

Causes of Female Criminality in Dhaka District: A Study of Reported and Unreported Criminal Cases

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Abstract: Crime is an action that violates the laws of a country or region. A person who commits such an act is referred to as a criminal, and female criminality refers to crimes committed exclusively by women. Historically, women have been seen as victims, but this trend is increasing. This research examines the nature, trends, and causes of female criminality in Dhaka District, including the metropolitan area. Using quantitative and qualitative methodologies, the study analyzes reported and convicted cases using archival legal records, court documents, and secondary data. The population includes female offenders in Dhaka District. The study found only three cases regarding female criminality in reported source like DLR, BLD, and MLR, and 28 convicted cases from the unreported source in the last five years before 2018. The study reveals that female criminality in Dhaka District is largely due to social marginalization and economic deprivation. Women often commit non-violent crimes like drug-related offenses and cheating, often working with other criminals. Factors such as gender expectations, family relationships, poverty, and lack of education significantly influence criminal behavior. Habitual offenses and recidivism are also linked to structural problems in unstable economies. The research suggests that combating female criminality requires interventions focusing on family support, economic empowerment, education, and rehabilitation initiatives. Addressing underlying reasons like poverty, illiteracy, and social constraints is crucial for a comprehensive strategy to reduce female criminal involvement and prevent recidivism in Dhaka District.

Keywords: Female Criminality, Dhaka District, Reported and Unreported Cases, Nature of Female Criminality, Causes of Female Criminality.

1. Introduction

Female criminality is a significant issue in society, influenced by the dehumanizing roles of women in the capitalist system. Crime is traditionally seen as a male-dominated issue, with women being seen as guardians of traditions, conventions, morality, and family cohesion. Female criminality, a term devised recently, refers to crimes committed exclusively by women, a trend that has been growing since the 1970s. Historically, crime was considered a male-only issue, but the rise of female

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criminality has significantly impacted society's stability. Criminologists, psychologists, and sociologists have been researching the causes of female criminality, comprising gender discrimination, patriarchy, men's control over women, and victimization. Female criminality in Bangladesh has been largely overlooked due to the patriarchal family system, where women are seen as guardians of social norms and traditions. However, recent studies have shed light on the complex interplay of socio-cultural, economic, and systemic factors that contribute to female criminality. Familial maladjustment is the primary cause of crime. This multifaceted nature of female criminality in Bangladesh is increasing attention due to evolving societal dynamics. Traditionally, women's roles in Bangladeshi society were prescribed within home life and familial responsibilities. However, shifting socio-economic landscapes and changing gender dynamics have led to a nuanced understanding of women's engagement in unlawful behaviors, from petty theft to involvement in organized crime. Female criminality in Bangladesh is influenced by economic disenfranchisement, poverty, unemployment, and limited education, as well as patriarchal structures, gender inequalities, and societal pressures. Violence against women, including domestic abuse and sexual exploitation, complicates the issue. Women may resort to criminal acts as self-defense or retaliation against oppressors. In Bangladesh, the rate of female criminality is increasing, with common types including theft, cheating, prostitution, trafficking, and hijacking. However, women are also increasingly involved in murder and conspiracies. This study aims to analyze the current situation of female criminality in Dhaka District with studying the reported and unreported cases for the propose of preventive measures. The legal framework and criminal justice system play a crucial role in addressing female criminality, influenced by various economic, political, social, biological, and psychological factors.

2. Objectives of the Research

Examining the ways in which social, economic, legal, and other contextual elements influence women's engagement in criminal activity within the larger societal context is the main goal of this study. Through an examination of both reported and unreported cases, the study aims to comprehend the nature and extent of female criminality, with an emphasis on determining its causes in the context of Dhaka district. Additionally, it seeks to investigate the socioeconomic and associated elements that impact criminal behaviour among Bangladeshi women. Additionally, the study will look into the various trends and expressions of female criminality in Dhaka district. The study's ultimate goal is to suggest suitable and practical ways to stop and lessen female criminal activity within Bangladesh's current legal and social structure.

3. Methodology

The nature of proposed research mainly deals with both quantitative and qualitative (analytical) research methodology. Primarily, relevant theories of female criminality has been reviewed from available and accessible books, articles etc. Besides, data

and information have been collected from available secondary sources such as journal articles, research reports, books, newspaper and periodicals. Furthermore, the contents have been analyzed descriptively and a comparative analysis of the theories has been done to describe the nature and pattern of female criminality.

Secondly, this study aimed to analyze the patterns, trends, and factors influencing female criminality in Dhaka District, specifically the metropolitan area. The research design adopted a descriptive quantitative research design, focusing on reported and convicted cases, using archival legal records, court documents, and secondary data. The population for this study consists of female offenders in Dhaka District including Metropolitan area whose crimes have been documented in legal records. The study has been considered reported cases from DLR (Volume 1 to 27, year 1949-1980), BLD (Total volume number 17, year 1981-1995), and MLR (Total volume number 7, year 1996-2014). From these large number of reported cases of these volumes, the study has found only three cases from Dhaka district regarding female criminality.

This study also found only unreported 28 convicted cases regarding female criminality from the last five years before 2018, aiming to provide a comprehensive view of female criminality during this period. These 28 convicted cases had been gathered from record-keeper offices of the Chief Judicial Magistrate Court (CJM), Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court (CMMC), Session Judge Court, and Special Tribunals Court, Dhaka. A purposive sampling technique will be employed to select cases based on specific criteria relevant to the research questions.

The study has been considered total of 31 cases that include a mix of reported and unreported convicted cases to ensure adequate representation of female criminality in Dhaka District. Data has been collected through a document review process, which includes collecting information on reported cases and convicted unreported cases. Key variables will be identified as dependent variables, such as nature of criminal offenses, age groups, socioeconomic status, family structure, education level, and motivational factors.

The data has been analyzed using descriptive statistical methods to summarize and categorize the key features of female criminality in Dhaka District. The study aimed to provide a comprehensive analysis of the patterns of female criminality in Dhaka District, focusing on reported and convicted unreported cases. It highlighted key factors contributing to female criminal behavior and provided insights into the socio-economic and familial influences that shape criminality in this demographic.

4. Meaning of Crime

A crime is any behavior that is penalized by the state or another authority. It can be any act or omission that is specified by statute or common law, and the punishment is determined based on the type of crime.¹ The primary component of crimes is

¹ Crime definition "Crime". Oxford English Dictionary Second Edition on CD-ROM. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2009.

intention, which also establishes the severity of the punishment and any strict liability. If the defendant did not have the specific intent to commit a crime but it did occur, they must be held accountable for the infraction, such as a parking infraction, and no proof of mala fide or bona fide intention is necessary.² Numerous criminal activities will take place, including murder, homicide, fraud, robbery, theft, extortion, disrupting religious services, forgery, sodomy, gambling, and bigamy.³

4.1. Meaning of Female Criminality

No specific definition exists for Women Crime, as crimes against women are generally the same as those against men. Women's crimes involve intentional or malicious violations of criminal law. If a woman is under 18, they fall under juvenile delinquency or delinquency in conflict with law. Therefore, crimes committed by women are considered Women's crimes.

Early views on female criminality was based on biological ideas and patriarchal beliefs. Thinkers like Lombroso and Freud argued that female criminals were rare and shared traits with male criminals. Later, sociology presented new ways to understand why women commit crimes, leading to sociological criminology.⁴

In the 1970s, controversial ideas by Adler and Simon proposed that women's criminal behavior was linked to the women's liberation movement and changing gender roles, predicting that men and women would commit crimes at similar rates. Feminist scholars strongly criticized these views for being inaccurate and biased.⁵

These critiques, along with challenges to other traditional ideas, led to feminist criminology. This new perspective offers more accurate and nuanced insights into why women and girls commit crimes, considering their unique experiences and contexts.⁶

Feminist perspectives emphasize that women's involvement in crime is shaped by gender and their experiences with the justice system. These views also point to how poverty and class inequality, especially among women, influence criminal behavior. Crime is often linked to lower-class individuals and is traditionally seen as a male issue.⁷

² "Crime | Wex | US Law | LII / Legal Information Institute" (LII / Legal Information Institute) <https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/crime#:~:text=Crime%20is%20behavior%2C%20either%20by,regard%20to%20the%20criminal%20action> accessed April 10, 2020

³ Female Criminality: A Way Out" (New Age, March 19, 2019) <https://www.newagebd.net/article/67468/femalecriminality-a-way-out> accessed April 10, 2020

⁴ F. Adler 'Sisters in crime: The rise of the new female criminal,' 1975, New York: McGraw Hill.

⁵ F. Hill, 'Sisters in crime: The rise of the new female criminal,' 1975, New York: McGraw Hill.

⁶ L. Artz, Y. Hoffman-Wanderer and K. Moul, 'Hard Time(s): Women's pathways to crime and Incarceration. Gender, Health and Justice Research Unit,' 2012, University of Cape Town.

