

DETERMINANTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF FEMALE CRIMINALITY IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Female criminality is a form of crime involving female persons in our society. It is often frowned at when a female person commits a crime. This is regarded by some people as an abnormal phenomenon. The society expects a female person whether a grown up woman or a young girl to be law abiding and should lead exemplary life. In a typical Nigerian situation, a woman is expected to take good care of her children by bringing them up in accordance to the norms and values of the society she lives in. It is therefore unconscionable for a female person who is expected to guide the younger ones as appropriate to become involved in criminality. This definitely may have a ripple effect on the younger ones and the society at large. It is against this background that this paper critically examined the determinants and consequences of female criminality in Nigeria with a view to suggesting long lasting solutions to the menace. This is a theoretical paper that is anchored on the feminist and the social disorganization theories as its theoretical framework. It is in the opinion of this paper that poor educational attainment, low income/poverty and lack of sufficient social network predispose women in the low income brackets into criminality. This further buttresses the need for women empowerment which could be by skill acquisition, provision of soft loans for engaging in small scale enterprises and even creation of employment opportunities. The paper suggested that strong institutional framework should be put in place to curb criminality in Nigeria.

Key Words: Criminal Law, Female Crime, Female Criminality, Feminist, and Social Networks

Introduction

In almost all societies, gender roles tend to create the impression that females are less prone to criminality and criminological researches often reach the conclusion that criminality is a male phenomenon (Islam et al., 2014). In fact, some scholars have often presented the historical gender ratio disparity in criminality as 1:5 for women and men as convicts; 1:20 for women and men as inmates and 1:20 for juvenile females and males (Aslimoski et al., 2015; Stanojoska, 2011). This has equally had significant implications on legal approaches to female crimes. An interesting aspect of this historical insight is the fact that female criminality is as old as humanity, and has continued to evolve dramatically as societies developed. Prior attention towards female criminality treated the phenomenon as an anomaly – focusing on the relationship between the biological and psychological makeup of the offenders and criminality. One strong viewpoint within the late nineteenth and early twentieth century as postulated by Cesare Lombroso and Sigmund Freud argued that criminal females exhibited masculine biological or psychological orientations (Ameh, 2013). In fact, Lombroso in his work “Female Offender” published in 1893, described female offenders as primitive and pathological individuals who had failed to develop into moral feminine women (Estrada, et al., 2019). The point here is that females involved in criminality were perceived as possessing abnormal characteristics or sicknesses that influenced their criminal behaviours (Curran & Ranzetti, 2001).

Female criminality according to Obi, et al. (2014), refers to criminal activities which are committed only by females. In other words, it has to do with a female carrying out behaviours that have been criminalised under the criminal law of a particular society, state or nation. No doubt, female criminality may have been an uncommon phenomenon due to the historical structuring of gender roles which made it difficult for females to operate beyond certain socially scripted roles. However, in the wake of the 21st century, the wave of socio-political and technological revolution significantly altered the hitherto existing socio-cultural structures which constrained females from venturing into other socio-economic and political spheres. Females began to gain more opportunities to own business enterprises, acquiring properties, living independent lives, engaging in politics and other opportunities, which tend to create a convergence in the social roles between males and females. These factors facilitated through liberalization and popular media have led to dramatic changes in the behavioural dispositions and thought patterns of women and have opened opportunities for females to perform almost every other activity like that of males including criminality (Islam & Khatun, 2013; Siegel, 2007).

The determinants of female criminality have remained a debatable issue among scholars in criminology and related fields. Some scholars in Nigeria attribute female criminality to issues such as family problems, peer influence, poor parenting, and the influence of social media, spousal/relationship issues, broken home, widening socio-economic opportunities open to women in the labour force, poor socio-economic background including

unemployment, poverty and lack of education, among others (Obi, et al., 2014; Okafor & Uzoh, 2019). Other scholars have expressed the view that technological progress and changes in social norms have freed women from the home, thereby increasing their participation in labour force and criminal market (Campaniello, 2019). Although females were initially associated with lower forms of crimes such as shoplifting, domestic thefts, thefts by prostitutes, abortions, perjury (Pollak, 1961) among others, recent global researches and statistics have shown that the dynamics of female criminality have significantly changed within the past two decades in such a manner that females are now involved in serious felonious crimes (Ayodeji & Mojeed-Sunni, 2013; National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 2016).

