



On the etiology of Female Offending in Bangladesh: Toward a Quest for Alternative Explanation¹

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Abstract:

Presumed changes in patterns of crime by females are drawing the attention of the popular media as well as that of sociologists and criminologists. Increases in the rate of crime by women and shifts in the nature of women's criminal involvement are commonly attributed to the emergence of the women's liberation movement. The main intent of the study is explore the etiology of female offending as well as nature and extent and socio-demographic characteristics of female criminality. This study relies on incident based newspaper report. The data has been collected from four historically famous and renowned newspapers (The Daily Ittefaq, The Daily Prothom Alo, The Daily Jugantor, and The Daily Shamokal) by using checklist. The collected data has been analyzed by descriptive statistics (Percentage, proportion, average, standard deviation and cross-tabulation). From the data analysis we have seen that women commit more violent and victimless crime in contemporary Bangladesh than any other crime. Among them, many of the women participated in greater scale like murder and suicide as well as cheating/fraud, drug trafficking and illegal trespass crime. In Bangladesh, Women are engaged in property, organized and public order crime due to economic necessity for accelerating their lifestyles, whereas they commit violent and victimless crime because of having familial conflict, poverty, collision,

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dowry and failure in love. Among the theories of masculinization, opportunity, marginalization and chivalry, marginalization theory is the most relevant and significant for analyzing causes of female offending in Bangladesh.

Key words: Female offending, Crime, Causes of Crime, Marginalization.

Introduction

Gender is one of the most important variables to explain the criminal behavior (Adler et al. 2006). Historically, from the sexual point of view, with some exceptions (e.g. prostitution, foeticide, abortion), the rate of crime and juvenile offences is comparatively higher in men than in women, and this applies in all age groups, people in all community and nations (Janenskela 1997; Kim and Kim 2011). Up to recently, it was believed that crime is mainly male-centered and the crime world is controlled only by male (Ahuja 2000: 113). Though there are various researches, seminars, symposia in Bangladesh on the issues of crime against women - the relation between eve-teasing and suicide (Islam and Ahmed 2011); *Rape in Bangladesh: Causes and Prevention* (Rezina 2008); *Social-psychology of Acid-throwing* (Saha 2009); *Sexual harassment inflict upon women in industry* (Siddiqui 2003) - there is not still a complete research on the etiology of female offending as well as the nature and typology of female crime from a theoretical point of view. Auto Pollack (1950) said that female offending is 'hidden crime' (Chelik 2008, Ahuja 1996). Considering several reasons, he claimed, firstly not all types of women crime are being reported to the police. Secondly, in many cases the police and justice systems are not sympathetic towards women because of their male-dominated and patriarchal values. According to prison data on crime rate and arrest record in prison, nowadays women are engaged with a variety of crime and these engagements occurred at a high rate (Simpson 2000: 3). In the context of gender equality, women get legal opportunities alongside the increase of their involvement in illegal works (Flowers 1995).

In the present study, to explain the nature, extent and causality of female offending, a question arises, "What do we

mean by female offending?” Though multiple definitions and a variety of explanations of female offending/criminality are available in criminological literature, it is quite difficult to define female offending specifically. Generally, female offending is a term where women played a central role in crime commission. In Bangladesh, women are involved in different types of crime such as: murder, child and drug trafficking, prostitution, suicide, adultery, theft, robbery etc. But in some cases, in occurrences of crime, women played as the partners of men or in some cases, both of male and female played indirect roles in crime commission. Generally, the crimes in which women hold responsibility are: family suppressing quarrel, abortion, affray, illegal black marketing, and corruption. According to the Child Act, 2010, the crimes committed by an individual or a group who are below 18 years are defined as Juvenile Delinquents’ crimes. Relevant for this article, we considered the female offenders who belong to the age groups of 18 years old or more than 18 years.

Although the statistical information shows that female offending rates are not dominant in Bangladesh, these rates increase day by day. According to the police record in 1971, the percentage of female crime was only 1.7%, while the increased percentage of this crime is 3.5 and 3.8 in 1991 and in 1992 respectively (Police Statistics, 2010). Again the data that is published in newspapers indicate that the percentage of female crime was only 4.27% (7760) out of the total crimes (165339) occurred in 2007 (Faruq and Khatun 2008), which increased in 2008 at the amount of 13% (59851). In one year, net increased rate of female offending is 8.73%. On the other hand, if we consider the property and violent crime separately in 2007, the number of crime was 2379 and 1070 respectively. In 2008, the number of property and violent crime increase is 7886 and 6069 respectively. In Bangladesh, every 12 women in 100 000 are engaged in female criminality, which is comparatively low in the context of developed countries [USA (1154), Germany (516), Thailand (316)] but comparatively high as to our neighboring country, India (8). As a result, from asociological point of view, female criminality is a crucial problem for Bangladesh because it hinders the total development of a child as well as of a nation.

During the 1970s and after, women movements have accelerated widely in the world and, in order to understand the problems of female offending, criminology, sociology, psychology and anthropology started their study and research in parallel. Consequently, to realize the etiology of female offending, different trends of theoretical perspectives have been developed.

