

**CYBERBULLYING AND ONLINE HARASSMENT: AN ASSESSMENT OF
DIGITAL CRIMES AMONG STUDENTS OF THOMAS ADEWUMI
UNIVERSITY**

PROJECT

Submitted by

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DECLARATION

I declare that, this is an original dissertation carried out by me in the department of Sociology (Criminology and Security Studies) Faculty of Management and Social Science, Thomas Adewumi University, Oko-Irese Kwara State.

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CERTIFICATION

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DEDICATION

I dedicated this project to Almighty Allah. To him alone is all the Glory!!!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I thank God for the opportunity given to me to be counted among the living. May his name be praised and glorified forever. However, i say big a thank you to Mr Ajibade who is my supervisor, lecturer, mentor and a friend to me. He ensures that, i work harder to become successful in life. I pray to God to increase you in wisdom, knowledge and understanding and take you higher and higher, Amen.

Secondly, i want to thank my parents for the opportunity to sponsor me to school and to ensure that, i become successful person in life and also graduate with very good grades through their word of encouragements. I pray that, Allah continue to bless them, Amen! I all want to appreciate all my lecturers and faculty members. God bless you all, Amen!

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the prevalence, psychological and academic impacts, contributing factors, and institutional responses to cyberbullying and online harassment among students of Thomas Adewumi University. The research adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data from 297 questionnaire responses with qualitative insights from interviews conducted with a student counselor, ICT officer, and SRC President. The study was guided by the Routine Activity Theory and Social Learning Theory, both of which offered frameworks for understanding how peer influence and institutional gaps enable cyberbullying behaviors in academic environments. Findings revealed that 59.6% of respondents agreed that online harassment is a common issue within the university, while 66.6% had either experienced or knew someone who had been cyberbullied. The most frequent forms of online harassment reported included the sharing of personal information without consent (73.4%), inflammatory comments (66.7%), and deliberate exclusion from online groups (64.3%). The psychological impacts were significant: 76.4% of respondents reported that cyberbullying led to anxiety and emotional stress, and 71% agreed it negatively affected academic performance. Additionally, 66% indicated that victims often withdrew from academic and social activities. The study also identified several vulnerability factors: 69.7% of students agreed that excessive social media use increased risk, while 75.8% cited poor awareness of digital safety practices. Gender was a notable factor, with 66.7% of respondents agreeing that female students were more frequently targeted. On the institutional side, only 26.3% believed the university had effective anti-cyberbullying policies, and 32% were aware of formal reporting channels. The study concludes that while cyberbullying is prevalent and harmful, institutional policies and student awareness remain inadequate. It recommends implementing comprehensive reporting mechanisms, digital safety education, and proactive policy communication to protect students and reduce online harassment on campus.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the Study

The rapid growth and penetration of digital technologies have transformed the way people communicate, learn, and socialize. Alongside these advancements, the misuse of these technologies has given rise to digital crimes, particularly cyberbullying and online harassment. These issues have become a global concern due to their widespread nature and profound impacts, especially among young people. According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2021), cyberbullying and online harassment are among the most prevalent forms of violence affecting youth, often leading to severe psychological and social consequences.

Cyberbullying involves the use of electronic communication tools such as social media platforms, email, and instant messaging to intimidate, harass, or embarrass individuals. Online harassment encompasses a broader spectrum, including cyberstalking, threats, and other forms of abuse in the digital space (Patchin & Hinduja, 2020). In educational settings, university students are particularly vulnerable due to their high level of digital engagement and social interactions online. A survey conducted by Pew Research Center (2021) revealed that 59% of young adults aged 18–29 have experienced some form of online harassment, with significant repercussions on their mental health and academic performance.

In Nigeria, the increasing accessibility of smartphones and the internet has exacerbated the prevalence of cyber-related issues among university students. Reports by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC, 2023) show that internet penetration in the country reached over 50%, with students making up a significant portion of active users. This digital landscape provides opportunities for academic advancement but also creates an environment for misuse and abuse. A study by Olusola and Ayodeji (2022) highlighted that Nigerian university students often face cyberbullying, which negatively impacts their self-esteem, mental health, and academic productivity.

Thomas Adewumi University, being a modern institution with a focus on digital learning and connectivity, is not immune to the challenges posed by cyberbullying and online harassment. The absence of robust preventive measures and policies in some Nigerian universities has been identified as a critical factor contributing to the proliferation of such digital crimes (Igwe & Kalu, 2024). Moreover, the lack of awareness and reporting mechanisms further compounds the issue, leaving many victims without adequate support.

Understanding the dynamics of cyberbullying and online harassment in Thomas Adewumi University is essential for creating a safe and conducive learning environment. This study seeks to assess the prevalence, impacts, and contributing factors of these digital crimes, as well as evaluate the effectiveness of existing policies and preventive measures. By addressing these gaps, the research aims to provide actionable recommendations to mitigate the incidence of cyberbullying and online harassment within the university community.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The increasing reliance on digital platforms for social interaction, education, and recreation among university students has brought with it the pervasive issue of cyberbullying and online harassment. These digital crimes are characterized by their anonymity, reach, and psychological impact, making them a growing concern in educational environments. At Thomas Adewumi University, the prevalence of cyberbullying and online harassment is not well-documented, leaving a gap in understanding the magnitude and specific nature of these issues within the institution. This lack of data makes it challenging to identify affected individuals and address the root causes of these digital crimes effectively.

Cyberbullying and online harassment have significant psychological, academic, and social impacts on victims. Studies have shown that victims of these crimes often suffer from anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and, in extreme cases, suicidal ideation (Olusola & Ayodeji, 2022). For university students, these issues are compounded by academic pressures, leading to diminished focus, reduced performance, and withdrawal from academic and social activities. Despite the profound effects of these digital crimes, many victims remain silent due to stigma, fear of retaliation, or lack of trust in institutional support systems.

In the Nigerian context, the increasing access to internet-enabled devices and social media platforms has created an environment conducive to cyberbullying and online harassment. However, existing policies and measures to address these issues in higher institutions, including Thomas Adewumi University, are often inadequate. A review of policies in Nigerian universities by Igwe and Kalu (2024) highlights significant gaps in preventive measures, awareness programs, and reporting mechanisms. This inadequacy leaves students vulnerable and perpetuates a culture of impunity for perpetrators.

Another critical factor contributing to the prevalence of cyberbullying and online harassment is the lack of awareness among students about what constitutes digital crimes and their associated consequences. Many students are either unaware of the resources available to them or skeptical of their effectiveness. Additionally, cultural and societal norms often downplay the seriousness of online harassment, further discouraging victims from seeking help. This gap in awareness and education underscores the need for targeted interventions to address both the individual and systemic factors that sustain these crimes.

Addressing cyberbullying and online harassment requires a multi-faceted approach that includes understanding the prevalence and types of these crimes, identifying contributing factors, and evaluating the effectiveness of existing policies. Without a comprehensive understanding of these elements, institutions like Thomas Adewumi University may struggle to create a safe and supportive environment for their students. This study aims to bridge these gaps by providing empirical data and actionable recommendations to mitigate the occurrence of digital crimes within the Thomas Adewumi University community.

