Correlates of Crime and Education Qualification among Prison inmates in Keffi Medium Prison

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Abstract: *The results of the study indicated that level of educational qualifications were significantly associated with types of crime. As hypothesized, cross tabulating the types of crime with the level of education indicated that cases of robbery, assault and rape were more prevalent among inmates with no formal education and primary school certificate holders respectively. While Fraud and murder, however, were more prevalent amongst inmates who had secondary and tertiary education. The study adopted secondary data collection method. The data collection instrument for this study was verbal interview and the Prisoners' Criminal Records (PCR) that contains the official information of inmates in the facility. The sample comprised 500 inmates who were randomly selected from the PCR. The results of the Chi square analysis showed that education qualifications have significant statistical correlation with types of crime.*

Keywords: *Education, Crime, Correlation.*

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

A crime has been defined as an offence that deserves community condemnation, usually through fine or imprisonment (Law Handbook, 2017). Crime also refers to a body of both Federal and State rules that forbid behavior the State or Government deems harmful to society (Legalmatch, 2018). Research has indicated various types of crime including personal crimes, property crimes, statutory crimes and inchoate (incomplete) crimes (Legalmatch, 2018). Noting that gamut of patterns of criminal activities such as robbery, forgery, rape, kidnapping, arson, burgulary, battery, murder, conspiracy etc., are all forms of crime. Crimes are also often classified according to criminal intent or the degree of seriousness, for example felony and misdemeanor. There are some psychological, emotional and physical consequences of experiencing a crime, ranging from headaches, sleep problems, fatigue, jumpiness, and feelings of fear, anger, guilt, helplessness, confusion, sadness, depression and anxiety (Victims of Crime, 2018). Noting that these effects cut across all ages and gender, indeed there are no exceptions as per who could be an offender or a victim of crime.

International evidence of effects of crime, for instance homicide alone took the lives of almost half a million people in 2012 (UNODC, 2013). A global study of homicide indicated that this type of crime victimizes the family and community of victim, who may be considered secondary victims (UNODC, 2013) and leaves a ripple effect of fear and uncertainty. Thousands of people across the world are reported to be physically and occasionally assaulted (attacked) each year in hate crimes (BBC News UK, 2018). Noting that race hate crimes in the western countries were most common, but victims might also be particularly targeted because of their religion, disability or sexual orientation. Canter and Youngs (2016) stated that a range of studies that critically investigated the interactions between crime and society drawing from a range of nations and cultures like USA, Turkey, India, Britain, Ireland, Israel and Nigeria respectively, found that most citizens in developed cultures have relatively little direct contact with crime as victims

and even fewer as offenders. Noting that criminality reaches out to influence most aspects of citizen's daily lives.

Research evidence and statistics have shown that the crime rate in Africa is high. According to (UNODC, 2013) nearly half-a-million homicides committed globally in 2012, only 5% occurred in Europe; 31% occurred in Africa; just next to the Americas' 36% (UNODC, 2013). Numbeo (2015) also ranked six African countries as among the twenty societies with the highest crime rates in the globe. These include South Sudan, South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya and Libya. According to the report, when homicide rates per 100,000 population were calculated, Africa again came second to the Americas. For example, statistics from the victimization surveys in Africa (UNODC, 2010) revealed that in Rwanda, during the period 2003- 2008, out of the number of crime cases reported, 68.9% were crimes at the household level while 31.1% were personal/individual cases. In other African countries, such as Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Egypt, Tanzania and Uganda, arson, manslaughter, robbery, corruption, consumer fraud, sexual assault, kidnapping, and property crimes involving car hijacking, theft of livestock, and burglary were prevalent, although to varying degrees. A report (UNODC, 2013) indicated that out of 437,000 (almost half a million) deaths caused by intentional homicide globally in 2012, more than a third (36%) happened in the Americas, 31% occurred in Africa, 28% in Asia, and just 5% in Europe (UNODC, 2014).