At first, physical features were treated as the main indicator of female offending. Here, the most active elements are: lack of masculine characteristics and indolence of women (Lombroso and Ferraro 1898), or women's hormonal change in menstruation period (women become more criminal minded before four days and after four days of their menstruation cycles) (Horney 2011). The second trends stated that family conflict and family maladjustment (Ahuja 2000: 115), broken family (Datesman and Scrapitti 1975), and inactivity of family (Henggeler, Edwards, and Bordwin 2011) are responsible for women's participation in criminal activities. Moreover, on the basis of the principle of Edwin Sutherland's 'Differential Association' theory, a group of theorists have stated that the nature of mix-up with friends group (Simpson 1996) and the nature and type of membership of gang (Herper and Robonson 2011) work as the indicator of female offending tendency. Theorists of the fourth trends, based on the Marxist fundamental philosophy, point out some indicators to detect the relationship between the women pauperization and crime. These are: marginalization (Chesney-Lind 1997), discrimination of class, gender, income, and race (Carlen 1988), anarchy, frustration and anger (Sandhu and Allen 1989) and the limitations of property (James and Thorston 1980). In class based capitalist social system, there must be suppression, or inequality by one group inflicted upon another group (Marx 1976). The main discussions of the fifth trends are that the various opportunities created by women's movements provide a different socialization of women inside the family and in society and consequently, the masculinity characteristics are developed among women (Adler 1975). The real life experience helps them to acquire masculinity characteristics gradually, this later leading to the profile of female offending. The sixth trend is that psychological causes are more responsible for the

development of female crime, particularly women's role and its related frustration (Berger 2011), defective personality (Kim and Kim 2011), and loneliness and psychological disorder (Riege in Simpson 1996).

On the discussion of the broad field of criminological and sociological research conducted in Bangladesh, there is a small number of works related to female offending, and those are very limited from the theoretical point of view. Faruk et al. conducted a research on 61 female criminals entitled "The nature and causes of female criminality in Bangladesh", which shows that 36%, 48% and 18.2% of female criminals' age are below 25 years, between 26-48 years and over 46 years old respectively. In addition to this, 42% female criminals are illiterate, 77% are married, 57.4% are professionally housewives; the monthly income of 59% women is between 1000-5000 taka and the number of their family members is more than 8-10. Findings of the nature of crimes shows that 39.4% commit highly serious crime, such as murder (14.8%), women battering (18%), acid throwing (3.3%), and kidnapping (3.3%), whereas 42.7% of women are involved in trafficking related crime, such as drug trafficking (27.9%), women and child trafficking (14.8%); 18% of women commit less serious crime. In spite of the richness of data, this study was primarily descriptive in nature and inadequate from a theoretical point of view. The research mainly focused on the socio-economic status and typology of female crime. On the other hand, Rahman and Hossain (1984) try to show the relationship between the personality and the typology of female crime. They conducted their research on the female criminal portrait of the Dhaka jail and showed that female criminals also have a high rate of personality score. Although they emphasized the psychology of female criminals, they didn't explain any causal relations between the socio-economic status and its impact on criminality. Lastly, Akhter and Faruk (2007) explored positive relations between juvenile female offence and family background. In their study the female juvenile offenders, who have a good relation with their family, are committed less to crime. Though this study focused on the conflicting position of women in their family relations that causes female offending,

their study is very much descriptive in nature and questionable for overgeneralization.

Because of insufficient research and limited knowledge about female offending in Bangladesh, it is needed to expand academic research on this issue. The main purpose of the study is to explore the etiology of female offending in Bangladesh. The second purpose is to present the socio-economic status of female offenders and lastly, after reviewing the theories related to female offending, to find out relevancy of these theories in contemporary Bangladesh.

Methodology

The determination of proper research procedures for the nature, typologies and the etiology of female offending is rather difficult in the context of Bangladesh because, in the third world countries like this, there are a lot of methodological limitations in the field of social sciences as well as in criminological research. Firstly, the data on female criminality is insufficient, and it has validity or reliability problems. Developed countries, especially U.S.A., benefit at least three sources of crime data: Uniform Crime Report (UCR), National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) and Self-Report Study (Adler et al. 2006). Generally, in Bangladesh, the information on the nature and typologies of crime, which are kept by the police department, is called Police statistics. The information, which remains in the police department, is mainly reported or given by the victims. But in many cases the victims cannot report to the police about the incidents. As a result, police statistics does not reflect the realistic feature of crime in our country (Alam et al. 2011: 64). Because of the lack of an academic point of reference, police statistics are not reliable in many cases. On the other hand, in police statistics, there are no separate data on female criminality and/or offending. Secondly, historically in male dominated societies, the crimes of females are seen in a sympathetic way, the minor guilt is ignored and only serious crimes are taken into account. The crime of females, their arrest and punishment remain hidden by the three main parts of the Criminal Justice System: Police, Court and the Criminal Investigation Department. As a result, it is

extremely difficult to get the institutional and legal source of data on female offending. Moreover, by using survey methods, data can be collected from the Correctional Center (Akter and Faruk 2007). In many cases, because of the behavioral problem of respondents (expertise, giving false or partial information, non-eagerness, fear or forgotten information), the quality of the surveyed data may be wrong or constructed. In developed countries, research on the etiology of female offending is performed directly or by using ethnographic field research, which is time consuming or even threatening for researchers.

