

Customary Deprivation: Perceptions of Legatee in Igbo land and Female Property Crimes amongst Enugu Urban Inhabitants

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Abstract: This study aims to garner perceptions of Enugu inhabitants on the customary practice of property transfer to inheritors and its nexus to female property crimes (FPCs). Inheritance is an age-old practice which tends to favour male folks. Women have often been relegated to the kitchen. This practice is embedded in most African cultures where the birth of a male is valued over the birth of a female child. Denial of female rights of inheritance, denial of ownership of landed property, and female marginalization in almost all social institutions seem to stem from patriarchy which in turn tend to predispose women to property crimes. This study anchored on Relative Deprivation theory. Mixed method approach was adopted. Sampling of participant was based on multi-stage sampling procedure and purposive sampling. The sample size is 1015 for the quantitative part of the study and nine key informants for the qualitative aspect. This study found that the customary practice of legatee in Igbo land is embedded in patriarchy and this holds adverse economic effects for women, culminating in FPCs which involve women of youthful age who are mostly in full blown exposure of the existing privileges and cover offered to women in patriarchal societies especially when married. This study concludes that patriarchy understood as domination of vital social and political positions by men and exclusion of women from inheriting family lands and properties is implicit to FPCs.

Keyword: Legatee, Customary practice, Igbo land, Female property crime, Inheritance, Patriarchy.

INTRODUCTION

Inheritance is an age old practice which tends to favour male folks. Women have often been relegated to the kitchen. Customarily, legatee (property inheritance and transfer) in Igbo land follows male line, as there are very scanty locations where matrilineal kinship can be found in Igbo land. This is the case with Ohafia where matrilineal kinship system dominates and Afikpo where the practice of double descent is found (Smith, 2003). Patriarchy therefore, tends to dominate customary practice of legatee amongst the Igbo's of Nigeria. Practice of legatee in Igbo land also follows cultural practices found in most African cultures. The outstanding cultural practice in Africa with direct implication to legatee is the value placed on the birth of a male over the birth of a female child (Osezua, 2016). In Benin, Nigeria, female children at birth, are derogatorily referred to as '*half-current*' a vernacular terminology used to depict the perceived notion of less virility to conceive a female child and a direct cultural allusion to female inferior status (Osezua, 2016). Emanating from these conceptions, cultural or customary practices can be seen accompanying denials of female rights of inheritance, denial of ownership of landed property, and female marginalization which tend to predispose women to property crimes.

The unequal treatment of women dates back to the history which relegates the place of the women to the kitchen. Private patriarchy (found in the families or reproduction) which emanate from antiquity seems to share a patterned attribute with Public patriarchy (found in production or workplace) obtainable in the 21st century (Osezua, 2016). There still seem to be a perceived carryover of traditional practices from ancestral era which presume that women are meant to be seen and not heard. Nigeria society is patriarchal in nature which is a major feature of a traditional society (Makama, 2013). A onetime sitting president of the federal republic of Nigeria was once quoted to have said with reference to his wife: "... [She] belongs to my kitchen and my living rooms and the other room" (Osezua & Agholor, 2019, p.409). However, with increasing feminist agitation and movements, women are becoming increasingly involved in front line political arena and decision making machinery of various states across the world, but unlike any other agitations, women are still mostly disadvantaged (McKay, 2009); Carter & Barrett, 2006); Carter & May, 2001). In several climes, affirmative action has been given to women to ensure a compulsive proportionate representation in the society. Overall, there are some supports that female disadvantage and primarily female poverty is an absolute measure related to female offending (Hays, 2005; Reckdenwald & Parker, 2008).

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In Nigeria, including Enugu urban which comprises Enugu north, Enugu south and Enugu east local

government areas, it is argued that advancements in the twenty-first century tend not to have salvaged women at their work places in the areas of promotion or otherwise. Another issue is that there is unequal remuneration of women in the same work environment with their male counterparts. For example, there is disparity in the salary of female athletes to that of their male counterparts whereby the male athletes are paid higher amount than the female athletes (Adelphi University, 2020). Also, in Nigeria, including Enugu metropolis, women tend to have limited entry into certain job roles such as engineering. The focus of this study, however, lies not on the emancipation of the feminine gender, rather, it lies on how such emancipation and attendant patriarchal arrangements in the society may hold certain consequences for female property crimes in Enugu urban. Female access to property is the most contentious in patrilineal clime (Rose, 2006; Oleke, Blystad & Rekdal, 2005; Strickland, 2004; Drimie, 2003; Human Rights Watch, 2003; Drimie, 2002).