1.2 Research Questions

1. What is the prevalence and types of cyberbullying and online harassment experienced by students at Thomas Adewumi University?
2. What are the psychological and academic impacts of cyberbullying and online harassment on students at Thomas Adewumi University?
3. What factors contribute to students' vulnerability to cyberbullying and online harassment at Thomas Adewumi University?

4. How effective are the current policies and preventive measures at Thomas Adewumi University in addressing digital crimes?

1.3 Research Objectives

1. To examine the prevalence and types of cyberbullying and online harassment experienced by students at Thomas Adewumi University.
2. To analyze the psychological and academic impacts of cyberbullying and online harassment on students at Thomas Adewumi University.
3. To identify the factors that contribute to students' vulnerability to cyberbullying and online harassment at Thomas Adewumi University.
4. To evaluate the effectiveness of current policies and preventive measures at Thomas Adewumi University in addressing digital crimes.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is significant as it addresses the pressing issue of cyberbullying and online harassment among university students, specifically at Thomas Adewumi University. As digital technology becomes an integral part of education and social interaction, understanding these digital crimes is essential for fostering a safe and supportive academic environment. The findings will shed light on the prevalence, impacts, and contributing factors of cyberbullying and online harassment, equipping the university with data-driven insights to develop effective interventions and support systems. From a policy perspective, the study will contribute to strengthening institutional frameworks to combat digital crimes. By evaluating the effectiveness of existing policies and preventive measures, the research will identify critical gaps and offer actionable recommendations for improvement. These insights will not only benefit Thomas Adewumi University but can also serve as a model for other institutions in Nigeria, providing a localized perspective to address a global challenge.

Furthermore, the research will raise awareness among students, faculty, and administrators about the risks and consequences of cyberbullying and online harassment. It will encourage a collaborative effort to enhance campus safety and improve support systems for victims. On a broader scale, the study will contribute to the academic discourse on digital crimes, offering a

Nigerian perspective that enriches global strategies to combat cyberbullying and safeguard students in digital environments.

1.5 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is limited to examining cyberbullying and online harassment among students of Thomas Adewumi University. The research focuses on understanding the prevalence and types of these digital crimes, as well as their psychological and academic impacts on the students. It also investigates the factors contributing to students' vulnerability to cyberbullying and online harassment within the university context. Additionally, the study evaluates the effectiveness of existing policies and preventive measures implemented by the institution to address these issues. Data will be collected from students across different faculties and levels of study to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon within the university. While the study emphasizes the experiences of students, it also provides insights into broader institutional responses, offering recommendations for improved digital safety and crime prevention strategies.

1.6 Operational Definitions of Key Terms

Academic Impact: The negative effects of cyberbullying and online harassment on students' academic performance, including reduced focus, poor grades, or withdrawal from academic activities.

Cyberbullying: Refers to the use of digital platforms, such as social media, messaging apps, or online forums, to intentionally harm, harass, or intimidate another individual, particularly students at Thomas Adewumi University.

Digital Crimes: Encompasses illegal activities conducted using electronic devices or networks, including cyberbullying and online harassment, as they pertain to the university environment.

Online Harassment: Involves persistent or severe misuse of online communication tools to cause emotional distress, disrupt activities, or threaten the safety of students.

Prevalence: The frequency or rate at which cyberbullying and online harassment occur among the student population at Thomas Adewumi University.

Preventive Measures: Policies, strategies, and interventions implemented by Thomas Adewumi University to reduce the occurrence of cyberbullying and online harassment and protect students from these digital crimes.

Psychological Impact: Refers to the mental health consequences, such as anxiety, depression, or stress, experienced by students as a result of cyberbullying and online harassment.

Vulnerability: Factors or conditions, such as lack of awareness or weak security measures, that increase the likelihood of students becoming victims of cyberbullying and online harassment.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

This section presents a comprehensive review of the relevant literature on cyberbullying, online harassment, and digital crimes, with a particular focus on their prevalence, impacts, and contributing factors among university students. This chapter also examines existing theoretical frameworks (Routine Activity Theory and Social Learning Theory) that have been used to understand these phenomena, providing a foundation for the current research. By exploring national and international studies, policies, and preventive measures, this chapter highlights the gaps in literature, offering insight into the challenges and implications of cyberbullying in higher education, especially within the Nigerian context.

2.1 Conceptual Clarification

2.1.1 Digital Crimes

Digital crimes, also referred to as cybercrimes, encompass a broad range of illegal activities conducted through digital platforms or involving digital technologies. These crimes can be categorized into various types, including hacking, identity theft, online fraud, cyberstalking, and the dissemination of malicious software (viruses, worms, etc.) (Gandhi & Sharma, 2019). As technology has advanced, digital crimes have become more sophisticated, targeting individuals, businesses, and governments alike. Digital crimes can have far-reaching consequences, both for the immediate victims and for society at large. According to Wall (2007), digital crimes differ from traditional crimes in that they exploit the vulnerabilities inherent in digital systems, often transcending geographical boundaries and involving anonymous or pseudonymous perpetrators.

One distinctive feature of digital crimes is their ability to target not only individuals but also large organizations or state entities. For instance, cybercrime may involve financial theft, such as online banking fraud, or data breaches, where sensitive personal or corporate data is stolen and misused (Van den Broeck et al., 2017). These crimes can lead to significant financial losses, reputational

damage, and a breach of trust. Hacking and unauthorized access to systems, for example, are often perpetrated with the intent to steal or manipulate data, disrupt services, or exploit vulnerabilities for malicious purposes (Bada et al., 2019). As digital infrastructure becomes more deeply integrated into daily life, the scale and complexity of digital crimes continue to grow, necessitating new legal frameworks and security measures.

Digital crimes also encompass online harassment and cyberbullying, which are increasingly recognized as significant threats to individuals' well-being. These forms of cybercrime involve using digital platforms to harm or intimidate others, either through the distribution of harmful content or the direct communication of threats (Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004). Online harassment and cyberbullying can lead to severe psychological distress, including anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation, particularly among vulnerable populations such as adolescents and young adults. The anonymity and reach provided by digital platforms enable perpetrators to engage in these harmful behaviors without fear of immediate consequences, complicating efforts to identify and prosecute offenders (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010).

In the academic context, universities are increasingly recognizing the need to address digital crimes, which can interfere with students' learning, mental health, and social interactions. Universities, including Thomas Adewumi University, must develop robust policies and support systems to protect students from digital crimes, including online harassment, identity theft, and fraud. These crimes not only harm the individual victims but can also damage the overall campus environment, affecting student engagement, academic performance, and institutional reputation (Binns, 2017). To combat digital crimes effectively, universities must adopt proactive measures, such as offering digital literacy programs, strengthening cybersecurity policies, and providing avenues for reporting and responding to digital misconduct (Bada et al., 2019).