⁷ *ibid*

Research by Dobash, Dobash, and Noaks (1995) shows that responses to women's crimes are influenced by societal systems like patriarchy and capitalism. Many crimes committed by women arise from poverty, economic hardship, and restrictive gender roles.⁸

Feminist criminologists have long criticized the masculinist bias in criminology, disagreeing for the inclusion of women, women's insights, and the study of women in the field. This bias has generally been manifest in two interrelated phenomena:

(i) the ways in which criminologists have ignored women's experiences with crime and justice

(ii) the limited presence of female criminologists in the field.⁹

Women criminality, by definition, refers to the crimes committed by women. It corresponds with the male crime, and is a crime classification which is made from a gender perspective.¹⁰ Women are considerably less likely to commit crimes than men, but the gap is decreasing. According to the World Female Imprisonment List, while the number of men in prison has increased worldwide by about 20% over the last 20 years, that of women has increased by 53%.¹¹ The number of women prisoners of Bangladesh is about 2,772. It is about 3.8% of total prison population.¹²

4.2. Nature of Female Criminality in Bangladesh

Gender is one of the most important factors in predicting criminal behavior. Men commit crimes and acts of delinquency at higher rates than women across all nations, communities, age groups, and historical periods where statistics are available.¹³

Recent years have seen an increase in the number of women involved in the sale and distribution of various substances, including marijuana, heroin, and phensedyl. Numerous offenses, including trafficking, hijacking, smuggling, possessing counterfeit money, carrying illegal weapons, etc., have been linked to their involvement. Twelve national and 198 regional newspapers in Bangladesh published 340 articles about women's participation in criminal activity between January and December of 2005. 406 of the 477 women who were allegedly participating in various criminal acts were taken into custody by the police. In those occurrences, 108

⁸ R.E. Dobash, R.P. Dobash and L. Noaks, '*Gender and crime. Pub.*' 1995, University of Wales Press

⁹ Meda Chesney-Lind and Nicholas Chagnon, 'Criminology, Gender, and Race: A Case Study of Privilege in the Academy', *Feminist Criminology Journal*, Vol. 11 (4), (2016), pp. 311 - 333.

¹⁰ Moly Kuruvilla, *Handbook of Research on New Dimensions of Gender Mainstreaming and Women Empowerment (Advances in Religious and Cultural Studies)*, IGI Global (2020), p. 470

¹¹ Roy Walmsley, 'World Female Imprisonment List' Third Edition (2017), p. 2

¹² *ibid*

¹³ Galan M. Janeksela, 'Female criminality: An overview', *International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice*, FALL 1997, VOL. 21, NO. 2, pp. 181-205.

criminal cases were filed.¹⁴In 2005, different courts gave 13 judgments convicting female criminals; sentences included imprisonment of different terms and fine.¹⁵

In Bangladesh, on the basis of percentage distributions, female have committed more violent crime (66%) than any other crimes in 2012. Among the violent crimes, female have participated in murder or attempt to murder (65.2%), assault/collision (10.6%), grievous hurt and hurt (11.3%), and abduction/attempt to abduction (6.9%).¹⁶

Research suggests that differences in brain structure and hormone interactions between males and females might explain why females are generally less aggressive. Though, it remains challenging to determine whether biological or social factors play a bigger role in shaping the behavioral differences between males and females.¹⁷

The nature or characteristics of female criminality are described below:

I. Education:

It has been seen that women who lack a basic education or who are illiterate act without thought or reason, which is reflected in their criminal inclination that has not been well-socialized. Knowing the law and breaking it, as opposed to breaking it and not knowing the law, indicates that the former will be at a competitive advantage.¹⁸

II. Religion:

Regardless of the religion, the powerful powers of religion have always shaped human conduct. Therefore, the only way to find the hints needed to comprehend the disparities in crime rates across various population segments is through this religion.¹⁹

III. Social Position

Social class is a major factor in criminal activity. In essence, upper-class women commit property crimes to demonstrate their social standing. Here, one's degree of happiness, desire, and urge varies according to one's position and social standing.

IV. Marital Status:

¹⁴ Jahirul Islam, Nurjahan Khatun, *On the Etiology of Female Offending in Bangladesh: Toward a Quest for the Alternative Explanation* (2013), *European Academic Research*, Vol-1, Issue-4 (July)

¹⁵ *ibid*

¹⁶ *ibid*

¹⁷ Rodney D. Geisert, *Altering rat sexual behavior to teach hormonal regulation of brain imprinting* (2019), *Advances in Physiology Education*, Volume 43

¹⁸ Sehgal Diganth Raj, "Female Crimes: Related Theories and Postulations" (iPleaders, October 25, 2021) <https://blog.iplayers.in/female-crimes-related-theories-and-postulations/> accessed November 20, 2021

¹⁹ *ibid*

When examining female criminals, marital status must be taken into account because it links a woman to social obligations and meeting expectations, which puts pressure on women. The women commit crimes when these pressures go horribly wrong. While unmarried respondents are more likely to be involved in property crimes and other offenses, married women are more likely to be involved in crimes against individuals.²⁰ For example, a mother named Rima Begum killed her two boys, Father Ismail Hossain filed a case against Rima and Saifullah after Yasin Khan (7) and Morsalin Khan (5) mixed poison with sweet, then purchased NAPA syrup and put it in the child's mouth in an attempt to demonstrate that NAPA syrup was the primary cause of death. Despite having a disability, Yasin Hossain works as a bricklayer. Saifullah and Rima chose to be married after working together at the same factory.²¹

V. Occupation:

The offenses committed by women differ according on the profession they choose. For instance, because they are more prone to conduct property crimes, housewives are more likely to commit crimes against people than women whose occupations range from services to business and domestic assistance.

VI. Income:

A lot of people in the twenty-first century think that the greatest degree of personal autonomy a person can have is economic freedom. Reducing women's reliance on men in their households is a major factor in the problem of female criminality. A person's social behavior is influenced by their financial situation. Crimes vary according to the same.²²

VII. Family:

Families have a significant impact on people's personalities and values. It has frequently been noted that women from dysfunctional homes are more inclined to commit crimes against people. Women from joint families conduct crimes against persons, whereas those from nuclear households commit crimes against property.²³

5. General Causes of Female Criminality in Bangladesh

²⁰ *ibid*

²¹ Napa Syrup: Mother Poisoned Sons to Death, Say Police | Daily Star” (The Daily Star, March 17, 2022)

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/crime-justice/news/not-napa-syrup-mother-poisoned-children-deathbrahmanbaria-police-2984946> accessed March 17, 2022

²² R. Vathramugi, Critical Analysis Of Female Criminality, Legal Service India, e-journal, <<https://www.legalserviceindia.com/legal/article-15659-critical-analysis-of-female-criminality.html>> accessed on 20 April 2020

²³ *ibid*

Early criminologists' biologically based theories were illogical and did not apply to Indian women. Early academics considered that sociocultural or biological factors were responsible for female criminality. As a behavioral or societal issue, crime is complex and difficult to realize. Whether the reasons are biological, psychological, social, or environmental, women are viewed as perverting the feminine role by committing crimes.

5.1. Biological Perspective

Cesare Lombroso's biological perspective on female criminal behavior is the foundation of scientific study. He believed that deviant behavior is an inherent attribute of women, making them more dangerous than men due to their deliberate and sinister nature.²⁴ Lombroso also suggested that women share certain traits with children, such as moral shortcomings, and attributed their low crime rates to a lack of intellect. He also proposed that individuals who display anti-social behavior are biological "throwbacks" to earlier stages of human evolution.²⁵

Otto Pollak's theory emphasized the role of hormonal changes during menstruation, pregnancy, and menopause in influencing criminal behavior. Pollak suggested that these biological phases can lead to mood swings, unusual cravings, impulsivity, and temporary loss of self-control, contributing to criminal tendencies.²⁶ However, these theories are now seen as outdated and scientifically weak. In modern societies, female criminality is often linked to social and economic deprivation rather than inherent biological traits. The idea that crime is a natural human characteristic does not explain the complexity and variety of crimes committed today, especially when crime has become a professional activity requiring advanced skills and techniques.²⁷

5.2. Psychological Perspective

There are differing views on the relationship between certain psychological traits and female criminality, claim Burt, Healy, and Bonger.²⁸ Burt contends that prevailing emotions like fear, forgiveness, and kindness are the reason why women commit less crimes. According to Bonger, women are much less likely than men to commit crimes because they are psychologically stronger. Bonger claims that because of economic hardship, a small percentage of women have engaged in economic crimes since World War II.²⁹ Women are more disconcerting and suffer from more

²⁴ Cesare Lombroso and Guglielmo Ferrero, *The Female Offender* (T Fisher Unwin 1895).

²⁵ *ibid*

²⁶ Otto Pollak, *The Criminality of Women* (A S Barnes 1950).

²⁷ *Ibid*

²⁸ T. İçli, *Kriminoloji* (Martı Kitabevi 2004) 369

²⁹ *Ibid*

psychological problems than men, leading to feelings of desperation and suspicion. This may contribute to female criminality, as women are more suspicious than men.

Female criminals often exhibit emotional instability, insecurity, rejection, or frustration due to their lack of traditional roles as mothers and wives. They often face harsh living conditions, suffering, or ill-fated events that make it difficult for them to cope with life's challenges. Women usually experience more stress than men due to limited opportunities and conflicting expectations, particularly those with lower social status.³⁰ Societal norms disappoint women from expressing anger, leading to emotional suppression and ultimate violent occurrences. Women with persistent stress, isolation, poor coping skills, and an overly controlled personality are more likely to resort to extreme violence. This perspective is particularly relevant in Bangladesh, where many crimes committed by women can be attributed to depression, frustration, and devastating stress.³¹

5.3. Sociological Perspective

The sociological viewpoint has focused on how social factors contribute to women becoming criminals. Notwithstanding progress and awareness, women in Bangladesh continue to face inequality in many aspects of life. Though the Constitution guarantees equality, it is hardly practiced in reality. This inequality confines women's opportunities, reduces their financial freedom, and lowers their economic status. Klein analyzed female criminality and noted that most theories focus on physiological or psychological causes, with little attention given to societal factors.³²

The rise in female criminality in Bangladesh is typically caused by socioeconomic, familial, and educational reasons. In addition, there are a few more factors contributing to Bangladesh's rise in female criminality. They are talked about below:

I. Family Issues

Children's mentalities can be greatly impacted by family problems like divorce, separation, and criminal activity, which can result in inferior complexity, despair, and criminal activity. Due to a lack of parental care, these kids frequently have psychiatric crises. Following a divorce, women encounter many difficulties and frequently find it difficult to define their social positions. One of the main causes of the increase in female criminality in Bangladesh is domestic abuse. Women are frequently beaten by their husbands, have subordinate roles in the household, and are not permitted to voice their opinions on family issues. Extreme behavior can result

³⁰ P MK Mili and Neethu Susan Cherian, 'Female Criminality in India: Prevalence, Causes, and Preventive Measures' (2015) 10(1) *International Journal of Criminal Justice Sciences* 65 <https://www.sascv.org/ijcjs/> accessed 4 January 2025.

