Crime Reporting and Perceived Effects on its Victims: A Case Study of Ekpoma

Akindutire Francis

Department of Sociology, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma Nigeria

*Corresponding author
Akindutire Francis, Department of Sociology, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma Nigeria

Abstract
This study focused on crime reporting and perceived effects on its victims: a case study of Ekpoma. Crime is a universal social problem which goes beyond the general notion of theft, murder, assault, rape, fraud, kidnapping and other unwholesome behaviour. This research work posits that whatever definition one gives to crime, the concept suggests a decline of public security and steady descent into social chaos. The research work argues that crime reporting and prevention must dovetail into the entire region of security management. The research work concludes by maintaining the true security goes beyond the provision of modern electronic equipment and increased police surveillance, etc, but involves much more of social justice, equity, employment opportunities in the society at large. Two major theories were use: Strain and Conflict Perspective Theory. Proffer suggestions were made on how the problem of crime reporting and victimization can be managed in Nigeria.

Keywords: Crime, Victimization, Security, Strain and Conflict Theory

Introduction

Crime is one of the human security problems confronting humanity across the world. As it is in contemporary times, delinquency and criminal behaviours are common phenomena in Nigeria. The high rate of occurrence in recent time is of greater concern to the citizens and their governments than it ever had been before now. Nigeria is currently caught in the web of crime dilemma, manifesting in the convulsive upsurge of both violent and non-violent. Also, events of past few years show that the spate of crime has assumed a debilitating proportion and requires the intervention of policy makers in this regard.

Crime has been defined in various ways by different scholars such as [1-4]. For instance, Onoge defined crime as an act or omission which renders the person doing the act or making the omission liable to punishment under any order in council, ordinance, law or statute. Clinard sees crime as those activities that break the law of the land and are subject to official punishment. To Adler, Muellier, and Lauifer crime is any human conduct that violates criminal laws and is subject to punishment. Schmallenger view crime as a conduct violating the criminal laws of a state, the federal government, or a local jurisdiction, for which there is no legally acceptable justification or excuse. While Territo, Halsted, and Bromley defined crime as acts that violate laws (formal, official, written statements of norms). According to them, no matter how reprehensible an act or the omission of an act may be, a crime

has not been committed unless a specific law has been violated. Moreover, the violation must be either intentional or negligent. However, in spite of the differences in the definitions given by those authors the fact remains that a crime (i) is an act or omission (ii) proscribed by the state; and (iii) has a punishment for its occurrence.

The menace of criminal gangs is on the increase and their deadly exploits in recent times have sent many homes wailing and gnashing. Likewise, in Benin City, Edo State the apparent insecurity of life and property has constituted a deterrent to the willingness of both local and foreign investors to consider serious investment in the state. Thus, although the state is fast developing, its state of security still hinders development at appreciable level. This phenomenon no doubt constitutes danger signal to national development.

According to Oseghale Crime has become a terrible social problem in Nigeria [5]. It is almost now a household word. Most people would hasten to describe criminals as persons without "home training", or persons whose early socialization was defective. An apparent link between family and crime [6]. Kelly Crime is a very common word with some uncommon connotations. Crime is relative and can mean different, even opposed things according to one's point of view. It is also an umbrella term covering a wide range of different circumstances and situations. When we think

of crime, we have a general notion of theft, murder, assault, rape, fraud and other unwholesome behavior, the kind of conduct which cannot be allowed free rein without a disruption of order, a decline of public security and a steady descent into social chaos.

In fact, one may say that there is no universally acceptable definition of crime because what is a crime in one society may not be so in another. The content of crime is culturally determined. For instance, it may be regarded as a crime in a particular society for one to violate the normative pattern between friends but in another society such an act may never connote crime. This seems to be the reason behind Clifford's submission that "… for there to be any precision in what we mean by crime, we have to outline distinctly and specifically the actions which will not be tolerated [7]. This definition of offences, Clifford contends, is the province of the law and it accounts to a great extent for its technicality [7]. One of the most important aspects of sociological thinking about crime is an emphasis on the interconnections between conformity and deviance in different social contexts Giddens [8]. Sutherland linked crime to what he called differential association [9, 10]. Emile Durkheim, one of the founding fathers of sociology developed the notion of anomie to refer to the thesis that in modern societies, traditional norms and standards become undermined without being replaced by new ones. This view explains that there are no clear standards to guide behaviour in a given area of social life Giddens.