In whatever form that female criminality occurs, it has serious consequences on the society and the development of children. This is particularly due to the fact that women are the primary child caregivers, moral standard of the society. Female involvement in criminality therefore undermines the socialization structure of the society and breeds normlessness in the society (Ameh, 2013). Although studies by Okafor and Uzoh (2019), Ameh (2013), Louwadare and Agboola (2011) have investigated aspects of female criminality in Nigeria; this paper tend to further investigate the determinants and consequences of female criminality in Nigeria with a view to proffering lasting solutions to it. This is a gap in knowledge which this paper hopes to bridge.

Theoretical Framework

The feminist theory and the social disorganization theory formed the theoretical anchorage for this paper. Although the feminist theory has been described as a collection of social theories, political movements and moral philosophies (Mohajan, 2022), its development is credited to Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–1797) who proposed this theory in an attempt to describe the socio- economic and political inequalities and oppression against women, with the view to identify its causes and consequence, and advocates aggressive policies to remove discrepancies from the society (Adawo et al, 2011). This theory has become popular in the contemporary social movements directed towards obliteration of socio-economic disparities and socio-cultural inequalities that promote patriarchal traditions and practices, and disenfranchise women from socio-economic, political, cultural and religious advantages (Hooks, 2000; Mohanty, 1988).

The application of feminist theory has cut across different topics related to women as a group in the society, including criminal involvement among women. From this premise, feminist theory sees female criminality as being influenced by their social and economic circumstances, as well as by the patriarchal norms and expectations that shape their lives. This view has been substantiated by research findings which have shown that women who experience poverty due to socio-economic deprivation, abuse, and discrimination are more likely to engage in criminal behaviour as a means of survival or coping with their circumstances (Chesney-Lind, 1997; Okafor & Uzoh, 2019).

Furthermore, feminist theorists argue that women's involvement in crime is often a response to the limitations and constraints placed on them by society. Women may turn to criminal activities as away to assert their agency and challenge traditional gender roles that restrict their autonomy and freedom. For example, women who engage in drug trafficking or prostitution may do so as a means of gaining financial independence and control over their own lives (Daly, 1994).

This theory seems most relevant for explaining female criminality within the Nigerian socio- cultural context where issues of patriarchy rules, stereotypes against female gender, socio- economic deprivation such as low access to education, among others, seems to be prevailing across different communities. In other words, feminist theory provides an opportunity to understand female criminality within the Nigerian socio-cultural context by highlighting gendered power dynamics, intersectionality, and cultural norms' influences on behaviour patterns of females (Okorie, 2019; Olusola-Ajayi & Arulogun, 2016).

Despite the veracity in the assumptions of this theory to explain female criminality, there are some important lapses that can be found in it. One of such lapses in relation to explaining female criminality is that it may oversimplify the factors contributing to female criminal behaviour. This is because feminist theory tends to focus solely on gender inequality and patriarchy as the primary causes of female criminal behaviour, while overlooking other complex social, economic, and psychological factors that may also play a significant role. Thus, the feminist theory may be considered in this direction as a biased way of analysing female criminality. The theory may also not help to explain the criminality among women that are not affected by socio-economic and political deprivations such as women in the political class. Another criticism is that feminist theories may sometimes portray women as inherently non- violent or less capable of committing serious crimes compared to men. This portrayal overlooks the reality that women are capable of engaging in various types of criminal behaviour, including murder and other violent crimes, as have been witnessed in an increasing rate in different

parts of Nigeria. Based on these limitations, another theory was reviewed to cover these gaps.