³¹ *ibid*

³² Dale Klein, 'The Etiology of Female Crime: A Review of the Literature' (1973) 8 *Issues in Criminology* 3-30.

from this ongoing denial of rights and unchecked aggression; 80% of female offenders had experienced ongoing domestic abuse prior to committing a crime.³³

II. Lack of Education

Female offenders in Bangladesh are often illiterate or lack education, resulting in a lack of survival skills and vulnerability to deception. They are unable to effectively deal with problems and lack legal knowledge, making them vulnerable to crime. Despite being victims, they often resort to violence to protect themselves, leading to serious crime. Chesney-Lind and Pasko argue that women's crime is deeply influenced by their marginalized and poor position in society, lacking formal education and job skills development. Their lack of knowledge and vulnerability to violence contributes to their criminal behavior.³⁴

III. Socio-economic Factors

Socio-economic factors contribute to the rise of female criminality, with poverty and unemployment being common issues. Women often resort to criminal activities to meet their basic needs, leading to a desire for luxury and illegal cohabitation. Moral values have disintegrated, leading to an increase in adultery and illegal cohabitation. Lower-class women, influenced by junk cultures, are also involved in crime to achieve this lifestyle. High-society women, too, are involved in crime to achieve more. The alarming increase in prostitution is concerning for society.³⁵

IV. Cultural Differences

The upbringing of women in Bangladesh differs greatly from that of men. They learn to be patient and well-mannered. They are instructed to remain silent even when their rights are violated. Males predominate over them from a young age. They are weak-headed people because of the oppressive schooling they receive from their families. They are triggered by the discriminatory treatment they get. These unjust cultures for women are entirely the product of family. As a result, the majority of current research focuses on the families of female offenders.³⁶

V. Changing patterns of Female Criminality

In the past, women were more likely than men to be involved in less serious crimes like organized crime, victimless crimes, property-related offenses like theft and misappropriation, trafficking, and kidnapping. Nevertheless, current patterns show

³³ Sadia Tabassum, Punam Chakrabarty, "Criminality in Bangladesh: Causes, Patterns, and Preventive Measures," Volume 6, Issue 5, September–October 2024, Journal for Multidisciplinary Research (IJFMR), E-ISSN: 2582-2160

³⁴ Meda Chesney-Lind, Lisa Pasko, 'The female offender: Girls, women, and crime,' 2004, second edition. 10.4135/9781452232157.

³⁵ Sadia Tabassum, Punam Chakrabarty, "Criminality in Bangladesh: Causes, Patterns, and Preventive Measures," Volume 6, Issue 5, September–October 2024, Journal for Multidisciplinary Research (IJFMR), E-ISSN: 2582-2160

³⁶ *ibid*

that women are progressively engaging in more serious crimes, which is indicative of a wider variety of criminal activity. These include terrorism, smuggling, corruption, cybercrime, drug trafficking, robbery, assault, murder, attempted murder, adultery, kidnapping, and illegal arms trafficking. This change emphasizes how female crime is changing and the need for a more thorough comprehension of its root causes.³⁷

6. Theories of Female Criminality

Conventional criminals are often male, leading to a misconception about female criminality. Nevertheless, the criminal gap between male and female offenders is closing, raising questions about whether this rise is due to reporting and conviction policies or if women are committing more crimes.³⁸ Various theories have developed to clarify why some women become criminals, including traditional and contemporary approaches.³⁹ These theories explicate female criminality through observations and behavioral studies, emphasizing the importance of understanding the complexities of female criminal behavior.

6.1. Traditional Criminological Theories

Earlier accounts of female criminality, which spanned the 1890s to the early 1950s, tended to take a wider perspective on crime and human behavior.⁴⁰ Criminality theories typically attributed crime to social or biological circumstances that were outside the offender's control. The majority of traditional or conventional theories considered women's criminal behavior to be supporting, or subordinate, to men's. Simple clarifications and straightforward motivations were frequently used to explain female criminality.⁴¹ The following are the most significant of these theories:⁴²

I. *Cesare Lombroso (1835-1909)*

The concept of the "born criminal," put forth by Cesare Lombroso (1835–1909), postulates that biological characteristics dictate criminal behavior. He thought that offenders had ape-like physical characteristics and were a holdover from prehistoric human times.⁴³ According to Lombroso's analysis of criminal autopsies, some physical characteristics—such as asymmetrical facial features, enormous ears, eye

³⁷ *ibid*

³⁸ Imogen Bowler, *Evolutionary Psychology* (Psych2Go) <www.psych2go.net> accessed on April 20, 2022

³⁹ Frank P Williams and Marilyn D McShane, *Criminological Theory* (4th edn, Pearson/Prentice Hall 2004) 253

⁴⁰ Dr Virender Negi and Dr Monika Negi, 'Theories of Female Criminality: A Socio-Legal Analysis' (2014) 3(11) *IF* 4.547, IC Value 80.26, ISSN No 2277-8179.

⁴¹ *ibid*

⁴² Dr Virender Negi and Dr Monika Negi, 'Theories of Female Criminality: A Socio-Legal Analysis' (2014) 3(11) *IF* 4.547, IC Value 80.26, ISSN No 2277-8179.

⁴³ Cesare Lombroso, *The Criminal Man* (1876, University of Chicago Press 2006).

problems, and unique head shapes—are "stigmatic" and are indicative of criminal tendencies.⁴⁴

Apart from Lombroso's own opinions, there isn't much data to support this strategy, and it would be regarded as sexist and out of date today. This theory is wholly untrue.⁴⁵

In addition, Lombroso thought that female offenders were biologically more like men than non-criminals and possessed masculine characteristics. He maintained that "penis envy," which he said pushed female offenders to commit crimes, led them to be less evolved and biologically disadvantaged. This hypothesis related biological differences and physical appearance to criminal behavior.⁴⁶

II. Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)

Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic writings are believed to be the basis for understanding female criminality, mostly accept the concept of Cesare Lombroso.⁴⁷ According to Freud, women are docile, egotistical, and masochistic, and they are physiologically inferior to men. He ascribed these characteristics to penis envy or a masculinity complex, which made them less capable of restraining their urges and morally inferior. Jealousy, immorality, emotionalism, and poor judgment resulted from this. Freud thought that females were influenced toward amorality because of their physical deficiencies, even though he did not directly connect female crime to superego weakness.⁴⁸

III. Otto Pollak (The Criminality of Women: 1950)

Pollak's work is regarded as significant in the explanation of female criminality prior to the modern era.⁴⁹ He argued that the following factors contribute to the underreporting of crimes committed by women: easy concealment, chivalry in the criminal court system, and underreporting. These factors comprise shoplifting, petty theft, abortions, perjury, and other crimes. He adds that although the rates of crime for men and women are probably very comparable, female criminality seems to be less common for these reasons. According to Pollak's view, women are inherently dishonest and docile, which he said stems from the way they conceal their menstrual cycle or engage in sexual activity.⁵⁰

⁴⁴ *ibid*

⁴⁵ Rita James Simon and Heather Ahn-Redding, *The Crimes Women Commit: The Punishments They Receive* (Lexington Books 2005) 7.

⁴⁶ Joanne Belknap, *The Invisible Woman: Gender, Crime, and Justice*, 3rd edn, University of Michigan Press 2007, 36.

⁴⁷ Sigmund Freud, *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* (1933), Norton.

⁴⁸ *ibid*

⁴⁹ Otto Pollak, *The Criminality of Women* (University of Pennsylvania Press 1950).

⁵⁰ *ibid*

He argued that women were the masterminds behind crime, the ones who started crimes rather than committing them, and that they could and would coerce males into breaking the law in order to protect their own reputations.⁵¹

6.2. Contemporary Theories of Criminality

The role of women in society extended attention and became a more attractive subject after the feminist movement in the late 1960s.⁵²

I. The Women's Liberation Hypothesis

Freda Adler's book "Sisters and Crime" (1975) suggests that the rise in female criminality is linked to changes in women's roles in society. With the women's liberation movement, women have taken on more traditionally male-dominated roles, including workforce jobs.⁵³ Adler argues that as women become more dominant in society and adopt male-dominated roles, their involvement in crime will increase.⁵⁴ Historically, women were seen as quiet, timid, and nurturing, making them less likely to commit crimes. However, with the rise of women's rights and changing gender norms, women are becoming more confident and assertive, gaining more opportunities in life and crime. This change means women now have more chances to commit crimes that were once seen as "masculine," like violent crimes. However, female criminals still tend to hold traditional views, especially when it comes to family.⁵⁵

II. Economic Marginalization

Clarice Feinman and Ngaire Naffine are the pioneer of this theory. According to this view, the lack of genuine and meaningful possibilities for women is directly linked to the rise in female-perpetrated crime. Even though there are more women in the workforce today, a sizable portion of them are either unemployed or working in positions that pay minimum wage. This theory is supported by statistics showing that most female offenders are unemployed or concentrated in low-paying, unsatisfying jobs.⁵⁶

III. Self-control Theory

Originally developed by Hirschi and Gottfredson, this theory is referred to as a "General Theory Of Crime." This indicates that it does not believe that gender-specific explanations of criminality are necessary and instead seeks to explain all

⁵¹ Rita James Simon and Heather Ahn-Redding, *The Crimes Women Commit: The Punishments They Receive* (Lexington Books 2005) 7.