To fulfill this urge, criminal activities are reported to appropriate authorities, established to safeguard the lives and properties of its citizens. The criminal justice system is therefore, put in place to deliver crimes reported to them. Crimes reported cannot be said to have effectively reduced the rate of criminal activities, making people lose their faith in the Criminal Justice System (CJS). Individuals or groups concurrently complain about the injustice they suffer when nefarious criminal acts are overlooked and treated with such low level of seriousness. It could be concluded therefore that the major factor adducible to the loose of faith of individual, groups and corporate bodies, is the perceived inefficiency of the so-called appropriate bodies. Many societies all over the world have had to contend with the consequences of criminal activities, which include lives and properties fear of the unknown, political instability, victimization by conventional criminals, amongst others.

Even though a member of the society reports a crime to a law enforcement officer, it would not be counted unless it is recorded in a way that allows it to be incorporated into the crime statistics, as a consequence, offending particularly minor offending, may be significantly under counted in situations where law enforcement officers are overloaded with work or do not perceive the offending as worth recording. Some crimes reported are not done in a way that the actual event of things is made known. These crimes lack uniformity, which produce obvious difficulties in actually investigating and solving the crimes that are reported. Another causal factor may include the time frame of the crime. A firsthand account is relatively low. For example, by the time a robbery case is being reported, the robbers will probably have fled the victims in the hospital, answering police questions if any is around or even in the mortuary.

Certain behaviour are labeled deviant which in actual fact may not be, according to the criminal code of that particular society. Members of the society (victims and witnesses), are most times ignorant of criminal laws. When such behaviours are reported, they are more or less unimportant. Crimes known to police (CKP), already certified as reported may not be analyzed as desired by victims of such immoral acts. Charges may be dropped, even when the perpetrator is arrested. Such is the situation when there is lack of evidence. Another popular incidence is the arrest of innocent persons in place of those that actually committed the crimes. This maybe as a result of being in the wrong place, at the wrong time. Pleading guilty to a crime, lower than that which an offender commits is another major problem. In most cases, it reduces the levity of punishment and sentence becomes in proportionate to the actual crime committed. Also among the problems associated with crime reporting, is the dependency of skills on both the prosecuting counsel and defense counsel, with convictions and acquaintances actually depending on the professional skills of both counsels.

Another problem associated with the procedure of reporting crimes is the inconsistencies involved in information given out by the so-called witnesses, when crimes are being investigated. The illiterate nature of most citizens about the legal and criminal code of its society poses a greater threat. Some just give information about a crime thinking that by doing so; they will be popular, given money for coming forth with' vital information'. With this, they say or do anything to act as if they were present when the crime occurred. This scenario drastically slows down the process of justice.

Crime Perspectives
Without conformity and predictability in human behavior, society as we know would not exist. Order and stability is the cornerstone of social life. It is also a known fact that social life involves people's breaking of rules. According to Direnzo, 'all societies have strong prohibitions against certain types of activity [11]. Some types of behavior are universally condemned, irrespective of culture, era or circumstance. Such actions are viewed as been intrinsically wrong and there is great deal of consensus among people in different societies on this matter''. Beneath this brief and straightforward definition, lies a tangled complex web. Defining crime is a challenge in large part, because it is a relative matter as described by Howard.S. Becker.''It is not the act itself, but the reactions to the act that makes something deviant or criminal''. According to Durkheim [12]. It is no longer possible today to dispute the fact that law and morality vary, from one social type to the next, nor that they change within the same type, if the condition of life are modified'' Ugodin Criminologists and legislatures agree that some crimes are evil in themselves (mala-in-se), while some others are evil because they are forbidden (mala-prohibita) [13]. Based on these notions about crime, they believe that there is no crime without punishment (Nullen crimen sine poena), and there is no punishment without law (nullen poena sine lege) and no crime without a victim (nullen crimen sina victima), Reid.

Durkheim argued that crime is an inevitable and normal aspect of social life. He posits that crime is present in all types of societies; indeed, the crime rate is higher in the more advanced, industrialized countries. He went further and said, crime 'is an integral part of all healthy societies, it is inevitable because not every member of

society can be equally committed to the collective sentiments-the shared values and moral beliefs of society. Since individuals are exposed to different influences and circumstances, it is impossible for all to be alike. Therefore, not everyone is equally reluctant to break the law. He imagined a society of saints populated by perfect individuals. In such a society, there might not be murder or robbery, but there would still be deviance. The general standards of behavior will be so high that the slightest slip would be regarded as a serious offense. Thus, the individual who shows bad taste, or mere impolite behavior, would attract strong disapproval from other members of that society. As said, the society is the womb from which crime is brought forth.