Social Disorganization Theory was developed by Shaw and McKay (1942) through the research they conducted in Chicago, United State of America in the Early 1960, after which their findings were later published in the book "Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Development" in 1965 (Lindsey & Beach, 2002). They found that there was not an even spread of criminal activities across time and space in the Chicago City; rather they observed that crime was more prevalent in certain areas of the city. In specific terms, the scholars discovered that crime was seemingly prevalent in socially disorganized neighbourhoods—where social control institutions were weak and unable to regulate the behaviour of individuals. Social disorganization theory posits that areas of social disorganization may be associated with increased criminal activity, including female criminality. In the Nigerian context, social disorganization may be particularly relevant in terms of gender roles and cultural values, as well as economic and political instability. One potential explanation for female criminality in the context of social disorganization could be in terms of the disorganization in the traditional gender roles and cultural values which placed restrictions on women's ability to participate in public life and work outside the home. It could also be analysed in terms of the disorganization of strong cultural values around family honour and morality, which hitherto pressured women to conform to traditional gender roles, making it difficult for them to engage in criminal activity. It could also be analysed from the lens of the high levels of socio-economic strain that predispose people to poverty in Nigeria. This is arguably true because as people experience poverty, they often have limited access to basic resources and opportunities, and are more likely to engage in criminal behaviours such as theft or prostitution to survive. It is therefore plausible to assume that women who are often denied access to education, employment, and decision-making power in traditional patriarchal societies, may resort to criminal activities to gain independence and agency in a society that disenfranchises them.

Furthermore, social disorganization may be observed in terms of weak social controls and social networks and norms particularly within the contemporary urban social life, which results in a lack of positive role models, weak families, and broken social ties. This can contribute to the development of criminal behaviour among women, who may turn to crime as a means of survival or as a form of resistance against the social and economic inequalities they face.

Despite the seemingly merits of this theory in explaining female criminality, it has some limitations. For instance, while the theory recognizes the role of social factors to criminal activity, it sometimes overlooks the role of individual choice and agency in determining criminal behaviour. This can be seen as a weakness, as it fails to account for the complex and multifaceted factors that can influence a women's decision to engage in criminal activity. Again, while the theory recognizes that social inequality and social disorganization are linked to criminal activity, it sometimes fails to account for the ways in which broader social and economic forces, such as political violence, poverty, and economic inequality, can also contribute to female criminality.

The combination of feminist theory and Social Disorganization Theory (SDT) is considered apt in providing a solid theoretical framework for the discourse on the determinants and consequences of female criminality in Nigeria. Feminist theory emphasizes the role of structural power imbalances and systemic gender inequality in society, and how these power imbalances lead to marginalization, stigmatization, and exclusion of women, which are precursors to female criminality. Social Disorganization Theory on the other hand, posits that social structures and networks are disrupted and weakened in areas with high levels of poverty and inequality, leading to the emergence of criminal behaviours. The combination of these two theories provides a broader explanation for socio- cultural factors that influence female criminality in different communities within the Nigerian nation. In a nutshell, using this theoretical framework, this paper investigated the social contexts that shape the evolving phenomenon of female criminality in Nigeria, by examining how structural gender inequalities interact with social disorganization to create criminal opportunities and risk for women in communities within the region, which can then inform the development of effective crime prevention and control strategies that take into account gender-specific factors in crime analysis.

Review of Relevant Literature

Concept of Female Criminality and Female Crime

In order to fully grasp the concept of female criminality, it is equally important to distinguish between the concepts of female criminality from female crime. Although the two concepts are often conflated in discussions about women and the criminal justice system, and refer to women's involvement in criminal behaviour, they have different implications and can be understood in different ways.

Female criminality is a broader concept that looks at the larger societal context in which women engage in criminal behaviour, and often encompasses the various factors that contribute to women's involvement in crime,

such as social, economic, and psychological factors (Heidensohn, 1996). Female crime on the other hand, is a narrower concept that looks at the specific criminal acts committed by women, or the individual actions of women that are considered criminal under the criminal law (Daly, 1994). In other words, the concept of female crime can be subsumed under the umbrella theme of female criminality as a broader concept. In recent years, the concept of female criminality has gained attention within academic literature, and has equally formed part of academic debate in the area of criminology and penology. Earlier conceptualization of the female criminality largely emanated from biological explanation of criminality particularly with the theoretical postulations of Lombroso (1898), who theorised that the female offender has a “*virile cranium*” an over abundance of body hair, and constitutional anomalies and brain capacity which are more similar to those of a man than to a non-criminal woman (Islam et al., 2014). In view of the fact that women were perceived as inherently weak, innocent and victim-like individuals, who are less prone to criminal behaviours (Gauthier & Beland, 2020), women who committed crime were considered as outliers and that their actions were linked with that of men who were perceived to possess more criminal tendencies. The weaknesses inherent in the biological conceptualization of female criminality gave rise to other perspectives from other academic fields.

