skills training to equip inmates for post-release employment.
3. Establish trauma-informed care programs in prisons, addressing the 43.5% prevalence of abuse among female inmates through counseling and mental health services tailored to women's experiences. Develop gender-specific rehabilitation programs focusing on

substance abuse treatment, parenting skills, and coping mechanisms to address the unique needs of female inmates.

4. Promote legislation for community service, probation, or restorative justice for non-violent offenses, reducing family disruption and recidivism, especially for mothers. Expand pretrial diversion programs with access to mental health and substance abuse treatment to address underlying issues before incarceration.
5. Introduce policies allowing children to stay with incarcerated mothers in designated facilities, as practiced in some countries, to maintain maternal bonds and support desistance. Provide post-release family reunification support, including legal aid and social services, to help women regain custody of children and reintegrate into society.

## REFERENCES

Adebayo, A. A., and Ojo, A. A. (2024). Female criminality in Nigeria: A feminist conceptual and theoretical perspective. *Gusau Journal of Sociology*, 4(2). Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net>

- Agoff, M. C., Sandberg, S., and Fondevila, G. (2020). Women's incarceration in Mexico: Exploring gender-specific challenges. *Crime and Justice*, 51(1), 123–150.
- Artz, L., Hoffman-Wanderer, Y., and Moul, K. (2012). Women in South African correctional centres: A statistical overview. *South African Journal of Criminology*, 25(2), 45-60.
- Barnes, J. C., Nedelec, J. L., and Raine, A. (2020). Biosocial criminology: History, theory, research evidence, and policy. *Journal of Crime and Justice*, 45(6), 789–810.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/0735648X.2022.2134067>
- Belknap, J. (2007). *The invisible woman: Gender, crime and justice*. 3rd edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Belknap, J. (2020). *The Invisible Woman: Gender, crime, and justice* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Brown, S., and Miller, J. (2020). Gender-based violence and criminal pathways: Exploring coercion in women's offending. *Journal of Criminology*, 53(4), 345–362.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022018320925643>
- Bucerius, S. M., Berardi, L., and Haggerty, K. D. (2022). Women's experiences in prison: A comparative analysis of Canada, Norway, and Mexico. *Crime and Justice*, 51, 123-156.  
<https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/full/10.1086/722105>
- Council on Criminal Justice. (2024). *Women's justice: A preliminary assessment of women in the criminal justice system*. <https://counciloncj.org/womens-justice-assessment/>
- Curti, S. M., Lupariello, F., Coppo, E., Praznik, E. J., Racalbuto, S. S., and Di Vella, G. (2020). Child sexual abuse perpetrated by women: Case series and review of the literature.

- Journal of Forensic Sciences*, 64(5), 1427–1437. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1556-4029.14033>
- Daly, K. (1992). Women's pathways to felony court: feminist theories of law-breaking and Problems of Representation'. *Review of Law and Women's Studies* vol. 2: 11–52.
- Daly, K. (1994). *Gender, Crime and Punishment*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Davis, A. (2021). Structural racism and women's incarceration: A critical analysis. *Feminist Criminology*, 16(2), 123–139. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1557085120987654>
- Encyclopædia Britannica. (2025). *Crime*. Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com>
- Fuentes, M. R. (2024). Gender and cybercrime: Emerging trends. In *Criminology: Foundations and modern applications*. COD Pressbooks.
- Garcia, M., and Lee, S. (2022). Trauma, addiction, and crime: A gendered perspective on female offenders. *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment*, 134, 108–119. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsat.2021.108543>
- Jenness, V., and Fenstermaker, S. (2021). Trans women in male prisons: Gender practices and challenges. *Gender and Society*, 35(2), 245–267. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243220987576>
- Jones, N., Smith, R., and Taylor, L. (2018). Economic hardship and female criminality: Survival strategies in urban settings. *Criminology and Public Policy*, 17(3), 567–589. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9133.12389>