Causes of Crime

There is no universal or single explanation for the causes of crime, but the biological and sociological schools, offer explanations as to the cause of crime, to the best of their knowledge. Socio-biologists try to explain criminal abilities by looking for answers 'within' individuals. They assume that something in the individual's biological make-up leads him or her to become criminal in nature. Socio-biological explanations therefore focus on genetic predispositions to such deviances such as crime [14, 15]. These biological explanations include but are not limited to these three (3) theories

I.   Intelligence-low intelligence leads to crime.
II. The 'XYY' theory-an extra 'Y' chromosome in males, lead to crime.
III. Body type-people with squarish, muscular bodies are more likely to commit street crimes such as mobbing, rape, and burglary.

Biological Explanation of Crime.

The subject of genetics and criminality is a very recent one. Each cell in the human body, with the exception of the egg cells in the woman and the spermatozoa in the man, contains 46 chromosomes, which control all our physical characteristics and the body functions. They are called AUTOSOMES. The other two determine the sex of the individual, with the male having' XY' chromosome and the female' XX' chromosome. In the process of cell division (meiosis), sometimes the duplicated 'Y' chromosome may fail to split, hence fuses with the released 'X' chromosome from the female, then an abnormal male is born with 'XYY' chromosome.

William Brown, claims that the male child with 'XYY' chromosome has high mental abnormality and height [16, 17]. Price and Whatmore, compared those with XY chromosome with those with XYY chromosome and found that the normal XY chromosome males displayed low aggressive behavior as claimed by Patricia Jacobs, and that XYY chromosome individuals also start their criminal career at younger ages than the XY chromosome males and that they were also more resistant to corrective training [18].

In a related study, William (1968), examined 200 boys between the ages of 15 and 21 in Boston. In this study, which examined the relation between body shape and criminal tendencies, he distinguishes three (3) basic physical and psychological types of humans. They include;

I.   Endomorphic individuals; these people maintain predominantly negative functions. They grow fast and are characterized by the love of food, comfort and they are generally slow. Sociable with temperament, they are extroverted and cordial with physically stout bodies.
II. Mesomorphic individuals; they have well developed muscles and are characterized by aggressive and forceful actions, always in the habit of engaging in fist fights. They are vigorous and active, muscular and energetic.
III. Ectomorphic individuals; they have prominent skin development and are characterized by introversion i.e their love for privacy, self-restrain and cool towards other people. They are generally tall and thin and with temperament that is highly intelligence.

Of these three (3) types or groups of individuals, mesomorphic individuals are seen to be prone to criminality, while both endomorphic and ectomorphic individuals are portrayed to be the same.

Sociological Explanation to Crime

Unlike biology and psychology, which look within individuals for explanations of human behaviour, sociological explanations focus on external experiences such as people's association or group membership. External influences such as socialization, sub-cultural membership and social class are areas where sociologists and criminologists in particular, look into to account for the reason why people commit crime.

Our beliefs, attachments and commitments are bonds that control our internalized morality. The stronger our bonds are with society, the more effective our inner controls are Hirschi [19]. This can be summarized as self-control says sociologist Travis Hirschi. The key to learning high self-control is socialization, especially in childhood. In some families where physical and aggressive abuse is predominant and an everyday issue, children and younger members of the household may learn criminal pattern of behavior as Siegal, asserts correctly; 'Research indicates that habitually aggressive behavior is learnt in homes in which children are frustrated and victimized and parents serve as aggressive role models; learnt violence then persists into childhood' [20]. From the above, children who are exposed to violent and aggressive patterns of behavior easily learn to behave in such manners and thereby continue to act in criminal ways, even well into adult stages of their lives.

Living with Crime

Crime is thought to be a major concern that shapes the everyday live of members of society. But what impact does living with high levels of crime have in the mindset of most of them also belonged to ordinary citizens? Research conducted by Valerie Moller of Rhodes University, postulates that citizens with high social integration were known to be protected and safe in their neighborhoods from crime [21]. These households were well established in their neighborhoods and knew, as well as trusted their neighbors. Most of them also belonged to local organizations, faith based membership and also resident's association for neighborhood watch.