2.1.2 Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is a form of bullying that occurs through digital platforms, including social media, messaging apps, and online gaming spaces. Unlike traditional forms of bullying, which typically occur in face-to-face interactions, cyberbullying enables perpetrators to harass or intimidate victims from a distance, often with a sense of anonymity (Smith et al., 2008). This anonymity can

amplify the aggressor's behavior, making them more likely to engage in harmful actions without fear of immediate consequences. The nature of cyberbullying can involve spreading false information, sending threatening or abusive messages, or sharing private content to harm the victim's reputation and well-being (Olweus, 2012). These actions often have long-lasting effects on the victim, as the digital footprints of the harassment can be permanent and accessible to a wide audience.

The conceptualization of cyberbullying includes several distinguishing features, including intentional harm, repetition, and an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. While bullying generally involves repeated acts of harm, cyberbullying is unique in its ability to reach victims at any time and from any place with internet access (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010). This 24/7 availability of harassment amplifies the stress and emotional toll on victims, who often find themselves unable to escape the bullying. According to Kowalski et al. (2014), the emotional impact of cyberbullying on victims can include anxiety, depression, and even suicidal thoughts, highlighting the severe mental health risks associated with such online harassment. The continuous nature of cyberbullying, driven by social media and other online platforms, has led researchers to investigate its broader psychological and academic consequences.

A key aspect of cyberbullying is its diverse forms, which include verbal abuse, exclusion, impersonation, and the dissemination of private or sensitive information without consent (Wright, 2017). These forms are not only harmful in isolation but can also overlap and exacerbate the impact on the victim. For instance, the sharing of embarrassing images or videos can be coupled with online exclusion, leading to a compounded effect on the individual's social identity and self-esteem (Vandebosch & Van Cleemput, 2009). The ability to target victims anonymously, without physical confrontation, makes it easier for bullies to engage in persistent and harmful behavior. Studies have also suggested that cyberbullies often operate in groups, further increasing the power imbalance between the perpetrator and the victim (Olweus, 2012).

In the context of higher education, including universities like Thomas Adewumi University, cyberbullying presents unique challenges. While universities are equipped with various support systems for traditional forms of bullying, the digital nature of cyberbullying requires tailored policies and responses. Cyberbullying among university students can disrupt not only the victim's

academic performance but also the overall campus climate, affecting the mental health and social interactions of the student body (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010). To effectively address this issue, universities must develop comprehensive anti-bullying policies that specifically target online harassment, provide adequate support for victims, and educate students about responsible online behavior (Kowalski et al., 2014).

2.1.3 Online Harassment

Online harassment is a broader category of digital abuse that includes various forms of aggressive or harmful behavior targeted at an individual through the internet or digital communication channels. It can involve repeated and deliberate actions aimed at intimidating, humiliating, or distressing a person, which can include sending offensive messages, stalking, doxxing, or cyberstalking (Jaishankar, 2011). Unlike other forms of cybercrime, online harassment is particularly damaging because it often involves a direct violation of an individual's personal space, leading to significant emotional and psychological harm. Research by Kowalski et al. (2014) explains that online harassment includes a wide range of behaviors that can cross into cyberbullying but also include broader threats, such as online blackmail or impersonation, that are not necessarily related to bullying in the traditional sense.

One important aspect of online harassment is its ability to cause ongoing harm, as the victim is often unable to escape the attacks. Unlike traditional harassment, which can be contained to specific settings or times, online harassment can occur at any time and can reach victims anywhere with internet access (Heirman & Walrave, 2012). The harassment may extend to multiple platforms, including social media, email, and messaging apps, creating a pervasive threat that can continuously disrupt the victim's personal and professional life. As noted by Patchin and Hinduja (2016), online harassment can be especially harmful because of its public nature; the content of the harassment is often accessible to a wide audience, which amplifies the victim's humiliation and distress.

The forms of online harassment are varied, including but not limited to sending threatening or abusive messages, sharing private information without consent, and engaging in harmful online behaviors such as trolling or spreading rumors (Binns, 2017). Online harassment can also include

behaviors such as cyberstalking, where the harasser monitors or follows the victim's online activities in an intrusive and obsessive manner. This relentless and targeted approach can cause severe distress and lead to long-term emotional consequences, including anxiety, depression, and even suicidal ideation (Kowalski et al., 2014). The anonymity provided by online platforms makes it easier for individuals to engage in such harmful behaviors without fear of identification or consequences, thereby increasing the likelihood of victimization (Patchin & Hinduja, 2016).

In the context of universities, online harassment poses unique challenges, as it can negatively affect students' social relationships, mental health, and academic performance. The pressure to maintain a positive online image, combined with the potential for online harassment, can lead to heightened stress and academic disengagement among students (Binns, 2017). As universities increasingly rely on online platforms for communication and education, it is crucial for institutions to develop policies that specifically address online harassment. This includes offering support services for victims, educating students about online safety, and implementing strict penalties for perpetrators of online harassment (Heirman & Walrave, 2012).

2.2 Prevalence and Types of Cyberbullying and Online Harassment Among Students in Nigeria

Cyberbullying and online harassment are growing concerns among students in Nigeria, reflecting the increasing integration of digital technology into daily life. With the rise in internet penetration and smartphone use among Nigerian youths, more students are becoming active on social media platforms, online forums, and educational apps, which unfortunately increases their exposure to online abuse (Adebayo, 2020). Studies show that cyberbullying affects a significant proportion of Nigerian students, with rates of victimization varying across regions and institutions. For instance, a survey conducted by Okafor and Nwoke (2021) found that 34% of university students in Nigeria reported experiencing some form of online harassment, with social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp being the most common avenues for abuse. This prevalence aligns with global trends, where cyberbullying is recognized as a pervasive issue among young adults.

One of the most common types of cyberbullying among Nigerian students is verbal abuse through online messages and comments. This involves sending offensive, threatening, or demeaning

messages, often anonymously, to the victim. Students are frequently targeted for their physical appearance, academic performance, or opinions shared online. Another widespread form of online harassment is social exclusion, where individuals are deliberately excluded from online groups or discussions, creating feelings of isolation and rejection (Ufuophu-Biri & Iwu, 2014). Additionally, the dissemination of false information or rumors about individuals, often termed "cyber gossip," is prevalent and can lead to reputational damage and emotional distress. This behavior is exacerbated by the viral nature of digital platforms, which enables false information to spread rapidly and reach a large audience (Adebayo, 2020).

More severe forms of cyberbullying experienced by Nigerian students include cyberstalking and doxxing. Cyberstalking involves the persistent monitoring of an individual's online activities, often accompanied by threatening or invasive messages. This can lead to significant psychological harm, including anxiety and a sense of insecurity. Doxxing, on the other hand, involves the unauthorized publication of personal information, such as addresses, phone numbers, or academic details, with malicious intent (Okafor & Nwoke, 2021). These acts are often perpetrated by individuals seeking revenge or intending to intimidate the victim. Female students in Nigeria are particularly vulnerable to these forms of harassment, as gender-based abuse is common in online spaces, reflecting broader societal inequalities (Ufuophu-Biri & Iwu, 2014).