For instance, Sigmund Freud defined female criminality from the psychological perspective as those which results from “masculinity complex” stemming from “penis envy” - a situation which expresses that women are by and large very different from men and do not match the strength of men (Ebobo, 2020). As a result, they are able to make healthy adjustments to the realization that they do not have a penis. Those who are unable to overcome their penis envy tend to identify with masculinity and are more prone to act out criminally.

However, sociological conceptualization of female criminality has tended to focus on critical issues regarding the concept such as delineating female criminality from that of male criminality, as well as determining the socio-cultural factors associated with it. Perhaps, a better argument would be whether there are crimes peculiar to females compared to males. To answer this question, some scholars have tried to conceptualize female criminality from the gender dimension. For instance, Otakey, et al., (2021) argued that female crime refers to crimes committed by women. This definition gives the impression that there are specific types of criminal behaviours that are peculiar to females. This may not be so in contemporary society because females are now involved in almost all types of crimes that are as well committed by men. Perhaps, a better definition was captured by Meixiang (2016) who described the concept as the intentional violation of the criminal law by a female offender. What this implies is that female criminality occurs when a female breaks the criminal law by committing a crime irrespective of the crime committed. While these definitions provide a useful starting point for research on female criminality, it is important to recognize that they may not capture the full range of perspectives and complexities associated with female criminality. For example, these definitions may not account for the social and cultural contexts in which women commit crimes, nor do they fully address the potential biases in the treatment and punishment of female offenders. The paper conceptualizes female criminality as the intentional violation of criminal law by women within specific social and cultural contexts, including factors such as gender roles, power dynamics, and societal expectations.

Determinants of Female Criminality

Female criminality remains a complex phenomenon, and this has generated a lot of theoretical precepts that have provided variant ideas about the occurrence in female criminality. However, an important point to highlight is that the occurrence of female criminality could be associated with the socio-cultural contexts of the society. A number of scholars have given credence to socio-cultural factors influencing female criminality (Warraich & Farooq, 2016; Aslam, et al., 2023). What comes to mind about socio-cultural factors are the combination of factors such as customs, lifestyles, beliefs, and social values which influence human behaviours including criminal activities (Judit, 2012). It is important to highlight that quite a number of socio-cultural variables can be linked to the issue of female criminality including but not limited to cultural norms and values, gender discrimination, social network, poverty, limited access to education and employment opportunities, among others (Braus, 2017; Brown & Deater-Deckard, 2017). Some of these factors are espoused hereunder.

Cultural norms and values: Cultural norms and values represent the beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours that are considered normal and acceptable within a particular culture or society, and which are learned through socialization. They shape how people think, feel, and act in their daily lives (Lindsey & Beach, 2002; Frese, 2015). The cultural norms and values of a society can influence gender roles and expectations, which in turn can influence a woman's perception of her role and place in society. For example, in many African cultures, women are expected to assume roles associated with care giving and housekeeping, which could limit their access to education and job opportunities. This can lead to low social status, financial distress and an increased disposition to engaging in criminal activities to make ends meet. This variable can equally determine the pattern of criminal behaviour exhibited by a female. For instance, a woman with lower socio-economic status may be

involved in crimes like theft, child abuse, child trafficking, trafficking illegal drugs, among others.

Gender Discrimination: Gender discrimination is a significant factor that can influence the prevalence of female criminality. Discrimination against women can manifest in several ways, including limited access to education and employment opportunities, restrictive gender roles and expectations, and reduced legal and social rights (Zarar, et al., 2017). When women experience discrimination and inequality, it can limit their potentials to participate fully in social development and can contribute to feelings of frustration and despair. In some cases, these feelings can lead to an increased push to engage in criminal activity as a means of meeting up with basic needs, coping with emotional distress, or seeking justice. Additionally, gender discrimination can also contribute to social and economic disparities that can increase the likelihood of criminal behaviour among females. According to Mohammed (2014), when women are discriminated against, they may face higher levels of poverty and may have fewer opportunities for social and economic mobility. This can increase the risk of criminality, as individuals who are struggling to meet their basic needs may resort to criminal behaviour as a means of surviving or improving their circumstances.

While this perspective may seem to make valid point, it seems overly simplistic and does not account for the complex nature of discrimination that could lead to criminality. While it may be the case that women who are discriminated against may have fewer opportunities for social and economic mobility, there are likely other factors at play, such as social and economic policies, cultural norms, and lack of access to resources and opportunities especially within the Nigerian context.