⁵² Dr Virender Negi and Dr Monika Negi, 'Theories of Female Criminality: A Socio-Legal Analysis' (2014) 3(11) *IF* 4.547, IC Value 80.26, ISSN No 2277-8179.

⁵³ Pamela J Schram and Stephen G Tibbetts, *Introduction to Criminology: Why Do They Do It?* (Sage Publications 2014) 295.

⁵⁴ *ibid*

⁵⁵ William Giordano and Jennifer Cernkovich, 'A Comparative Analysis of Male and Female Delinquency' (1979) 20 *Sociological Quarterly* 131.

⁵⁶ Merry Morash, *Understanding Gender, Crime, and Justice* (Sage Publications 2006) 165.

crimes. According to the notion, crime happens when people—men and women alike—lack self-control. They contend that their parents' poor parenting techniques during their upbringing are the cause of their lack of self-control. Individuals with poor self-control are more prone to impulsivity, insensitivity, and physical altercations. These are clear characteristics that may contribute to criminal activity. According to research by Thornton, Graham-Kevan, and Archer (2013),⁵⁷ criminals frequently exhibit versatility, which lends credence to the notion that they lack self-control. Longshore asserts that self-control is not the only factor that contributes to criminality.⁵⁸

IV. *Social-control Theory*

According to the Social Control hypothesis, which Hirschi developed in 1969, we all have criminal impulses.⁵⁹ Nevertheless, the bulk of us do not follow through on these desires because they are restrained by outside influences. Attachment, commitments, participation, beliefs, and conformity are a few examples of these external influences. All of these elements guarantee that an individual is repressing their illicit impulses. However, a person is more likely to give in to their criminal impulses if these restrictions are absent or inadequate. This notion was supported by Alarid, Burton, and Cullen (2000), who discovered that there were minimal gender differences in the association between criminality and a lack of social control. This implies that this criminal hypothesis can also be in female criminality.⁶⁰

7.1. Nature of Crime in Dhaka District

This study of 31 reported and unreported cases of female criminals, gives us the crime-wise picture. These crimes fall under Penal Code, 1860 as well as under other Laws applicable in Bangladesh. The female criminals were arrested by the police under sections of the Penal Code, 1860 and other local laws such as Manab Pachar Protirodh O Domon Ain, 2012 (Human Trafficking Deterrence and Suppression Act, 2012), Madok Drobbo Niyontron Ain, 1990 (Drug Control Act, 1990) and Bangladesh Passport Order, 1973.

Table 7.1: Nature of Crime / Offence:

(Offence under which offenders were convicted)

Crime / Offence	Frequency	Percentage
Murders	2	6.45

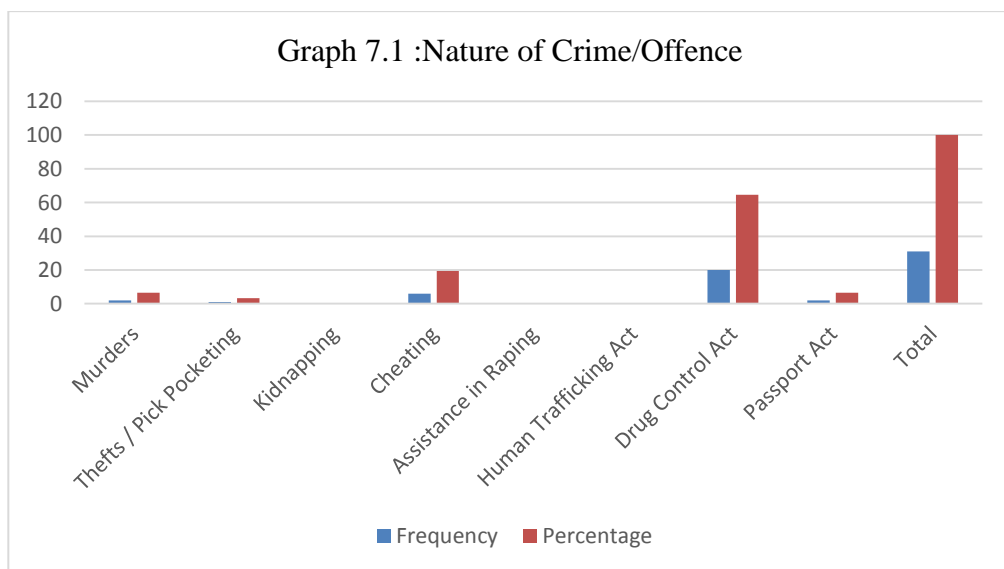
⁵⁷ Joanne Savage and Kevin H Wozniak, *Thugs and Thieves: The Differential Etiology of Violence* (Oxford University Press 2016) 6.

⁵⁸ L Edward Wells, *Social Control and Self-Control Theories of Crime and Deviance* (Ashgate Publishing 2011) 165.

⁵⁹ Travis Hirschi, *Causes of Delinquency* (Transaction Publishers 2002) 85.

⁶⁰ J Robert Lilly, Francis T Cullen, and Richard A Ball, *Criminological Theory: Context and Consequences* (Sage Publications 2015).

Thefts / Pick Pocketing	1	3.23
Kidnapping	0	0.0
Cheating	6	19.35
Assistance in Raping	0	0.0
Human Trafficking Act	0	0.0
Drug Control Act	20	64.52
Passport Act	2	6.45
Total	31	100



Source: Primary Data Collected from 31 reported and unreported cases in Dhaka District

Figures given in table 7.1 shows that, women of Dhaka District are more prone to participate in drug related crimes. About 64.53 percent women participate in drug related crimes. The second significant crimes are cheating or defrauding others. 19.35 percent women are involved in such crimes. The cause of drug related offences and cheating is particularly economic deprivation. Criminality rates among women

are closely correlated to low income. According to Landis⁶¹ there are some important ways in which economic deprivation enters as a risk factor in criminality: (a) when material success is highly prized, economic deprivation breeds demoralization and apathy; (b) economic deprivation hampers integration into society. Those who are unemployed or who receive low wages have no secure place in the community of work and their ties to the larger society are extremely tenuous. Thus, economic deprivation could be considered a significant factor in women criminality, which provokes them particularly to get involved in cheating and drug related offences.

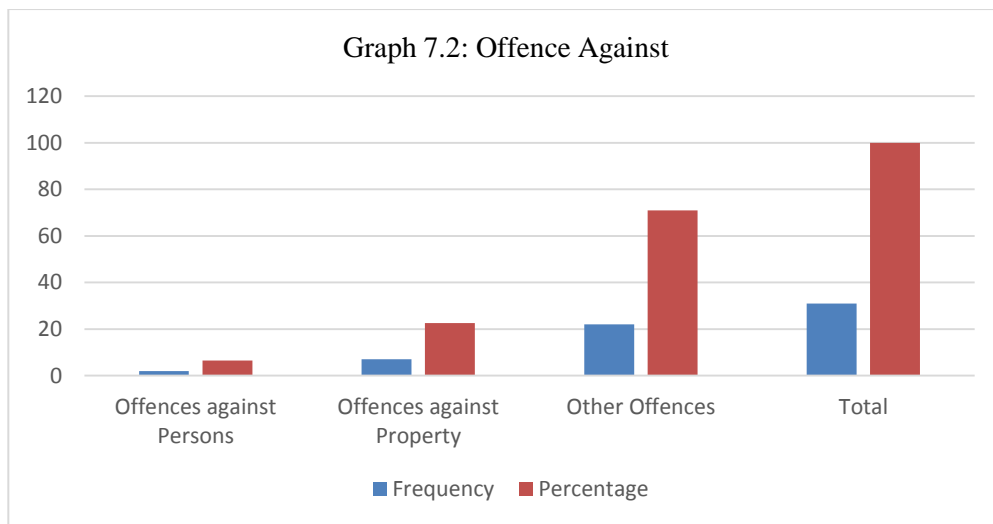
7.2. Offences Against

Various types of offenses were committed by female offenders in the Dhaka district; nevertheless, for the purposes of this study, the offenses were divided into three categories: offenses against persons, offenses against property, and other offenses. Drugs, passport-related offenses, and various pity offenses are examples of additional offenses.

Table 7.2: Offences Against

Crime / Offence	Frequency	Percentage
Offences against Persons	2	6.45
Offences against Property	7	22.58
Other Offences	22	70.97
Total	31	100

⁶¹ Landis Paul - "Social Problems", p.55.



Source: Primary Data Collected from 31 reported and unreported cases in Dhaka District

Table 7.2 shows that, women of Dhaka District participate more in the category of Other Offences (70.97 percent). The category consists of offences under Drug Control Act, 1990 and Bangladesh Passport Order, 1973. Offences against property have a percentage of 22.58. They participate less in offences against persons. The reason can be explained by using role theory of criminology. In this regard, Frances Heidensohn⁶² pointed out that, owing to close supervision and social restrictions on women, socialization and the development of consciousness and self-perception vary considerably between boys and girls.

Girls are typically not permitted to learn how to fight or use weapons; instead, they are taught to be submissive, tamed, and peaceful. Boys, on the other hand, are gregarious, assertive, and ambitious. As a result, girls are afraid of violence and lack the power or technical skills needed to commit violent crimes, armed robberies, gang battles, etc. At worst, they commit small-time or domestic crimes like burglaries and riots that don't include the use of physical force. The role theorists emphasize how opportunity structures make men more likely than women to commit crimes, but they do not explain why women commit crimes; rather, they merely explain why the rates of male and female criminality differ..

