

Role of Women in Crime Control in Nigeria: Evaluation of Igala Women in Kogi State

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Abstract

This paper seeks to critically analyse the contributions of Igala women in fostering peace and security, alongside traditional mechanisms and modern influences that shape their involvement in crime control. By exploring social, cultural, and political dimensions, the paper aims to understand these women's unique strategies and the sociocultural dynamics that enable them to effectively tackle crime in their communities. The paper examines the cause/prevalence of crime rate in Igalaland, effect of crime on Igalaland, and the role of Igala women in crime prevention in Igalaland, in Kogi State. The paper adopted literature review approach and Feminist Theory of Crime Prevention was theoretical framework utilised to understand key role women play in crime prevention in Kogi state. Findings show that Igala women have played a pivotal role in crime control/prevention via many channels such as neighborhood watch programs, established community centers where residents can access resources and support, and implemented educational programs to raise awareness about crime prevention strategies. The paper concludes the Igala women played crucial roles in facilitating crime reduction in Igalaland. It is therefore recommended that by empowering women to take on leadership roles in various communities of Kogi state and Nigeria at large will be able to effectively address crime issues and create safer environments for their residents. Through their efforts, they will help to maintain peace and harmony in their towns and fostered a sense of unity among community members.

Keywords: Women in Crime Control, Women's Contribution to Security, Igala Women, Female Empowerment & Kogi State

INTRODUCTION

The development of human civilization, characterised by significant changes in both human beings and their surroundings, owes its existence to the contribution of men and women within the society. The development of any society no doubt comes with both positive and negative consequences such as crime, (Shitu and Obi, 2017). Crime has always plagued every human society and its history is as old as mankind. Based on Judeo-Christian religious tradition, the first crime was committed by Cain, the first son of Adam and Eve, when he murdered his brother Abel, (Genesis, 4:1-16). Crime is like a social contagion with its pandemic and spontaneous nature in societies in recent times. Crime has become one of the major means of survival in Nigeria considering the poverty level premised on unemployment (Obi, et al. 2020). In Nigeria nobody is isolated from the adverse effects of crime. In all parts of Nigeria crime has not only brought about loss of lives and property but sending away investors. To ensure peaceful harmony, successive administrations in Nigeria have formulated policies and programmes to control

crime. Formal institutions of social control have been reinvigorated to control crime. Critical stakeholders such as women have been involved in crime control. Women are in the military, police, immigration, customs, prisons, etc. In spite of the tremendous role women play in combating crime in Nigeria, not much is known about them.

Women are major stakeholders in the development project of any society. Amadi (2022) avers that, there are sufficient evidences to prove that women are a veritable access in public offices, homes and secular fields and even in leadership positions who have contributed and still contributing to societal development (Agbo, 2023). In the military sphere, women play prominent leadership roles, not only in the military exploit of the Amazons of Greek legend.

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but also in those of the Amazons of South America and Dahomey, in modern times. Similarly, the heroic exploits of Queen Amina in the military and political ascendancy of Zaria in the sixteenth century were paralleled by those of Joan of Arc who led her French country men to record notable victories against the invading English forces in 1429. Queen Amina conquered as far as Nupe and Kwararafa, collected tribute from far and wide and ruled for 34 years (Palmer, 1908). The leadership roles played by both Mrs. Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti and Mrs. Margaret Ekpo in the Nigerian pre-independence political struggles of the 1950s are incontrovertible (Abdullahi, 2021).

Mrs Kuti was a strong advocate and campaigner for women's rights across the country. Mrs. Margaret Ekpo, on her part, was the only female member of the seven-man committee set up in 1951 to organize a national political organization geared toward achieving self-government within five years. She became the Vice-President of the Eastern House of Chiefs in 1959. Indeed, it may well be that the women who spearheaded the 1929 Aba Women's Riots in South-Eastern Nigeria were the precursors and role models of the two better known female political activists (Nduka, 2011). Professor (Mrs.) Grace Alele-Williams not only distinguished herself in the field of mathematics education, but also rose to become the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Benin-the first female Nigerian academic to be so honoured (Akanbi, 2022). Similarly, late Prof. Dora Nkem Akunyili (OFR), who was the former Director of National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control reduced the incidence of fake drugs from about 90% to 68% of drugs in 2001 (Akunyili, 2016).