Previous studies (Osezua & Agholor, 2019; Tuncer, Broers, Ergin & Ruiter, 2018) have examined patriarchy in relation to unequal treatment of women in the society. Others (Steffensmeier, 1978; Oluwadare & Agboola, 2011; Abdul-Rasheed *et al.*, 2016; Campaniello, 2014; Jegede *et al.*, 2016; Estrada, Nilsson & Pettersson, 2019) investigated the statistical disparities of male and female involvement in crime, while Stanojoska and Jurtoska (2018) argued that, the patterns of female criminality are a reflection of their social and cultural position. Scholars have already presented different pathways to crime for males and females (Maghsoudi, Anaraki & Boostani, 2007). While men are found to be mostly involved in criminal activities involving the use of force and heavy weapons because of the masculine physique, Silvestri and Crowther-Dowey (2008) noted that women engage in those crimes which are mainly non-violent, or which involve the use of wits. These crimes are sometimes undetected, not reported and consequently constitute the bulk of dark figures of crime. Worthy of note is that the changing roles of women in the new world order, championed by feminist agitations, tend to have overturned earlier narratives of criminal activities for females (Zedner, 1991; Smart, 1976; Höigård & Snare, 1983; Heidensohn, 1985). Greenfeld and Snell (1999) noted that in the United States, women account for about 22% of all arrests, including 17% of the arrests for violent offenses and 29% of the arrests for property offenses. Beck (2000) also noted that women

incarceration rates in the US are growing at a faster rate than those of men. Also, analysis of arrest data in the United States over 1980 to 2011 for two large categories of crimes; property crimes and violent crimes, shows that women commit twice as many property crimes as violent crimes (Campaniello, 2014). However, debates studies on female inheritance, unequal treatments of women or women involvement in crime has not fully extended to making nexus between legatee (property inheritance and transfer) and female property crimes. This study therefore identify this important gap in literature, thus the idea was set to study customary practice of legatee in Igbo land and female property crimes with specific focus in Enugu urban. This study was carried out in line with the following objectives; to ascertain the commonest property crimes perpetrated by females in Enugu urban; to investigate the influence of patriarchy on female property crimes in Enugu urban; to find out the commonest victims of female property crimes in Enugu urban; to determine the level of awareness of the relationship between patriarchy and female property crimes in Enugu urban; and to suggest measures that could be taken to ameliorate female property crimes in Enugu urban.

The rest of the paper is structured as follows. We reviewed of empirical literature bordering on patriarchy and female criminality. This is important because the strength of this paper lies in linking the practice of patriarchy to the customary practice of legatee in Igbo land in relationship of its causality of female property crimes. Next, we extended the empirical literature review to examine different angles of female property crimes. We presented a theoretical framework which was pertinent in answering the research objectives. This was followed by our research hypotheses, methodology approach, our research findings and discussion of findings followed by conclusion. Data from this study show that customary practice of legatee in Igbo land is embedded in patriarchy and this holds adverse economic effects for women, culminating in FPCs mostly involving women of youthful age as they are bereft of the few privilege which patriarchy society accords to women, especially in marriage.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Patriarchy and Female Criminality

In Nigeria, Osezua and Agholor (2019) conducted a study entitled "Patriarchy, Cultural Prejudices and Spousal Violence in the Ancient City of Benin of

Southern Nigeria". The authors examined the persistence of patriarchy and traditional cultural practices which have adverse effects on women's rights and health, as well as the growing incidence of spousal violence in Benin City, arising from obvious internal and external factors of social changes. Thus, their study investigated the nature of patriarchy in relation to Benin society, and discussed some of the customs and traditions that have put women in positions of inferiority. The authors found that female genital mutilation, exclusion from inheritance titles, widowhood practices prostitution and trafficking are some of the cultural prejudices against women in Benin City. Also, the nature and pattern of spousal violence that emerged from the study include hitting, slapping, kicking, and beatings; psychological abuse, such as constant belittling, intimidation, and humiliation; and coercion, including for sex. The authors therefore concluded that, patriarchy, and other cultural prejudices have the potentialities of further deepening the incidences of spousal abuse and family disorganization, if efforts are not made to abolish all harmful cultural practices and enforce the legal provisions which protect women's rights and general wellbeing.

