Among Inmates of Keffi Correctional Service Center, Nasarawa State, Nigeria

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Abstract
This study investigated the psychological predictors of violent crimes among incarcerated inmates of Keffi Correctional Center. This study used the Nigerian Correctional Service admission register inspection and cross-sectional survey design in which the register was examined to identify cases detained of crimes of both convicted and awaiting trial inmates. The participants for the study were incarcerated inmates of Keffi Correctional Center. A total of 96 inmates volunteered to participate in the research. Participants were required to complete **Psychological Index of Violent Crime Scale (PIVC)**. **The** instrument is a seven-factor questionnaire design to measure anti-social factors, childhood, psychological, school factors, community factors, substance abuse factors, emotional trauma factors of violent crimes with two and three response options respectively. Violent crimes identified in this study were murder, armed robbery, fighting, terrorism, cultism, and kidnapping. Of the violent crimes identified, murder and armed robbery were the most prevalent among the inmates of Keffi correctional center. One hypothesis was tested and the result showed that, the psychological factors of depression, emotional trauma and childhood experience were significant predictors of criminal behavior. Depression, (X=4.482, P=.034, Fisher's Exact=.035), Emotional Trauma (X=.5.233,

P=.022, Fisher's Exact=.023,) and Childhood factors (X=.485, P=.486, Fisher's Exact=337). Substance use, law enforcement factors, school factors and community factors were not significant predictors of criminal behavior; Substance use (X=.563, p=.563), Law Enforcement Factor (X=2.153, p=.142, Fisher's Exact=.159), School factors (X=2.600, p=.107, Fisher's Exact=.098), Community factors (X=1.264, p=.261, Fisher's Exact=.196). The researchers reported that, inmates with high depression were significantly more likely to commit violent crimes than those with high depression, and inmates with high emotional trauma were also more likely to commit violent crimes compared to those with low depression and low emotional trauma. Based on these results, it is recommended that, there is need for mental health services to be provided for inmates in the correctional centers because they research result showed that inmates who commit crimes manifested high depression and high emotional trauma on statistical score in the research, which are mental health needs that require mental health services.
Key Words: Psychosocial Predictors, Crime, Inmates, Correctional Center, Nigeria.

Introduction

Crime is a phenomenon that affects various countries across the globe in varying degrees as it affects safety and security of lives (Adebayo, 2013). Adebayo (2013) stated that the prevalence of violent crime in the world today is worrisome for all and sundry. According to the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (2016), there has been an upsurge in the frequency of violent crime committed, with approximately 170 million people as victims worldwide. For instance, global research on violent crime indicates that, since the last decade, there have been reported cases of 83% violent crimes in the world (National Institute of Justice, 2016). These crimes include armed robbery, burglary, violent assault, murder, forcible rape, manslaughter and non-negligent homicide, militancy, amongst others. This has led to palpable fear among the populace as the security of lives and properties can no longer be guaranteed (Adebayo, 2013). Nigeria as a country is not exempted as records of violent crimes show that, kidnapping is on the increase across Nigeria

with 60% cases being recorded (Center for Law Enforcement Education in Nigeria, 2016).The prevalence of violent crimes in Nigeria today is a cause for serious concern for all and sundry. For example, first, crime undermines the social fabric by eroding the sense of safety and security. Secondly, crime impacts on society in a variety of ways according to the nature and extent of crime committed.

Statement of the Problem

Nations all over the world have been grappling to contain the rising incidence of violent crimes such as homicide, armed robbery, and kidnapping, drug trafficking, rape, indecent dressing and sexual assault, sex trafficking, illegal gun running and host of others (Roberts, 2008). For instance, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2010) reported that the rising cases of homicides globally were estimated at 468,000 and more than a third (36%) was estimated to have occurred in Africa, 31% in the Americas, 27% in Asia, 5% in Europe and 1% in the tropical Pacific region. It is widely reported that, reasons for the increase in violent crime in Nigeria include unemployment and urbanization which are increasing more widely and rapidly than improvement in the social and economic condition. According to United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, economic crisis; food insecurity; inflation; and weak or limited rule of law are other factors that drive crime. However, the drivers of crime are not restricted to the aforementioned causative factors. In the Americas, more than 25% of homicides are related to "organized crime and the activities of criminal gangs"; the same only true of approximately 5% of homicides in the Asian and European countries for which data are available.