Dr. (Mrs.) Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, successfully transformed the Nigerian economic platform when she succeeded in negotiating a debt relief package for Nigeria as the Finance Minister (July, 2003-June, 2006) under the Obasanjo regime and also spearheaded the unpopular fuel subsidy removal policy by the Nigerian government, which led to protests in January 2012 under the Goodluck Jonathan regime (Elaigwu, 2020). Also, she stressed the need to reduce the country's recurrent expenditure, which is currently 74% of the national budget, and embark on capital projects which could improve the 14% unemployment rate in the country (Nwankwo, 2023). In all developing countries, women leaders abound, not just in politics, but also in academia, and private and public sector/organizations.

Princess Inikpi sacrifice for the Igala people is a powerful symbol of women's commitment to community survival and is often recounted in Igala lore. In essence, Igala women have consistently played vital roles in community development, both historically and in contemporary

times. Their contributions range from sacrificial acts to advocacy, education, and economic empowerment, shaping the lives of their communities and pushing for a more equitable future. For example, women play the role of traditional doctors, they are regarded as friends of their community. They play the role of counselors, judges, advisors, fortune tellers and revealers of secrets and as such held in high regard in the community. The economic advantage of the services of women diviners is enormous as they do not usually charge much. In Enjema, Emere and Odagbo in Ankpa Local Government Areas, the services of women diviners are always more available than that of their male counterparts because the men combine their service with farming as a means of survival. Their charges for their services are usually low. Old women in Igala traditional society has some basic knowledge of midwifery transmitted to her either by her mother, aunty or neighbors who practiced midwifery. A particular woman called Kashuwa in Imane was renowned for this practice, and eventually won the name Iye nurse (nursing mother). Among other roles played by women in Igala traditional religion include transmission of Igala cultural values. If the saying that women are at the forefront of the education of children is anything to go by, then it is to be taken for granted that the inoculation of cultural and moral values is one of the major roles being played by women in the Igala Society.

Kogi State, located in the central region of Nigeria, has been a focal point for socio-political challenges, including rising crime rates. Despite predominant narratives that emphasise the role of men in law enforcement and crime control, women in the Igala community are increasingly recognised for their traditional and pragmatic approaches to societal safety. It is on the basis of this that this paper intends to x-ray the role of women in crime control in Kogi State, Nigeria.

Statement of Research Problem

This research was informed by the role of women in crime control in Kogi State, Nigeria. For example the summary of crime statistics Kogi State presented by Police Report from 2015-2025 has indicated that the number of crime incidence such as child stealing, armed robbery and murder was fifty eight thousand, seven hundred and eighty-eight (58, 788) in 1987. The number of crime incidence rose to sixty nine, one hundred and fifty six (699, 156) in 2022, (Abdullahi, 2021).

Crime has persistently been a serious challenge in many societies, undermining social order, economic stability, and public safety. In Kogi State, particularly in urban and rural settings of Igala-land, criminal activities such as

theft, assault, kidnapping, and violence continue to disrupt communities and pose a significant threat to national development. Despite various efforts by law enforcement and governmental bodies, crime rates remain alarmingly high, indicating that conventional approaches to crime prevention and reduction have been insufficient. This has serious economic impact because, crime hampers economic growth by discouraging investment, raising the cost of security, and deterring entrepreneurship in Igalaland, communities are torn apart by fear and distrust, reducing social cohesion and hindering collective progress, and victims of crime suffer both physically and psychologically, and the social fabric is weakened as communities become less trusting and more fragmented.

The challenges posed by crime necessitate innovative approaches that engage all members of society, especially marginalized and underrepresented groups, such as women. Historically, women have been sidelined in active roles related to crime prevention, yet recent studies and societal shifts suggest that women's involvement in crime reduction efforts can have far-reaching benefits because, women, in many societies, play central roles as mothers, educators, and caregivers, which positions them as key players in shaping the values and behaviors of future generations, women often possess stronger conflict resolution and negotiation skills, which can foster peaceful coexistence in communities and reduce the likelihood of violence escalating into crime, women have been shown to be effective in community-based policing, neighborhood watch programs, and other forms of social advocacy, creating environments of trust and cooperation that deter criminal activities. By addressing the above factors, this study will provide insight into how involving women in crime reduction efforts can lead to better social cohesion and improved public safety, contributing to long-term solutions to the crime problem.