In Sweden, Estrada, Nilsson and Pettersson (2019) carried out a study in Sweden on "The female offender - A century of registered crime and daily press reporting on women's crime". The study examined how women's crimes have been reflected in crime statistics and media crime reporting over time. The method employed by the study was a long-term historical perspective, looking at developments from the beginning of the 20th century until the present. The researchers found that viewed over the past century, the gender gap in the proportions of men and women convicted for violent and theft offences in Sweden has never been lower than it is today. To them, a powerful driving factor behind variations over time in the gender gap in crime is found in the conviction trends among men. They stated that, with the exception of the period 1990–2010, when there was an increase in assault convictions among women, the decline in the gender gap in crime is primarily due to men's convictions which started to decline substantially over recent decades. In strengthening their arguments, the authors found that there are almost no similar descriptions of male offenders as a woman's husband, fiancé or boyfriend at any time during the period examined. The study concluded that women and men are viewed differently and that the need to describe women in relation to a man has changed following women's emancipation.

Similarly, Tuncer, Broers, Ergin and Ruiters (2018) conducted a study in Turkey on "The association of gender role attitudes and offense type with public punitiveness toward male and female offenders". The major objective of the study was to examine the relationship between gender role attitudes and public punitiveness in Turkey. The study employed snowball sampling method to complete a survey of 400 adult respondents out of which 172 (43%) were male and 228 (57%) were female. The authors were motivated for their study on the basis that prisons in Turkey have witnessed a steady increase in incarceration rates in the last few decades, and in the post-2000 period, in particular. They noted that, Turkey has the second highest incarceration rate in Europe: 224 per 100,000; this rate is almost 40% higher than in 1970. Their second motivation lies on their observation that female offenders constitute 4% of the current Turkish prison population which is almost twice the 1970's rate, and according to them, although the absolute number of female offenders is still limited, there has been a relative increase in females' imprisonment rate, compared to male offenders in the last 15 years. The authors found that a woman who commits a violent offense in Turkey is considered to have violated traditional gender roles and she is punished more harshly than a man who has committed the same offense.

Female Property Crimes

Steffensmeier (1978) in a study entitled "Crime and the Contemporary Woman: An Analysis of Changing Levels of Female Property Crime, 1960-75", examined female property crime trends since 1960. The study set off with the objective to clarify the central questions about female property crime and compute arrest rates to determine the extent of change in female property crime since 1960 in the United States. The study employed content analysis to obtain data on arrests for the years 1960-75 from the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) in order to assess property crime trends in the United States. According to the author, UCR was adopted because it computes the most comprehensive crime statistics in the US and published by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). He also noted that UCR provide the number of arrests in a given year, the offenses for which suspects have been arrested, the age, sex and race of those arrested. Examining the effects of the women's movement on female property crime, the study found that female levels of property crime are on the rise. However, it is only for the offenses of larceny-theft and fraud/embezzlement that

female levels are increasing at a faster pace than male levels (Steffensmeier, 1978). Steffensmeier also observed that the pattern of the data which he examined suggests that the upward trend in female property crime is not due to the women's movement; that women are still typically nonviolent, petty property offenders; and that the "new female criminal" is more of a social invention than an empirical reality. He concluded that rates of property crime for females in the United States have increased substantially.

Stanojoska and Jurtoska (2018) conducted a study entitled "Ladies or Criminals: An Exploratory Study of Patterns of Female Criminality in the Republic of Macedonia", following the content analysis methodology. The authors used secondary data from the State Statistical Office of Republic of Macedonia, covering the period between 1995 and 2015 to analyze characteristics, such as volume, dynamics and structure of female criminality and its connectedness to the current social and cultural position of women. The study set off with the objective that women, as well as in many other aspects of society, have been evaded and poorly researched. It argued that the patterns of women's criminality are a reflection of their social and cultural position and that in most cases women commit crimes because they are pushed to the margins of society, trying to find the best solutions for their suppressed lives. The study showed that, being in such suppressed position; women are either unemployed or have underpaid working positions. Such living conditions result in difficulties when finding employment or in satisfying simple, everyday necessities. These two factors working together produce circumstances where women use criminal activities (property crimes) so that they can survive (Stanojoska & Jurtoska, 2018).

Theoretical Framework

Relative deprivation was coined to describe unexpected relationships that emerged from surveys of American soldiers in World War II (Stouffer, Suchman, DeVinney & Williams, 1949). Robert Merton enlarged the idea of relative deprivation within a reference group framework (Merton, 1957; Merton & Kitt, 1950), while Runciman (1966) broadened it. Thus, development of the concept of relative deprivation is often attributed to American sociologist, Robert K. Merton. Relative deprivation is formally defined as an actual or perceived lack of resources required to maintain the quality of life to which various socioeconomic groups or individuals within those groups have grown accustomed to, or are considered to be the accepted