Considering the aforementioned problems, to ensure the reliability of data sources, we have used a different method in our study entitled “On the Etiology of Female Offending: Toward a Quest for Alternative Explanation.” The four most popular and historically renowned newspapers published in 2010 (*The Daily Ittefaq*, *The Daily Prothom Alo*, *The Daily Samakal*, and *The Daily Jugantor*) are selected purposively for data collection. The data were collected through checklist from the crime reports of the selected published newspapers. The information related to the nature of female criminality, criminal’s socio-physical characteristics, victim’s socio-physical characteristics, causes of crime, time, geographical location and description of used weapon are collected through checklist. To avoid the double counting problem, the same date incidents published in more newspapers are counted as one incident. After examining the collected data, in data analysis section we have used the statistical tools as univariate analysis (tabulation, percentage, mean, standard deviation) and bivariate analysis. By using various criminological theories, we have produced thematic writing for understanding the analyzed data from the theoretical view point.

Theoretical Framework

Generally, classical theories of crime emerged to find out the answer to the following questions, ‘Why does a person commit a crime?’ and/or ‘What factors contribute to committing crime?’ In the early periods of the classical theories, any types of crime and criminality were treated as male crime. Day by day, with the increasing rate of female offending, rationally a

question arises - Is it possible to understand female offending by male dominating theories? If it possible, how much will it be relevant or rational?" "Besides distinct biological characteristics, women also bear a different and/or unique socio-psychological personality." (Simpson, 2000: 3) Another question is – Shall we consider all the female crimes from the same theoretical point of view? In criminological research and its related literature there are four theoretical traditions of female offending and its causation: (i) Masculinity Theories, (ii) Opportunity Theories, (iii) Marginalization Theories, and (iv) Chivalry Theory.

The book published by the prominent female criminologist Freda Adler - *Sister in Crime: The Rise of a New Female Criminal* - in 1975, has helped to develop the masculinity theory. In fact, Adler's theory of masculinity was the new explanation of the masculinity complex in the arena of theories which derived from sociology. It has come from Sigmund Frued's theory of 'Penis envy', according to which it is believed that 'women revolt because of their subordinate positions to man in society.' Among three traditions of masculinity theory, the first was developed by the famous criminologist Cesare Lombroso, the father of the biological doctrine. Biologically, crime is mainly a male dominated phenomenon, where male characteristics are responsible for those crimes (Harrington and Nye 2005: 3). For the internal physio-chemical characteristics, the females are more conservative and play a neutral role, consequently, committing less crime than males (Lombroso and Ferraro 1895). From some specific examples of female criminality, Lombroso argues that criminality is principally the product of inconsistent and altered thought of women, related to their indirect role in domestic affairs (Cf. Simpson, 2000: 4). The females who are involved with crime are dominated by male characteristics in their personality (Harrington and Nee 2005: 3-4).

In the contemporary age, two reasons are considered for less acceptability of early biological theory. Firstly, the theory is sexually-partial and gender biased (Simpson 2000: 4) and secondly, if the masculine characteristics are the only responsible factor for crime, then why don't all men commit crime? (Harrington and Nee 2005: 4). For these reasons, beyond

biological explanation, there has developed a type of masculinity theory based on socio-structural explanation, which focuses on the relationships between crime and the masculine characteristics of women. One idea has been reflected here according to which different socialization processes trigger much more differences between male and female- which is a more significant cause for crime than the biological traits. Freda Adler, in addition to the masculinity theory, argued that women are involved in more crimes due to the increasing participation of women in social movements since the 1970s, which changed the role of female in family and the feelings of independence in her work and thought. All these factors promote the ‘masculinization processes of women’ role in society (Harrington and Nee 2005; Ahuja 1996). As women become more liberal in their thinking and work, this helps them to integrate the male characteristics of being aggressive, pushy, and hardheadedness in their personalities. Women learn to utilize crime as a means of acquiring success and wealth, and thus they become more violent. As a result of the masculinization process of women, their rates of offending are increasing as well. (Small 2000: 75) Masculine characteristics are seen as a driving force behind the criminality of women in every aspect of masculinity theories: biological, psychological and sociological.

Another important theory of female offending is the “opportunity theory” developed by Rita J. Simon (1975) in the book *Women and Crime*. She emphasized the descriptions of different dimensions of female criminality, that is - type, nature and also the corrective role of jail and court in this regard. She showed that there is no difference between male and female in terms of morality, the biological characteristics not being relevant for committing crime. According to the empirical observations of this theory, she argued that historically, males are more active in crime because of their greater social opportunities, competences, and networking than females. In the broader social context, if female opportunity, efficiency and social communication are increased, then the rate of female criminality increases accordingly (Small 2000, Chelik 2008). Simon logically argued that “when more women get access in labor market as skilled labor and possess highly specialized

positions in the job sector they commit more employment related property crime than men. Some women take the advantage of these opportunities, just as some men did before.” (Simon, 1991: 3) On the other hand, she logically comments that, “If women become more skilled and educated, they will be economically independent in future.” Consequently, the rate of violent crime of female will be reduced since women generally commit violent acts against their husbands or inmate partners. When women become more educated and independent they will be more able to resolve these often volatile situations in other less violent ways. This is where the masculinity theory differs from the opportunity theory. This point is often missed by researchers who link the two theories together as one, and labeling them as the liberation or gender equality theory. Overall, the opportunity theory predicts that increasing opportunities of women reduce the rates of violent female offending, but increase the rates of property female offending, especially larceny/theft, embezzlement, fraud, and forgery.