In line with common practice, crimes against the household and

crimes against the individual are the major incidences of criminal victimization. Householders in areas of high criminal rates are usually dissatisfied with their lives, varying according to how recently the crime has been committed Valerie Moller [21]. Also, citizens are no longer willing to play host stranded strangers. This is based on the experiences of many, who have been individually robbed and /or in their household and those whose daughters or wives have been raped, assaulted or even beaten by those they have hosted. A decline in the organizational life and mobilization capacity of the neighborhood is also another impact of living amidst crime, neighbors dread communal celebrations and festivity where everyone and anyone is welcome.

Crime in Nigeria
According to Kelly (2012) crime causes loss of lives and property, as well as overwhelming fear of insecurity. These have serious consequences for democracy, economic development and social capital and associated life generally. Nigeria has witnessed upsurge in crimes during the past two decades. Increasing incidence of armed robbery, kidnapping and insurgency has led to a paralyzing fear, which has in turn, affected economic and social life in the country. As a result of the growth rates of severity of criminalities, successive governments in the country since the early 1980s introduced diverse crime control measures, but without much success Etannubi Alemika [22].

To effectively combat crime, comprehensive socio-economic development planning, aimed at effective and equitable social services delivery is necessary. Innocent.C. Chukwuma. The fact is, these crime measure cannot be achieved without reliable and valid data. Nigeria at present does not have such statistics. It is therefore not surprising that in spite of the various crime control measures and task forces that were respectively introduced and established during the past two decades, criminals continue to operate in greater number over increasing wider spheres. Official crime statistics produced by police, prisons and the courts are the indicators of criminality and victimization commonly available in most societies. However, such statistics are inaccurate due to dark figures (unreported crimes), grey figures (reported but unrecorded crimes), and manipulation of records to satisfy political and / or institutional interests. Globally these statistics are known to suffer several weaknesses. Such weaknesses led criminologists in Nigeria and all over the globe, to develop self-report measures of obtaining information on criminality, victimization, criminal justice administration and public attitude to crime in the society, Alemika EO [23].

Crime Report and Criminal Victimization
One of the major components of criminology is the victims of crime. After all, there can never be a crime without persons or organizations that suffer directly or indirectly. However, it has been observed that this aspect of criminology has suffered neglect [24-26]. But, before the extent of neglect of victims of crime within the subject matter of criminology is highlighted, it is safer to have a clear conceptual meaning of the term victims of crime. Victimization generally is a widespread phenomenon/problem encompassing every facet of the life of individuals and organizations. Thus, the generic meaning of victimization is a situation in which persons or groups suffer physical, mental or psychological harm and/or injuries, material loss or damage or other social disadvantages resulting from either natural, socioeconomic, political, or physical or mechanical disaster or misfortune. But specifically, victims of crime are in reality individuals or groups who have directly or indirectly suffered the brunt of criminal activities. Thus, those who suffer from outright violations of Fundamental Human Rights perpetrated by individuals or the State, discriminatory socio-economic policies, white collar elite and conventional (common) crimes, among others, can be said to be victims of crime. According to the United Nations Report, a person or a collectivity may be made victims of crime as a result of conduct which: Is a violation of the rights proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; otherwise constitutes an abuse of power in violation of the international law and fundamental personal, economic, social, cultural, environmental, civil or political rights possessed by that person or collectivity otherwise constitutes an offence under national legislation [27]. Similarly, in the eyes of the New South Wales Council for Civil Liberties, victims of crimes are citizens who have had their lives interrupted by crime [28, 29]. Wikipedia noted that a victim of crime is an identifiable person who has been harmed individually and directly by the perpetrators rather than merely the society as a whole. It further observed that this may however not always be the case as with victims of white collar crime who may not be clearly identifiable or directly linked to the crime. In the same vain, the UN High Commission for Human Rights has contributed to the understanding of victims of crime [30]. It defines victims of crimes as persons who individually or collectively have suffered harm including physical or mental injury, emotional suffering, economic loss or substantial impairment of their fundamental rights through acts or omissions that are in violation of criminal law operating within a 'state' including those laws prescribing criminal abuse of power. Furthermore, it says a person may be considered a victim of crime regardless of whether the perpetrator is identified, apprehended, prosecuted or convicted and regardless of the familiar relationship between the perpetrators and the victim. In addition, it argues that the term victim of crime also includes where appropriately, the immediate family or dependents of the direct victims or persons who have suffered harm in intervening to assist victims in distress or to prevent victimization.