Moreover, research has shown that educated people are largely involved in "white collar" crimes. These include medical fraud, false advertising, price fixing and corporate violence. While less or uneducated people may engage in crimes such as homicide, assault, rape, theft and burglary, Bryjak (2011). Recent research effort has shown that crime rates have gone up dramatically in big cities all around the world (Schmalleger, 2006). Noting that people who have migrated from rural areas to big cities have underlined a myriad of security problems. In this respect, there are numerous reasons why individuals who migrate to big cities bring about increase in crime rates in terms of lack of education and changes in values. Also, (Schmalleger, 2006) posited that with regard to education it can easily be opined that in today's world, education has become indispensable part of people's lives. He delineated strong connections between education and crime rates. Adding that experience has indicated that people who are involved in illegitimate ways are generally composed of uneducated individuals. Apparently, lack of education could be seen as a major factor that constitutes a threat to society in big cities. Bryjak (2011) argued that lack of education plays a leading role in increasing crime rates in big cities. Lochner (2004) emphasized the place of education as a human capital investment that tend to increase future genuine work opportunities, which discourages involvement in crime. Furthermore, a report showed that in 2001, more than 75 percent of convicted persons in Italy had not completed high school (Buonanno and Leonida, 2006), while confinement rates among men less than age 25 in the United Kingdom were more than eight times higher for those without educational qualification (Machin, Marie and Vujic 2011).

Statement of the problem

Crime is endemic in every society and all over the world government devote huge fund and State resources to tackle and keep the the havoc wrecked by criminal elements at minimum. No doubt, the cost of fighting crime, especially sophisticated and organized ones is unquantifiable. At the heart of the matter is identifying the various factors responsible for increase in crime rate across board. Such factors as economic frustration, poverty, personality disorder, peer influence, amoral beliefs etc., have all been attributed to be sources or causes of criminal behavior. In Nigeria for example new forms of organized crimes like kidnapping, cybercrime, fraud, serial killings, corporate crimes, corruption to name a few have continued unabated. To this effect, critical stakeholders in the security sector seem not to have designed the right approach to curb such category of crime. Besides, the several efforts of government to ensure security of lives and property appear elusive because citizens now live in fear and continue to scamper for safety including migrating to other locations where they believe are safer. Again, the economic and psychological cost of displacement or migration on citizens is enormous and devastating. Furthermore, research has shown that in this century, education seems to be an essential aspect of people's lives. The more educated and exposed individuals are, the better their opportunities of finding alternative legitimate means of surviving. Apparently, little or no education has over the years been linked to various categories of crime. This study is set out to investigate the nexus between education qualification and forms of crime.

Research question

How is levels of education related to types of crime?

Purpose of the study

The general objective of this study is to examine the relationship that exist between education qualifications and types of crime.

Review of Extant Literature

The society contributes to criminal events both formally and informally. Society's less formal inputs arise out of generic social practice and conditions like poverty, poor education and the entire socialization process. Schmalleger (2006), argued that education has an important impact on criminality because it provides the interpretative foundation used to define and understand the significance of particular situations in which we may or may not decide to act. Previous studies indicate that poor education can lead to steep increase in criminal behavior, besides; the expense of incarcerating an individual greatly outweighs the cost of providing education for same person, Moretti (2005). Further research by Harlow (2003), shows that in about 75% of America's State Prison inmates, almost 59% did not complete High school. In a study conducted by Wright et al (2001), on interaction effect, interdependence levels of self-control and education versus delinquent peers on self-reported rates of offending, it was found that low self-control, level of educational achievement were an important factors influencing extent of involvement in crime. The researchers agreed that it is not at all uncommon to encounter adult inmates who are reading, writing, and performing mathematics operations at an elementary school level.

A study conducted by Tenibiaje (2010), on some prisons in South-West Nigeria on literacy remediation for inmates, the researcher found that 54% could neither read nor write in vernacular or English questionnaire. Bohma and Haley (1998) in a study discovered that two-thirds of prison inmates have such poor reading and arithmetic skills that they are unable to write brief letter explaining a billing error or to interpret a bar graph. In the same study it was established that many offenders enter prison with deficits in their education, which makes prison education amount to remedial schooling designed to prepare inmates. According to Harlow (1996), many jail inmates have poor reading skills, he further exposed that 40% of all jail inmates have less than a ninth-grade education. Schmalleger and Smykla (2005) in a study posited that though education does not guarantee that an offender will remain free of crime upon release, inmates who earned remedial education while incarcerated are less likely to return to crime.

