The Impact of Vulnerable Family Relation on Female Criminality: Its Forms, Causes, and Consequences in Society

Md Mazharul Islam[1] & Md. Ishtiaq Ahmed Talukder[2]

Abstract: *Female criminality may be a quickly developing issue in our society. It has negative impacts on our standard of living and the encompassing world. It influences the solidarity and solidarity of our society. Vulnerable family relation works as a cause of the different societal problems and could for female criminality. It is vital to connect the family workforce, the position of females within the family, and female culpability. This study tried to determine the impact of vulnerable family relations on female criminality. Family relation imposes different impacts on female to engage in crime. Various aspects and family procedures are the liable factors of this problem, such as maladjustment in the family, domination, different necessities. Female criminals had done different offenses for discrete purposes and situations such as drug business, murder, kidnapping and theft. This study will help enrich academic knowledge to understand and control female crime in society.*

Keywords: *Dysfunctional Family, Family Relation, Female Criminality, Family Conflict, Family pressure*

Introduction

Female offending is a term where women played a central role in crime commission (Islam and Khatun, 2013). Female criminality refers to crimes committed only by females or associated with others. Women no longer think of themselves as uncompetitive with men, and they are involved with every activity

with men, and as a result, they are not afraid of doing risky and illegal jobs like crime. Women are involved in different types of crimes such as murder, child and drug trafficking, prostitution, suicide, adultery, theft and robbery. Family dysfunction can play a vital role in generating these offenses. Carr (2009) described that for an ideal family, there should be structural completeness, economic security, cultural conformity, moral conformity, physical and psychological normality, and functional normality. There are certain factors in a criminal's family life or 'under the roof culture', which are responsible for female delinquency or later criminal activities (Ahuja, 2000). Psychological causes are also responsible for developing female crime, particularly women's role and its related frustration (Berger, 2011), defective personality (Kim and Kim, 2011), loneliness, and psychological disorder.

Women's crimes often display a relational component (Richie, 1996), where women generally engage in their first crime by helping a male partner to commit an offense. Akhter (2019) showed that females' crime was only 1.7 percent in 1971, which increased to 3.8 percent in 1992 and 13 percent in 2008. In 2003, there were 1910 or 2.8 percent female prisoners in the jail of Bangladesh, while in 2017, there were 2772 female prisoners or 3.8 percent, having a growth rate of 2.9 percent. These data indicate a growing trend in female offenders in Bangladesh. Pollack (1950) said that offence by female is a hidden crime. In the context of gender equality, women get legal opportunities alongside the rise of their involvement in illegal works. Family conflict and family maladjustment (Ahuja, 2000), broken family (Datesman and Scrapitti, 1975), and inactivity of the family (Henggeler, Bordwin, and Cunningham, 1998) are responsible for women's participation in criminal activities. Gerstel and Sarkisian (2011) said family problems are the root cause of women's crime. The differences in the rate of male and female crimes result from the differences in their respective roles (Ahuja, 2000). This study aims to analyze the nature of female crime in the Tangail district of Bangladesh. It is also related to identifying the causes of female criminality in a family function. According to the socio-demographic characteristics, this study tried to find out the form of female crime and the position of the female in the family, before and after committing a crime.

Literature Review

Regarding female crime, Pollak (1950) said that women's crime has a masked character. On the one hand, all-female crimes are not reported to the police, and on the other hand, the police and courts are very sympathetic towards females

due to their paternalistic and protective attitudes. The no reporting and under-reporting female crimes are also because women's social roles are excellent covers, and homes serve as a smokescreen for hiding the crime. Sharma (1963) studied female offenders in Uttar Pradesh and highlighted female crime's social and psychological factors. Because of the lack of the right role and family relationships, they could be involved in crime. Adler (1975) begins by showing a faster rate of female arrests than in male arrests. She focused on the women's movement, which has brought about changes in traditional sex roles, greater equality for women, and an increase in the female labor force. In this aspect, Simon (1976) analyzed various dimensions of female criminality, like the extent and types of crimes committed and their treatment by prison officials and courts. She said that it starts from the family, and because of the restrictions to fulfill their emotional and other basic needs, they involve in crime and misuse various opportunities. She also referred to the changes in women's status in labor force participation, education, profession, and income. She showed that female property has increased, for which more women are being arrested and incarcerated, while violent offenses of women have not increased. She predicts that white-collar crime and occasional crimes by women increase even more as women take an edge within the workforce, allowing them more significant opportunities to commit a criminal offense.