norm within the group (Runciman, 1966). Runciman (1966) listed four required conditions of relative deprivation as follows: (1) a person does not have something; (2) that person knows other people who have the thing; (3) that person wants to have the thing; and (4) that person believes she or he have a reasonable chance of getting the thing. Relative deprivation is a subjective dissatisfaction that troubles many people. This dissatisfaction is caused by the comparison between one person's situation and another's situation. People exposed to relative social deprivation feel that they deserve to have or receive the same as others. Because of the pressure imposed by society, they don't feel equal when they miss things. These comparisons are relative because they are compared to standards that are not absolute. Poverty and social exclusion. Are the two underlying factors in explanation of relative deprivation theory. Thus, in relation to the current study, adherents of relative deprivation theory assume the position that female property crime stem from the aftermath of the disadvantaged position which women believe was imposed on them by the system and cultures in patriarchal societies. Thus, women know that their male counterparts have everything working for them because of patriarchy, they want to enjoy the rights and privileges accorded to their male counterparts, and they think that they can struggle to get these rights and privileges.

Relative deprivation theory has been criticized on the basis of its failure to explain why some people who, though deprived of rights or resources, fail to take part in social movements meant to attain those things (Longley, 2020). However, proponents of relative deprivation theory (led by Runciman) argue that many of these people simply want to avoid the conflicts and life difficulties they might encounter by joining the movement with no guarantee of a better life as a result. Thus, we considered relative deprivation theory sufficient to explain customary practice of legatee in Igbo land and female property crime. This we justified on the postulate of relative deprivation theory that as persons go about choosing their values and interests, they compare what they have and do not have, as well as what they want or do not want, with real or imaginary others. They tend to perceive a discrepancy between what is possible for them and what is possible for others, and react to the situation with anger or an inflamed sense of injustice. Thus, this study examined the extent to which systemic arrangements in patriarchal societies trigger the currents of female property crimes.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses guided this study:

1. There is a statistically significant positive correlation between perceived rate of patriarchy and female property crimes in Enugu urban.
2. Respondents who perceive full denial of property rights are more likely to be aware of patriarchal influence on female property crimes than others.

METHODOLOGY

The study setting is Enugu urban; it is the metropolitan capital city of Enugu State in Soth eastern Nigeria. The choice of Enugu urban as the study setting was informed by the increasing urbanization of the area which brought together people of diverse ethnic nationalities and race. The application of customary legatee in this setting entails its resistance to urbanization or otherwise. Sampling of participant was based on multi-stage sampling procedure and purposive sampling. A sample size of 1015 respondents was selected from residents of Enugu urban for the quantitative part of the study. Respondents for the qualitative aspect of the study were selected purposively for in-depth interview (IDI). This consists of nine (9) key informants, who are considered knowledgeable in the subject matter of the study. This comprised three women leaders, three persons within traditional ruler’s cabinet, and three Divisional crime officers of the Nigerian police. The study is generally on women and their social and cultural treatment which may make them vulnerable to property crimes. The views of women leaders on this cannot therefore be over-emphasized. Similarly, traditional ruler’s cabinet is the custodians of the culture and traditions of their communities and their views are equally very pertinent. Finally, the police are

charged with the responsibility for maintenance of law and order in society and the issue of property crimes come under their jurisdiction, hence their inclusion here. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) Version 21 was used for the analysis. Spearman’s Rank Correlation coefficient (Spearman rho) and Chi-square statistics were used to test the hypotheses of the study. Thematic analysis of the qualitative data placed emphasis on the interpretation and description of responses by the interviewees to complement the quantitative data.

Ethical Consideration

This study passed through the ethical consideration of the board of faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Enugu State University of Science and Technology. In line with the approvals, informed consent was duly sought from the respondents being that the study did not expose participants to obvious risks. Also, participants were meant to understand that they reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any point they deem necessary or feels uncomfortable.

FINDINGS

Analysis of data collected from the field was arranged in three parts. The first part employed frequency distribution tables to show descriptive presentation of the major data collected from the field. The second part deals with test of the study hypotheses using Pearson Chi-square and Spearman correlation; this was followed by the third part which deals with the discussion of findings. Qualitative data collected using interview schedule was also used to complement the quantitative data, they were pseudonymized. One of the key variables of this study is patriarchy, conceptualized as unequal allocation of real property and property rights to males in a way that disenfranchise females and increases their vulnerability. Attempt was made to present data on the

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by their Understanding of Patriarchy

Understanding of Patriarchy	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Domination of vital socio-political positions by men	321	31.6
Idea of men’s world	105	10.4
Denial of property rights to women	189	18.6
Excluding women from family land inheritance	280	27.6
Role subjugation of women	120	11.8
Total	1015	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Specific Forms of Patriarchy Affecting Females in Enugu Urban

Specific forms of patriarchy affecting women	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Denial of property rights	387	38.1
Discrimination in formal employment	132	13.0
Exclusion in family inheritance	397	39.1
Role subjugation	99	9.8
Total	1015	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

nature of patriarchy existing in Enugu urban. As a result, questions were asked to find out what the respondents understand as patriarchy in their areas.