` In Nigeria, there was observable upsurge of violent crimes and their atrocious nature particularly in the use of dangerous weapons and killings. Research report showed, from 1995 to 2016, cases of assault have been reported to increase from 17666 to 465430 (Dambazau, 2016). Murder cases have been reported to increase from 1585 to 2283; Kidnapping cases have been reported to increase from 410 to 415 cases. Crimes such as rape, armed robbery, cultism and lately militancy and terrorism as unleashed by the Boko

Haram sect, made the Nigerian nation apparently insecure (Dambazau, 2016).

Nigeria's crime problem is worsening partly due to ineffectiveness of the crime control apparatuses (Adebayo, 2013). For instance, Nigeria has been on the global crimes map since 1980s and the nature of these crimes includes armed robbery, murder, forcible rape, homicide, aggravated assault, attempted simple assault, kidnapping, human trafficking and or abduction, vandalism, amongst others (Ukoji & Okoli-Osemene, 2016).

Sadly, there are reports of crimes such as armed robbery committed mostly by the youths at virtually every corner of the country, which has been estimated to increase from 2109 to 3497 cases between 1996 and 2016 (Adebayo, 2016). Violent criminal activities such as armed robbery, kidnapping, political thuggery, militancy, terrorism and other social vices in the society have contributed greatly to high level of insecurity in Nigeria (Tanimu, 2006). The frequency of violent criminal activities as recorded is a cause for serious concern and indicates that violent crime is being committed on daily basis with serious consequences on the economic, political, social and psychological wellbeing of people and the country at large (Ugwuoke, 2010). According to Adebayo (2013) various forms of violent crimes prevalence have been estimated at76% in the country (Adebayo). In recent times, there have been notable adverse social, economic and political developments in Nigeria as a consequence of crime particularly exemplified by increasing militancy, kidnapping, restiveness and violence (Ajufo, 2013; Dambazau, 2016). The scariest undertone of these in Nigeria, is the steady rise of these crimes in the North Central region of Nigeria, nurtured in a climate of increasing occurrence of anti-social behavior, violence, conflicts, and crises (Adebayo, 2015, Ugwuoke, 2010). Also, armed insurgencies ravaging this nation and wanton destruction of lives in the volatile North Central and by Boko Haram in the East of Northern part of the country make crime more worrisome (Ukoji & Okoli-Osemene, 2016). According to Danbazau (2007) the net effect of the above has been a tragic precipitation of violent crimes such as assault, armed conflicts and kidnapping etc. Decades of these social turmoil has turn the strategically located

Nigerian nation and the peaceful North central region into an established junction for armed robbery, murder, drug smuggling, firearms smuggling, and Kidnapping, amongst others (Osalor, 2010).

The escalation of violent crimes in Nigeria has also been attributed to the proliferation of arms and ammunition in the hands of private individuals. Also, the high rate of violent crimes has been explained as a product of several factors. These include political factors such as state fragility and state failure, and historical factors such as the history of inter-ethnic and interracial injustices including apartheid. Others are economic factors such as unemployment and corruption, and the balloon effect resulting from the improved successes of anti-drug law enforcement in Europe and the Caribbean, which are said to be responsible for increased drug trafficking into West Africa (UNODC, 2014; &2015).Despite research efforts to understand the root causes of crime, the perpetrations of crimes are on the increase.

Among other associated factors of crime, reporting of these crimes in Nigeria to the Police has been grossly under estimated. For instance, the findings of the survey by Sheriff deputies (2016) revealed that most crimes 82% are unreported. Only 2 in 10 (18%) of people who suffered crimes reported to the police.

From the foregoing, it is evident that many violent crimes have gone undetected. This indicates that published crime statistics were probably grossly understated because most parts of the country were virtually un-policed, and in most cases, the issue of 'dark figures' complicate the phenomenon (Igbo, 2007).

Second, non-immediate and inadequate government responses during crime incidence often increase its perpetration in our societies. The increased violent crimes in Nigeria, which is attributable to government machineries' inadequacies is derived from the fact that the government has not been able to prove itself to the position of an objective force standing above the breakdown of law in the society. By implication, the State is directly immersed in certain contradictions of the society, which are defined largely, in terms of class cleavages. The State however is partisan and unpatriotic in terms of quick response to crime incidence (Tenuche, 2009). In this case, the Federal government, the State, and the local