AIM AND OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The aim of this paper is to evaluate the role of Igalaland women in crime control in Kogi State, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

- i. Examine the cause of crime in Igalaland, Kogi State
- ii. Determine the prevalence of rate in Igalaland
- iii. Investigate the effect of crime rate in Igalaland
- iv. Determine the role of Igalaland women in crime prevention in Igalaland

Research Method

The methodology employed in carrying out this review was a theoretical approach that makes use of largely

secondary sources of data to address the issue of women role in crime control in Igalaland, Kogi State in Nigeria. These sources include textbooks, published journal articles, internet-sourced materials, daily newspapers etc. The analytical approach is mainly associated with the textual and contextual analysis of existing information on the phenomenon being investigated by exploring practices, reasoning, prognosis, analysis, criticism, and discussion of relevant information gained from the different categories of sources from which conclusions were drawn. Precisely, the use of secondary sources of data was adopted to examine the views of various authors on studies that are related to role of women in crime control in Igalaland.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Conceptual Clarification

Meaning of Crime

There is no universally acceptable definition of crime because of its complex nature. To some people, crime is something that causes serious injury to the community. Crime could also be seen as something, which offends the morality of society, or something which violates the divine law. Crime is defined by law, as an act or act of omission that violates the law and is punishable by the state. Okafor (2022) defined crime as an act or omission against public interest and which is prescribed by law enacted by the legislature in the overall interests of the society, and to which prescribed punishment is attached in the event of violation and it involves four major principles which are public wrong, moral wrong, law and punishment for the criminal. Crime is also seen as a violation of the rules agreed to be respected by all members of the society, and upon which the rest members of the society mete sanction upon those guilty of the violation, (Ogbuke & Obi, 2016).

It is for the same reason that the legal system views crime as a public and moral wrong. Both the positivist and classical schools take a consensus view of crime. Crime according to these schools of thought is an act or omission that violates the basic values and beliefs of society. These are values and beliefs that are manifested as laws and that a society agree upon. More so, Obi (2017), noted that crime is any act or omission against the statutes of the penal or criminal code, and which is punishable by the state. In the light of all the above definitions, it is worthy of note that behaviors deemed or regarded as criminal act must necessarily violate both social contract and criminal law, and act which must be duly punished, a punishment that must have a statutory basis. The prevalence of crime in

the world today is a cause for serious concern for all and sundry.

Causes/Prevalent of Crime in Igalaland, Kogi State

Socio-Economic Factors Contributing to Crime

The rise in crime in Igala land can be attributed to several socio-economic factors. One primary influence is the high level of poverty. According to the World Bank, over 40% of the population in Kogi State lives below the poverty line (World Bank, 2023). This economic disadvantage drives many individuals, especially the youth, to partake in criminal activities as a means to alleviate their financial struggles. The lack of access to quality education further compounds this issue, leaving young people with limited opportunities for legitimate employment.

Additionally, unemployment rates in Kogi State are alarmingly high. Many graduates from local universities face difficulties securing employment, leading to frustration and, ultimately, engagement in criminal behaviour (Ogunyemi, 2023). This environment of despair fosters a breeding ground for crime, as individuals seek alternative means to generate income and attain social mobility. Moreover, poor governance and inadequate law enforcement exacerbate the crime situation. Many residents in Igala land express distrust towards the police and other security agencies, citing corruption and inefficiency (Idris, 2023). This lack of faith in law enforcement often results in a reluctance to report crimes, further perpetuating a culture of impunity among criminals. Without timely and effective interventions from the authorities, criminal activities are likely to persist and escalate.

Many residents rely on subsistence agriculture and petty trading, leaving them vulnerable to economic fluctuations. According to the National Bureau of Statistics, Kogi State consistently ranks among the states with the highest poverty rates in Nigeria (National Bureau of Statistics, 2021). When individuals find it challenging to meet their basic needs or support their families, they may resort to criminal activities such as theft, fraud, or even violent crimes as a means of survival. The impact of economic hardship is particularly pronounced among the youth, who, facing limited job prospects, may turn to crime as an alternative source of income. The Youth Employment and Social Support Operation (YESSO) programme, although commendable, is insufficient to address the depth of the unemployment crisis in the region (World Bank, 2019). When young people lose hope in legitimate avenues for income, crime becomes an alluring option, perpetuating a cycle of violence and insecurity.

Inadequate Education

Closely linked to economic hardship is the issue of inadequate education. The literacy rate in Kogi State, particularly among youths in Igala land, has not improved significantly over the years. According to UNESCO, Kogi State has one of the lowest educational attainment levels in Nigeria (UNESCO, 2017). The lack of quality education limits individuals' opportunities for meaningful employment and personal development.