7.3. Nature of Involvement

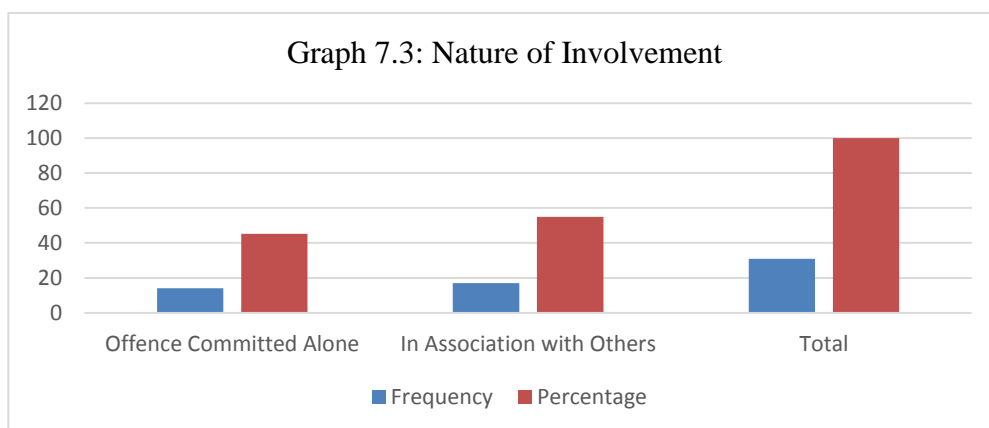
According to the current survey, women commit a wide range of crimes. The table categorizes female criminality based on whether the offense was committed alone or

⁶² Heidensohn Frances - "The Deviance of Women: A critique and an enquiry", British Journal of Sociology, Vol.19, No.2, p.170.

in association with others. The participation of women in offenses is displayed in the following table.

Table 7.3: Nature of Involvement

Crime / Offence	Frequency	Percentage
Offence Committed Alone	14	45.16
In Association with Others	17	54.84
Total	31	100



Source: Primary Data Collected from 31 reported and unreported cases in Dhaka District

Table 7.3 express that 45.16% of offenders committed their crimes alone, suggesting that they may be driven by personal circumstances or motivations rather than external influences. The analysis also shows that 17 out of the total of female criminals acted in association with others, with 54.84% of them. This suggests that more than half of these criminals acted in collaboration, reflecting various dynamics such as peer influence, shared motivations for crime, or involvement in organized criminal activities.

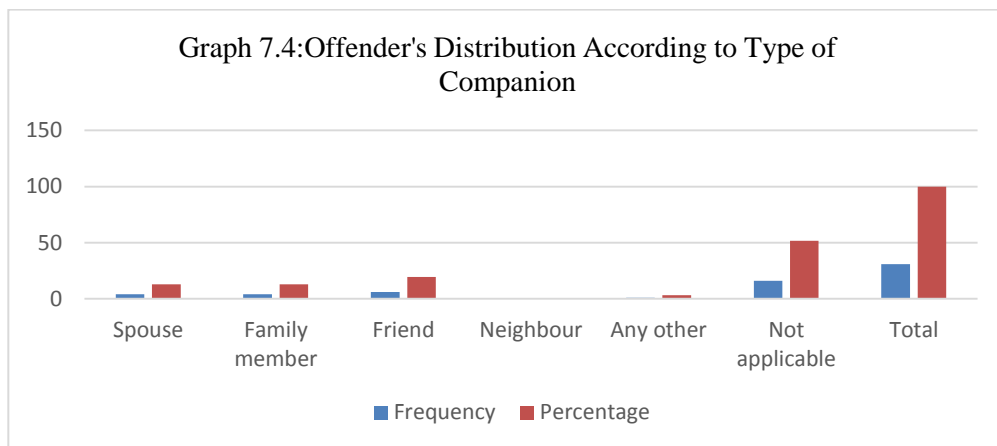
Girls thus shrink from violence and do not possess the necessary technical ability or strength to engage in crimes of violence, armed robberies, gang fights, etc. So it is observed that different expectations of standard behavior appear to be important in the genesis of women's crime. She mostly plays the role of an accomplice and assists the male offenders who actually commit the offense.

7.4. Offenders' Distribution according to Type of Companion:

The table shows the distribution of companion types among 31 respondents, including "Spouse," "Family member," "Friend," "Neighbour," "Any other," and "Not applicable." It provides insights into trends in companionship preferences and circumstances, allowing for a deeper understanding of social dynamics, support systems, and interpersonal connections within a given context.

Table 7.4: Offenders’ Distribution according to Type of Companion:

Type of Companion	Frequency	Percentage
Spouse	4	12.90
Family member	4	12.90
Friend	6	19.36
Neighbour	0	0
Any other	1	3.23
Not applicable	16	51.61
Total	31	100



Source: Primary Data Collected from 31 reported and unreported cases in Dhaka District

The study reveals that a majority of respondents (51.61%) do not have any companions, indicating a preference for independence or lack of accessible companionship. Friends were the most common form of companionship, with 19.36% of respondents reporting it. Family dynamics and marital relationships were

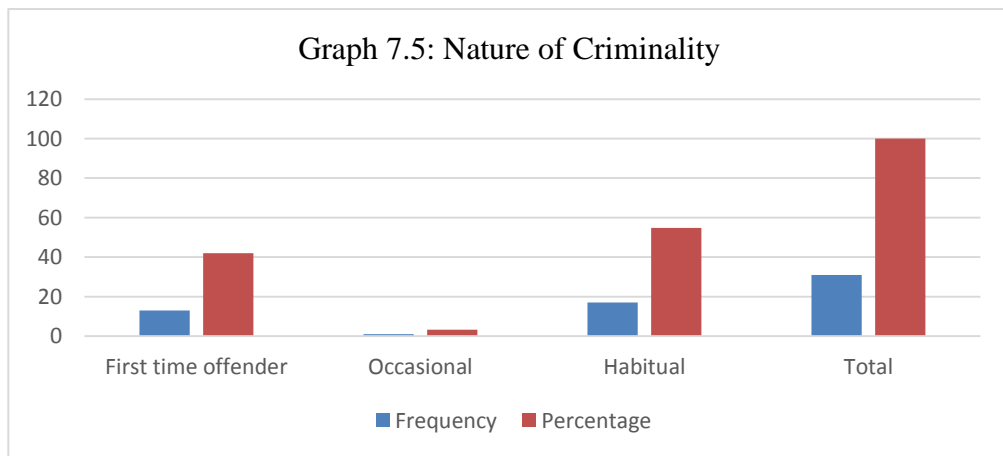
moderately significant in the study population. Neighbors were not identified as companions, suggesting a lack of close community ties or reliance on neighbors for support. The study suggests prioritizing friendship networks while addressing gaps in family and spousal support. The data provides a clear empirical foundation for studying companionship patterns in the population, suggesting that over half of respondents do not report any companion, raising questions about their social support and connectivity. These insights are valuable for shaping social interventions and fostering deeper exploration into the dynamics of companionship.

7.5. Nature of Criminal Behavior

Nature of Criminality expressed here the distribution of respondents based on their involvement in criminal behavior. It categorizes individuals into three groups: first-time offenders, occasional offenders, and habitual offenders. This data provides valuable insights into the patterns of criminal behavior and serves as a foundation for exploring strategies for intervention and rehabilitation.

Table 7.5: Nature of Criminality:

Nature of Criminality	Frequency	Percentage
First time offender	13	41.93
Occasional	1	3.23
Habitual	17	54.84
Total	31	100



Source: Primary Data Collected from 31 reported and unreported cases in Dhaka District

Table 7.5 indicates that, 54.84 percent women are habitual offenders. First-time offenders account for 41.93% of female offenders, suggesting that many commit crimes due to specific circumstances or pressures rather than a consistent pattern of criminal behavior. This highlights the underlying causes leading to first-time offenses, such as socioeconomic factors. Occasional offenders are less frequent, with 3.23% of female offenders indicating that few engage in crime sporadically. This suggests that if they offend, it is more likely to be an isolated incident or part of a pattern. Habitual offenders, representing over half of the offenders, have established patterns of criminal behavior, which could highlight issues such as recidivism, mental health, or systemic problems contributing to continued criminal activity.

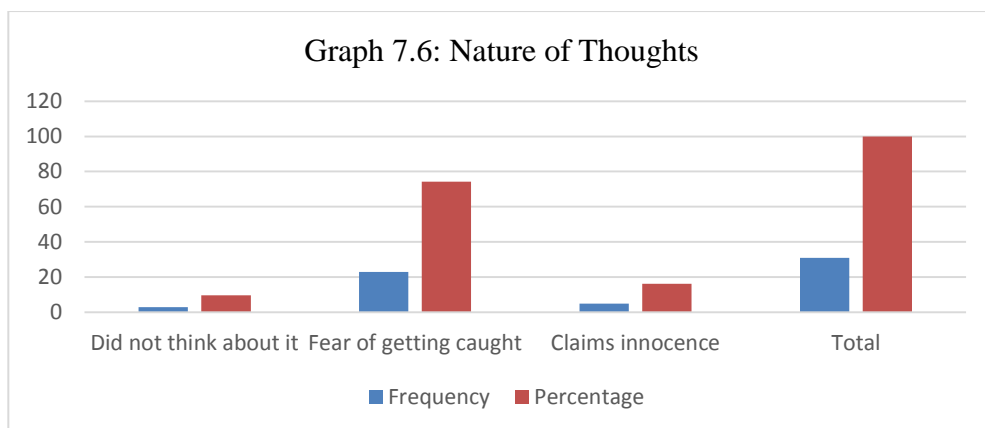
In conclusion, the data suggests a tendency towards habitual criminal behavior among females, with first-time offenses being a significant but smaller portion. Understanding these distinctions is crucial for developing targeted interventions, rehabilitation programs, and policies aimed at addressing the root causes of criminal behavior in women. Further research into the individual circumstances of these offenders could provide more effective prevention strategies.

7.6. Nature of Thoughts Committing Crime

The following table reveals the motivations behind criminal behavior among 31 respondents, categorized into three groups: those who didn't think, those driven by fear of getting caught, and those who claim innocence. This data provides critical insights into the psychological and situational factors influencing criminal behavior, offering a basis for developing effective prevention and intervention strategies.