The third important theory is economic marginalization theory for explaining the nature and etiology of female offending. Proponents of this theory claim that more female participation in the labor force does not necessarily indicate either more gender equality or improved economic condition for women (Chesney-Lind 1997). To find out the causes of the majority of female criminality it has been seen that their position is marginalized by less salary, unrespectful occupation and less secured job. Generally, they commit less property related crime. Women are motivated to commit crime as a rational response to poverty and economic insecurity. This theory argues that the major causes of female crime are unemployment, poorly paid employment, inadequate welfare payments, and the increasing number of female headed households with large number of children (Small 2000: 76). The mainstream marginalization theory is strongly related to other two theoretical trends. These two are - (a) Marxist theory, and (b) Feminist theory. According to Marxist Smith (1980), in her seminal article “Women, crime and deviance”, “In capitalist social structure, females commit crime as a result of their socialization process.” (in Ahuja 1996: 114). The real conditions of the aforementioned causes induce the female gradually

toward a marginalization position and, as a result, females commit more crimes for their economic need. On the other hand, feminist theorists emphasized on the early childhood experience of women’s physical and sexual torture and relate this to female offending. Chesney-Lind and Sheldon said, “the exploitation and torture of females by males instigates them to commit crime and drug addiction.” (in Simpson 2000: 5). Ogle, Maiyer Katkin and Bernard (1995) support the above logic to develop their “homicidal theory.” They showed that homicide has a positive relation with the rate of repeated victimization.

Lastly, to explain the female offending, the chivalry theory argues that historically there have been lower rates of female offending because of the more lenient treatment of female offenders by criminal justice personnel. According to the chivalry theory, females are more prone to violating the law but according to the economic standard they are treated as less destructive in nature. Thus, female offences get less importance than male ones in the criminal justice system.

Findings

Socio-demographic Characteristics of Female Offenders:

The explanations of socio-economic and socio-demographic characteristics are essential for a holistic analysis of the crime related incidents of a country. The socio- demographic characteristics are discussed in this article for understanding the etiological analysis of female offending. All the considerable criminological variables cannot be used to identify the socio-demographic characteristics for the present article because of the writer’s dependency on the reported information in the newspapers. The information related to age, residence, religion, occupation, and role of female offenders are discussed below:

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of female offender

Age	Violent crime F (%)	Property crime F (%)	Organized crime F (%)	Victimless crime F (%)	Public order crime F (%)	Hate crime F (%)
18-28	34 (40.48%)	13 (65%)	11 (42.31%)	29 (76.32%)	1 (50%)	
28-38	31 (36.90%)	6 (30%)	9 (34.62%)	6 (15.79%)	-	
38-48	14 (16.67%)	1 (5%)	4 (15.38%)	2 (5.26%)	-	1 (100%)
48-58	4 (4.76%)	-	1 (3.85%)	1 (2.63%)	1 (50%)	
58-68	1 (1.19%)	-	1 (3.85%)	-	-	
68+	-	-	-	-	-	
Total	84 (100%)	20 (100%)	26 (100%)	38 (100%)	2 (100%)	1

						(100%)		
Average	31.87	27.05	31.85	25	36.00	45		
Standard Deviation	9.35	5.27	10.44	8.08	19.79			
Religion								
Residence		Role of women in crime		Occupation				
Religion	F (%)	Residence	F (%)	Role of women	F (%)	Occupation	F	(%)
Islam	381 (96.21%)	Urban	251 (53.40%)	Women individually	211 (44%)	Housewife	104	34.78%
Hindu	15 (3.79%)	Rural	219 (46.60%)	Women with men	122 (25.4%)	Student	30	10.03%
				Women as followers	147 (30.3%)	White collar Professionals	33	11.04%
						Worker	38	12.71%
						Politics	7	2.34%
						Professional offender	80	26.76%
						Professional Jihadist	1	.33%
						Unemployed	3	.99%
						Assistant of Pir	3	.99%
Total	396 (100%)		470 (100%)		480 (100%)		299	100%

Considering all types of crimes, the study shows that most of the female offenders belong to 18-28 years of age, then 28-38. The study revealed that the types of crime are changing in accordance with the age structure of the female offender. Table 1 shows that, among the total number of violent crime, the highest 40.48% of female offenders belongs to 18-28 years of age and second highest 36.90% criminals belong to 28-38 years age group. On the other hand, in property related criminals, 65% and 30% belong to 18-28 and 28-38 years age groups. In the case of violent crime, there are all aged female offenders, whereas in property related criminals most (95%) of the female criminals are less than 38 years of age. Again, in the case of organized crime, the age of criminals belongs to 18-28 (42.31%), 28-38 (34.62%), 38-48 (15.38%), and 48-68 (7.7%) years of age. On the other hand, comparatively the victimless criminals are young in age. It is noticeable that more than three-fourth of female criminals (36.32%) are less than 18-38 years. Considering the mean age of female criminals, except the victimless criminals (25 years) and property related criminals (27.07 years) most of the criminals are more than 30 years of age: for example, hate crime (45 years), public order crime (36 years), violent crime (31.87 years) and organized crime (31.85 years). The mean age of female criminals are less than 32

years, that means the females belonging to this age limit are more crime-prone. Different studies explored that the females of this age group are involved with more violent and organized crimes because of the maladjustment in the workplace, and their family life. On the other hand, since under the age of 30 females are neither chronological nor mentally mature and are biologically and socially incapable of understanding and performing the marital and other function in the family (Ahuja 1996: 117), they indulge in victimless and property related crimes. It is noticeable that the nature of violent and organized crimes are different (planned, organized) so that the participants of old age and hard-minded female are more than in the case of victimless and property related criminals.