Table 1 show that 31.6% of the respondents understood patriarchy as the domination of vital social and political positions by men. On the other hand, 10.4% of the respondents understood patriarchy as a dominant idea that the world belongs to men and that men are free to do whatever they want. The Table also reveals that 18.6% of the respondents understood patriarchy as a system that denies property rights to women, 27.6% understood it as the practice of excluding women from inheriting family lands while 11.8% understood patriarchy as a practice of assigning subjugating roles to women. The findings here show that the idea of patriarchy as domination of vital social and political positions by men is the most common way that patriarchy is understood in Enugu urban, followed by the understanding of patriarchy as exclusion of women from inheriting family lands and properties.

Forms of Patriarchy Affecting Females in Enugu Urban

Respondents were asked to indicate specific forms of patriarchy in Enugu urban.

Table 2 shows that 38.1% of the respondents indicate that the specific form of patriarchy in Enugu urban is 'Denial of property rights', 13% of the respondents indicated 'Discrimination in formal employment' as the specific form of patriarchy in the area, 39.1% of the respondents indicated that 'Exclusion from family inheritance', while 9.8% of the respondents indicated 'Role subjugation' as the specific form of patriarchy in Enugu urban. This implies that majority of the respondents (77.2%) maintained that patriarchy in Enugu urban is specifically in relation to property/family inheritance. This finding validates the fact that patriarchy is male domination and women exclusion from property inheritance

Influence of Patriarchal Practices on Females in Enugu Urban

To ascertain the extent to which patriarchal practice affects women in Enugu urban, respondents were asked the rate at which patriarchal practices affect women. The outcome of the question is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents on Extent at which such Patriarchal Practice Affects Females in Enugu Urban

Extent	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Very High	201	19.8
High	502	49.4
Moderate	104	10.3
Low	208	20.5
Total	1015	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Table 3 shows that 19.8% of the respondents stated that the extent at which patriarchal practice affects females in Enugu urban is very high, on the other hand, 49.4% of the respondents stated the effect of patriarchy on females in Enugu urban as high, 10.3% of the respondents indicated moderate, while 20.5% of the respondents gave low rating over the effect of patriarchy on females in the area. This implies that patriarchal effects on women in Enugu urban is quite significant as indicated by more than half (69.2%) of the total respondents.

Female Property in Enugu Urban

To situate the study within the context, respondents were asked to indicate their understanding of property crimes that females engage in. The outcome of the question is presented in Table 4.

Data presented in Table 4 show responses on female property crimes in Enugu urban. It shows that

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents by Female Property Crimes

Forms of property crimes	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Stealing	209	20.6
Armed Robbery	33	3.3
Receiving and keeping stolen property	333	32.8
Advance fee fraud (419)	121	11.9
Shoplifting	275	27.1
Arson/Vandalism	44	4.3
Total	1015	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

20.6% of the respondents indicated that females engage themselves mostly in stealing, 3.3% of the respondents indicated ‘armed robbery’, 32.8% of the respondents indicated ‘receiving and keeping stolen property’, 11.9% of the respondents indicated ‘advance fee fraud (419)’, while 4.3% of the respondents indicated ‘arson/vandalism’. This implies that in Enugu urban, female property crimes mostly involve receiving and keeping stolen property.

Frequency of Occurrence

To ascertain the serious nature of female involvement in property crimes in Enugu urban, respondents were asked to indicate the perceived frequency of occurrence of such crimes in their area. The outcome is presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Distribution of Respondents by their Perception of Frequency of Occurrence of Female Property Crimes in Enugu Urban

Frequency of occurrence	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Every week	386	38.0
Once in a month	198	19.5
Once in three months	255	25.1
Once in six months	176	17.3
Total	1015	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Data presented in Table 5 show that female property crimes occur in Enugu urban “Every week” (38%); “Once in a month” (19.5%); “Once in three months” (25.1%); and “Once in six months” (17.3%). This implies that an appreciable number of female property crimes occur in Enugu urban in every three months.