Table 7.6: Nature of Thoughts

Nature of Criminality	Frequency	Percentage
Did not think about it	3	9.68
Fear of getting caught	23	74.19
Claims innocence	5	16.13
Total	31	100



Source: Primary Data Collected from 31 reported and unreported cases in Dhaka District

Table 7.6 shows that, for social conviction or for pressure, women are mostly afraid of getting caught (74.19 percent). 16.13 percent women claim themselves innocent. 9.68 percent women did not think about the results of their action before they committed crime. It proves that either they might have been in tension at the time of criminal act or they did not think the acts serious and heinous or as harmful to society.

7.7. Motivation Behind the Criminal Act

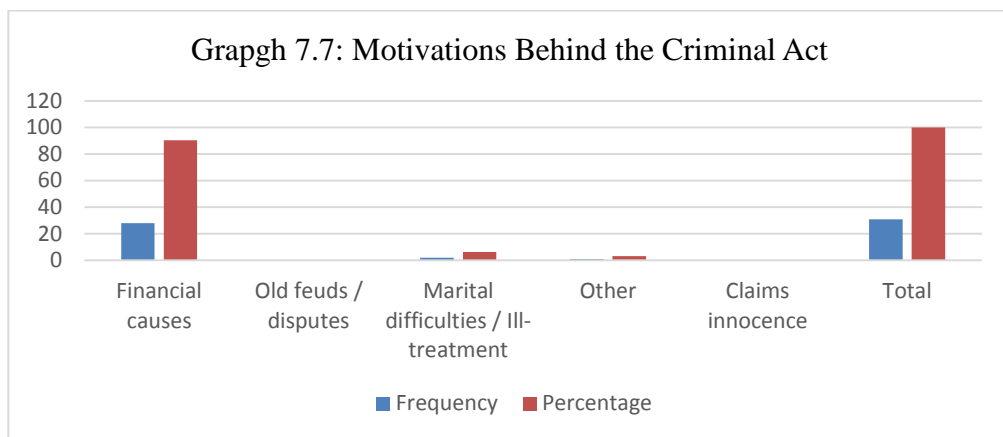
Bonger⁶³ has divided crimes into four categories: political, sexual, economic, and vengeful. However, it cannot be argued that there is only one motivation behind every crime. The motivations behind the crime were investigated in this study. The responses of respondents on the reasons for committing crimes are displayed in the following table.

Table 7.7: Motivations Behind the Criminal Act:

Motives Behind Crime	Frequency	Percentage
Financial causes	28	90.32
Old feuds / disputes	0	0
Marital difficulties / Ill-treatment	2	6.45
Other	1	3.23
Claims innocence	0	0

⁶³ Bonger - "Criminality and Economic Conditions", p.36-37.

Total	31	100
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Source: Primary Data Collected from 31 reported and unreported cases in Dhaka District

Table 7.7 demonstrates that, in 90.32 percent of cases, financial issues are the main driving force for female criminality. This emphasizes how important financial difficulties are as a primary cause of female criminal activities. This element doesn't need much explanation in a place like Bangladesh, where financial difficulties are common. Economic hardships frequently result in extreme stress and pressure, which puts women in precarious positions where they may feel forced to act in ways that are deviant in order to cope or survive.

In addition to having an impact on an individual's well-being, financial instability can also trigger more significant social and psychological changes, which frequently lead to antisocial conduct.

With 6.45 percent of instances, marital problems or experiences of mistreatment rank as the second most important contributing factor. These results imply that although financial factors are the primary motivator, relational and interpersonal issues also significantly impact women's engagement in criminal activity.

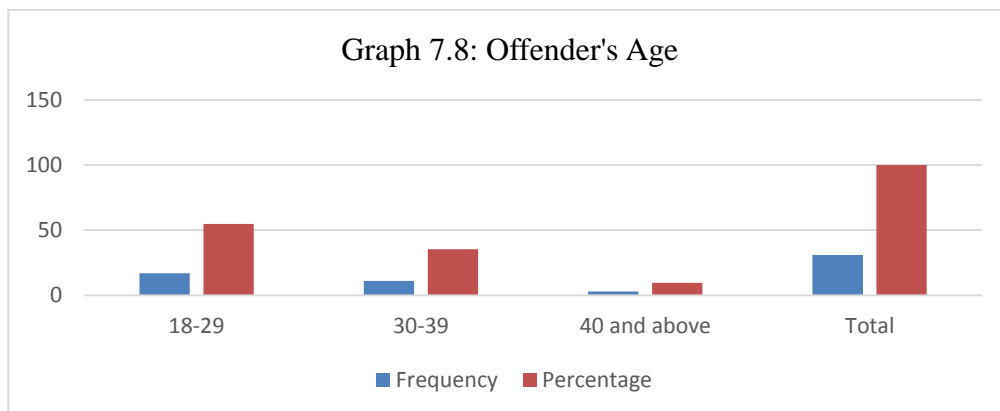
7.8. Age Factor

Female offenders age is very important factor to understand the cause of female criminality. Following table shows the age distribution and percentage of offence committed by female offenders.

Table 7.8: Offender's Age

Age (in years)	Frequency	Percentage
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18-29	17	54.84
30-39	11	35.48
40 and above	3	9.68
Total	31	100



Source: Primary Data Collected from 31 reported and unreported cases in Dhaka District

The age distribution of female offenders is displayed in the table 7.8, with young women between the ages of 18 and 29 making up the majority (54.84%). Only 9.68% of offenders are elderly women (40 years and beyond), compared to 35.48% who are middle-aged (30–39 years). According to this distribution, female criminal activity is most common in younger age groups and sharply declines with age. In addition to addressing the socioeconomic pressures middle-aged women face to refrain from criminal activity, the findings emphasize the necessity for focused interventions for young women, such as education, skill development, and financial support. The underrepresentation of elderly women suggests that age and stability in life can be protective factors.

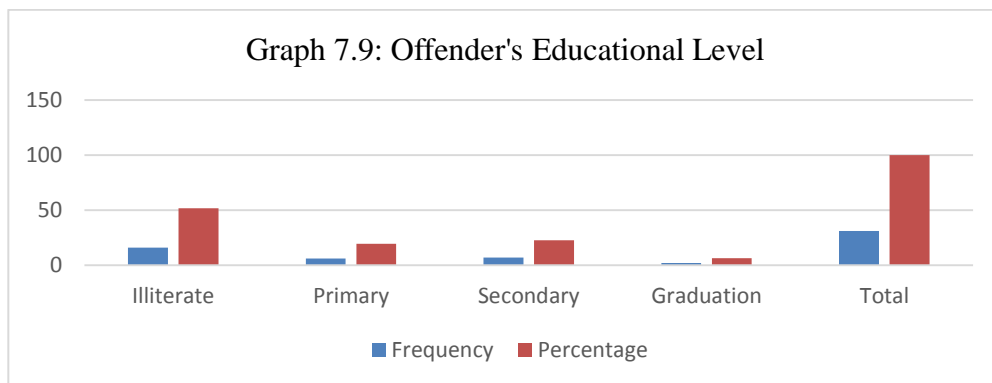
7.9. Educational Qualifications Factor

The data regarding these aspects are presented in table 7.9

Table 7.9: Offender's Educational Level and Nature of Offence:

Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage
Illiterate	16	51.61

Primary	6	19.36
Secondary	7	22.58
Graduation	2	6.45
Total	31	100



Source: Primary Data Collected from 31 reported and unreported cases in Dhaka District

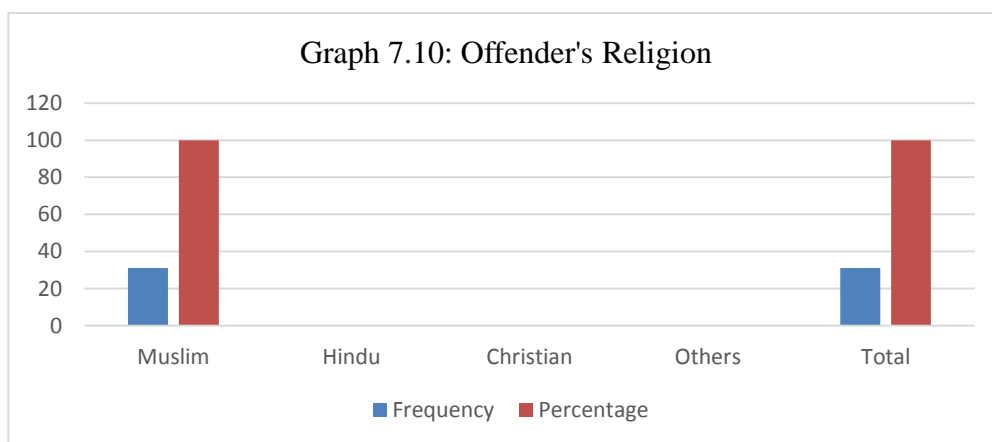
This study reveals a significant correlation between education and criminal behavior among female offenders. The majority of offenders are illiterate, with 51.61% being illiterate. This lack of education restricts access to economic opportunities, reduces awareness of legal consequences, and increases susceptibility to exploitation. About 19.36% of offenders have a primary level of education, but this may limit their socio-economic mobility. A significant portion (22.58%) have attained secondary education, but this may not be sufficient to prevent criminal behavior. Only 6.45% of offenders are graduates, suggesting that higher education acts as a protective factor against criminality. The study highlights the importance of education in preventing criminal behavior, but also suggests that socio-economic factors, such as poverty and job insecurity, may override the protective benefits of education. Despite this, higher education equips individuals with better tools to navigate challenges and reduces the likelihood of engaging in criminal activities.

7.10. Offender's Religion Factor

The most powerful factor influencing how people behave is religion. It might also offer hints for comprehending the disparities in crime rates among various population segments. The correlation between religion and the type of offenses is displayed in the following table.