government apparatuses are controlled and operated on behalf of certain class interests and this severely limit the confidence of the vast majority of people in Nigeria. It has been proven over and over again that government response at all levels (including the police, the courts, and key functionaries of the government in power) to crime has in-built bias and preferences. This situation often make criminals to unleash terror as if there is nothing like law and order, and as if law enforcement agents do not exist since immediate government response was not adjudged to be responsive and adequate (Tenuche, 2009). Hence, sporadic violence as gun shooting and destruction of properties and crimes of diverse kind has become the prevailing feature in Nigeria. Despite beefing up of security in the country, the problems still looms. Hence, the legacy of state repression and impunity; and the sheer failure and or inability of the police and security agencies to fulfill their basic obligations to maintain law and order and to protect lives and properties create an enabling environment for violent crimes perpetration to increase. Today the Northern, Southern, Eastern and Western parts of Nigeria have literally recorded unrivalled crimes. Bomb blasts, kidnaps and killings of Nigerians and others have become the prevailing trend. Also, in recent times, crime waves grew to nearly pandemic proportions, particularly in urbanized areas characterized by rapid economic growth and change, stalk economic inequality and deprivation, social disorganization and by inadequate government service and law enforcement in capabilities (Emeh, 2012). So far, the prevalent increasing waves ofviolent crimes in Nigeria have questioned the political will on the part of the leaders and the capability of the law enforcement agencies in containing the challenges.

Third, there appears to be a clouded and unclear understanding of the nature and determinants of crimes in Nigeria even though a few general explanations have been made from existing theoretical precepts. This implies that the determinants of the different types of crimes are yet to be systematically studied.

Hence in Nigeria, there are few data evidence on the psychosocial predictors of crime as most of the research were carried on phenomenal attacks like the Boko-Haram violence, ethno-

militia violence, ethno-political violence, ethno-religious violence which feature crime and the effects to individual, communities, properties, the economy, law and entrepreneurship. This paper focuses on studying the psychological predictors of violent crimes, whether in the form of **a**rmed robbery, violent assault, murder, forcible rape, manslaughter and non-negligent homicide, and militancy using systematic methods of investigation.

Objectives

This present research seeks to achieve the following objectives:

1. To examine the influences of depression, emotional trauma, childhood factors, substance use factors, law enforcement factors, school factors and community factors over the prevalence of violent crimes among inmates of Keffi Correctional Center.
2. To study the roles of depression, emotional trauma, substance use factors, law enforcement factors, school factors and community factors in predicting violent crimes among inmates of Keffi Correctional Center.

Hypothesis

One hypothesis was formulated thus:

Hi Depression, emotional trauma, childhood factors, substance use factors, law enforcement factors, school factors and community factors will have significant influence over violent crimes among inmates of Nigerian Correctional Service, Keffi Medium Custodial Center.

Methods

Design and Participants

This study adopted a survey research design. This design proves appropriate in that the participants were measured on psychological predictors of violent crimes. The participants of this study comprised of 96 male inmates of Keffi Correctional Center that volunteered to participate in the study. Their age ranges from 18 to 60 years. Out of the total participants, 8 (8.3%) fall between the age

range of 18-20, 18 (18.3%) fall between the age range of 21-25, 27 (28.1%) fall between the age range of 26-30, 15 (15.6%) fall between the age range of 31-35, 11 (11.5%) fall between the age range of 36-40, and 17 (17.7%) fall between the age range of 40-60. For marital status, 61 (63.5%) were singles while 35 (36.5%) were married. For educational attainment, 16 (16.6%) were not educated, 45 (46.9%) of the inmates attended secondary school, and 35 (36.5%) of the inmates attended tertiary institution. For religious affiliation, 13 (13.5%) practice Islam, 77 (80.2%) of them practice Christianity and 2 (2.1%) practice African Traditional Religion (ATR), while 4 (4.2%) practice none of the aforementioned religion. For occupation, 49 (51.0%) of the inmates were self-employed, 20 (20.8%) were employed, 21 (21.9%) were unemployed, and 6 (6.3%) were under-employed.

The instrument used to gather data for this study was Psychological Index of Violent Crime (PIVC). The Psychological Index of Violent Crime (PIVC) was designed by the researcher. The instrument is a seven factors questionnaire design to measure psychological factors, emotional and trauma factors, childhood factors, substance abuse factors, anti-social (behavioral) factors, school factors, and community factors of violent crimes. The first sub-scale has 12 items with 4 response options as "Much more, A lot, A little, and Not at all." The second sub-scale has 4 items with 4 response options as "Much more, A lot, A little, and Not at all." The third sub-scale has 11 items with 4 response options as Much more, A lot, A little, and Not at all." The fourth sub-scale has 7 items with "current user, occasional user, and regular user" as response options. The fifth sub-scale has 6 items with 4 response options as "Much more, A lot, A little, and Not at all." The sixth sub-scale has 26 items with 4 response options as "Much more, A lot, A little, and Not at all," and the seventh sub-scale has 7 items with 4 response options as "Much more, A lot, A little, and Not at all."The response options are scored as follows: Much more = 3 marks, A lot = 2 marks, A little = 1marks, and Not at all = 0 marks respectively.