Sexual harassment is another critical type of online abuse prevalent among Nigerian students. This includes sending unsolicited sexually explicit messages, images, or videos, as well as coercing individuals into sharing intimate content. Perpetrators often use anonymous accounts or fake profiles, making it difficult to identify them. In many cases, victims are blackmailed with the threat of publicizing private images or conversations, a phenomenon referred to as "sextortion" (Olowu & Olusola, 2022). The impact of such harassment extends beyond the victim's emotional well-being, often affecting their academic performance and social interactions. The stigma associated with sexual harassment also discourages many victims from reporting these incidents, further complicating efforts to address the issue.

The prevalence of cyberbullying and online harassment among Nigerian students is influenced by several factors, including the anonymity provided by digital platforms and the lack of robust cybercrime laws. The Cybercrimes (Prohibition, Prevention, Etc.) Act of 2015, while a significant

step forward, is often inadequately enforced, leaving many victims without recourse (Olowu & Olusola, 2022). Furthermore, limited digital literacy among students and the absence of formal reporting mechanisms within educational institutions contribute to the persistence of these issues. Peer influence and the normalization of abusive behavior online also play a role, as students may participate in cyberbullying to gain social validation or as a form of retaliation (Adebayo, 2020).

Addressing the prevalence of cyberbullying and online harassment among Nigerian students requires a multi-faceted approach. Educational institutions must implement awareness campaigns to educate students about the risks of online abuse and the importance of responsible digital behavior. Support systems, including counseling services and hotlines, should be established to provide victims with immediate assistance. Additionally, policymakers must strengthen the enforcement of cybercrime laws and promote collaboration between internet service providers, social media platforms, and law enforcement agencies to track and penalize offenders. As internet use continues to grow in Nigeria, proactive measures are essential to protect students from the harmful effects of cyberbullying and online harassment (Ufuophu-Biri & Iwu, 2014).

2.3 Overview of the Psychological and Academic Impacts of Cyberbullying and Online Harassment on Students in Nigeria

The psychological impacts of cyberbullying and online harassment on Nigerian students are profound. Victims often experience heightened levels of stress, anxiety, and depression due to the relentless nature of online abuse. Cyberbullying incidents are particularly distressing because they can occur at any time, disrupting the victim's sense of safety even in private spaces. Studies show that persistent online harassment erodes self-esteem and fosters feelings of isolation among victims (Adebayo & Olawale, 2021). In Nigeria, where mental health stigma is prevalent, students often lack access to counseling services or emotional support, exacerbating the psychological toll of these experiences (Olowu, 2022). Furthermore, victims may develop post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms, particularly if the abuse involves threats of physical harm or public humiliation.

The emotional distress caused by cyberbullying and online harassment often translates into social withdrawal and a diminished capacity to form meaningful relationships. Victims may avoid online

interactions entirely or limit their participation in social and academic activities, fearing further victimization. This behavior can lead to loneliness and reduced peer support, further deepening the emotional impact of the harassment (Ufuophu-Biri & Iwu, 2014). For female students, who are disproportionately targeted for gender-based online abuse, the psychological effects can be even more severe, as they often face additional societal judgment and victim-blaming (Ajayi & Fatima, 2020). The fear and shame associated with being targeted online frequently discourage students from seeking help, perpetuating the cycle of victimization and emotional harm.

The academic consequences of cyberbullying and online harassment are equally concerning. Victimized students often struggle to concentrate on their studies, leading to a decline in academic performance. This can be attributed to the mental exhaustion and preoccupation with the abuse, which detracts from their ability to focus on coursework or participate in class discussions (Adebayo & Olawale, 2021). In severe cases, students may miss classes, drop out of school, or underperform in examinations due to the psychological burden imposed by the harassment. For instance, a survey conducted by Okafor and Nwoke (2021) found that 28% of students who experienced online harassment reported a significant drop in their grades, underscoring the detrimental impact on academic outcomes.

Cyberbullying also affects students' motivation and engagement with their educational environment. Victims often feel alienated from their peers and teachers, leading to a loss of interest in extracurricular activities and academic pursuits. This disengagement is particularly troubling in Nigeria, where limited resources and opportunities already hinder students' educational advancement (Olowu, 2022). Moreover, the public nature of some forms of online harassment, such as the dissemination of embarrassing photos or videos, can lead to stigmatization and ostracism within the school community, further undermining the victim's academic experience and sense of belonging.

The long-term consequences of cyberbullying and online harassment extend beyond the immediate psychological and academic effects. Victimized students are at a higher risk of developing chronic mental health issues, such as depression and anxiety disorders, which can persist into adulthood (Ajayi & Fatima, 2020). The emotional scars left by online abuse can also impact their career aspirations and future relationships, limiting their ability to achieve personal and professional

goals. Academically, students who experience a prolonged period of victimization may face challenges in accessing higher education or securing scholarships due to their compromised academic records. The cumulative effect of these challenges highlights the urgent need for interventions to address cyberbullying and online harassment within Nigerian educational institutions.

To mitigate these impacts, it is essential to establish robust support systems and preventive measures within schools and universities. Educational institutions must prioritize mental health awareness and provide accessible counseling services to help victims cope with the psychological effects of online abuse. Policies aimed at fostering a safe and inclusive online environment, such as enforcing strict codes of conduct and educating students about responsible digital behavior, are crucial (Ufuophu-Biri & Iwu, 2014). Furthermore, collaborative efforts between policymakers, educators, and technology companies can ensure that perpetrators of online harassment are held accountable, thereby reducing the prevalence of these issues and alleviating their impact on Nigerian students.

2.4 Factors Contributing to Vulnerability to Cyberbullying and Online Harassment Among Undergraduate Students

Several factors contribute to the vulnerability of undergraduate students to cyberbullying and online harassment in Nigeria. One key factor is the widespread use of digital technologies and social media platforms among students. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and WhatsApp are commonly used for social interactions, but their open and anonymous nature also creates opportunities for abuse (Olowu & Popoola, 2014). The anonymity provided by these platforms emboldens perpetrators to send abusive messages, share inappropriate content, or engage in trolling without the fear of immediate consequences (Ogundele et al., 2020). As a result, students who are highly active on social media are at greater risk of becoming targets of online harassment.

Another contributing factor is the lack of digital literacy among students. Many undergraduates in Nigeria are not fully aware of how to protect themselves online, such as setting strong privacy controls or recognizing and avoiding potentially harmful interactions (Olatokun & Opesade, 2021). The absence of formal education on digital safety further exacerbates this vulnerability, leaving

students exposed to phishing, cyberstalking, and other forms of harassment. This is particularly concerning in public universities, where limited resources may hinder the implementation of comprehensive digital literacy programs (Ajayi, 2022). Consequently, students' lack of knowledge about safe online practices increases their susceptibility to victimization.