In another study by Tenibiaje (2012), on educational attainment and peer group influence as predictors of recidivism, it was found that educational attainment and peer group influence were predictors of recidivism. The researcher recommended for life skills, literacy, employment and vocational programmes to be incorporated into prisons programmes in order to reduce rate of re-offending. Vereecken (2004) investigated the association of lifestyle behavior with educational level and social background based on parental occupation in adolescence, 12, 490 samples drawn from secondary school students participating in Belgian Health. The result showed that students of lower educational level reported more smoking, less healthy food habit and less teeth brushing. They concluded that a lower educational level is associated with higher prevalence of indicators of unhealthy lifestyle. Wilson (2000), emphasized the impact of education and vocational programmes and allied programmes with adult offenders.

Hypothesis

There will be a significant correlation of education qualifications with types of crime.

Method

This section captures the research design, population of study and data collection and analysis techniques.

Participants

The sample for this study comprised 500 prison inmates (males and females) who were drawn using simple random technique from Keffi Minimum prison, Nasarawa State. The age range of the participants is 25 – 55 years. They are composed of inmates who must have spent at least six months in the prison facility.

Instruments

The study adopted both primary and secondary data collection method. The data collection instruments for this study were verbal interview and the Prisoners' Criminal Records (PCR) that contains the official information of inmates in the facility. The PCR contains classified information about the inmates of the facility which can only be obtained through a legitimate means. It consists of the family, court and criminal records of the inmates. The PCR is a valid and reliable source of secondary data, we sort the consent of the Prisons Authorities to use it as the main source of data for the study.

Procedure
The researcher first of all obtained approval from the Assistant Controller of prison in charge of the Keffi Medium Security Prison and adhered to the right to privacy, anonymity and confidentiality demanded by the facility Authorities. As part of the efforts to obtain informed consent, the researcher explained the purpose of the research and what will be done with the data that was sought. Thereafter, the researcher and is team proceeded to the 'Records Unit' of the prisons to obtain documented data of the inmates in relation to the research interest. This constituted the main secondary data used for analysis in this study.

Design/Statistics
The study employed traditional survey methods (including use of secondary data) to examine the relationships that existed between the variables under investigation. Accordingly, Data was obtained from the Prisoners' Criminal Record (PCR) and simple frequency distribution table of the participants' educational levels juxtaposed with types of crime was computed. To ascertain whether there is statistically significant relationship between levels of education, and crime, the Chi-square test was used for analysis.

Presentation of Results
The available data on crime and education were collected from a secondary data of prison inmates for 500 sample size. From the distribution of the sample by academic qualification, we found that 6% have tertiary education, 20% secondary and primary education account for 64%. Those with informal or vocational education accounted for 10% of the sample.

Table 1: Distribution by Educational Qualification

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	None	50	10.0	10.0	10.0
	Primary	320	64.0	64.0	74.0
	Secondary	100	20.0	20.0	94.0
	Tertiary	30	6.0	6.0	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

Table 2: Types of Crime

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Robbery	223	44.6	44.6	44.6
	Assault	72	14.4	14.4	59.0
	Rape	127	25.4	25.4	84.4
	Fraud	52	10.4	10.4	94.8
	Murder	26	5.2	5.2	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

The distribution of types of crime from the analysis showed that robbery has 44.6%, assault accounts for 14.4%, while rape, fraud and murder account for 25.4%, 10.4% and 5.2% respectively.

Table 3: Chi-Square Test (Educational Qualification and Crime)

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)

Pearson Chi-Square	769.974[a]	12	.000
Likelihood Ratio	569.142	12	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	321.954	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	500		

Hypothesis 1:
There will be significant correlation between education qualifications and types of crime.
Decision: The statistical analysis for level of education and types of crime was significant at 5% critical value, 12 degrees of freedom and a Chi-square value of 769.97. Thus, the hypothesis is accepted. This simply implies that there is statistically significant correlation between education qualifications and types of crime among prison inmates.