Datesman and Scarpitti (1980) said that the increase of female crime predates the women's liberation movement. These movements are happening in order to achieve their rights legally and illegally. Balman, Berger, and Schmidt (1980) used Marxist perspectives and submitted that ladies commit crimes due to their socialization under a capitalist structure. These factors also work in the family because it is an institution of the society. Shariff and Sekar (1982) studied female inmates of Remand Home in Bangalore and pointed out the defective family environment, faulty discipline by parents, broken homes, and parental rejection as a cause of female criminal behavior. Mishra and Gautam (1982) pointed out that female criminality is primarily due to broken homes and the crisis of changing social values. Bloom, Chesney-Lind, (1994) had shown that women generally commit fewer crimes than men, and offenses tend to be less severe, primarily nonviolent property offenses, such as; fraud, forgery, theft, and drug offenses. Lloyd, (1995) said that as most women commit the crime of a lesser violent nature such as shop-lifting, leniency is given to them from law enforcement officers and judges. Many women indeed use their femininity to their advantage, making it very difficult to argue for equal rights for both sexes (Lloyd, 1995).

Gaines and Miller (2004) presented that most female convictions of nonviolent offenses are for drug crimes. They said the single mom who commits a crime to provide for her children or turns to drug use in an attempt to escape the pressure of their daily life. Naples (2004) draws attention to welfare, poverty, sexual identity, and sexual assault. For instance, a number of the salient dilemmas of feminist research point out the talk over objectivity, the paradox of discourse, the dilemma of standpoint, and the challenges of activist research. Chesney-Lind and Irwin (2007) challenged the new bad girl's characterization, arguing that it is only a replacement plan to punish the girl who is not the stereotypical depiction of excellent. Beyond bad girls exposes the formal and informal socio-cultural control system imposed on girls. Milkman (2008) presented several factors to place women at risk for criminal behavior and supplied associated statistical information regarding these factors' incidence among female judicial clients. Brownridge (2009) investigates under-researched and underserved groups of women who are particularly vulnerable to violent victimization from an in house male partner in a family or another place. Roces and Edwards (2010) identified that the women's movement in Asia is a comprehensive study of women's activism across Asia. The contributors investigate how national feminism is influenced by transnational factors, like women's movements in other countries, colonialism, and international agencies.

Gerstel (2011) said that family problems show how the current emphasis on the nuclear family with its exclusion of the extended family is narrow, even deleterious, and misses much of family life. Maparyan (2012) discussed the womanist idea, which offers a comprehensive systematic analysis of womanism, including a detailed discussion of the womanist worldview and its implication for activism. Islam and Khatun (2013) discussed that varying nature and typologies of female crime and its associated factors are due to the impact of socio-political change, urbanization, technological development, structural changes, and the nature of socialization in the family. Nevertheless, in Bangladesh, no study has generated yet specifying the impact of vulnerable family relations on female criminality. The forms, causes, and consequences of female criminality in society concerning family bonding and understanding were missing from Tangail, Bangladesh. This is the research gap on what this study focused on.

Methodology

This study is qualitative and used the interview method for data collection. The interview process had been done in a particular room using a relatable

questionnaire with the detainee of Tangail District Jail, Bangladesh. Tangail Jail has been used as a study area of this study to determine the form, causes, and consequences of female crime and about family. This research population is the female criminals of the Tangail district jail. Some female criminals were convicted by the court, and some were in the trial stage for their actions. Twenty respondents were present on data collection day in jail. The total population is the sample number of this study, and the number is twenty. The interview proceeding had been done on 19 September of 2019. Face-to-face interviewing methods had been used in this study, and much information is collected through books, journals, newspapers, and websites. Mostly open-ended and contingency questions were used for data collection. Al last analysis and discussion had been used in this paper to fulfill the objectives.