Peer pressure and the need for social validation also play a significant role in increasing students' vulnerability. Many undergraduates seek validation through likes, comments, and followers on social media, which often leads them to overshare personal information or post provocative content (Olowu & Popoola, 2014). This behavior can attract negative attention from cyberbullies or harassers who exploit personal details to target their victims. Female students, in particular, are often pressured to conform to certain beauty standards or social norms online, which can make them more likely to face harassment, including unsolicited messages or explicit content (Ogundele et al., 2020).

The prevalence of weak cybersecurity policies within Nigerian universities further contributes to students' vulnerability. Many institutions lack robust systems to monitor and regulate online activities or to protect their networks from external threats (Adebayo & Ogunleye, 2021). This gap allows cyberbullies to exploit institutional weaknesses, such as hacking into students' accounts or creating fake profiles to impersonate victims. Furthermore, the absence of institutional support mechanisms, such as reporting systems or counseling services, often leaves victims without the means to seek help or justice, perpetuating a culture of impunity for cyberharassers (Olatokun & Opesade, 2021).

Cultural and societal norms also influence students' vulnerability to online harassment. In Nigeria, gender norms often dictate that women should remain passive in the face of aggression, which may discourage female students from reporting incidents of cyber harassment (Ajayi, 2022). Additionally, societal stigma surrounding discussions of harassment or abuse can prevent both male and female students from seeking help, fearing judgment or retaliation. This cultural context not only emboldens perpetrators but also perpetuates the cycle of victimization by silencing the voices of those affected.

Lastly, economic factors and the digital divide exacerbate vulnerabilities among certain student populations. Students from lower-income backgrounds often rely on shared or public devices to access the internet, making their accounts more susceptible to breaches or unauthorized access (Adebayo & Ogunleye, 2021). Furthermore, limited access to secure internet connections or paid digital tools may force students to engage in risky online behavior, such as using unverified platforms or sharing sensitive information. These economic disparities create an uneven playing field, where financially disadvantaged students face heightened risks of cyberbullying and online harassment.

2.5 Overview of Policies and Preventive Measures at Higher Institutions (National and International)

Higher education institutions have implemented various policies and measures to combat cyberbullying and online harassment. These initiatives aim to create safe and inclusive environments by addressing the root causes, ensuring accountability, and supporting victims. Both national and international approaches reflect diverse strategies informed by legal, cultural, and institutional contexts.

In Nigeria, universities are beginning to address cyberbullying and online harassment through institutional guidelines and frameworks. These measures often fall under broader disciplinary policies, which outline acceptable student behavior both offline and online. For example, institutions such as the University of Lagos and Obafemi Awolowo University include provisions in their student handbooks that define and penalize acts of cyberbullying, harassment, and defamation on digital platforms. However, these policies are not always detailed or specific to digital misconduct, reflecting a gap in targeted regulations (Ajayi, 2022).

The Cybercrimes (Prohibition, Prevention, Etc.) Act of 2015 plays a significant role in shaping institutional policies in Nigeria. This act criminalizes offenses such as cyberstalking, identity theft, and online threats, which universities can use as a legal basis for disciplinary actions. Many institutions have partnered with law enforcement agencies to address severe cases of online harassment, though challenges in enforcement and reporting often hinder the effectiveness of these collaborations (Adeoye & Olatunji, 2020).

Globally, universities in countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia have developed more comprehensive policies to combat online harassment. In the United States, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 requires federally funded institutions to address all forms of harassment, including cyber harassment. Universities like Stanford and Columbia have established detailed policies that define cyberbullying and outline clear reporting procedures. These policies often include provisions for anonymous reporting, immediate investigation, and support services for victims (Lipinski et al., 2021).

In the United Kingdom, the Equality Act 2010 obliges universities to eliminate harassment in all forms. Institutions like the University of Cambridge have developed policies specifically targeting online misconduct, including harassment through email, social media, and other digital platforms. These policies are complemented by training sessions and awareness campaigns to educate students and staff on acceptable online behavior and how to seek help (Allen & Ward, 2021).

Preventive measures in higher institutions often focus on education, awareness, and technological interventions. Many universities have incorporated digital literacy programs into their orientation activities to teach students about online safety, privacy management, and the consequences of cyberbullying. For instance, the University of Melbourne in Australia mandates digital safety courses for all incoming students, covering topics such as responsible social media use and recognizing signs of online harassment (Green et al., 2020).

Universities are also leveraging technology to combat cyberbullying and harassment. Some institutions have adopted monitoring tools to detect harmful behavior on university networks or forums. Others, like Canadian universities, have introduced anonymous reporting systems to encourage victims to report incidents without fear of retaliation. Such systems ensure that complaints are promptly addressed while protecting the identity of the victim (Chen et al., 2022).

Effective policies often involve collaboration between universities, governments, and external organizations. In countries like the United States and the UK, institutions partner with local law enforcement, digital safety organizations, and technology companies to strengthen their policies. These partnerships facilitate access to resources, training, and expertise, enabling universities to address online harassment more effectively. For example, several universities in the UK

collaborate with the National Cyber Security Centre to improve digital security and harassment prevention on campuses (Allen & Ward, 2021).

2.6 Empirical Review

Cyberbullying has become an increasing concern in higher education, particularly in Nigeria. Studies show that university students are vulnerable to online harassment, which affects their psychological well-being and academic performance. Patchin and Hinduja (2020) highlighted the significant negative correlation between cyberbullying and self-esteem among students, with those who experienced online harassment displaying lower levels of confidence and self-worth. In Nigeria, Olumide et al. (2015) explored the role of social media in facilitating cyberbullying, revealing that platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp are commonly used for online harassment. This digital harassment leads to emotional distress, anxiety, and depression among students, emphasizing the need for universities to address this growing issue through educational programs and policy interventions.

The psychological impacts of cyberbullying on students are profound. Chester et al. (2020) found that the emotional toll of cyberbullying extends beyond the immediate effects, leading to long-term issues such as depression and suicidal ideation. Students who are victims of online harassment may experience a decline in academic performance due to heightened stress and emotional instability. Juvonen and Gross (2008) further supported this by noting that cyberbullying victims often face difficulties in concentrating on their studies, which results in poor academic outcomes. The study highlighted the importance of early intervention, with schools and universities playing a crucial role in providing support for victims and promoting safe online environments.

One of the key factors contributing to students' vulnerability to cyberbullying is the increasing use of social media platforms. Li (2006) emphasized that adolescents and young adults, particularly those in higher education, are more susceptible to online harassment due to their high engagement with social media. Social media platforms provide an anonymous space where perpetrators can easily target victims without fear of immediate consequences. Wright (2014) found that anonymity is a significant enabler of cyberbullying, as it allows perpetrators to hide their identities, reducing

the social consequences of their actions. This creates a climate where online harassment can thrive, leaving victims feeling helpless and isolated.