Social networks: Social networks are an important aspect of women's lives, and can play a significant role in either increasing or reducing the risk of criminality for women (Lindsey & Beach, 2002). Women who have strong and supportive social networks are less likely to engage in criminal activity, as they have access to sources of support and can engage in pro-social behaviours that can mitigate the risk of criminal behaviour. Similarly, women who have access to positive social networks may also have greater opportunities for employment and economic empowerment, which can reduce the risk of criminal behaviours by providing alternative means of meeting their needs (Otakey et al., 2021). These arguments however emanated from the euro-centric point of view, and may not help to appreciate the complexity of issues associated with access to social networks and criminal behaviour within the Nigerian context.

It is true that access to positive social networks, such as supportive family members, friends, or community groups, can provide important social and emotional support (Bakhshandeh & Stephens, 2024), but it may not necessarily lead to greater employment and economic opportunities. For example, job markets in Nigeria may be limited, and employment opportunities may be based on factors such as nepotism or favouritism, making it difficult for some individuals to secure employment, even with a positive social network.

On the contrary, women who have limited access to positive social networks or who are part of negative social networks may be at greater risk for criminal activity. For example, women who have social networks that reinforce negative behaviours, such as substance abuse or criminal activities, may be more likely to engage in those behaviours themselves. Additionally, women who have weak or negative social networks may have fewer opportunities for support and may be more vulnerable to the influences of negative peers or circumstances. A woman's social network, including family, friends, and community organizations, can also influence her risk of engaging in criminal activity. For example, a woman who has a strong and supportive social network may be less likely to turn to criminal behaviour than one who is isolated or disconnected.

Low access to Education: Lack of access to education has been identified as one of the key socio-cultural factors influencing female criminality (Cano-Urbina & Lochner, 2018). Women who are unable to access education are less likely to have the skills and knowledge necessary to secure meaningful employment opportunities, which can result in financial stress and an increased likelihood of engaging in criminal activity to make ends meet. Additionally, women who lack access to education may also face additional challenges, such as social marginalization and discrimination, which can contribute to a cycle of poverty and criminal behaviour. The importance of education as a means of reducing the risk of criminality for women has been widely recognized by researchers and policymakers alike. For example, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2011) noted that women who lack access to education often face limited opportunities for economic empowerment and participation in mainstream society, which can contribute to feelings of hopelessness and frustration that can increase the risk of criminal behaviour. Similarly, the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2017) highlighted the need for greater investment in education and vocational training programs as a means of reducing the risk of criminality for women.

To balance the foregoing arguments, it is important to note that increased level of education can also increase a woman's likelihood of being involved in criminal activities. This is because education can lead to high level of exposure, rationalization, critical thinking and awareness of rights among women. This can lead to a sense of empowerment and a desire to challenge the existing power structures in order to improve their own lives. In some cases, however, this can lead to women engaging in criminal activities in order to challenge these power structures just to achieve their goals. In some cases, education can empower women with access to resources and information that can provide them with new opportunities for criminal activities. This view is not only peculiar to western societies, but has also been observed across African context and Nigeria in particular (Birenkait-Diaz, et al., 2018; Brend & Fassin, 2020; Nwankwo, 2017).

Consequences of Female Criminality

Consequences of female criminality abound. For instance, Vonnermann (2018) did a qualitative study on women's offending pathways, focusing on the experiences and needs of women who have been involved in the criminal justice system and found that women offenders frequently faced barriers in accessing services and support. Similarly, Ogar & Abutu (2016) examined the social and psychological consequences of female offending in Kenya and found that female offenders faced significant stigmatization and discrimination, both in their families and communities, leading to negative psychological consequences such as feelings of rejection and low self-esteem. In a situation where women who are expected to be the moral hub of the family are increasingly involved in serious crimes, the children are likely to also learn criminal and delinquent behaviours, which are very detrimental to the society (Ameh, 2013). There are also issues of social stigma attached to women who commit crimes, which can lead to social isolation and mental health consequences. Chukuezi (2009) agreed that with increased cases of female criminality, moral in society is way off, on account of women losing that platform with which to challenge and advocate for uprightness in society. Among other consequences of female criminality is the effect it has on families as it tends to disintegrate families. Warraich and Farooq (2015) contend that societies where the family institution is not bonded enough to socialize its members firmly according to its approved and cherished societal norms, usually experience disintegration which in turn fuels criminal adventures and indulgence among females who hitherto see family as their model. Nyen and Ejue (2022) believe that as a result of shame and stigma, many families whose female spouses have one criminal record or the other are known to experience disintegration.