Age of Perpetrators of Female Property Crimes

To obtain deeper information into female property crimes, respondents were asked their perception of the age category of women that engage in property crimes. The outcome was presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Distribution of Respondents by the Age Category of Women that Engage in Property Crimes

Age categories of FPC perpetrators	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Adolescent (13-17 years)	66	6.5
Youth (18-35 years)	773	76.2
Middle aged (36-50 years)	176	17.3
Total	1015	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Data presented in Table 6 show the responses on the age category of women that engage in property crimes in Enugu urban. It shows that 6.5% of the respondents are of the opinion that adolescents (13-17 years) are the age category of women that engage property crimes, 76.2% of the respondents opined that youth (18-35 years) are the age category of women that engage in property crimes, while 17.3% of the respondents are of the view that middle aged women (36-50 years) are those that mostly engage in property crimes. This implies that women of youthful age are those that mostly engage in property crimes in Enugu urban.

Category of Women that Perpetrates Female Property Crimes

Respondents view on the category of women that perpetrates female property crimes was sought and the outcome presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Distribution of Respondents by the Category of Women that are Likely to Engage in Property Crimes

Category of women	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Single Ladies	718	70.7
Married Women	110	3.3
Divorced Women	154	15.2
Widowed Women	33	10.8
Total	1015	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Table 7 shows that 70.7% of the respondents perceive single ladies as the category of women that are likely to engage in property crimes, 3.3% of the respondents indicate that married women engage in property crimes the most, 15.2% of the respondent indicate that divorced women are likely to engage in property crimes, while 10.8% of the respondents opined that it is widowed women. This implies that over two-thirds of the respondents (70.7%) identified single ladies as the category of women that are most likely to engage in female property crimes. Juxtaposing this finding with findings from Table 6, it shows consistency of response from the respondents on Youth (18-35 years) as the age category of women that mostly engage in property crimes. Also, information from Table 7 holds implication on the levels of security enjoyed by different categories of women as a push factor towards engaging in property crimes. For instance, it can be deduced that from the information presented on Table 7, married women enjoy more social security than other categories of women stated on the table, and therefore respondents perhaps do not perceive them (married women) as likely to engage in property crime.

Place of Female Inheritance in Enugu Urban

Data presented in Table 8 show responses on places where women inherit property from in Enugu urban. It shows that 12.7% of the respondents indicated that women inherit property from their father's side, 8.9% of the respondents indicated that women inherit property from their mother's side, while 15.4% indicated that women inherit property from their husband's side. This implies that basically, women inherit property from their husband's place as indicated by 15.7% of the respondents. Also, the father's place is the next in line from where women can inherit property as indicated by 12.7% of the respondents, while the mother's place is the least likely place women can

inherit property from in Enugu urban as indicated by only 8.9% of the respondents.

Table 8: Distribution of Respondents by Places where Females Inherit Property in Enugu Urban

Place of inheritance	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Father's side	129	12.7
Mother's side	90	8.9
Husband's side	157	15.4
Don't Know	639	63.0
Total	1015	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Why Females do not Inherit Properties in Enugu Urban

Data presented in Table 9 show responses on why females do not inherit properties in Enugu urban. It shows that 20.5% of the respondents indicated that females do not inherit property as a result of local custom, 9.7% of the respondents indicated male child preference as an impediment to female property inheritance, 10% indicated property owner's will as the major stumbling block towards female property inheritance, while 22.8% of the respondents indicated that male dominance (patriarchy) is the major reason why female do not inherit property in Enugu urban. This implies that patriarchal nature of Enugu urban wields significant weight on females' inability to hold firm grip towards property inheritance.

Table 9: Distribution of Respondents on why Females do not Inherit Properties in Enugu Urban

Responses	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Local Custom	208	20.5
Male child preference	99	9.7
Property Owner's will	231	10
Male Dominance (Patriarchy)	101	22.8
No response	376	37
Total	1015	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Level of Property Inheritance Denial in Enugu Urban

Data presented in Table 10 show responses on level of property inheritance denials to females in Enugu urban. It shows that 51% of the respondents indicated full denial, 34.9% indicated partial denial

while 14.1% of the respondent are uncertain about the level of property inheritance denials to females in the area. This implies that females are perceived to be denied of property inheritance in Enugu urban following responses from respondents which is slightly above half (51%) of the total responses.

Table 10: Distribution of Respondents by Denial of Property Rights to Females in Enugu Urban

Responses	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Full Denial	518	51
Partial Denial	354	34.9
Uncertain	143	14.1
Total	1015	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Responses from the in-depth interview presented invaluable insight on findings from the quantitative study in Table 4.2.15.

Women can inherit properties which are not landed property such as economic trees, palm, and even money. It cannot be said that it is a total denial for women in terms of property inheritance, rather, the issue is n that which they inherit. Be that as it may, that which women are entitled to inherit is of value in earlier years, but as the system of economy changes, attention tends to shift from what it was to the current realities. This later development from the women perspective necessitates interest over landed properties **[Obed, IDI, 44 year old, Male Town Union president]**.