The prevalence of cyberbullying is a global issue, but it manifests differently across cultures. Tynes et al. (2012) found that minority students, particularly African Americans, face a higher incidence of racialized cyberbullying, which can exacerbate feelings of discrimination and marginalization. This finding is important for Nigerian universities, where students from diverse ethnic backgrounds interact on social media. The study suggests that addressing cultural differences in online harassment can help develop more targeted interventions. Sasson (2017) also pointed out that cyberbullying can negatively impact academic performance, with victims reporting difficulties in concentrating and increased absenteeism. Students who experience online harassment may find it difficult to engage in their studies, leading to lower academic achievement.

A comprehensive response to cyberbullying requires not only awareness but also effective prevention policies. Kowalski and Limber (2013) emphasized the importance of clear anti-bullying policies in schools and universities, which should address both traditional and digital forms of bullying. Nigerian universities, like many institutions worldwide, need to adopt more robust policies that specifically address online harassment. This includes establishing reporting mechanisms, offering counseling services, and integrating digital literacy programs into the curriculum. The involvement of parents and the wider community in these efforts is also critical to combat the pervasive nature of online harassment. Additionally, Ybarra and Mitchell (2004) argued that educational institutions should be proactive in creating safe online spaces, encouraging positive social media use, and fostering a culture of respect and empathy among students.

The intersection of cyberbullying and its impact on mental health and academics has garnered attention in numerous studies. Chester et al. (2020) and Kowalski and Limber (2013) both emphasize that online harassment can result in serious psychological consequences, including anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts. This underscores the need for universities to implement comprehensive strategies that not only address the prevalence of cyberbullying but also provide long-term support for victims. As digital platforms continue to evolve, so too must the policies and preventive measures that universities employ to ensure a safe and supportive environment for all students.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study is grounded in two key theories: Routine Activity Theory and Social Learning Theory. These theories will guide the analysis of cyberbullying and online harassment among students at Thomas Adewumi University, helping to understand the underlying causes and dynamics of digital crimes in the academic setting.

2.7.1 Routine Activity Theory

Routine Activity Theory (RAT) was developed by Lawrence E. Cohen and Marcus Felson in 1979. The theory focuses on crime as an outcome of everyday life, suggesting that crime occurs when certain situational elements align. Unlike other criminological theories that emphasize offender psychology or societal structures, RAT examines the circumstances under which crimes are likely to occur in routine activities (Cohen & Felson, 1979). This perspective has been instrumental in shifting criminological research toward situational crime prevention and environmental factors.

Assumptions of Routine Activity Theory

The core premise of Routine Activity Theory is that crime arises from the convergence of three essential elements in time and space: a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of capable guardianship. A motivated offender refers to an individual willing and able to commit a crime, while a suitable target could be a person or property perceived as vulnerable. Capable guardianship, such as law enforcement, surveillance, or even bystanders, serves as a deterrent to criminal acts (Felson, 1998). Additionally, the theory emphasizes that changes in daily routines and societal trends, such as increased use of technology, directly influence crime patterns.

Strengths of RAT

One strength of Routine Activity Theory is its practical application. By identifying the situational factors that facilitate crime, it provides a framework for designing effective crime prevention strategies, such as improving surveillance or reducing target vulnerability (Eck, 2003). Furthermore, the theory's simplicity and clarity make it accessible to practitioners, policymakers, and researchers. However, the theory has notable weaknesses. It assumes the presence of

motivated offenders but does not delve into the underlying social, psychological, or economic factors driving criminal behavior (Wilcox et al., 2018).

Weaknesses of RAT

Critics also argue that RAT focuses too narrowly on situational dynamics, overlooking broader systemic issues such as poverty, inequality, or cultural factors. In the context of victim behavior, the theory risks implying that individuals create opportunities for crime, which may inadvertently shift blame onto victims.

Application of Routine Activity Theory to the Study

Routine Activity Theory offers a valuable lens for understanding cyberbullying and online harassment among university students. Motivated offenders in this context are cyberbullies and harassers who exploit the anonymity and accessibility provided by digital platforms. These offenders often target students who are active on social media, forums, or other online platforms, perceiving them as suitable targets due to their accessibility or digital behavior (Ngo & Paternoster, 2011). Additionally, the lack of capable guardianship, such as robust cybersecurity measures, effective institutional policies, or vigilant monitoring of online interactions, creates an environment where cyberbullying and harassment can thrive.

In the case of students at Nigerian universities, daily activities like frequent use of social media for communication and academic collaboration increase exposure to potential cyber threats. Moreover, limited institutional capacity to monitor and address digital crimes exacerbates students' vulnerability (Olumide et al., 2015). By applying RAT, this study can identify the specific online routines and institutional gaps contributing to students' exposure to cyberbullying and harassment, ultimately informing the development of targeted preventive measures such as enhancing digital literacy, promoting responsible online behavior, and implementing stronger institutional policies.

2.7.2 Social Learning Theory

Social Learning Theory (SLT) was developed by Albert Bandura in the 1960s as an extension of traditional behavioral theories. Bandura emphasized that learning occurs not only through direct reinforcement but also by observing and imitating others' behaviors, attitudes, and outcomes of those behaviors (Bandura, 1977). The theory was later applied to criminology by Ronald Akers, who combined it with differential association theory to explain how individuals learn criminal behaviors from their social environments (Akers, 1998).

Assumptions of the Social Learning Theory

Social Learning Theory is based on four key assumptions:

1. **Observational Learning:** Individuals can learn behaviors by observing others, particularly those they admire or consider role models.
2. **Differential Association:** People learn behaviors through interactions and associations with others who endorse those behaviors.
3. **Reinforcement:** Learning is influenced by rewards and punishments. Positive reinforcement (e.g., approval) and negative reinforcement (e.g., avoidance of punishment) encourage behavior repetition.
4. **Cognitive Processes:** The theory acknowledges that mental processes, such as attention, retention, and motivation, play a crucial role in learning behavior (Bandura, 1986).

In criminology, Akers adapted these principles to suggest that criminal behavior is learned through interactions in a social context where deviance is modeled, justified, and reinforced (Akers, 2009).

Strengths of SLT

One strength of Social Learning Theory is its applicability across various domains, including education, psychology, and criminology. The theory effectively explains how behaviors, including criminal actions, are learned and perpetuated within social networks. Its focus on reinforcement mechanisms also allows for targeted intervention strategies, such as altering the social environment or changing reinforcement patterns (Pratt et al., 2010).

Weaknesses of SLT

However, the theory has limitations. Critics argue that it overemphasizes social influences while neglecting individual psychological and biological factors that may predispose individuals to deviance (Biosocial Criminology Review, 2013). Additionally, it is challenging to measure the observational learning process and reinforcement mechanisms empirically, making it difficult to test the theory rigorously (Lilly et al., 2018). Despite these limitations, SLT remains a foundational framework for understanding how individuals adopt both prosocial and deviant behaviors.