From the religious perspective, most of the female criminals 96.21% (381) are Muslims and only 3.79% (15) are Hindu. Comparing various censuses, the Muslims are more involved with various crimes, whereas, as a minority group, others religious people (Hindu, the Buddhist and the Christian) are becoming victims of crime. Because of their dominancy in the power structure and related state apparatus, Muslims are involved in more crimes than the minority group. Moreover, religiosity inversely penetrates toward criminality as well as delinquency (Benda and Corwyn 1997). We think that the minority group is more familiar with their religious culture and consequently they commit fewer crimes. The findings of the study are similar with the U.S.A. situation (Ringkvist 2010).

Residence plays an important role for crime commission. Table 1 shows that more than half of the female offences (53.40%) occur in the urban area. Inversely, only 46.60 % offences occur in the rural area. In modern capitalist society, the individualistic thinking is increasing among community members due to industrialization and urbanization, which results in the increased crime rate in the urban area (Adler et al. 2006).

For a comprehensive analysis, the justification of the female role in crime commission (independent or indirect) is important. The above table (Table 1) shows that, among 480 crimes, females play an independent role in approximately half of the incidents (44%). Females play the same role in case of victimless (92.9%), property related (53.1 %) and organized

crimes (46.2%). Separately, in the case of violent crime, here females participate as accomplices of males (35.3%) or with the male (30.9%). Besides, in the case of 25.4% (122) crimes, females play primary roles, with males as partners, and in the case of 30.3% (147) crimes, males play the main function while females play an indirect role. Lastly, in the case of domestic violence females play an indirect role as mother-in-law, sister-in-law or as a wife.

According to present study, more than one third of the criminals are house-wives (34.78%), 26.76% are professional criminals, 12.71% are workers, and 11.04 % are white color criminals. Besides this, among female criminals, 10.03% are students, members of a political party (12.71%), unemployed (.99%), accomplice of saint (.99%) and professional militant (.33%). Among the criminals, especially professional criminals, work in house as second occupation. Based on theoretical analysis, more than one third of housewives indulge in crimes because of their victim status by different types of assault or violent attack. J. Pollack (1995) said that the females who were beaten by their husbands frequently murdered their husbands in the future. They murdered their husbands, because of their immediate reaction to husband beating. (in Proctor 2004:63).

The nature and types of female offending:

To explain the nature and type of female offending, the present study depends on reported news in national daily newspapers in 2010. From the criminological point of view, in Bangladesh females are committed to six types of crimes: violent, property related crimes, organized crimes, victimless, hate and public order crime. Totally, female committed 480 crimes in 2010. Among them, females participated more in four types of crimes: violent (317), property related (49), organized (52), and victimless crimes (56) (Table 2).

On the basis of percentage, females have committed more violent crime (66%) than other crimes. Among the violent crimes, females have participated in murder or attempt to murder (65.2%), assault/collision (10.6%), grievous hurt and hurt (11.3%), abduction/ attempt to abduction (6.9%), arson (1.9%), acid throwing (1.6%), help in rape (1.3%), and bomb blast/ riot (.6%). The question is why are females more involved

in murder, grievous hurt, assault, abduction, or collision (94%)? Historically, criminological data and theoretical analysis provide some noticeable explanations in this regard.

Firstly, in police statistics, victimization survey or in newspaper publication, the reporting rate of murder and other serious crimes is high, irrespective of female or male. Secondly, according to Lombroso, female are involved in violent and cold minded murder due to the lack of some physical traits (Adler et al.: 2006). Increasing participation rate of women in the working sector triggers effects of masculinization and this plays a vital role in committing violent and property related crimes by the female (Simon 1991). Lastly, females are the victim of gradual Marginalization in their family and broadly speaking, in society. From the economic point of view, the scarcity of job opportunity, lack of decision making power in family, or other deprivation stimulate violence and aggression among females (Chesney-Lind 1997). But in the context of Bangladesh economy, there are many limitations of Adler’s and Simon’s theories, especially if we consider the total participation rate of females in the productive sectors. On the other hand, in third world countries like Bangladesh, the higher participation rate of females in violent and victimless crimes indicates the rationality of the marginalization theory.

Table 2: Nature and Typologies of Female Offending’ 2010

Types of Crime		Number of Crime	Percentages	
Violent crime	Murder/ Attempt to murder	208	65.2%	66%
	Collision/ Conflict	34	10.6%	
	Kidnapping/ Attempt to Kidnap	22	6.9%	
	Torture/ Assault/ Serious Assault	36	11.3%	
	Acid violence	5	1.6%	
	Rape/ Helping rape	4	1.3%	
	Bombing	1	.3%	
	Arson	6	1.9%	
	Riot	1	.3%	
Total	317	100%		
Property Crime	Theft/ Burglary	4	8.1%	10.2%
	Dacoity/ Robbery	5	10.1%	
	Mugging	4	8.1%	
	Bribe	2	4.1%	
	Illegal storage	2	4.1%	
	Illegal note making	3	6.1%	
	Cheating/ embezzlement/ forgery	18	24.4%	
	Corruption	4	8.2%	
	Smuggling	7	14.3%	
Total	49	100%		
Organized Crime	Drug trafficking/ Trafficking (Women and Child)	45	86.5%	10.8%
	Illegal storage	1	1.9%	