Moreover, an uneducated populace is more susceptible to accepting criminal behaviour as a norm. Many youths in Igala land lack the critical thinking skills necessary to evaluate the consequences of their actions. Without proper education, they may be more easily influenced by criminal elements within their communities. Educational initiatives that focus not only on academic achievement but also on vocational skills could provide an avenue for economic empowerment. However, these initiatives are often stymied by inadequate infrastructure and funding, leaving a significant gap in educational accessibility.

Societal Disintegration

Another factor contributing to crime in Igala land is societal disintegration. The traditional communal lifestyle that once characterised the region is eroding in the face of modernity and economic pressures. This breakdown in social cohesion fosters an environment where crime can thrive. Communities that once offered collective security and support now struggle with individualism and apathy. According to a study published in the Journal of African Studies, the disintegration of community ties has led to a rise in criminal activities as individuals no longer feel a sense of communal responsibility (Akintoye, 2020). In the absence of strong social ties, many individuals experience a sense of anonymity, which can lead to deviant behaviour. For instance, the concept of shame, which once restrained individuals from committing crimes, weakened as social bonds diminished. Furthermore, families that are fractured or face challenges such as domestic violence often produce children who may be at risk of engaging in criminal activities, perpetuating a vicious cycle of crime and dysfunction.

Poor Governance and Corruption

Poor governance and rampant corruption within the local government further exacerbate crime in Igala land. Kogi State has faced several governance challenges, including mismanagement of resources and lack of accountability among public officials. These issues erode public trust in government institutions, leading many to believe that the legal system is ineffective or corrupt. According to a

report by Transparency International, Nigeria ranked 149 out of 180 countries in the 2020 Corruption Perceptions Index, indicating a pervasive culture of corruption that undermines governance (Transparency International, 2020). In an environment where citizens lack faith in the justice system and law enforcement, they may feel compelled to take the law into their own hands. This situation not only fosters criminal behaviour but also creates a culture of impunity where criminals operate without fear of repercussions. Moreover, with limited resources devoted to public safety and crime prevention, law enforcement agencies in Kogi State are often ill-equipped to respond effectively to rising crime rates.

Additional Factors

While the aforementioned causes represent the core contributors to crime in Igala land, it is crucial to acknowledge other factors that exacerbate the situation. The influence of drug abuse, especially among youths, plays a significant role in heightening criminal activities. Substances such as cannabis and illicit drugs have permeated local communities, leading to increased violence and theft, as individuals engage in criminal behaviour to support their habits (National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, 2021). Furthermore, the impact of regional conflicts cannot be overlooked. The proximity of Kogi State to areas experiencing ethnic and religious tensions has led to spill-over violence. This influx of conflict can escalate criminal activities, as disillusioned youths may become recruits for extremist groups or partake in gang-related activities.

Current Crime Rates and Statistics

The prevalence of crime in Igala land is alarming, with various reports indicating a noticeable increase in criminal activities over the past decade. According to the Nigeria Security Tracker, a platform that monitors violence and crime in Nigeria, incidents of armed robbery, kidnapping, and communal violence have risen sharply in Kogi State (Nigeria Security Tracker, 2023). For instance, a report by the National Bureau of Statistics highlights that Kogi State recorded a 15% increase in reported cases of violent crimes from 2021 to 2022, with Igala land being significantly affected (National Bureau of Statistics, 2023). Furthermore, a local government report from 2023 showed that incidents of robbery and kidnapping have become commonplace, with community members often taking to social media to express their concerns about safety and security (Idris, 2023). The increased proliferation of illegal arms in the region poses a considerable threat, contributing to the rising crime rate (Adebayo, 2023).

TYPES OF CRIME PREVALENT IN IGALA LAND

In Igala land, various types of crime are predominantly observed. Primarily, armed robbery has become a significant concern. Criminal gangs operate openly, targeting businesses, residences, and even vulnerable individuals in broad daylight. This is largely attributed to the high levels of poverty and unemployment in the region, which drive individuals toward criminal activities as a means of survival.

Kidnapping is another critical issue affecting Igala land. The region has witnessed a surge in abductions for ransom, particularly targeting wealthy individuals and prominent community members. This trend reflects a broader pattern observed in Nigeria, where kidnapping has emerged as a lucrative business venture for criminals (Adeola, 2023). Additionally, communal clashes and violence, often rooted in ethnic and land disputes, contribute to the crime landscape in Igala land. Such conflicts have historically been a cause of unrest in the region, exacerbating existing tensions among different groups.