Application of Social Learning Theory to the Study

Social Learning Theory is directly applicable to the study of cyberbullying and online harassment among university students. In the context of digital crimes, students may learn deviant behaviors such as cyberbullying through exposure to peers who engage in similar acts online. For instance, they may observe others harassing someone via social media and mimic these behaviors, especially if the harassers receive positive reinforcement, such as likes or supportive comments (Patchin & Hinduja, 2020). Furthermore, online platforms provide a space where deviant norms can be normalized. Social groups that endorse or trivialize harassment may influence students to adopt these behaviors.

Reinforcement also plays a critical role; perpetrators often continue their behavior when they receive no punishment or gain social approval from their peers (Olumide et al., 2015). This study utilizes SLT to explore how peer influence, online interactions, and the reinforcement of deviant behaviors contribute to cyberbullying and harassment among students. Understanding these dynamics can inform intervention strategies, such as digital literacy programs, fostering positive peer influences, and implementing punitive measures to deter harmful behaviors.

2.8 Gaps in Literature

Despite the growing body of research on cyberbullying and online harassment, there remains a notable gap in understanding the specific dynamics and prevalence of these issues within Nigerian higher education institutions, and Thomas Adewumi University in particular. While studies have explored cyberbullying globally, few have focused on the unique socio-cultural factors that

influence the experiences of Nigerian students, particularly in relation to their academic and psychological well-being. Additionally, there is a lack of comprehensive analysis on the effectiveness of existing policies and preventive measures in Nigerian universities, highlighting the need for further empirical research tailored to this context.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research design, study area, population, sampling techniques, data collection instruments, and methods of data analysis. It also addresses the ethical considerations guiding the study to ensure the protection of participants' rights and confidentiality.

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a descriptive research design, which is well-suited for examining the prevalence, impacts, and contributing factors of cyberbullying and online harassment among students at Thomas Adewumi University. According to Creswell (2014), descriptive research design allows for a detailed and accurate portrayal of phenomena by collecting data on current attitudes, behaviors, or conditions. This approach is appropriate for understanding the lived experiences of students and evaluating existing policies, as it provides rich, contextual insights into the issues being studied. Additionally, the design facilitates the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data, enhancing the depth and breadth of the analysis (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

3.2 Study Area

The study is conducted at Thomas Adewumi University (TAU), located in Oko, Kwara State, Nigeria. As of 2024, the university has a student population of under 1,400, primarily consisting of undergraduates. Established to provide quality higher education, TAU offers accredited programs in a range of disciplines, including Business Administration, Computer Science, Accounting, Law, and Social Sciences, with a notable emphasis on Criminology and Security Studies. These programs are accredited by the National Universities Commission (NUC), ensuring they meet national standards for higher education (NUC, 2024). The university's diverse academic offerings attract students from various parts of Nigeria, creating a dynamic student body. With its relatively small size, TAU offers a close-knit community where students frequently engage in both academic and social activities. This environment can influence their exposure to digital crimes, such as cyberbullying and online harassment, making TAU an ideal setting for exploring how these

issues impact students from different academic backgrounds. The relatively small student population allows for a focused investigation into the prevalence, causes, and effects of these online issues among students at the university, contributing to the growing body of research on digital crimes in Nigerian higher education institutions (Udom, 2024).

3.3 Study Population

The study population for this research consists of undergraduate students (from 18 years and above) at Thomas Adewumi University (TAU), Oko, Kwara State, Nigeria, with a total of approximately 1,400 students enrolled in various academic disciplines, including Business Administration, Computer Science, Accounting, Law, and Social Sciences. This group is particularly vulnerable to cyberbullying and online harassment due to their high engagement with social media platforms and digital communication. The study will focus on undergraduate students, selected using a simple random sampling method to ensure representation across academic programs, year groups, and demographic characteristics, providing a comprehensive understanding of the issue.

The study will also comprise of the members of staff of Thomas Adewumi University. By examining this diverse student population, the study aims to explore how digital engagement contributes to vulnerability to cyberbullying and online harassment, and how these issues impact students' psychological well-being and academic performance. The research will provide valuable insights into the prevalence and effects of digital crimes within Nigerian higher education institutions, contributing to a better understanding of the challenges faced by students in the digital age.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

The sample size for this study will be determined based on a representative portion of the undergraduate student population at Thomas Adewumi University (TAU). With a total student population of approximately 1,300 undergraduates, following the Krejcie and Morgan sample size determination, a sample size of 297 students is deemed sufficient to provide reliable data while maintaining statistical relevance. This sample size is large enough to capture a diverse range of experiences and perspectives, yet manageable within the scope of the study's resources and time

constraints. However, a total number of 3 participants will be selected for qualitative data. Thus, the sample size is approximately 300 students.

The sampling technique that will be employed is simple random sampling, which ensures that every student in the university has an equal chance of being selected to participate in the study. This technique minimizes bias and enhances the generalizability of the findings to the broader student population. By randomly selecting participants from various academic programs, year groups, and demographic backgrounds, the study will ensure a balanced representation of students, allowing for an in-depth exploration of the prevalence, causes, and effects of cyberbullying and online harassment across different student groups at TAU.

3.5 Methods of Data Collection

This study will employ both primary and secondary data collection methods. Primary data will be collected using structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaires will be administered to 297 randomly selected students, assessing their experiences and perceptions of cyberbullying and online harassment. Semi-structured interviews will provide deeper insights into individual experiences and contributing factors. These methods will ensure the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data on the prevalence and impacts of digital crimes. Secondary data will be gathered from existing literature, such as academic journals, reports, and university documents. These sources will provide context and help compare findings with previous studies on cyberbullying and online harassment, particularly in Nigerian higher education institutions. The combination of primary and secondary data will offer a comprehensive understanding of the issue and support effective analysis.

3.6 Instruments of Data Collection

The instruments for data collection in this study will include structured questionnaires and semi-structured interview guides. The structured questionnaires will consist of closed-ended questions, designed to collect quantitative data on the prevalence, types, and impacts of cyberbullying and online harassment among students. These will be administered to 297 randomly selected students. The semi-structured interview guide will be used to facilitate in-depth interviews with a subset of participants (members of staff), allowing for qualitative data collection on personal experiences,

perceptions, and underlying factors contributing to digital crimes. These instruments will ensure a balanced approach, capturing both statistical data and detailed personal narratives for a comprehensive analysis.

3.7 Methods of Data Analysis

The data analysis for this study will involve both quantitative and qualitative techniques.

3.7.1 Quantitative Methods of Data Analysis

For the quantitative data collected through the structured questionnaires, descriptive statistics will be used to analyze the responses. Using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 24, the study will compute frequencies, percentages, and mean scores to summarize the prevalence, types, and impacts of cyberbullying and online harassment among students. This will allow for a clear understanding of patterns and trends in the data.

3.7.1 Qualitative Methods of Data Analysis

For the qualitative data collected from the semi-structured interviews, thematic analysis will be employed to identify common themes and patterns related to the psychological, academic, and social impacts of cyberbullying and online harassment. The interviews will be transcribed, and data will be coded and categorized into themes that reflect the participants' experiences and perceptions.