	Mosuddari	3	5.8%	
	Terrorist activism/ Jihadism	3	5.8%	
	Total	52	100%	
Victimless Crime	Suicide/ Attempt to Suicide	54	96.4%	11.7%
	Suicide with Child	1	1.8%	
	Adultery*	1	1.8%	
	Total	56	100%	
Hate Crime	Eve-teasing	1	33.3%	.6%
	Women violence	2	66.7%	
	Total	3	100%	
Public Order	Illegal Act	1	33.3%	.6%
	Illegal trespass	2	66.7%	
	Total	3	100%	
Grand Total		480	100%	100%

In Bangladesh, recently victimless crimes are getting more public concern than other crimes. Victimless crime is that in which the victims are criminals and at the same time victims (Khatun and Islam, 2011), such as: abortion, suicide, adultery and drug-abuse. In 96.4% cases of suicides/ attempts to suicide, females are criminals and at the same time victims. Historically, capitalist political economy and a system of patriarchy determine women's marginalization in society. For this marginal position in a broad social structure, women are to face different types of 'victim blaming', especially when there are victims of sexual offence. As a result, females are compelled to commit suicide and attempt to suicide. Females are also indulging in suicide with children (1.8%) and adultery (1.8%). Recently, the rate of adultery or illegal sexual relation is increasing in Bangladesh because of the spreading of the consumerist culture and feeling in the society. As a result, the possibilities of becoming a victim are increasing both in females and males.

In the present study, the participation rate of female in property crimes shows the multidimensional and diversified nature of it. A maximum of 24.4% female criminals indulge in cheating/fraud/forgery, in smuggling (14.3%), robbery / dacoity / looting (10.1%). Females are also involved in corruption (8.2%), snatching/showing weapon (8.1%), note forgery and trafficking (6.1%), bribery/illegal storage (8.2%). Sometimes females participate independently for acquiring properties, or participate in crime commission as partners of males.

Recently, the rate of organized crime has increased. In the analysis of the nature and type of female offences in Bangladesh, it is shown that the involvement of females in

crime commission is increasing in the case of drug-trafficking / trafficking (86.5%), stock-holding (5.8%), terroristic / militant violence (5.8%) and illegal arms trafficking or organized crime. In other studies, 27% of female criminals are involved in drug trafficking and 14.8% female - in organized crime, such as women and child trafficking. It is shown that these types of crime create more opportunities to earn money within the shortest possible time (Faruk et al. 2009). The table shows that the rates of hate crime (.6%) and public-order crime (.6) are lower because this type of crimes are not reported properly, thus being hidden. In the case of these two crimes, females are only the victim, except when in their association in women oppression.

Socio-demographic Characteristics of victims of Female Criminality:

To know the dialectical nature of female criminality as a holistic phenomenon in the criminological research arena, it is important to explain the socio-demographic conditions of female victims besides the offender's socio-demographic situation, which are absent in social sciences research area in Bangladesh. In the present section of this article, the socio-demographic characteristics of victims are discussed (in light of age, religion, sex, occupation). The study revealed that one-third of the victims of violent crime (31.35%) belong to the age group of 20-30 years old, where more than half of the victims of property related crimes (60%) belong to the age limit of 30-40 years. Noticeable is that, in terms of mean age, 25.56 year is the mean age of violent crimes victim, while the mean age of property crime victims is 40.60 years. But in terms of percentage, the victims of both crimes belong under the age of 40 years. Among the victims of below 40 years are victims of victimless crime 94.59%, property crime 80%, violent crime 79.46% and organized crime 66.67%. As consequences of conflicting familial relationship, adultery, assault etc., children are also part of the crime victims. Recently, females have been committing suicide with their children because of the assault by their husband, mother-in-law, sister-in-law and brother-in-law in the family. As a result the victimless crime is increasing. On the other hand, the school-going girls are being the victims of

hate crime through eve-teasing. The children have no such power of bearing mental pressure and, as a result, they are becoming victims.

Table 3: Socio-demographic Characteristics of Victim by Female Offending

Age	Nature of Crime					
	Violent crime F (%)	Property crime F (%)	Organized crime F (%)	Victimless crime F (%)	Public order crime F (%)	Hate crime F (%)
1-10	31 (16.76%)		1 (33.33%)	1 (2.70%)		
10-20	28 (15.14%)	1 (20%)		12 (32.43%)		2 (100%)
20-30	58(31.35%)		1 (33.34%)	17 (45.95%)		
30-40	30 (16.22%)	3 (60%)		5 (13.51%)		
40-50	21 (11.35%)		1 (33.33%)	2 (5.41%)		
50-60	13 (7.03%)					
60+	4 (2.16%)	1 (20%)				
Total	185(100%)	5 (100%)	3 (100%)	37 (100%)	-	2 (100%)
Average	25.56	40.60	22.00	23.05	-	16
Standard Deviation	14.85	25.77	18.52	8.24	-	00

Religion			Gender			Occupation		
Religion	F	(%)	Gender	F	Percentage	Occupation	F	Percentage
Muslim	324	95.29%	Male	141	37%	Housewife	109	40.22%
Hindu	16	4.71%	Female individually	196	51.45%	Students	44	16.24%
			Female and Male	44	11.55%	White collar professionals	49	18.08%
						Worker	42	15.50%
						Politicians	10	3.69%
						Professional criminal	6	2.21%
						Unemployed	3	1.11%
						Others	8	2.95%
Total	340	100%		381	100%		271	100%

The data source of religious state of the victim of female crimes shows that, among 340 victims 95.29 % (324) are Muslim, where only 4.71% (16) are Hindu. Because of the movement of dominant religious group, the Hindus are comparatively becoming more victims.