Procedures

To collect the data for this study, the researchers obtained an official permission from the management authority of the Nigerian Correctional services before the administration of the instrument to the inmates. First, an official letter of acceptance was obtained from the Nigerian Correctional Services Headquarters Command Lafia, to conduct the research at Keffi Correctional Center. The researchers were then granted access to conduct the study in the prison by inspecting admission register in administering the Psychological Index of Violent Crimes (PIVC).

In addition to obtaining Institutional permission to conduct the study, a consenting process and procedures were established which includes obtaining voluntary informed consent from the inmates to indicate their willingness to participate in the research, debriefing them of the objectives of the study, explaining the benefits of the study to the inmates and the Nigerian Correctional Service(s), assurance of confidentiality of the research information was given to the inmates, and also assurance of the right to withdraw at any point of the study without adverse consequence was addressed.

Method of Data Analysis

All analyses were conducted using SPSS 16.0 and Multivariate logistic regression was used to identify the psychological predictors of violent crimes among inmates of Keffi Correctional Center.

Results

The result of the study is as presented on the table below

Table 1: Cross-Tabulation showing Influence of Depression, Emotional Trauma, Childhood Factors, Substance use Factors, Law Enforcement Factors, School Factors, and Community Factors over violent crimes among Inmates of Keffi Correctional Center

** Significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The cross-tabulation presents the result of hypothesis one which states that depression, emotional trauma, and childhood factors will have significant influence over violent crimes among inmates of Nigerian Correctional Service, Keffi Medium Custodial Centre.

This analysis requires a cross-tabulation of violent crimes and non-violent crimes in this population. The results showed that Depression (X=7.577[a], P=.006, F=.013),Emotional Trauma (X=5.295[a], P=.021, F=.030) and Childhood factors (X=.909[a], P=.332, F=.479) had significant influence over the prevalence of violent crimes in the study sample.

	TYPE OF CRIME					
	NON VIOLENT	VIOLENT	X	Df	Sig.	Fishers Exact
DEPRESSION						
No	47(58.8%)	14(41.2%)	7.577[a]	1	.006	.009
Yes	52(81.5%)	12(18.5%)				
EMOTIONAL TRAUMA						
No	58(78.4%)	16(21.6%)	5.295[a]	1	.021	.030
Yes	20(58.8%)	14(41.2%)				
CHILDHOOD FACTORS						
Positive Experiences	38(78.4%)	8(21.6%)	.909[a]	1	.348	.479
Negative Experiences	41(69.5%)	18(30.5%)				
SUBSTANCE USE						
Current User	48(72.7%)	15(27.3%)	.031[a]	2	.985	
Occasional User	31(72.1%)	8(27.6%)				
Regular User	6(75.0%)	2(25.0%)				
LAW ENFORCEMENT FACTORS						
Low Criminality	63(71.6%)	25(28.4%)	.940[a]	1	.332	.441
High Criminality	7(87.5%)	1(12.5%)				
SCHOOL FACTORS						
No Truancy	58 (78.4%)	16(21.6%)	4.878[a]	1	.027	.053
Truancy	12(54.5%)	10(45.5%)				
COMMUNITY FACTORS						
Poor Coexistence	42(70.0%)	18 (30.0%)	.689[a]	1	.406	.481
Good Coexistence	28 (77.8%)	8 (22.2%)				

Substance use (X=.031[a], P=.985) and law Enforcement Factors (X=.940[a], P=.332, F=.441) did not have any significant influence over the prevalence of violent crimes among inmates of Nigerian Correctional Service, Keffi Medium Custodial Centre. The results also revealed that, School factors (X=4.878[a], P=.027, F=.053) and Community factors (X=.689, P=.406, F=.481) did not have any significant influence over the prevalence of violent crimes in the study population. It should be noted however, that school factor such as truancy influences the occurrence of violent crimes.

Discussion of Findings

This study investigated the psychological predictors of violent crimes among incarcerated inmates of Keffi Correctional Center. The major aim of the study was to find out if psychological factors have a positive relationship with crimes and to find out which of these factors will predict the acts of violent crime by any individual.

The result of the hypothesis revealed that Depression, emotional trauma and childhood factors had significant influence over the prevalence of crimes among inmates of Keffi Medium Security Nigerian Correctional Service. That means that, types of crimes committed by the inmates were related to depression, emotional trauma, and childhood experience. Whereas those who committed non-violent crimes were proportionately larger than those who committed violent crimes, the prevalence of depression and emotional trauma tended to be higher in the later.