Theoretical Framework

Different crime theories have been propounded from time to time, but only a few among them have dealt with and have a relation with female criminality. This helps to understand female criminality and shape a better understanding of female criminality according to different family relation statuses.

i. Feminist theory and family relationships on female criminality

Dysfunctional family relations and female criminality can be explained to some range according to the feminist theory. Women are treated paternalistically by more lenient judgments or punished more harshly for certain offenses that go strongly against traditional female sex role expectations. As a result, the pressure of personality norms are exerted on them, and they are divided on the basis of social and legal norms, which contribute to female criminality (Akers and Sellers, 2004). Chesney-Lind, (1994) and Owen Bloom (1994) argued that exploitations of women and girls in family and negligence, cause some to run away or begin abusing drugs at an early age, which often leads to criminal activity. The feminist theory discussed how to maintain an equal position of male and female in society and discussed how family relations could play a significant role in committing a crime for females. In society and family, males generally make rules and enforce the rules on females forcibly. It happens through restriction and control of women by men, which gives rise to disadvantages for women in family and society. These procedures create pressure on personality of females. This personality problem can drive women to unsocial and illegal norms, which is deviation. All these give rise to female criminality, which also

generates position of misbalance in the society. This misbalancing in the society affects families, and only men make their rules and regulations.

ii. Masculinity theory and family relationships on female criminality

Freda Adler provided the masculinity theory in the book *Sister's in crime* (1975). It links changes in subjective attitudes brought about by the women's movement, changing women's social rules, the masculinization of female behavior, and changes in patterns of female offending. Women take on aggressive, pushy, and harsh male characteristics for being more liberal. Women learn to use crime to acquire success and wealth and become more violent. As women become masculinized, their offending rates, both in property and violent offenses, will collate with male rates of offending. In explanation, she wrote, in a family, when women become independent and free from the domination of the male person, then they use that position and change the family rules for women. Here they become more independent and free to use power and position. Using position, they change roles to achieve male characteristics in society, family, and surroundings. They become more desperate to achieve more success and wealth. In this way, they got attracted to and started using illegal forms of income and abuse their position. It means they learn to commit a crime, which explains female criminality. This position creates improper control over the family and society.

iii. Differential association theory and family relationships on female criminality

The differential theory, developed by Edwin Sutherland, in the 1930s is based on social interaction between inmate groups, which causes certain people to deviate while others do not. According to Sutherland, learning criminal behavior is seen as being no different from any other form of learning. Differential Association Theory's primary focus is the frequency, intensity, and meaningfulness of association (Elliot and Sheldon, 1998). Differential Association theory sees criminal behavior as being learned through intimate personal groups in the process of communication (Williams and McShane, 2018). Using Differential Association Theory, we can observe that women learn criminal behavior from their family and inmate groups. They maintain a relationship with their family and learn various techniques of crime. Sometimes they work as a group to commit a crime and maintain understanding relations with family. In this way,

they get more involved in crime. These create an imbalanced situation in family and society.

Socio-demographic Characteristics and Female Criminality

i. Age

This study's findings reveal that the age range of 20 there are two persons in 20 to 25 years of age; six people, in 26 to 30 years of age; ten persons are in 31 to 35 years of age; two persons in 36 to 40 years of age. Most of the respondents' age is between 31 to 35 years. This age group is more involved in crime than other age groups of people. Laub and Sampson (2020) said that personal and professional relationships build a social capital that significantly inhibits deviance over time. In this stage (31-35 years) of life, people are more likely to be attached and involve in families and social organizations. Malfunction of family, conflict, and enough experience from other deviant members involves crime at a high range than other age groups female person.

ii. Educational qualifications

This study has found that the highest number of respondents is illiterate. Out of twenty respondents thirteen are illiterate. Criminal tendencies are mostly seen in illiterate respondents. They are not aware of the rights, opportunities, and where they should go. Lack of education also created family maladjustment and sometimes leads women to involve in crime. Lochner and Moretti (2003) estimated the effect of education on the participation of criminal activity, accounting for the endogeneity of schooling. Using FBI data on arrests, found that mostly illiterate and low educational status people commit more crime than high educational status people.

iii. Marital status

This study found that married people commit crimes more than single or unmarried people. After getting married, family procreation, family conflict, and family maladjustment work as factors that create different obstacles in life and drive females to commit a crime. In this study, fifteen respondents were married, four were single, and one was divorced. Marriage is a central consideration in contemporary crime and resistance theories (Giordano, Cemlovich, and Rudolph, 2002). They said that marriage influences females for offending differently because. marriage is a highly gendered process for getting involved in crime.

iv. Occupational status

Bangladesh is a country where most of the married women are supposed to be housewives in the perspective of culture, values, beliefs, and social structure. In this study, all married women respondents were housewives. It is found in the study that married women committed crimes under the influence of their husbands or other family members. They face problems after marriage in the family. To maintain a balanced situation and fulfill daily living expenses, they are involved in crime. The family where they live is somehow related and linked with crime-based culture.