The Effect of Crime Rate in Igala Land

Like many communities worldwide, Igala land is increasingly grappling with the adverse effects of crime. Crime in this region can be attributed to various factors, including poverty, lack of education, and unemployment. Statistical reports indicate a rise in incidents such as armed robbery, kidnapping, communal clashes, and ritual killings (Odeyemi, 2020). The influx of young people into criminal activities is often linked to their desperation for financial gain in the face of limited job opportunities. A targeted investigative report by the National Bureau of Statistics (2021) highlighted that Kogi State has seen economic performance stagnate, significantly affecting the youth who, feeling excluded from legitimate means of making a living, often turn to crime as a coping mechanism (National Bureau of Statistics, 2021).

The prevalence of crime in Igala land has far-reaching consequences for the community. The fear of crime affects daily life, with residents often feeling unsafe in their own environments. This insecurity can lead to a decline in economic activities, as businesses struggle to operate effectively amid the constant threat of robbery or kidnapping (Adeola, 2023). Consequently, the economic development of Igala land is stunted, perpetuating a cycle of poverty and crime. Moreover, crime and violence negatively impact social structures, leading to strained relationships within the community. Trust among neighbours diminishes as individuals become wary of potential threats. This erosion of social cohesion not only affects community interactions but also hampers collective efforts to tackle crime and build a safer environment (Ogunyemi, 2023).

Social Implications of Crime in Igalaland

One of the most substantial effects of crime on Igala land is the deterioration of social cohesion. Communities that once thrived on mutual trust and collaboration find themselves grappling with fear and suspicion. As individuals become victims or witnesses of crime, their sense of security diminishes, leading to a breakdown in the social contract. The erosion of traditional values and communal ties is particularly evident. Elders, once revered as custodians of customs and wisdom, now find their authority undermined by the rising tide of criminality. For instance, instances of youth engaging in violent acts against their elders have surged, disrupting the longstanding respect between generations (Iloeje, 2019). This generational divide not only fractures familial relationships but also jeopardises the transmission of cultural values essential for maintaining societal integrity. Moreover, the ripple effects of crime extend into social gatherings, religious practices, and communal festivities, which serve as vital expressions of Igala identity. Fear of crime can lead to decreased participation in communal activities, thus stifling cultural expressions. Consequently, the Igala people's sense of identity and belonging is threatened, which can engender feelings of alienation and disenfranchisement.

Economic Consequences

The economic ramifications of crime in Igala land are profound and pervasive. As crime rates increase, investors hesitate to engage with businesses in the area, leading to dwindling economic opportunities. The resultant economic climate stifles entrepreneurship and innovation, leaving the community trapped in a cycle of poverty. The agricultural sector, which forms the backbone of the Igala economy, is particularly vulnerable to criminal activities. With reports of kidnappings and theft on farmlands, many farmers now risk their livelihoods when venturing out to tend to their crops (Adetola, 2022). The fear of violence discourages agricultural productivity, exacerbating food insecurity and driving many rural dwellers into starvation.

Moreover, the local economy suffers a double blow as victims of crime often divert their resources from productive investments to deal with security concerns. This diversion leads to a decline in standards of living, where individuals and families are forced to spend significant portions of their income on security measures instead of education, health, or business ventures (Osubor, 2021). Further compounding the economic impacts, crime leads to increased policing and security expenditures. The Kogi State government has been compelled to allocate substantial funds to enhance law enforcement capabilities to combat rising crime, diverting resources away from

crucial developmental projects (NBS, 2021). Consequently, infrastructure, education, and healthcare suffer as funds are redirected toward addressing crime rather than fostering economic growth and community development.

Psychological Effects of Crime

The psychological toll of crime on the Igala people is an often-overlooked consequence. Witnessing or being a victim of crime can lead to prolonged anxiety, stress, and trauma, significantly affecting mental health. A substantial number of Igala residents report feelings of vulnerability and helplessness, which can culminate in a collective trauma within the community (Eze, 2023). Children growing up in an environment riddled with crime are particularly susceptible to psychological distress. Exposure to violence can have lasting effects on their development, leading to behavioural issues, academic challenges, and social withdrawal (Okafor, 2022). The fear instilled in these children not only hampers their childhood experiences but may contribute to the perpetuation of a cycle of violence, as they may grow up to normalise the criminal behaviour witnessed in their formative years. Moreover, the stigma associated with being a victim of crime can further isolate individuals, causing them to retreat from social interactions and support networks. This isolation exacerbates mental health issues, leading to a concerning rise in depression and other psychological disorders within the community (Adekunle, 2021).