Table 7.10: Offender's Religion and Nature of Offence

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Muslim	31	100
Hindu	0	0.0
Christian	0	0.0
Others	0	0.0
Total	31	100



Source: Primary Data Collected from 31 reported and unreported cases in Dhaka District

Research data show that, all the cases, which have studied for the research, are relating to crimes of muslim women. Though the data have been selected and availed randomly, depending solely upon their case numbers. Perhaps, the reason for that is, Bangladesh, predominantly, is a muslim country.

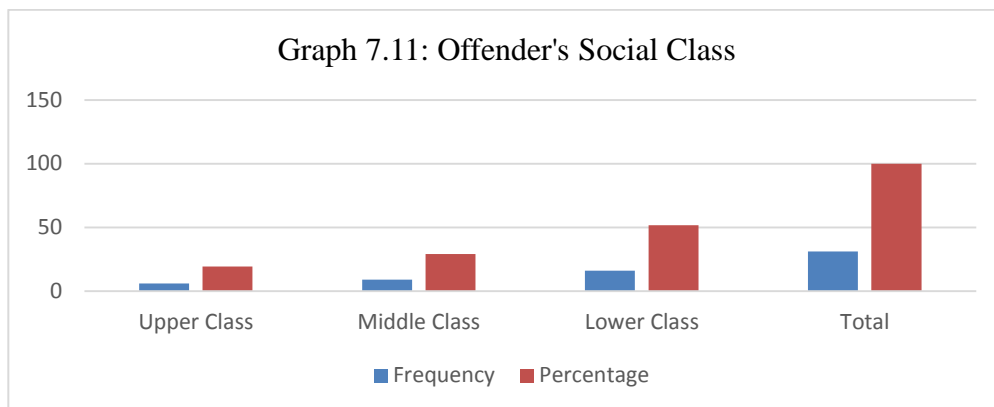
7.11. Offender's Social Class or Financial Condition

A person's social standing in society is determined by their financial condition. Studying the connection between class in the society and the type of offenses is therefore deemed necessary. The data also highlights the gendered (female) aspects of criminal behavior.

Table 7.11: Offender's Social Class

Castes	Frequency	Percentage
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Upper Class	6	19.36
Middle Class	9	29.03
Lower Class	16	51.61
Total	31	100



Source: Primary Data Collected from 31 reported and unreported cases in Dhaka District

The data from above table 7.11 reveals a significant correlation between socio-economic class and criminal behavior among female offenders. The majority of offenders, 51.61%, belong to the lower class, indicating a strong link between poverty and criminal behavior. The middle class, comprising 29.03% of offenders, may face stressors like financial instability and family pressures, which could lead to criminal behavior. The upper class, comprising 19.36% of offenders, may have better access to resources and opportunities, but may still be involved in criminal activities due to factors like greed, psychological issues, or social circles.

The data underscores the role of socio-economic disparities in influencing female criminality, with women from the lower class disproportionately represented. Middle-class pressures, societal expectations, and financial stress also contribute to deviance. Upper class deviance suggests that socio-economic privilege does not entirely eliminate criminal behavior risk, driven by different motivations.

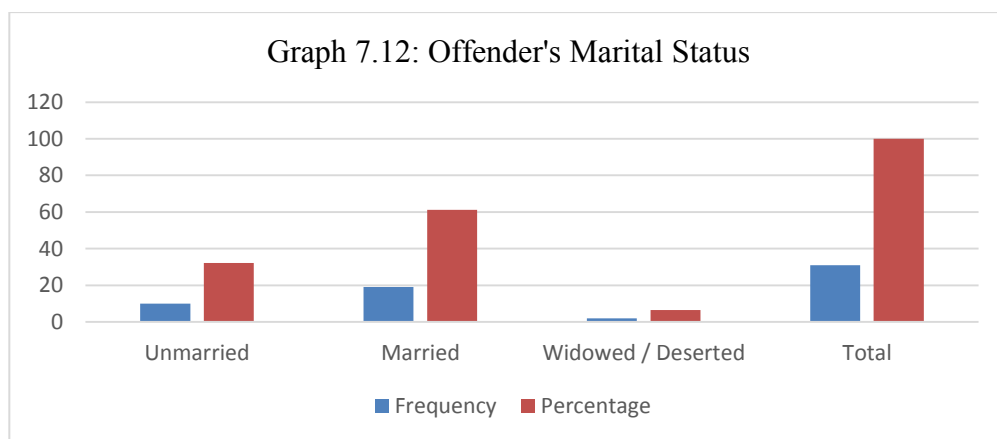
7.12. Marital Status Factor

The majority of crimes have something to do with a person's marital status. Marital status is constantly linked to social responsibilities and cultural expectations. A woman is more likely to engage in criminal activity if her needs cannot be met in

ways that are acceptable in her culture and society. The correlation between marital status and the type of offense is displayed in the following table.

Table 7.12 Offender's Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Unmarried	10	32.26
Married	19	61.29
Widowed / Deserted	2	6.45
Total	31	100



Source: Primary Data Collected from 31 reported and unreported cases in Dhaka District

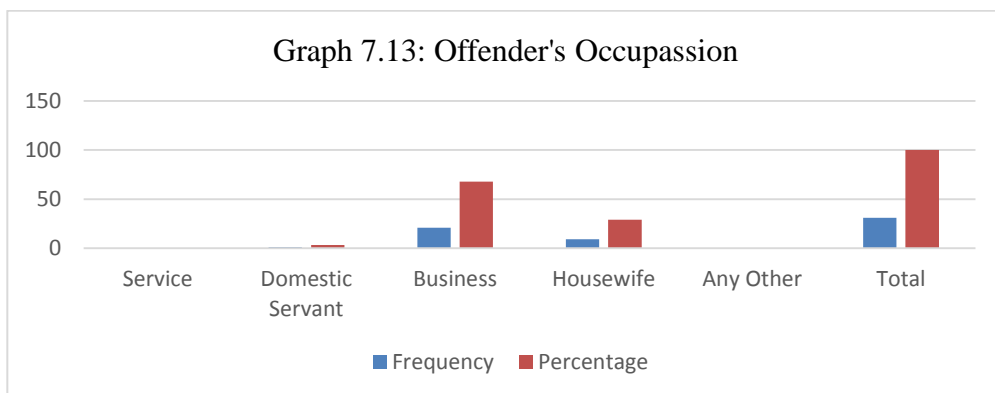
Table 7.12 shows that, married women (61.29 percent) engage in more crimes than the unmarried ones (32.26 percent). Perhaps the reason is unmarried women live with their parents who strictly regulate their behaviours. On the other hand, if the husbands of married women do not perform their duties as guardians, these women have possibilities of committing criminal activities.

7.13. Occupational Factors

Five categories—Service, Domestic Servant, Business, Housewife, and Any Other—are used in the chart to display the employment backgrounds of female offenders. The information sheds important light on how female criminality is influenced by occupational positions.

Table 7.13: Offender's Occupation

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Service	0	0
Domestic Servant	1	3.23
Business	21	67.74
Housewife	9	29.03
Any Other	0	0
Total	31	100



Source: Primary Data Collected from 31 reported and unreported cases in Dhaka District

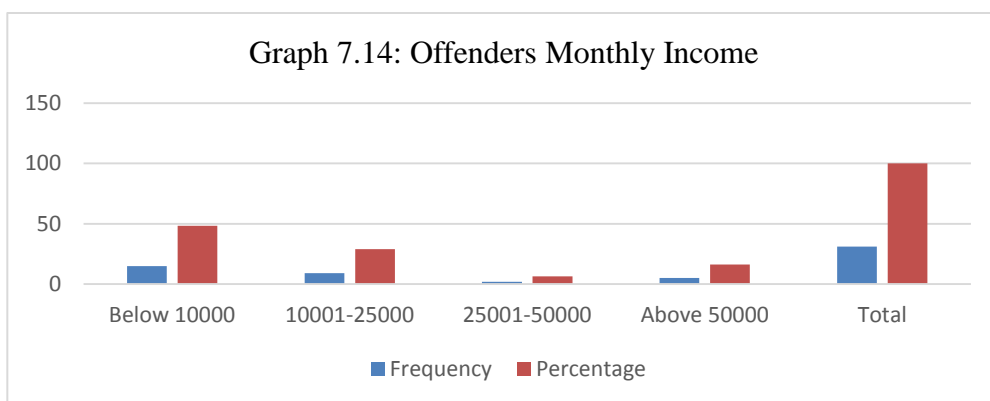
The table reveals that 67.74% of female offenders are involved in business-related activities, suggesting financial pressures and challenges in their ventures may lead to criminal behavior. Housewives, who manage household responsibilities, are also a significant group, with 29.03% of offenders. Domestic servants, who face extreme economic hardships and lack of social support, may also be driven towards crime as a coping mechanism. The absence of offenders in the service sector suggests that women in formal jobs or structured work environments may have lower involvement in criminal activities due to greater job stability, financial security, and social standing.

7.14. Monthly Income Condition of the Offenders

Following table shows the correlation between respondent's income and nature of offence.

Table 7.14: Offender's Monthly Income

Income (Per Month in Taka)	Frequency	Percentage
Below 10000	15	48.39
10001-25000	9	29.03
25001-50000	2	6.45
Above 50000	5	16.13
Total	31	100



Source: Primary Data Collected from 31 reported and unreported cases in Dhaka District

Table 7.14 reveals that, majority of female offenders are in the income groups of below Tk 10,000 (48.39 percent). Economic freedom plays an important role in female criminality. 29.03 percent crimes are committed by women who have income between Tk 10,001 to 25,000. These two categories constitute most female offenders.