In the discussion of female criminality, the sexual states of victims are also important besides the nature of role (primary/ secondary role) in female participation. It is the only way to understand the possible nature of victim in details. In Table 3, out of 381 respondents, in 51.45% (196) cases, females are unique victims. This statistics indicates the marginal position of women in the family. On the other hand, in 37% (141) cases, the males are the victim of female criminality, followed by 11.55% (44) cases of both female and male as victims of female criminality. This also indicates that different types of exploitation and unfavorable settings stimulate women

to commit crime. From this statistics, if we try to find out the tendency of victim by female criminality, it shows that 46.23% and 88.46% females are being victims of the violent and victimless crimes accordingly, whereas, in case of 44.44% and 100% males are the victims of property and organized crimes. To explain the occupational status of the victims of female crime, data shows that about 40.22% (109) were housewives, white collar professionals (18.08%), students (16.24%) and workers (15.50%). Besides this, 3.69% of victims are involved with politics (3.69%), professional criminal - 2.21%, vagabond - 1.11% and others - 2.95%. It is found from the analysis that, in Bangladesh, most of the victims of female criminality (72.65%) are mainly passive victims and their occupational status are housewives, students, workers and vagabond.

Victim-Offender Relationship:

In the analysis of crime, the relationship between victim and offender is very important. From Table 4, it is found that in most of the cases the victims are familiar with the criminals. The highest number of crimes occurs within the familial relationship (49.84%), in which spouse (44.16%), members of husband's family (37.01%) and member of own family (18.83%) are involved.

Table 4: Victim - Offender Relationship

Nature of the relationships		Frequency	Percentage	Percentage
Familial relationships	Wife-husband	68	44.16%	49.84%
	Relationships with other members of the families	57	37.01%	
	Own family	29	18.83	
	Total	154	(100%)	
Opposite groups		14		4.53%
Professional relations	Doctor-patient	1	2.86%	11.33%
	Owner- labor	24	68.57%	
	Labor-police	4	11.43%	
	Student-Teacher	3	8.57%	
	Colleagues	3	8.57%	
	Total	35	(100%)	
Relatives		10		3.24%
Lover		4		1.29%
Self		43		13.92%
Neighbors		33		10.68%
Strangers		16		5.17%
Grand Total		309		(100%)

Due to urbanization and consumerist culture, the controlling roles of family are decreasing. On the other hand,

individualistic thinking among the family members causes an increasing of the separation rate day by day. This conflicting relation among family members plays an important role in the female criminality. The study revealed that the victims are familiar with the criminals in the following ways: against party (4.53%), self (13.92%), client (11.33%), neighbor (10.68%), relatives (3.24%), strangers (5.17%) and lover (1.29%). At present the crime is increasing within the professional relation, especially within the owner-worker relationship (68.57%). In the industrial sectors alone, the collisions between owner-worker and police-worker have occurred because of the wage disparity, establishment of trade unions and other demands. Females are also engaging in these types of collision, which leads to female criminality.

Causes of female Offending:

Revealing the related causation of female criminality is important for a better understanding of the whole reality of female criminality. The main causes of being engaged with female criminality in Bangladesh are: (1) family related, (2) survival strategy, (3) gaining masculinity characteristics & awareness.

Table 5: Relations among the nature of crime and its causes

Causes of crime commission	Violent crime f (%)	Property crime f (%)	Organized crime f (%)	Victimless crime f (%)	Public order crime f (%)	Hate crime f (%)
Theft	2 (.76%)					1 (33.3%)
Conflict	34 (12.93%)			1 (2.22%)		
Robbery	1 (.38%)					
Abuse of Power	10 (3.80%)		1 (2.13%)			
Dowry	45(17.11%)			5 (11.11%)		
Family conflict	45 (17.11%)			14 (31.11%)		
Property/ Monetary gain	44 (16.72%)	44(93.61)	45 (95.75%)	1 (2.22%)	2 (66.7%)	1 (33.3%)
Poverty	1 (.38%)		1 (2.13%)			
Political conflict	6 (2.28%)					
Failure in love	5 (1.9%)			9 (20%)		
Protest	3 (1.14%)					
Illegal sexual needs	4 (1.52%)				1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)
Adultery	14 (5.38%)			1(2.22%)		
Abduction	1 (.38%)					
Salary/Opportunity increase	8 (3.04%)					
Land conflict	11 (4.18%)					
Domination	1 (.38%)					
Eve-teasing	3 (1.14%)			3 (6.67%)		
Failure in exam				1 (2.22%)		
Second marriage of husband		1 (2.13%)		1 (2.22%)		