According to Oseghale Criminal victimization approaches in determining the levels and dynamics of crime are usually developed as a result of dissatisfaction with official statistics produced by the criminal justice agencies. In particular, police crime statistics, though regarded as the best indicators of criminal activities in society generated by official sources was criticized for incompleteness (due to non-reporting and non-recording) and manipulation (for institutional and political interests). Crimes and victimization studies in different parts of the world and in Nigeria in particular, indicate that a large number or proportion of crimes were not reported to the police by their victims due to several reasons; nature of police effectiveness in bringing offenders to justice and recovery of property (in cases of property crimes), costs (in terms of time, money, and emotional distress) that may be incurred in reporting to the police. This pattern is consistent with the various literature reviews. Sexual offences in particular have low rate of reporting due to stigmatization, insecurity of law enforcement officials or acquaintance between offender

and victims, in majority of cases Innocent C Chukwuma. Crime has significant, yet varying consequences on individual crime victims, their families, friends and communities. The trauma of victimization can have a profound and devastating impact on crime victims and their loved ones (National Institute of Mental Health, 2006). It can alter the victim's view of the society as a just place and leave victims with new and difficult feelings and reactions that they may not understand.

The Public and the Police
There are various factors that influence the fear of particular crimes in communities. Factors like knowledge and experience of criminal realities, environmental context and biographical features, influences people's feelings of safety and security or otherwise. Historical and social science literature and especially media reports in Nigeria portrays a hostile relationship between the police and the public. Citizens in the country often complain about corruption, brutality, impolite behavior and ineffectiveness of the country's police force. These problems are associated and often attributed to the colonial origin of police forces and the protracted military rule in the country that entrenched a culture of impunity. Public attitudes towards the police are generally unfavorable though less hostile than is usually reported in the media. Police-public relations in the country have been characterized by mutual hostilities and mistrust due a legacy of colonial police oppression and continuing corruption since independence Alemika, E.O., Members of the society may take the option of reporting the crime to the police and thereby requesting the services of the police to visit the scene of the crime, to either arrest the criminal or prevent further criminal victimization. Such action is based on the established trust between the police and the people. However, many members of the society may choose not to report crimes to the police and decide to keep the incident away from the law enforcement agencies. The unwillingness to report to the police is based on the past disappointing experiences of the public in respect of police effectiveness in the performance of their duties.

Sometimes when crimes are reported, they are not recorded. When they are recorded, they are not charged. When eventually they happen to be charged to the court of law, they may be given inappropriate tittles Onimajesin, (2010) For example, charging armed robbery with stealing, raping with assault. Situations like this affect the victim in an adverse manner [31]. The offender gets sentences, (if at all) that are minimal to the crime which he has committed. On the part of the victim, substituting rape for assault is degrading to the victim. This is because the level of damage done to the victim is yards apart.

Theoretical Framework
Many theories concerning the causes of crime focus either on the individual or on society, as a major contributing influence. Theories centering on the individual suggest that people engage in criminal behaviour and activities, because they were not sufficiently penalized for previous delinquent or criminal acts, or that they have learnt criminal behaviour through interaction with others. A person who becomes socially alienated may be more inclined to commit a criminal act. The literature of theories on why people commit crime shall be reviewed.

Strain Theory
In criminology, the strain theory states that social structures within societies may encourage citizens to commit crimes. Robert King Merton, adopted the idea of anomie to develop strain theory, defining it as the discrepancy between common social goals and the legitimate means to attain these goals. In other words, an individual suffering from anomie would strive to attain the common goals of a specific society, yet, would not be able to reach these goals legitimately, because of the structural limitations in society. As a result, the individual would exhibit deviant behaviour. Merton expanded on the idea that anomie is the alienation of the self from society, due to conflicting norms and interest by describing five (5) different types of actions that occur when personal goals and legitimate means come into conflict with each other. Instead integration and social regulations as Durkheim emphasized. Merton focused on the two variables of goals and legitimate means. These two dimensions mould the adaptation of society according to the institutionalized means, which are the legitimate means, through which an individual may aspire to the goals. There are five (5) possible combination of adaptation:
- When an individual accepts the goals means altogether, it means that most times, he is working under conformity. In this sense, it means most people try to get good jobs, a good education and so on. If well paid are unavailable, they take less desirable ones. If they are denied access to posh schools, they go to common ones. Others take night classes and go to vocational schools. In short, most people take the socially acceptable road.
- When an individual accepts the goals, but uses illegitimates means, in other words, in order to achieve them, commits crimes to emulate the values of those who conform, in other words, they must use innovation, in order to achieve cultural goals. (A drug dealer who sells drugs to support a family).
- Also, an individual may lose faith in cultural goals, but still feel obligated to work under the routines of legitimate daily life. This person is practising ritualism. Although, ritualists have given up on excelling and advancing, they survive by following the rules of their job. (A teacher who has lost his enthusiasm, but remains in the classroom).
- Individuals may also reject both goals and means and fall under retreatism, when they ignore the goals and the means of the society. (Drug addicts who have stopped caring about the social goals and use drugs as a way to escape reality).
- Finally, there is a fifth adaptation, which is that of rebellion, where the individual rejects the cultural goals and the institutionalized means, but seeks to redefine new values for society. Radicals who want to repair the prevailing social structure like Bokoharams in Jos.