Igala Women Role In Crime Control In Igalaland, Kogi State

The Igala people have a tradition that values communal living, where both men and women contribute to the society's fabric. Historically, Igala women have played vital roles within their communities, participating in decision-making processes, agricultural production, and socio-economic activities. Despite cultural restrictions, women's involvement in community wellbeing, including crime control, has been evident. According to the Igala traditional governance structure, women have historically influenced local decisions, albeit often through indirect means (Okunola, 2021).

Community Guardianship

In Igala land, women are often seen as custodians of culture and tradition. Their roles include mediators during conflicts and supporters of community peace initiatives. Women initiate gatherings to address issues related to violence and crime in their communities. Such actions underscore the idea that crime control extends beyond the conventional law enforcement arena. As noted by Nwankwo (2022), "Igala women utilize social networks to

promote peace, often acting as informal peacekeepers and conflict resolution agents.” Their influence in community gatherings enables them to voice their concerns and propose solutions to local challenges.

Economic Contributions and Education and Awareness Initiatives

Another dimension to women’s role in crime control in Igala land is their economic contribution. Women engage in various economic activities, which often provide financial stability for their families. Economic empowerment is intrinsically linked to crime control, as poverty is frequently a catalyst for criminal behaviour. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), “The empowerment of women can lead to reduced levels

of crime in communities” (UNDP, 2020). By establishing microfinancing initiatives, cooperative societies, and local enterprises, Igala women mitigate economic hardship, thereby reducing the vulnerability of their communities to crime.

Education is a powerful tool for crime prevention, and women in Igala land have increasingly recognised its importance. Women organise literacy programmes and workshops aimed at educating their communities about crime prevention strategies and their rights. For instance, the Women’s Development Centre in Kogi has purportedly conducted numerous campaigns to enlighten women about their legal rights and protective measures against domestic violence and criminal offences (Owoseni, 2021).

Table 1: Role of Women in Fostering Informed Society

Role	Description	Global/Local Reference
Community Mediation	Informal dispute resolution, peacekeeping	Merry (1981); Nwankwo (2022)
Moral and Social Education	Teaching values and norms to youth	Heidensohn (1996); Akanbi (2022)
Organizing Safety Initiatives	Neighbourhood watches, vigilance	Skogan (2006); Owoseni (2021)
Advocacy and Awareness	Campaigns on crime prevention, rights awareness	Chesney-Lind & Pasko (2013); Agbo (2023)
Economic Empowerment	Microfinance, cooperatives to reduce poverty-related crime	UNDP (2020); Amadi (2022)
Cultural Practices	Use of traditions and rituals to enforce social norms	Odewale (2019); Okunola (2021)
Technology Use	Social media for crime reporting and community mobilization	Ogbimi (2022)

By disseminating knowledge and awareness, women play a crucial role in fostering a more informed society, capable of resisting crime and advocating for justice.

Challenges Faced by Women in Crime Control

While women in Igala land play significant roles in crime control, they face numerous challenges. Patriarchal structures continue to limit their influence and undermine their contributions. For instance, while women may be

active in mediating community conflicts, their authority is often questioned or disregarded in favour of male counterparts. According to Amadi (2022), “Women in Kogi State experience systemic barriers preventing their effective participation in formal crime control mechanisms.” Moreover, cultural stigma attached to women’s direct involvement in law enforcement can impede their effectiveness. Many women feel discouraged from reporting incidents of violence due to fear of social

Table 2: Challenges Faced by Women in Controlling Crime

Challenge	Description	Examples / References
Patriarchal and Cultural Barriers	Gender norms restrict women’s influence in crime control	Amadi (2022); Okunola (2021)
Limited Access to Formal Security Roles	Discrimination in police and law enforcement	UN Women (2019); Nwankwo (2022)
Safety Risks and Threats	Harassment and violence against women activists	Ojo (2023); Human Rights Watch (2020)
Socioeconomic Constraints	Poverty and caregiving limit participation	UNDP (2020); Agbo (2023)
Lack of Institutional Support	Marginalization and lack of recognition	Owoseni (2021); Transparency Int’l
Legal and Policy Gaps	Insufficient gender-sensitive policies	UK Gov Domestic Abuse Act (2021)