v. Monthly income of a family

Monthly income of twelve respondents out of the total twenty was between 1000 and 5000 Bangladeshi Taka. Four respondent family's monthly income was between 6000 and 10000 Bangladeshi Taka; two of the respondent's family monthly income was between 11000-15000 Bangladeshi Taka; one respondent had monthly family income between 16000 and 20000 Bangladeshi Taka; and one of the respondent's monthly family income was above 50000 Bangladeshi Taka. In this study, lower-class respondents were mostly involved in crime. Merton (1938), in his Strain theory emphasizes the predominance of crime and delinquency among the lower class and minority population, and the most deprived of legitimate opportunities. He discussed the inverse relationship between social class and law-breaking in the disadvantaged minority group.

vi. Family Size

This study revealed that nuclear family members' involvements are higher than the joint family members in the crime. In Bangladesh, most joint families are breaking down into nuclear families for different reasons and purposes. In this study, thirteen respondents belong to the nuclear family. After getting separated, they faced many obstacles and problems. To overcome their daily problems, they engaged in different kinds of crime. They were not economically stable. Seventeen respondents of this study said the head of the family was a male person. Many times, the head of the house dominated them and provoked and influenced them to commit a crime.

Forms of Female Crime

Respondents of this study were mostly involved with the drug business, murder, kidnapping, theft, and cheating. Drug dealing is the most common crime for females because it is an easy medium to earn more money in a short time. Murder is committed by provocation, torture, and domination in the family. Scott (2000) said the expected utility principle simply states that folks will make rational decisions on the extent to which they expect the selection to maximize their profits during a short time and minimize their cost and quickly earn extra money. Most respondents were in jail for drug cases. They were in jail for a second or more than that time. They did the crime in cooperation with family members or group members. Occupationally they took it as their profession. Violent offenses committed by women are not in high or even medium range compared to property-related or drug-related offenses. One was involved in adultery and killed her husband using a knife. She cut her husband's throat when the husband was sleeping. Some other respondents were involved in cheating. They committed this crime in an organized way in cooperation with other people. Some of the respondents were accused for theft. It was more habitual than necessary for those respondents. In the kidnapping cases, respondents helped their male partners to commit the offense. They worked in these activities as group members.

Causes of Female Crime

This study found that family conflict is the leading cause of females committing crimes besides poverty, family influence, family domination, adultery, broken family, and revenged motive. Crime is committed in the sequential circumstances by a person. It also depends on social solidarity and family relation. Hirchi and Gottfredson (1983) said that crime occurred when an individual's bond to society is broken or weak. In this study, respondents' bonds with their family members were not strong enough. They liked to break emotional attachment and did not care about other's feelings and societal rules. These were the vital reasons for dysfunctional families. This study found, fourteen respondents were involved in crime by the instigation of others, and six other respondents said they committed the crime willingly without any instigation. Most of them were involved in serious crime continuously by others' instigation. Timmermann (2006) said most people commit a crime by instigation of others. They were mostly instigated by their close person, such as husband and or son. Four respondents said the husband influenced them directly to

commit a crime. Others said that friends, other family members, and neighbors instigated them to commit crimes.

By instigation and provocation, females involve more into crime rather than on their own accord. Continuous family conflict, lacking in mental harmony and peace in the family, the necessity for basic needs, work as fuel to burst out the tank. Defected family environment, faulty discipline by parents, broken homes, and parental rejection are the core causes of female criminal behavior. They got support from other members for committing crime. It was a solid point for them to generate crime continuously. Berkowitz (1962) considered the instinct concept of aggression, frustration, and involvement of the various people in crime works as a backup for them. A fair and balanced family environment can work as medicine to reduce and prevent female crime from society ensuring basic needs and facilities.