Another respondent said:

Men and women alike face harsh economic realities of the time, worse still most women are now breadwinners in their families. It requires proactive measure for men to come to grip with the current realities and relax the customs which limit women towards inheriting lands or houses. So, for me, limiting women’s inheritance to economic trees or money is not enough, it is full denial. Both the man and the woman share the same parenthood and funny enough it is even

the females who tend to look after their aged parents. Therefore, why the limit to what they can inherit from their parents. I think it is a matter of time this line of thought of men can be undone **[Dumebi, IDI, 49 year old, Woman Leader]**.

Denial of Property Rights and Female Property Crimes

To ascertain the nexus between denial of property rights and female property crimes, respondents were asked whether denial of property rights to women leads some females into property crimes. The outcome of their responses was presented in Table 11.

Table 11: Distribution of Respondents by Whether Denial of Property Rights to Women Leads Some Female into Property Crimes

Responses	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Yes	817	80.5
No	132	13
Don't Know	66	6.5
Total	1015	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Data presented in Table 11 show that four out of every five of the respondents (80.5%) are of the view that denial of property rights to women leads some female into property crimes. On the other hand, 13% of the respondents indicated that denial of property rights to women do not lead some female into property crimes, while 6.5% of the respondents indicated that they ‘don’t know’.

One of the IDI respondents said that:

Property crimes involving women could possibly be linked to denial of property inheritance. Denial of property rights is like a push factor because all and sundry, irrespective of gender, faces the same harsh economic realities in our society. As technical as it can be, it is a situation that can lead to forgery, 419 or even kidnapping. The only challenge with the police in relation the crimes women commit are not officially reported, and when reported, they tend to receive leniency **[Okeke, IDI, 38 year old, Divisional Crime Officer]**.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is a statistically significant positive correlation between perceived rate of patriarchy and female property crimes in Enugu urban.

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no statistically significant correlation between rate of patriarchy and female property crimes as perceived by residents of Enugu urban.

Substantive Hypothesis (H_1): There is a statistically significant positive correlation between perceived rate of patriarchy and female property crimes in Enugu urban.

Test Statistics

Spearman rho was used in testing this hypothesis. The correlation test was carried out at a significance level of 0.05.

Table 12 indicates that the correlation coefficient value of perceived rate of patriarchy in Enugu urban and rates of female involvement in property crimes is 0.57. This depicts a positive correlation, which means that as patriarchal practices in Enugu urban increase, the extent at which women engage in property crimes also increases. Also, the correlation test has a sig. value of .002, which is less than the alpha level of .05, which implies that the correlation is statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no statistically significant correlation between rate of patriarchy and female property crimes as perceived by residents of Enugu urban is rejected. The study concludes that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between perceived extent of patriarchy and female property crimes in Enugu urban.

Hypothesis 2: Respondents who perceive full denial of property rights are more likely to be aware of patriarchal influence on female property crimes than others.

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no statistically significant relationship between full denial of property rights and awareness of patriarchal influence on female property crimes.

Substantive Hypothesis (H_1): Respondents who perceive full denial of property rights are significantly more likely to be aware of patriarchal influence on female property crimes than others.

Test Statistics

Chi-square statistics was used in testing this hypothesis. The test was performed at a significance level of 0.05.

The second hypothesis attempts to ascertain whether awareness of full denial of property rights to women is associated with awareness of patriarchal influence on female property crimes. If so, it will imply that full denial of property rights to women is the crucial aspect of patriarchy in Enugu urban that connects to female property crimes. The contingency table above shows that over one-third of the respondents who perceived partial denial of female property right, were not aware of patriarchal influence on female property crime while 65.1% were aware. For respondents who perceived full denial of female property crimes, only 25.1% were not aware of patriarchal influence on female property crime while majority (74.9%) were aware. Although majority of both those who regard female property right denial as partial (65.1%) and those who regard it as full (74.9%) were all aware of patriarchal influence on female property crimes, those who perceived full property rights denial were over 10% more than the others.

Table 12: Spearman's Correlation Test for Perceived Extent of Patriarchy and Female Property Crimes in Enugu Urban

		Perceived rate of patriarchy	Rate of female property crime
Perceived rate of patriarchy	Spearman rho	1.000	.57**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	—	.002
	N	1015	1015
Rate of female property crime	Spearman rho	.57**	1.000
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.002	—
	N	1015	1015

Table 13: Chi-Square Contingency Table of Perceived Full Denial of Property Rights to Women and Awareness of Patriarchal Influence on Female Property Crimes

Awareness	Perceived denial of property rights for women		Total
	Partial denial	Full Denial	
Not Aware	231 (34.9%)	89 (25.1%)	320 (31.5%)
Aware	430 (65.1%)	265 (74.9%)	695 (68.5%)
Total	661 (100%)	354 (100%)	1015 (100%)

$\chi^2 = 10.27$; $df = 1$; $p = .001$.