Discussion

The strictly based its discussion on the statistical analysis and findings made in the cause of carrying out the research. An attempt was made in research to investigate whether there are significant evidence of correlation between educational qualifications and types of crime. The data used for the study were collected from 500 prison inmates. Analyzing the distribution of the sample by academic qualifications, it was found that 6% had tertiary education, 20% secondary and primary education accounted for 64%. While participants with informal or vocational education accounted for 10% of the sample. The results indicated that there is high rate of primary school holders and low rate of tertiary education holders among prison inmates. Furthermore, the analysis on types of crime showed that robbery is the highest crime with 44.6%. Other crimes such as Assault, rape, fraud and murder accounted for 14.4%, 25.4%, 10.4% and 5.2% respectively. Cross tabulating the crime rate with the level of education indicated that cases of robbery, assault and rape are more prevalent with people without education and primary school certificate holders. Fraud and murder, however, are more associated with secondary school and tertiary school leavers.
From the foregoing, the first hypothesis which stated that there will be a significant correlation between educational qualifications and types of crime was accepted. This is based on the fact that the statistical analysis for level of education and types of crime was significant at 5% critical value, 12 degrees of freedom and a Chi-square value of 769.97. The statistical significance implies that types of crime is significantly correlated with education qualifications. This implies that as government makes more effort to increase the level of educational attainment up to tertiary education, it would decrease the rate of robbery, assault and rape. Such education, however, without creating the environment for ample employment opportunity, would increase fraud crime.
The result is in tandem with a study conducted by Wright et al (2001) on interaction effect, interdependence levels of self-control and education versus delinquent peers on self-reported rates of offending. It was found that low self-control, level of educational achievement were important factors influencing extent of involvement in crime. In another study by Tenibiaje (2012), on educational attainment and peer group influence as predictors of recidivism, it was found that educational attainment and peer group influence strongly predicted reoccurrence of crime.

Significance of the Study
This study will be useful to the judicial and correctional institutions who are often over burdened with unresolved criminal charges and prison overcrowding. Knowledge of education-crime relationship gives the Government insight as to providing the right information and education to citizens as a way of combating and reducing incidents of crime in the society.

Limitation of the Study
The main limitations of this study were the difficulties experienced to obtain classified data from the prisons authority. Also, financial constraints that affected the choice of sample size and number of factors considered for the study. It was not easy to differentiate the inmates awaiting trials from the convicted inmates.

Recommendations

The study recommended that out criminal Justice system and indeed the government should intensify effort to improve living conditions as well as operate a policy of free and compulsory education for the common man. This should be extended to those in the prisons. It was discovered that the more education qualifications people have, the less likely they will engage in certain types of crime. Also the researcher recommended that the study should be replicated using larger sample size for better generalization.

Conclusion

The results of the study indicated that level of educational qualifications were significantly associated with types of crime. As hypothesized, cross tabulating the crime rate with the level of education, showed that cases of robbery, assault and rape are more rampant with people without education and primary school certificate holders. Fraud and murder, however, are more associated with secondary school and tertiary school leavers. Studying the education-crime relationship gives the insight that as education has become an indispensable part of people's lives, it could also serve as a tool to prevent or reduce the incidences of crime. In addition, understanding the connection between areas of settlement and patterns of criminality just suggests to the law enforcement agencies, possible locations to deploy their scarce resources, when combating certain forms of crime. We think that the findings of the study will be useful to our criminal justice institutions, particular in the area of de-populating the prisons and introducing educational programs in our correctional facilities. The finding of the study is supported by related literatures. Bryjak (2011), posited that educated people are largely involved in "white collar" crimes. These include medical fraud, false advertising, price fixing and corporate violence. While less or uneducated people may engage in crimes such as homicide, assault, rape, theft and burglary. Mocan (2005), averred that poor education has led to a steep increase in criminal behaviors.

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