Family Relation with Female Offender before and after Committing a Crime

Most of the respondents said that the relationship with their family was not so good before committing a crime. The reasons were adjustment problems, torture, domination, and poverty. For bad adjustment problems, respondents were frustrated, and it induced them into committing a crime and holding a position. Patrosino, Derzon, and Lavenberg (2009) explained that family relations play a significant role before committing crime by someone. Seven respondents of this study said they were physically abused before involving in crime; and some respondents said that they were not physically abused but mentally dominated by other male or older members of their family. Some other respondents said that they did not face any adjustment problems in their families before committing crimes. It depends on different and particular social settings and environments. This is the reason why some faced problems and some did not. For family problems, mostly about sixteen respondents of this study were engaged in crime, and some for other reasons. Gabel (1992) said the behavioral problems and adjustment problems of females and children could generate harmful interactions and incarceration among family members. As a result, they involve in different types of crime. Many respondents faced mistrust, misbehavior, and intimacy problems in the family and as consequences, respondents were involved in crime.

Lee (2012) said that offenders face various adjustment problems after committing a crime, and they need to cope with those situations. Most of the time, they face negligence and avoidance by their family members. Maximum respondents said

after committing a crime, being neglected by their family members is a form of torture for their mental health. As a result, they become more restless and desperate to do something thrilling, in order to help them to be calm and relaxed. They use the easy way, and commit a crime. Respondents said they faced neglect because of the hypocritical nature of their family. When a female becomes a criminal, their families try to abandon them by thinking that their reputation could be hampered in society. The relationship with the neighbors was also not good with the respondents. They faced bullying, negligence, and indecent behavior from their neighbors.

Discussion and Conclusion

Crime is a sociological phenomenon. Crime appears to be the most challenging issue for socio-economic development in Bangladesh. In Bangladesh, females are involved in fewer crimes than males because women are isolated in the family, and they get fewer opportunities to engage in crime. However, it is increasing day by day rapidly. This study found the fundamental nature, causes of female crime, and the family's role in engaging with a crime, with offenders before and after committing a crime. Mostly 31 to 35 years old females were engaged in crime compared to other age groups. Illiterate is more involved in crime than literate females. They do not know the fundamental rights and do not know how to access opportunities for legal works. Maximum females engaged in crime are married rather than single. They face much-complicated life, situation, and condition to survive in life than single or unmarried females. Bangladesh is a country where most of the people belong to Muslim families. All the respondents belong to the Muslim families. Occupationally most of the females involved in crime are used to be homemakers.

Family maladjustment, poverty, necessities of money, family conflict, and abuse are the causes of female crime. Over all of these causes, conflicting family relation with members plays a significant role in involving in crime. Female crime is mostly related to drug abuse and drug business, murder, thefts and kidnapping. Most of the respondents were in jail for the first time, and some were for two or more. Those who came for a second or more times in jail were convicted for drug business by the court. Respondents are involved in crime in an organized way with their family persons or other members. Maximum of the respondents faced different adjustment problems in their families before committing a crime. Some were physically tortured, and most were mentally tortured in the family. After involving in crime, they faced the same problems in their family. Many of the respondents family members neglected them after committing a crime.

Respondents were discriminated against in their families in all aspects. Behind female crime, family roles such as family influences and adjustment problems are the leading factors. As a result of female crime, social disorder, law and moral degradation, and other inharmonic situations occur in society. The police role is a minor part, but family modification and reformation can prevent these kinds of crimes from society. Family relation has a significant impact on a person to involve in crime. Females quickly get confused and influenced by others for their weak position in family and society. Intense parental supervision is necessary for the early childhood development period to reform and regenerate families. Have to ensure all fundamental rights to the state's citizens and necessities. Have to ensure educational and employment opportunities and after ensuring, those are to be monitored appropriately. Have to decrease the population growth rate in Bangladesh because it is a highly populated country. Furthermore, general public have to be aware of any illegal offenses and activities.

For women, crime is an act of resistance to express their frustration and rebellion against inequality and subordination. Crime may also be a coping mechanism to evade the violence and unrealistic expectation, and multiple roles that women are engaged in within their family. The challenge is to chart a new and brave road towards understanding and dealing with women's criminality. Different factors such as family relations, condition of the family, gender-based violence, and socialization of a girl give rise to it. Family relations sometimes play a role where women become bound to commit and involve with crime. Family relations also set the social position of a woman, lifestyle, and necessities. These all are the facts, as a result of which female criminality happens.

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Bio Profile of the Author:

[1]The Author has filled his graduation and postgraduation from Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University in 2014 and 2017. He is now currently working at Criminology and Police Science Department in University of Chittagong.
Email ID: mdmazharulislam29@gmail.com.
[2] Associate Professor, Department of Criminology and Police Science
in Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University, Santosh, Tangail.
Email : ishtiaq.talukder@mbstu.ac.bd