Furthermore, the Chi-square result ($\chi^2 = 10.27$; $df = 1$; $p = .001$) shows that the obtained p-value (.001) is less than the alpha value of .05, indicating a significant association. As a result, the null hypothesis which states that there is no statistically significant relationship between full denial of property rights and awareness of patriarchal influence on female property crimes is rejected. The study concludes that individuals who perceive full denial of property rights are significantly more likely to be aware of patriarchal influence on female property crimes than others.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study found that the customary practice of legatee in Igbo land is embedded in patriarchy and this holds adverse economic effects for women, culminating in FPCs which involve women of youthful age who are mostly in full blown exposure of the existing privileges and cover offered to women in patriarchal societies especially when married. Findings from this study indicate that in Enugu urban the most common way that patriarchy is understood is domination of vital social and political positions by men, and this is followed by exclusion of women from inheriting family lands and properties. This aligns with Igbelina-Igbokwe (2013) that patriarchy has progressively changed from its description of the position of the father as a household head to the systemic organization of male supremacy and female subordination. Concomitantly, this study found with regards to specific forms of patriarchy that, patriarchy in Enugu urban is specifically in relation to property/family inheritance. Accordingly, findings from this study revealed that patriarchy affects women in the study area. Another salient finding from this study revealed that women of youthful age are those that mostly engage in property crimes in Enugu urban. Thus, our findings hold implication on the levels of security enjoyed by different categories of women which serve as a push factor whether or not to engage in property crimes. Arguably, it is deducible that from the information presented on Table 7, married women

enjoy more social security than other categories of women stated on the same Table; therefore, respondents perhaps do not perceive married women to engage more in property crimes. As Reckdenwald and Parker (2008) noted, economic marginalization is the major contributor to female crimes.

Another major finding from this study is that females do not inherit property in Enugu urban, the only exception is movable property, which basically comes from their husband’s side. The salient point to these findings is the revelation that patriarchal nature of Enugu urban such as male dominance, local custom and male child preference wields significant weight on females’ inability to hold firm grip towards property inheritance, and as perceived by respondents in this study, women are fully denied property inheritance. The foregoing also aligns with studies such as McKay (2009); Carter and Barrett (2006) and Carter and May (2001) whom noted that the redistribution of assets in a patriarchal economy can affect various individuals’ economic trajectories in positive or negative ways, but to the feminine gender, it is particularly to the negative. This study also revealed that denial of property rights to women leads some female into property crimes.

Finally, findings from this study uphold the tenets of its theoretical framework which was anchored on Robert K. Merton’s Relative Deprivation theory. For instance, in contemporary world, while women go about choosing their values and interests, they compare what they have and do not have, as well as what they want or do not want with the men; this is because majority of women are breadwinners in their families. In so doing, women tend to perceive a discrepancy between what is possible for them and what is possible for their male counterparts, and react to the situation with anger or an inflamed sense of injustice.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that patriarchy understood as domination of vital social and political positions by men

and exclusion of women from inheriting family lands and properties is implicit to FPCs. Patriarchy affects women in Enugu urban as to engage in female property crimes with the push factor resting on levels of social security enjoyed by the females with regard to whether the female in question is single, married or widowed. In all, married women are seen to have more social security. Research literature from various Sub-Saharan African societies (for example, Rose, 2006; Oleke, Blystad & Rekdal, 2005; Strickland, 2004; Drimie, 2003; Human Rights Watch, 2003; Drimie, 2002) also highlighted how existing social conventions, including national laws, widowed women and orphaned children are particularly vulnerable and prone to lose rights of access to properties they previously enjoyed during the lifetime of their husbands or fathers. Also, this study concludes that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between perceived extent of patriarchy and female property crimes in Enugu urban; and that individuals who perceive full denial of property rights are significantly more likely to be aware of patriarchal influence on female property crimes than others.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the findings this study recommends:

1. Legal framework to ensure female inclusion in property inheritance – a legal framework will ensure that there is basis of reference for female to rely on while seeking rights to property. This is because customary laws are most times based on oral evidence which in most cases could be coloured.
2. Protection of unmarried females in the family – this will ensure equitable access to wealth and survival in the face of harsh economic realities.
3. Protection of widows – this will ensure that male relatives of the deceased do not deprive a woman access to inheritance of her late husband's estate.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors have no conflicting interest to declare.

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