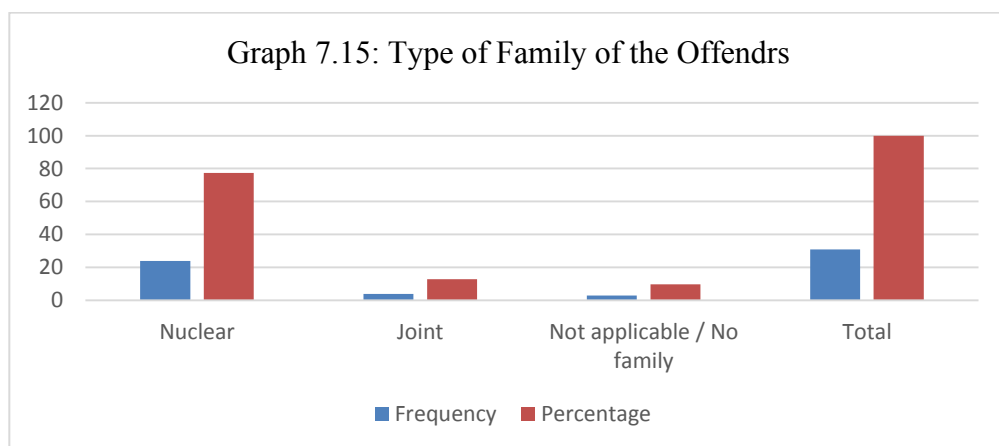
It is found that low income provokes women to commit offences. A poor woman does not find economic security and fails to satisfy the basic needs. Sometimes poverty operates directly to produce criminal activities. Illness, accident, providing dowry for marriage, etc. may provoke a women to indulge in thefts, fraud, cheating, robbery, etc. A woman may steal to supply her children food, clothing and other necessities of life. Thus the greater majority of female criminals in the income group of below Tk 10,000 are involved in offences. Income gives an insight into the economic status of the family and it is also instrumental in the formation of the behaviour of female criminals in the society.

7.15. Influence of Family Patterns

Family is a crucial social group that plays a significant role in shaping an individual's personality through socialization and control. However, family situations can vary greatly, and some individuals may not be able to live in normal families. The data in this aspects are presented in table 7.15.

Table 7.15: Type of Family of the Offender:

Type of Family	Frequency	Percentage
Nuclear	24	77.42
Joint	4	12.90
Not applicable / No family	3	9.68
Total	31	100



Source: Primary Data Collected from 31 reported and unreported cases in Dhaka District

Table 7.15 reveals that women who live separately in Dhaka District (and who also have economic constraints) from their family, are more prone to commit criminal activities than women of a joint family. 77.42 percent criminal activities were committed by women who lived in nuclear family. On the other hand women of a joint family are contributed to 12.90 percent.

Factors such as lack of control, strict discipline, parental neglect, physical abuse, broken homes, insecure homes, and immoral home atmospheres can contribute to family influence and subsequent criminal behavior. Researchers should examine the relationship between family patterns and the nature of involvement in crime, as well as the type of companion involved with the respondent in criminal acts.

8. Findings

The study on female criminality in Dhaka District reveals following distinct trends in crime types, motivations, and social dynamics.

- The majority of crimes committed by women involve drug-related offenses, followed by cheating (19.35%). Economic deprivation is a key factor driving these crimes, as it fosters demoralization and social disconnection. Offenses are categorized into crimes against persons, property, and other offenses, with drug and passport violations dominating the latter.
- A significant portion of women commit crimes in collaboration with others, often playing an accomplice role due to traditional gender expectations and limited autonomy. Over half of offenders act without companions, with friends and family members being the most common accomplices.
- Over half offenders are habitual offenders, suggesting systemic issues such as recidivism or economic instability. Habitual criminality requires targeted interventions to address recidivism and underlying causes, while preventive measures should focus on socioeconomic support and rehabilitation programs.
- The majority of women (74.19%) fear getting caught, while a minority (98.68%) act impulsively without forethought.
- Financial difficulties were the predominant cause (90.32%), with marital difficulties or mistreatment contributing to 6.45% of crimes. Criminality declined among women aged 40 and above, suggesting life stability as a protective factor.
- All offenders were Muslim, reflecting Bangladesh's predominantly Muslim population.
- It found that the majority of offenders (48.39%) earned less than Tk 10,000 monthly, highlighting poverty as a significant motivator.
- Young women aged 18-29 were the largest group of offenders (54.84%), followed by middle-aged women (30-39 years) at 35.48%, indicates a strong link between lack of education and early age of a women's life.
- Over half (51.61%) of offenders were illiterate, with secondary and higher education acting as protective factors, indicating a strong link between lack of education and crime.
- Occupational factors were also significant, with 67.74% involved in business and 29.03% housewives and domestic servants participating.
- Family dynamics were also significant, with 77.42% of offenders coming from nuclear families, where lack of control, broken homes, and neglect were contributing factors.
- Motivational factors were fear of getting caught (74.19%) and financial struggles (90.32%), with limited contemplation or impulsive actions noted in some cases.

Finally, this study reveals that female criminal behavior in Dhaka District is primarily driven by economic deprivation, low education, social pressures, and systemic inequities. The study concludes that policy interventions should focus on

economic empowerment, education, and strengthening family and community structures.

9. Recommendations to Prevent Female Criminality

Although women from all social classes are engaging themselves with criminal activities, the rate is higher among the slum dwellers and poor women, which often are related to their economic condition or other subjugated position. For the sake of scanty amount of money, these women are getting involved in various criminal activities. Additionally, they are mostly getting involved in crimes induced by men as they are less suspected by law enforcement agencies particularly in dealing with drugs, smuggling goods, etc. Thus, the offences that women do are self-initiated, acquired behaviour and imposed behaviour.

In the age of globalisation, it is not possible to cut out female offending from society and, therefore, concentration on putting down female offending is the demand of the day. The nature of female crime is different from men which demands to be addressed differently. As Mahatma Gandhi once pointed out, 'All crime is a kind of disease and should be treated as such.'⁶⁴ In regard to this, strengthening social control could be one of the most effective means for the prevention of female offending. It is also important to strengthen the legal education among the females as they can distinguish which behaviours are protected by laws and which not. Community and family education, educational institutions, television and print media, and social networking sites could be the medium to disseminate this knowledge.

In this society, patriarchy has a strong hold, creating a role model for women. Boys are taught to be masculine, while girls are trained to be feminine. Working women shoulder double burdens, including childcare and household chores. Despite increased education rates and socio-economic changes, women's traditional lifestyle is changing. Western-style democracy has contributed to their freedom, but decision-making remains male-dominated.

9.1 Preventive Measure:

Prevention is better than cure in crime prevention, especially for females in Bangladesh. Following measures are recommended:

- The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh guarantees equal rights for all citizens, regardless of sex, religion, race, or other factors. Women must have equal rights to men, and the state should strive for equality of opportunity and involvement in all spheres of national life.

⁶⁴ Louis Fischer, *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi* (Harper & Brothers 1950).

- Female criminality in Bangladesh can be reduced by ensuring basic needs such as food, clothing, housing, education, and medical treatment are adequately provided.
- Recognizing vulnerable areas like slums and over populated areas is challenging specially for women. The population growth of Dhaka city is a significant issue, with women being more respected in societies with fewer women. To reduce female criminality, population growth should be decreased.
- Parental care and supervision are crucial for both boys and girls, as lack of attention and supervision can push young girls towards criminal activities.
- Training programs, such as vocational training, can help female criminals secure employment after release. Social and legal awareness should be increased, as many women from remote areas are unaware of their legal rights and punishments.
- Sex education is crucial to prevent women from engaging in crime due to lack of awareness about sex-rackets and flesh trade.
- Major recommendations include preventing early marriages and ensuring financial independence for girls, employment for all citizens, and community-based programs for women offenders.
- New laws should be enacted to control female criminality, and diversion programs for female criminals can be arranged to improve their behavior or tendency. By addressing these issues, the government can work towards reducing female criminality and promoting a more inclusive society. Punishment of domestic violence cases and proper implementation of dowry laws are also necessary. The Penal Code, 1860 should be updated to address adultery as a significant cause of female criminality.
- The police department in Bangladesh as well as Dhaka district needs to be reorganized, with an increase in personnel and logistics support to effectively control crimes committed by women.
- Effective legal mechanisms and government policies should be adopted to decrease female criminality rates in Bangladesh.

9.2 Corrective Measure:

Female criminals serving their time in prison should be given the opportunity to rectify their actions, allowing them to become independent and less criminal. Many women are deprived of liberty and resort to crimes to break tradition. Support and assistance are needed to help these women become independent and contribute to their families and children. Prisons can provide opportunities for women to engage in activities like cooking, tailoring, gardening, painting, and handicrafts, improving

self-respect and confidence. Public awareness is also crucial, as returning to society may lead to harsher crimes. People should be made aware of the rights of reformed criminals, allowing them to continue their lives as before.

9.3 Rehabilitative and Supportive measures

Rehabilitative measures should be implemented to allow female criminals to fulfill their parental responsibilities. This includes providing proper medical aid and rehabilitation. If a female offender suffers from a mental condition, they may continue to commit crimes post-incarceration. Caretaking of children and allowing them to stay in touch with their families should also be prioritized. Access to legal advice should be provided, as many women come to prison for no mistake. This will help prevent the continuation of criminal behavior.

10. Concluding Observations

The study on female criminality in Dhaka District reveals that socio-economic factors, traditional gender roles, and limited education contribute to women's involvement in criminal activities. Economic deprivation, social marginalization, and family dynamics are key factors. To address this issue, preventive measures should focus on empowering women economically, enhancing their legal awareness, and providing rehabilitation support. Legal education and social awareness campaigns should also be implemented. Rehabilitative support for incarcerated female offenders is also crucial. The research calls for continued investigation to develop targeted strategies to address the rising trend of female offenses.