Oketch (1999) observed that among the effect of female imprisonment in the society are spiraling poverty, child mortality and family disorganization. She contended that families, who have their female members incarcerated bear the burden of disintegration, often contribute to malnourished street children and child prostitution. Alemika (2014) argues that the involvement of females in crime accelerates violence and impedes security and development. The mother figure in the African societies and family settings usually carries the major responsibility of socialization, hence her absence for any reason whatsoever, especially on account of criminality and imprisonment, tends to leave a devastating effect on the family, younger generation and the development of society.

Female criminality affects the family structure, family stability, and disturbs the whole appellation of the family and society at large (Pavlich, 2011). Furthermore, Esiri, (2016) avers that female criminality is a threat to the security of a nation and a major factor associated with underdevelopment because it reduces the quality of life, destroys human and social capital and damages relationship between citizens and the states and discourages both local and foreign investments. Female criminality is a cankerworm that is gradually eating deep into all regions of the country. Female criminality is a threat to the social order in Nigeria. The rate at which women are involved in criminal activities makes one stop to wonder what is really happening to the women folk. Women are known to occupy the natural position in inculcating moral values in children, but with the rising trend in involvement of women in criminal activities, one is left to wonder the kind of future generation we will have as the engagement of the women in criminal activities makes them fail in carrying out their roles as the guardians of morality in our society (Oyelade, 2019).

Curbing Female Criminality

Naqvi (2015) stressed that female criminality could be addressed through skill trainings of females, awareness raising sessions on the consequences of criminality for female inmates during their imprisonment and rehabilitation and integration back in the society, by family counselling services. Furthermore, Montgomery (2016) investigated gender perceptions of female criminality in China and the United States and stressed that measures including better education programs and better legal protection for females as two most important solutions to reduce female criminality. Obi et al. (2014) suggested the need for policy stakeholders to look into addressing issues causing broken homes, and domestic violence, as these were found to be major factors associated with female criminality. Thus, the scholars contended that addressing these factors would help to nip

the prevalence of female criminality in the bud. The scholars also recommended that the need for the government to help implement policies that would reduce the economic hardship and unemployment among the females, which are precursors to female criminality.

Conclusion

Female criminality is an absurdity in the human society which must be condemned by all and sundry. It makes the society unsafe because of the exceptional roles of women in a child moral upbringing. This is particularly against the backdrop that women are seen as the upholders of societal morals and are saddled with the responsibility of transmitting same to their children. Women are closer to their children and can easily transmit the right or wrong values to them. It is therefore unconscionable that women should be involved in any form of criminality. Children easily learn from their significant others. It is therefore very necessary that women and especially the girl child be given the right upbringing. This will definitely have a ripple effect when the right values are transmitted to the younger generation. It has to be stated however, that the social structural constraints which have the potentials of influencing the female gender to take to crime should be minimized or eradicated. It is assumed that a productive and industrious woman may not take to criminality as a mean of sustenance. The values of honesty should be adopted as a guiding principle for all irrespective of whether the person involved is a male or a female.

Recommendations

People who are not meaningfully engaged may easily take to criminality. It is therefore very imperative that concerted efforts are made at all levels of the society to have people meaningfully engaged. These could be through skill acquisition programmes, employment generation or by giving low interest loans to people to state up small scale enterprises. Compulsory basic education should not only be implemented but thoroughly enforced. An educated woman has a higher chance of navigating through the economic realities of our time than their non educated counterparts. It is also necessary to show sufficient social support to less endowed members of the society. This could be through provision of basic necessities to the less privilege ones in the society. The affluent members of the society should carry the downtrodden ones along. This will go a long way to reduce criminality in the society. The institutional capacity should be strengthened. Weak institutional framework plays significant roles in aiding and abetting of criminality including female criminality. Lastly but not the least, special care should be taken in the upbringing of female children. They should be taught the norms, values and customs of their communities from their childhood. This may go a long way in reducing the tendency to become involved in criminality.

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