The strain theories have been advanced by Albert Cohen, (1992). To these scholars, strain may either be:

Structural: This refers to the processes at the society level, which filter down and affect how the individual perceives his/her needs. i.e. if particular social structures are inherently inadequate or there is insufficient regulation, that may change the individuals perception, as to means and opportunities. Individual: this refers to the frictions and pain experienced by the individual, as he looks for ways to satisfy his needs i.e. if the goals of society become

is significant to an individual, actually achieving them may become more important than the means adopted [32, 33]. Agnew, asserted that the strain theory needed revision from social class or cultural variables to a refocus on norms. He therefore proposed a general strain theory that is neither structural nor interpersonal, but emotional and focused on an individual's immediate social environment. He argued that an individual's actual or anticipated failure to achieve positively valued goals, actual or anticipated removal of positively valued stimuli, and actual or anticipated presentation of negative stimuli, all result in strain. According to Agnew, strain emerges from negative relationships when people are not treated the way they want, thus losing their belief in the roles other people play for realizing expectations. Anger and frustration confirm negative relationships. This will often involve more unilateral action, because there will be a natural desire to avoid unpleasant rejections, confirming more general alienation. If particular rejections are generalized into feelings that the environment is unsupportive, more strongly negative emotions may motivate the individual to engage in crime. This is most likely to be true for younger individuals and Agnew, suggested that research focus on the magnitude, decency, duration and clustering of such strainful events, to determine whether a person copes with strain in a criminal or conforming manner. Agnew particularly identified factors including temperament, intelligence, interpersonal skills, self-efficacy, association with criminal persons or peers and conventional social support.

Akers, operationalised Agnew's version of strain theory. According to him, the difference between the views of what a person believes the outcome should be and what actually results increases personal disappointment [34]. Frustration is not necessarily due to any outside interference with valued goals, but a direct effect on anger and has indirect effects on serious crime and aggression. Agnew and White, have produced empirical evidence suggesting that general strain theory was positively due to relate delinquents and drug users and that the strongest effect on the delinquents studied was the delinquency of their peers. Up to this point, strain theory had been concerned with types of strains, rather than sources of strain, whereas the stress of events can be shown to interfere with the achievement of natural expectations or just and fair outcomes. Frustration leads to dissatisfaction, resentment and anger all the emotions customarily associated with strain in criminology. It is natural to feel distressed when one is denied just rewards for one's efforts, when compared to the efforts and rewards given to similar others for similar outcomes, as the most critical moment since it is almost always directed towards the external environment (outwards) and is often related to breakdown in relationships. Research shows that the stress or crime relationship appears to hold, regardless of guilt feelings, age and capacity to cope, when events occur simultaneously or in close succession.

The Nigerian society for example imposes upon its citizens, the right things to do and the right ways to do them. Unless there is considerable agreement about societal goals and means there can be no anomic conditions which results in adaptations to those goals. Poverty in Nigeria, like most developing nations of Africa, is widespread and seems to be on the increase on a daily basis. When poverty is coupled with high levels of economic and social aspirations, with strict means of getting them, which gives room

to the frustrated state of citizens, then the stage is set for criminal activities-particularly official corruption, robbery and dealing in illegal goods and services. Odumosu OF [35]. The Nigeria Police Force confirmed that property crime, which is a crime associated with economic survival, records the highest proportion of reported crimes in Nigeria, FOS. Property crimes include theft and other forms of stealing-armed robbery, burglary, house breaking, receiving stolen items and unlawful possession. It is thus obvious that as poverty produced by unemployment and inflation increases, crimes against property will increase. Incidence of armed robbery and other associated crimes can be observed to be inversely proportional to the state of the economy. That is, when the economy is buoyant, there is less crime and the reverse is the case when the economy is down. The longer people remain unemployed, the more they are tempted to commit crimes to satisfy their needs.