- Lee, H., and Thompson, K. (2024). Recidivism and reintegration: Challenges for formerly incarcerated women. *Corrections Today*, 86(1), 45–60.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01902595.2023.2178901>
- Modie-Moroka, T., (2003). Vulnerability across a life course: An empirical study: women and criminality in Botswana prisons. *Journal of Social Development in Africa*. Vol. 18(1).
- Nguyen, T., and Patel, R. (2023). Mental health and female offending: The role of untreated disorders. *Psychology, Crime and Law*, 29(5), 432–450.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1068316X.2022.2090012>
- Nigerian Correctional Service. (2024). *Annual report on custodial and non-custodial services*. Abuja, Nigeria: Nigerian Correctional Service, Ministry of Interior
- Okafor, C. C. (2020). Socioeconomic determinants of female criminality among inmates of correctional services in South East Nigeria. *International Journal of Health and Social Inquiry*, 5(1), 45–67.
- Olorunmola, J. O., Agboola, C., and Masekoameng, M. (2023). Gender discrimination against female inmates in a male correctional institution: A case study of Abakaliki custodial centre. *International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice*, 80, Article 100716.  
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1756061625000217>
- Pecino-Latorre, M. D. M., Santos-Hermoso, J., Pérez-Fuentes, M. D. C., Patró-Hernández, R. M., and González Álvarez, J. L. (2020). Female sex offenders: An analysis of crime scene behaviours. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 585279.  
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.585279>

- Pimlott, S., Kubiak, S. P., and Kernsmith, P. (2020). Reporting sexual victimization during incarceration: Using ecological theory as a framework. *Trauma, Violence, and Abuse*, 21(4), 678–696. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838018821289>
- PubMed. (2020). Characteristics of violent crime committed by female prisoners. *Women and Criminal Justice*, 30(4), 302–322.
- Redalyc. (2021). Prison from a gender perspective: A systematic review. *Redalyc*, 19(2), 45–60. <https://www.redalyc.org/journal/279/27967890003/html/>
- Rodriguez, C., and Carter, D. (2020). Gender-specific rehabilitation and women’s recidivism rates. *Justice Quarterly*, 37(6), 987–1005. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07418825.2019.1679123>
- Russell, B. (2022). Perceptions of female offenders: *How stereotypes and social norms affect criminal justice responses*. ResearchGate.
- Sawyer, W., and Bertram, W. (2022). *Mass incarceration: The whole pie 2022*. Prison Policy Initiative. <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/pie2022.html>
- Siegel, L. J. (2021). *Criminology: Theories, patterns, and typologies* (13th ed.). Cengage Learning.
- Siegel, L. J., and Worrall, J. L. (2022). *Criminology: Theories, patterns, and typologies* (13th ed.). Cengage Learning.

- Smith, J., and Thompson, M. (2019). Unemployment and crime: Gendered pathways to offending. *Sociological Perspectives*, 62(4), 512–530.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0731121418802367>
- SpringerLink. (2023). Gender perspective of victimization, crime, and penal policy. *Gender and Crime*, 12(3), 200–225.
- Taylor, K., and Johnson, P. (2018). Relational dynamics in female offending: The role of co-offending with partners. *Crime and Delinquency*, 64(9), 1123–1145.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0011128717737356>
- UNODC. (2018). Crime Prevention and criminal justice module 9: Gender-based discrimination and women in conflict with the law. Retrieved from <https://www.unodc.org>
- UNODC. (2020). *Crime Prevention and criminal justice module 10: Gender and cybercrime*. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.
- UNODC. (2022). Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice module 6: Current trends, key challenges, and human rights. Retrieved from <https://www.unodc.org>
- University of Chicago. (2022). Women in prisons: Crime and justice. *Crime and Justice*, 51.  
Retrieved from <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu>
- Wilson, A., Brown, T., and Lee, J. (2019). Substance abuse and criminal behavior among women: A longitudinal study. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 205, 107–115.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2019.10762>
- Yamane, T. (1967). *Statistics: An Introductory Analysis* (2nd ed.). New York: Harper and Row.

Yasmin, M., Naseem, S., and Sohail, A. (2021). Asymmetrical gendered crime reporting and its influence on readers: A case study of Pakistani English newspapers. *Heliyon*, 7(8), e07862. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2021.e07862>

**APPENDIX**

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY, FACULTY OF SOCIAL  
SCIENCES,**

**UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY, NIGERIA**

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

1. Age (18-20).      (21-25)      (25-30)      (30&above)

2. Marital Status: a) Single b) Married c) Divorced

3. sex: Male.      Female.