Challenge	Description	Examples / References
Social Stigma and Gender-Based Violence	Ostracism and violence deter activism	Ojo (2023); Walklate (2007)
Limited Access to Education	Gaps in training reduce skills	UNESCO (2017); Okafor (2022)
Balancing Multiple Roles	Time constraints due to multiple responsibilities	Akanbi (2022); Nwankwo (2022)

retribution or ostracism. This is particularly pronounced in cases of domestic violence, where cultural norms often dictate silence and complicity. Therefore, such barriers inhibit women from fully exercising their roles in crime control, resulting in an underutilisation of potential resources in combating crime.

The Intersection of Technology and Women's Roles

The advent of technology has transformed how communities approach crime control. In Igalaland, women have begun to leverage digital platforms for crime reporting and community engagement. Social media serves as a platform for awareness campaigns, highlighting issues of crime and advocating for community safety (Agbo, 2023). Women have used these platforms to mobilise support against socially harmful activities including human trafficking and gender-based violence. The use of technology has enabled women to form networks that transcend geographical barriers, allowing for the sharing of resources and strategies in crime prevention. As highlighted by Ogbimi (2022), "The integration of technology into women-led initiatives has proven essential in fostering a culture of vigilance and collective monitoring of neighbourhood safety." This shift towards technological engagement signifies a new era in women's involvement in crime control, fostering collaboration within and beyond their communities.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Feminist Theory

This paper adopted Feminist theory of crime prevention to analyse the role of women in crime control in Igalaland of Kogi State, Nigeria. Throughout history, crime prevention strategies have traditionally been male-centric and have largely overlooked the unique perspectives and experiences of women. However, feminist theory by criminologists like Carol Smart and Frances Heidensohn, (1960) has been instrumental in changing this narrative by focusing on the role of gender in crime prevention efforts. Feminist theory of crime prevention seeks to address the underlying social structures and power dynamics that contribute to crime, with a specific emphasis on how these factors intersect with gender. The feminist theory of crime prevention has its roots in the feminist movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, which

sought to challenge the social and political status quo that perpetuated gender inequalities. The first wave of feminism focused primarily on women's suffrage and legal rights, but it laid the groundwork for the development of feminist criminology in the 1960s and 1970s. Feminist criminologists like Carol Smart and Frances Heidensohn began to challenge traditional criminological theories that largely ignored the experiences of women and failed to account for the gendered nature of crime.

The impact of feminist theory of crime prevention has been felt in a variety of contexts, from policy development to community-based interventions. One area where feminist theory has had a significant impact is in the criminal justice system, where efforts have been made to address the gender biases that often pervade law enforcement and judicial processes. For example, feminist criminologists have advocated for greater awareness of the ways in which women are disproportionately impacted by the criminal justice system, particularly women of color and low-income women who face additional barriers to accessing support and resources. In community-based settings, feminist theory of crime prevention has informed the development of programs that empower women and girls to resist gender-based violence and advocate for their rights. These programs often focus on promoting gender equality, challenging traditional gender norms, and providing support for survivors of violence.

By addressing the root causes of crime and empowering individuals to confront gender-based violence, feminist theory of crime prevention has the potential to create more just and equitable societies, (Koss, 1985).

Looking towards the future, feminist theory of crime prevention has the potential to continue shaping our understanding of crime and developing innovative strategies to prevent it. As gender norms evolve and new forms of violence emerge, feminist criminologists must remain vigilant in challenging oppressive structures and advocating for the rights of all individuals. By working towards gender equality, promoting social justice, and addressing the root causes of crime, feminist theory of crime prevention can help create safer and more equitable communities for everyone, (Home Office, 2020).