Mental illness	6 (2.28%)			2 (4.44%)		
Unconsciousness	2 (.76%)					
Misunderstanding	1 (.38%)					
Physical torture				1 (2.22%)		
Forced prostitution	1 (.38%)					
Unemployment	1 (.38%)					
Individual gain	1 (.38%)	1 (2.13%)				
Rape/ Attempt to rape	1 (.38%)			1 (2.22%)		
Refusal of Marriage	1 (.38%)					
Self-Safeguard	1 (.38%)					
Cheat		1 (2.13%)				
Others	10 (3.80%)			5 (11.11%)		
Total	263 (100%)	47 (100%)	47 (100%)	45 (100%)	3 (100%)	3 (100%)

The different types of causation are related to violent crime and victimless crime whereas the property related and public order crimes are centered into one cause. From the analysis of violent crime in Table 5 it is showed that females have been engaged with crime (42, 26%) because of familial conflict. The main factors of familial intricacy are familial conflict (17.11%), dowry (17.11%), adultery (5.38%), mental illness because of continuous assault (2.28%), and misunderstanding (.38%). Generally female are becoming more aware by their participation in the education and working sectors and consequently women are gaining more masculinity characteristics than in the past. About 25% causes are related to awareness; out of the main causes of familial conflict are quarrelling/enmity (12.93%), land conflict (4.18%), gaining power/ misuse (3.80%), salary increasing (3.08%), protesting (1.14%), kidnapping (.38%), and domination (.38%). Thirdly, related to survival strategies for some economic benefit, 18.24% of females are engaged with violent crimes. Though, the economic gain is the main causes here (16.72%), the role of theft (.76%), poverty (.38%) and dacoity (.38%) are not negligible as causations of violent crime. On the other hand, the conflicting familial relationship is also responsible for victimless crime. It is shown that familial conflict (31.11%), dowry demanding (11.11%), and the failure in love (20%) lead to female criminality. Besides these, female criminality is related to the punishment of victim, suspension of service, and other negligible mistakes (11.11%). Female commit more violent and victimless crime as a result of the victimization of their personal life such as separation, physical assault, sexual assault or dowry. Sampson and Laub (1993) have showed that the inmate who has a lot of strain because of the sexual or

physical assaults which are derived from a negative socio-economic context has more chances to engage in crime than others. The strain of personal life and the role of social control are directly related to the female criminality (Proctor 2004:64).

Inversely, economic motives are considered as the main causes in the explanation of organized, property related and public order crimes. Among the criminals related to the economic gain, 45 (95.75%) females are engaged with organized crime, followed by property crimes 44 (93.61%) females and lastly 2 (66.76%) females are engaged with public order crimes. It is noticeable that the findings of this study in the causal explanation of female crime, especially familial conflict and assault/oppression which lead to crime, are directly consistent with the findings of the studies of female criminality in Bangladesh (Banerjee 2010, Faruk et al. 2009) and juvenile (girl) delinquency (Aktar and Faruk 2009) and female criminality in India (Ahuja 1996). The findings of the present study are theoretically supported by Chesney-Lind's marginalization theory rather than by Adler's masculinity theory or Simon's opportunist theory.

Conclusion

Historically, the varying nature and typologies of female crime and its associated factors is due to the impact of socio-political change, urbanization, technological development as well as structural changes and nature of socialization in the family. The participation of female in the broader social environment, especially in the working sectors, is increasing day by day. Because of this changing role, the participant's rate of female in crime commission is also increasing comparatively to the male's. As a result, the causation of female criminality is changing rapidly with the multi-facial or varietal mode in Bangladesh. The findings of the present study explored that females are committing more violent and victimless crime. Though, among these, the murder and suicide rates are increasing so rapidly, the participation rate of female in fraud / cheating, drug trafficking and illegal transaction are also increasing. In contemporary Bangladesh, women are engaged in property, organized and public order crime due to the

economic necessity for accelerating their lifestyles, whereas they commit more violent and victimless crime because of having familial conflict, poverty, collision, dowry and failure in love.

Above all, on the basis of the theoretical explanation of female offending in Bangladesh, the following conclusions may be drawn up. Firstly, “female bearing masculinity characteristics and participate in crime commission”, the proposition of Adler’s masculinity theory is questionable or in many cases inconsistent in the context of Bangladesh. Female are engaging with crime in Bangladesh as a result of their repeated victimization inside the family or society. Secondly, Rita J. Simon’s opportunistic theory is less acceptable because in Bangladesh females have fewer opportunities to participate in the formal economic sector, which leads to committing violent crimes instead of property related crime. Thirdly, in case of reported crime, it is shown that females are committing severe crimes more than less serious crime. As a result, the chivalry theory is not applicable in the context of Bangladesh. Lastly, familial conflict, increased separation rate, continuous victimization and disparity in the economic sectors forced women to marginal position in a society. Consequently, female are engaging more with crime than in the past. So, considering the findings of the study from theoretical perspectives, in the explanation of female offending in Bangladesh, the marginalization theory of Chesney-Lind is more empirically valid.

To lessen the participation rates of women in crime, government should formulate an appropriate policy to lessen the vulnerability of women inside the family and in the broader social context. In this matter, the government and the policy makers have to play a positive role in increasing the efficiency of the criminal justice system. To understand the etiology of female offending in a comprehensive way, more research is needed in the field of social sciences, which may open the door of knowledge on this matter.

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