4. Religion \_\_\_\_\_.

5. Educational Qualification

\_\_\_\_\_.

6. Occupation before incarceration

\_\_\_\_\_.

7. Family socio-economic status

\_\_\_\_\_.

**SECTION B:**

**REASON FOR WOMEN INVOLVEMENT IN CRIME**

1. What do you think led to your involvement in crime?

a) Financial difficulties

b) Family problems

c) Peer pressure

d) Lack of education

e) Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

2. How would you rate the influence of economic factors on your involvement in crime?

a) Very high   b) High   c) Moderate   d) Low   e) Very low

3. Did you have any role models or mentors who encouraged you to engage in crime?

a) Yes   b) No

4. Were you under the influence of substances (drugs/alcohol) when you committed the crime?

a) Yes   b) No

5. Did you feel pressured by someone else to commit the crime?

a) Yes   b) No

6. Do you think your involvement in crime was a result of circumstance or a deliberate choice?

a) Circumstance b) Deliberate choice c) Both

### **TYPES OF CRIME WOMEN COMMIT**

7. What type of crime were you involved in?

a) Theft b) Assault c) Fraud d) Prostitution

e) Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

8. How often did you engage in this type of crime?

a) Daily b) Weekly c) Monthly d) Rarely

9. Were you involved in any other types of crime?

a) Yes b) No

10. Was the crime committed alone or with others?

a) Alone b) With others

11. Did you receive any financial gain from the crime?

a) Yes b) No

12. How did you get caught?

a) Arrested by police b) Caught by family/friends c) Turned myself in d) Other (please specify)

### **SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS (OBJECTIVE 3)**

13.How would you rate the influence of your family background on your involvement in crime?

A) Very high b) High c) Moderate d) Low e) Very low

14.Did you experience any form of abuse or trauma in your past?

a) Yes b) No

15.How would you rate the influence of your educational level on your involvement in crime?

a) Very high b) High c) Moderate d) Low e) Very low

16.Did you grow up in an urban or rural area?

a) Urban b) Rural

17.What was your average monthly income?

a) Below N50,000 b) N50,000-N100,000 c) N100,000-N200,000 d) Above N200,000

18.Do you have any children?

a) Yes b) No

### **POLICIES AND LAWS**

19.Do you think there are adequate policies and laws to address female criminality in Nigeria?

a) Yes b) No

20.What type of policies or laws do you think would be most effective in reducing female criminality?

a) Education and job training programs

b) Family support services

c) Mental health services

d) Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

21. Do you think the government is doing enough to address female criminality in Nigeria?

A) Yes b) No

22. What do you think is the most challenging aspect of rehabilitation for female offenders in Nigeria?

a) Lack of education/job skills b) Social stigma c) Family rejection d) Other (please specify)

23. Do you think there should be separate correctional facilities for female offenders?

a) Yes b) No

24. What kind of support services do you think would be most beneficial for female offenders?

a) Counseling b) Education/job training c) Family support d) Other (please specify)

**SECTION C:**

**REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION**

25. What kind of support services have you received during your incarceration?

- a) Counseling
- b) Education/job training
- c) Medical care
- d) Other (please specify)

26. Do you think the correctional facility has prepared you for life after release?

- a) Yes
- b) No

27. What are your plans after release?

- a) Find employment
- b) Pursue education/training
- c) Reunite with family
- d) Other (please specify)

## **FAMILY AND SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS**

28. Did you have a supportive family environment before incarceration?

a) Yes

b) No

29. Have you maintained contact with your family during incarceration?

a) Yes

b) No

30. Do you think your incarceration has affected your relationships with family/friends?

a) Yes

b) No

## **MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**

31. Have you experienced mental health issues during incarceration?

a) Yes

b) No

32. Did you have access to mental health services during incarceration?

a) Yes

b) No

33. Do you think your mental health has been impacted by your incarceration?

a) Yes

b) No