In Nigeria, emphasis is placed on individual wealth rather than the development of the larger society. By this, a general improvement in the quality of life of the people is for the greater good. However, there are many young people who are not gainfully employed, some of them being highly educated. For survival, they may resort to criminality and will tend to rationalize this act on the grounds of economic standards Odumosu. The anger which they feel is then placed on strategizing different means of making a living, regardless of how lawful or unlawful it might seem. The endless search for jobs and sleepless nights on campus therefore is viewed as a waste of time and energy. Although strain theory explains the difference in crime rates, one of the major criticisms of strain, is that although crime rate of people exceeds those for higher income groups, only a small proportion of people in the lower economic class engages in criminal acts. American sociologists Edwin Sutherland, Richard Cloward and Lloyd Ohlin, have attempted to explain this phenomenon by emphasizing the role of learning to become a criminal, a person must not only be inclined toward illegal activity he or she must also learn how to commit criminal acts.

Conflict Perspective Theory
Radical or critical criminology is a branch of conflict theory, drawing its ideas from Marxist perspective (1818-1883). Conflict theory is based upon the view that the fundamental causes of crime are the social and economic forces operating within society. The criminal justice system and criminal law are thought to be operating on behalf of rich and powerful social elite, with resulting policies, aimed at controlling the poor.

The conflict theory assumes that every society is subjected to a process of continuous change and this process creates social conflicts. Hence, social change and social conflict are ubiquitous. Individuals and social classes, each with distinctive interests, represents the constituent elements of the society. As such, they are individually and collectively participants in this process, but there is no guarantee that the interests of each class will coincide. Indeed, the absence of common ground is likely to bring them into conflict with each other. To that extent, therefore, the progress made by each society as a whole, is limited by the acts and omissions of some of its members by others. This limitation may promote a struggle for greater progress, but if the less progressive group has access to the coercive power of law, it may entrench inequality and

oppress those deemed less equal. Thus, this inequality will become a significant source of conflict. The theory identifies the state and the law, as instruments of oppression used by the ruling class for their own benefit. A number of scholars have contributed to the conflict theory, since the 1960s. Amongst these are Vold George, Thorsten Sellin, Austin Turk etc.

Vold George, suggests in theoretical criminology which contains inaccurate dates for references, approaching an understanding of the social nature of crime as a product of the conflict between groups within the same culture [36]. Humans are naturally social beings; forming groups out of shared interests interact and produce competition, in an increasingly political arena over maintaining and/or expanding one's group's position, relative to others in the control of necessary resources (money, education, employment etc). The challenge for each group is to control the state, for selfish sectional interests. However, the group which proves most efficient in control of political processes obtains the mandate to enact laws that either limit or prevent the fulfillment of minority group's needs. Although the theory has some interest, it is limited in its application to the criminal law, because the laws do not so much represent sectional interests, but the way such laws are enforced. For example, the definition of theft might remain constant, but the allocation of resources to investigate and prosecute theft maybe unequally distributed between blue collar and white collar versions of the behaviour. The more diversified and heterogeneous a society is, the greater the probability of more frequent conflict, Sellin [37]. The nature and purpose of social conflict theories, is to examine the social controls made by the ruling class and imposed on the rest of society. Many theorists say class order has nothing to do with crime rates; however, Quinney Richard negates. He asserts that social class has direct correlation with crime, due to social conflict theory focuses on why government make and enforces laws and morality and do not concern themselves with why rebels cannot conform to the norms. They show how criminal law is used as a mechanism for social change.

"Merton believed that the character of every civilization, is determined by its mode production, the way its people develop and produce materials goods"- Senna [38-41]. The issue of class struggle has been present in Nigeria since colonial days, the omnipresent inequality between the rich and the poor, the elite and the masses and also between the ruling classes as against the ruled. The laws which are made to guide and guard the citizens are representations of the dominance of the few elites. These laws are structured in a way that the masses are stumped upon, with little no means of defending themselves. In this manner what is viewed as criminal is dictated by the elite, such that crimes committed by them are handled with levity, while the poor are severely punished, sometimes to a much larger extent than needs be. Reinman's book,' The Rich Get Richer and the Poor Get Prison' is a good example of the conflict perspective on crime. It is argued that both crime and the laws defining them are products of a struggle for power. A few powerful groups control the legislative process and that these groups outlaw behaviour that threatens their interests. In this manner, there is little or no crimes committed by the rich, while the criminal misconducts of the poor are handled strictly even if such crimes are not as serious as to attract such penalties. Until recently, when the masses have had a voice to speak for them, the Economic

and Financial Crimes Commission. Fraudulent acts perpetuated by the so called rich people have been considered as an area of strict monitoring. The infamous bode George and the story of the sacked bank chiefs are examples of this conflict between the ruled and the ruling.