Generally in prison populations, psychiatric morbidity or mental

disorders have been observed to be high. This study agreed with the findings of Leober and Farington (1998) which showed that psychological variables associated with depression, emotional trauma, and low self-control, predicts violent crimes, including impulsivity, risk taking, and hyperactivity. Children and individuals with attention deficit-hyperactivity disorders and depression have a higher likelihood of manifesting aggressive behavior and becoming involved in violent crimes and behavior (Leober&Farington, 1998). According to them, such behavioral traits have been linked to certain nervous system conditions and genetic predispositions which combined with adverse childhood environments to predict violent behaviors and crimes.

The finding by Leober and Farington (1998) agrees with the research by Adejuwon and Osinowo (2010) which showed that psychological characteristics such as depressive disorders are strongly related to violent criminal behavior

According to a state study in the U.S, Texas prisons of about 15,700 inmates and county jails of about 5,900 inmates received drugs treatment for depression illness. Also in Travis County, about 15% of county jail inmates have mental health issues (Travis County Sheriff's Office, 2000), and about one-half of juveniles referred to Juvenile Probation showed high to moderate need on a depressive health assessment (Travis County Juvenile Probation Department, 1999).

The result also revealed that emotional trauma had significant influence over the prevalence of criminal behavior among inmates of Keffi Correctional Center. This showed that prison inmates who scored high in emotion are unstable and have more tendencies in committing violent crimes than inmates who score low on emotional scale. This finding is in consonance with Bassarath, (2001); Adejuwon & Osinowo, (2010) which revealed that emotional characteristics, such as hyperactivity, attention deficit, impulsivity, risk taking, aggressiveness, anti-establishment and emotional trauma are related to criminal behavior (Loeber& Farrington, 1998).
The result again revealed that childhood factors were found to predict crimes' influence among inmates of Kefii Correctional Center. According to social control theory, children that bond to

their families are less likely to engage in delinquent behavior. Not surprisingly then, disruptions of the parent-child relationship are often related to criminal behavior. The degree and quality to which parents interact with their children and are involved in their lives have also been shown to predict criminal behavior.

Along these lines, research indicates that abuse or neglect during childhood increases the risk of later criminal behavior. The National Institute of Justice (1995) conducted a study on victims of childhood sexual abuse and later criminal consequences and found that children who were abused or neglected were more likely than people who were not maltreated to be arrested later in life. Also the likelihood of arrest was especially high in cases of neglect.

In summary, the result showed that psychological factors of depression and emotional trauma had significant influence over the prevalence of violent crimes among inmates of Keffi Medium Security Prison. However, childhood factors, substance use, law enforcement factors, school factors and community factors did not have any significant influence over the prevalence of crimes in Keffi.

Conclusion

The result of this study demonstrated that, depression, emotional trauma and childhood factors were found to be major predictors ofviolent crime tendencies among inmates of Keffi Correctional Center.

The study also demonstrated that, high depression, high emotional trauma and negative childhood experience predicted the likelihood of violent crimes among inmates in Keffi Medium Security Nigerian Correctional Service than inmates with low depression, low emotional trauma, and positive childhood experience.

Recommendations

Based on the outcome of this study, the following recommendations are made:

There is need for mental health services to be provided for inmates in the prison because they research result showed that inmates who commit violent crimes manifested high depression and high emotional trauma on statistical score in the research, which are

mental health needs that require mental health services.

Specialized therapies by psychologists serving in the Nigerian Correctional Services should be deployed to safeguard mental health of the inmates.

This study is not without limitation. First, the adoption of survey method prevents access to the understanding of the causal relationship that exists among the variables of study. Also, the sample of participants was only male inmates that were kept in the Nigerian Correctional Service, Keffi Correctional Center which was used in the study and this will not allow for a robust external validity of the research findings on female crime perpetrators. In addition, data are self-reports which makes responses based on spontaneity and difficult to control. Against this background, *future researchers should undertake* community survey study in order to identify major predictors of criminal behaviors in the population compare to prison statistics. This will then make it possible for policies on crime control so as to accommodate the mental health component and promote mental hygiene both for incarcerated inmates in correctional custodial centers and the general population.

In summary, this research represents an important contribution to research investigating predictors of crimes among inmates in the Nigerian Correctional Services. It is also a representation of the contribution of psychological predictors to the understanding of crimes among inmates in the Nigerian Correctional Services.

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