Discussion of Major Findings from Literature Review

The study examines the causes of crime in Igalaland, Nigeria, focusing on the rich cultural heritage, poverty, lack of education, and unemployment. The region's symbiotic disintegration, family fractures, and corruption contribute to a sense of anonymity and deviant behavior. The prevalence of crime has increased significantly over the past decade, with a 15% increase in violent crimes reported from 2021 to 2022. The proliferation of illegal arms, particularly armed robbery, kidnapping, and communal violence, is a primary concern. The youth often turn to crime as a coping mechanism, feeling excluded from legitimate means of making a living. The prevalence of crime has far-reaching consequences for the community, including fear of crime, strained relationships, and a decline in economic activities. The economic ramifications of crime are profound, with investors hesitant to engage with businesses, leading to dwindling opportunities and stifling entrepreneurship and innovation. The agricultural sector, which forms the backbone of the Igala economy, is particularly vulnerable to criminal activities. The psychological toll of crime on the Igala people is often overlooked, with prolonged anxiety, stress, and trauma affecting mental health. Children growing up in an environment riddled with crime are particularly susceptible to psychological distress, leading to behavioral issues, academic challenges, and social withdrawal.

The role of Igala women in crime prevention in Kogi State is crucial for creating secure and thriving communities. Notable Igala women, such as Hajiya Bilkisu Yusuf and Chief Mrs. Aisha Danjuma, have demonstrated exceptional leadership, courage, and determination in their efforts to ensure the safety and security of their communities. Their contributions have had a lasting impact on residents and helped create a safer environment for all. In Igala society, women often engage in informal mechanisms of crime control, such as imparting moral values to the younger generation and organizing community meetings to raise awareness about crime dangers. Women's groups within the Igala culture often organize community meetings to discuss local challenges, including crime, and provide emotional support to victims of crime.

In addition to these women, have made significant contributions to crime prevention, serving as role models for their communities and inspiring others to take action. They have also spearheaded initiatives to address youth violence and drug abuse, working closely with local authorities and NGOs. Despite these positive developments, Igala women face challenges such as gender

stereotypes, cultural norms, and societal expectations that limit their ability to assert their authority and influence decisions in matters of security and law enforcement. Ensuring the protection of women working in crime prevention is essential for sustaining their contributions and fostering an enabling environment for their continued engagement.

CONCLUSION

Crime rates in Igala land of Kogi State are influenced by socio-economic, cultural, and historical factors. High poverty, unemployment, and weak governance contribute to rising crime rates, affecting development and community cohesion. Women play a crucial role in crime control, serving as community mediators and educational leaders. However, cultural and systemic barriers persist. Greater recognition and support for women's roles, particularly in law enforcement, is essential for community safety and effective crime control. The feminist theory of crime prevention offers a framework for understanding and addressing issues disproportionately affecting women. Integrating feminist principles into crime prevention strategies can create safer, more just societies. Queen Amina's leadership, strategic policies, and military prowess have inspired and awed people, showcasing the importance of working together to create a safer environment for everyone.

Recommendations

Crime control in Igala territory, similar to many communities, is a multifaceted issue driven by socio-economic, cultural, and political variables. Addressing the role of Igala women in crime control and prevention necessitates a diversified strategy. The following are suggested solutions:

Empowerment via Education: Implement educational initiatives for women that emphasise legal literacy, community policing, and dispute resolution. This is because educated women are more inclined to promote law and order, comprehend their rights, and participate in crime prevention.

Reinforcing Conventional Functions in Crime Prevention: Engage Igala women in traditional peacekeeping functions, such as local arbitration and mediation that correspond with their cultural customs. The traditional duties of women in communities, such as dispute mediation, can be enhanced and broadened to tackle more significant concerns like crime.

Promoting Women's Involvement in Law Enforcement: Encourage Igala women to enlist in the police force or other law enforcement agencies by providing training

and career incentives, because increased representation of women in law enforcement can enhance trust between female citizens and the police, hence boosting crime reporting and safety.

Advocating for Legal and Policy Reforms: Promote measures that enhance women's involvement in crime prevention, including affirmative action within the justice system or community policing programs, because Policies that advocate for gender equality within law enforcement can guarantee that women's perspectives are acknowledged in the battle against crime,

Cultural Awareness and Advocacy: Implement community activities to enhance awareness of detrimental cultural norms that may lead to criminal behaviour, including domestic violence. Instructing both genders on the detrimental effects of specific habits might diminish tolerance for criminal behaviour and promote a safer atmosphere

Enhancing Awareness of Women's Safety: Implement community seminars centred on personal safety and crime prevention, emphasising practical skills for women. Women who are cognisant of their security vulnerabilities are more inclined to adopt preventive measures against crime and safeguard themselves and others. By concentrating on these answers, Igala women may significantly contribute to crime reduction and the establishment of safer communities. Involving women at all levels, from grassroots to law enforcement, is crucial for a sustainable resolution

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