Despite the above positions, the conflict perspectives have been criticized in the following ways by Goode. The mode of production postulated by Marx (socialism) that is viewed to be the saving grace is not a final solution to crime. Criminal activities do continue to exist in the so called socialist states. There is also similarity between capitalist and socialist systems, in terms of their workings of legal systems, in terms of their workings of legal systems, arrest and imprisonment as solutions to the criminal problem. Also Goode (2008) argues that not all conflicts represent economic or social class interests.

Conclusion
Dealing with the advent of crime in an area is less than actually reporting such crimes to the appropriate authorities. Crime reporting is said to be the relaying of information about criminal activities that is known to an individual to the proper authorities, for adequate containment. Despite all the measures put in place, by various parastatals to alleviate the incidence of dark and grey figures, the problem still persists. A situation where the level of crime reported is not adequate in determining the actual level of criminal activities.

This research therefore has studied and analyzed the issue of crime reporting and its perceived effect on its victims, especially the victims in Ekpoma. This research work as served as a means of bringing into limelight, the trend of crime reporting among the residents, how willing they are to come forth with relevant information. Also it would serve as a stepping stone into further fruitful researches about the effect of crime reports basically on its victims and the society in general.

Recommendations.
Based on the results and conclusions above, the following recommendations are provided.
a. Governments should enact laws that will include the learning of the legal codes of the society, into the educational system. By this, the younger generation coming up would not be ignorant of their civic rights and duties. The knowledge of the legal codes of a society would help in reducing the rate of criminal victimization, because people would be sensitized against the ills of the vices and would know the necessary steps they are to follow, in bringing culprits to book. These learning could also take form of community forum, media (newspapers, television programmes) through which the older generation are tagged along. With this in place, both the presents and upcoming generation would be able to distinguish between what an offence and what is not.
b. The appropriate bodies should make provision for better welfare of the Nigeria police officers. Through this, the issue of corruption or the petty bribe they collect from residents would be reduced. Welfarism should include adequate provision of basic salary as at when due, on-the-job training so that they might improve their capabilities and skills, enlisting the

appropriate number of eligible persons into the force. When and if these few conditions are in place, the society would be a safer place to stay because there is job satisfaction on the part of the officers. The motivation to do what one has been adequately catered for, would be high, thereby allowing them perform their duties to the best of their abilities.

c. The criminal justice system can also contribute by reducing the lengthy days involved in adjourning cases. Victim cases are usually adjourned to a date when the victims would want to forget the incidence and move on with their lives. When these cases are trialed, they should be done with strict adherence to the constitution and swiftly all at once, so that judgment is delivered on time to meet the timeframe of the incidence. This act (that is bringing the culprits to book) fosters speedy recovery on the part of the victim and family members. Upholding the rule of law is another area that should be looked into. Offenders should not be discharged and acquainted by the virtue of their status in the society, but by the ability to defend and convince the court of law, beyond reasonable doubt that they are innocent.

d. Proper investigation should be conducted when criminal reports are made. When this is done, the prevailing issue of once a person is not caught in the act, he/she goes scot-free. Investigative measures or procedures which would enable police officers in fishing or sniffing out criminals should be inculcated. By this criminals don't get away with their booties.

e. The idea of 'it's not my business' should also be addressed. Residents, members of the criminal justice system, the police and the general public at large should take into cognizance that vices such as criminal acts is not an individual problem but a collective one. This is because a witness today might be a victim tomorrow. If everyone realizes that it's a collective duty, majority of the loopholes would be covered and peace would reign.

f. The government should also provide counseling and job empowerment for the youths and even the prisoners, with vocations which can be useful to them while serving their sentence and once they are out. This is because criminals who have gone through adequate and effective counseling would want to make their lives better, once they are out again. By this, there is the likelihood that they would not return to their former ways.

If some of these suggestions are put in practice, reports in crime might pose a lesser risk.

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