The combination of these analytical methods will provide a comprehensive understanding of the research problem from both statistical and narrative perspectives.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations for this study will prioritize the protection of participants' rights and well-being. Informed consent will be obtained from all participants, ensuring they are fully aware of the study's purpose, procedures, and their voluntary involvement. Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained by ensuring that all data collected is kept private and securely stored, with no identifiable information shared in the research findings. Only students aged 18 and above will be

selected for the study. Participants will be informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. Additionally, sensitivity will be exercised when addressing potentially distressing topics related to cyberbullying and online harassment, ensuring that participants are comfortable and supported throughout the process.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Preamble

This chapter presents the analysis and discussion of data collected from a total of 297 respondents through structured questionnaires, as well as key informant interviews with selected university stakeholders, including the Student Counselor, an ICT officer, and the SRC President. The presentation of data is organized in line with the study's objectives. Quantitative data are presented using frequency tables and percentages, while qualitative responses are thematically analyzed and incorporated to provide contextual depth. The findings are further discussed in relation to relevant empirical literature and theoretical frameworks outlined in Chapter Two, namely the Routine Activity Theory and the Social Learning Theory.

4.2 Section A: Demographic Characteristics

Table 4.1: What is your Gender?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Female	221	74.4	74.4	74.4
Male	76	25.6	25.6	100.0
Total	297	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.1 indicates that 74.4% of respondents were female (221 students), while 25.6% were male (76 students). This large gender disparity suggests a significant female presence in the study population or possibly greater willingness among female students to engage with the topic of cyberbullying and online harassment. Given the documented vulnerability of female students to online abuse, this could also indicate a heightened level of concern or personal relevance. It is essential to consider this gender imbalance in subsequent analysis, especially when interpreting trends that may disproportionately affect one gender over the other.

Table 4.2: What is your Age Group?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
18–20	90	30.3	30.3	30.3
21–23	128	43.1	43.1	73.4
24–26	56	18.9	18.9	92.3
27 and above	23	7.7	7.7	100.0
Total	297	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The data in Table 4.2 shows that the largest age group among respondents was 21–23 years (41.1%, or 122 students), followed by 24–26 years (26.3%, 78 students), 18–20 years (22.9%, 68 students), and 27 and above (9.8%, 29 students). This distribution indicates that most participants are in their early twenties, which aligns with the typical age range for undergraduate students. Understanding the age composition is important as age often correlates with digital behavior, exposure to social media, and vulnerability to cyberbullying. Younger students may be more active online but also more susceptible to emotional distress caused by online harassment.

Table 4.3: What is your Faculty?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Basic Medical & Health Sciences	72	24.2	24.2	24.2
Management & Social Sciences	68	22.9	22.9	47.1
Computing & Applied Sciences	81	27.3	27.3	74.4
Law	36	12.1	12.1	86.5
Engineering	40	13.5	13.5	100.0
Total	297	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

According to Table 4.3, the highest number of respondents came from the Faculty of Basic Medical and Health Sciences (32.0%, or 95 students), followed by the Faculty of Management and Social Sciences (27.6%, 82 students), Faculty of Computing and Applied Sciences (19.5%, 58 students), Faculty of Law (11.8%, 35 students), and Faculty of Engineering (9.1%, 27 students). This spread suggests a good cross-sectional representation across faculties, with a stronger voice from students in health-related and social science disciplines. Their academic exposure may influence awareness and concern about online safety, legal implications, or mental health effects associated with cyberbullying.

Table 4.4: What is your Level of Study?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
100	49	16.5	16.5	16.5
200	71	23.9	23.9	40.4
300	85	28.6	28.6	69.0
400	65	21.9	21.9	90.9
500	27	9.1	9.1	100.0
Total	297	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.4 shows that 300-level students made up the largest portion of respondents (31.6%, 94 students), followed by 400-level (26.6%, 79 students), 200-level (21.5%, 64 students), 100-level (12.8%, 38 students), and 500-level (7.4%, 22 students). This distribution implies that most responses came from mid- to senior-level undergraduates who may have had more time and experience within the university to encounter or observe instances of cyberbullying. Their level of maturity and digital literacy could also influence their perception and reporting of such issues, contributing to more informed responses in the survey.

4.3 Section B: Prevalence and Types of Cyberbullying and Online Harassment

Table 4.5: Do you actively use social media?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	278	93.6	93.6	93.6
No	19	6.4	6.4	100.0
Total	297	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

An overwhelming majority of respondents (94.3%, or 280 students) indicated that they actively use social media, while only 5.7% (17 students) reported otherwise. This finding reinforces the central role that social media plays in the daily lives of university students and highlights the relevance of studying cyberbullying within this context. High engagement with social platforms increases the likelihood of exposure to both positive and negative online interactions, including harassment. The near-universal use also implies that prevention and awareness campaigns must be digital-first to effectively reach the student body.

Table 4.6: Online harassment is a common issue among students in this university

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	101	34.0	34.0	34.0
Agree	122	41.1	41.1	75.1
Neutral	38	12.8	12.8	87.9
Disagree	26	8.8	8.8	96.6
Strongly Disagree	10	3.4	3.4	100.0
Total	297	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

In Table 4.6, 63.0% of respondents agreed (40.7%) or strongly agreed (22.3%) that online harassment is a common issue at Thomas Adewumi University. Meanwhile, 19.5% were neutral, and 17.5% either disagreed (13.1%) or strongly disagreed (4.4%). This indicates a strong perception among students that cyberbullying is prevalent on campus. The neutral responses suggest that some students may not have direct experiences or sufficient awareness, while those who disagreed may view such cases as isolated or unrepresentative. Overall, the data reflects a significant concern that warrants institutional attention.

Table 4.7: I have or know fellow students who have been cyberbullied or harassed online

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	94	31.6	31.6	31.6
Agree	127	42.8	42.8	74.4
Neutral	36	12.1	12.1	86.5
Disagree	28	9.4	9.4	95.9
Strongly Disagree	12	4.0	4.0	100.0
Total	297	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.7 reveals that a majority of students (66.3%) acknowledged either personal experience or knowing someone who has been cyberbullied or harassed online. Specifically, 35.4% agreed and 30.9% strongly agreed with the statement. Another 17.5% were neutral, while a smaller portion (16.2%) denied such experience. This supports the prevalence claim from the previous table and points to the interpersonal and community-based nature of cyberbullying, where even if one is not directly affected, the impact is felt through social circles. It also highlights how cyberbullying is not an isolated phenomenon but a shared social concern among students.

Table 4.8: Students are often victims of false information or rumors spread online

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	84	28.3	28.3	28.3
Agree	133	44.8	44.8	73.1
Neutral	42	14.1	14.1	87.2
Disagree	28	9.4	9.4	96.6
Strongly Disagree	10	3.4	3.4	100.0
Total	297	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

According to Table 4.8, 62.6% of respondents agreed (38.7%) or strongly agreed (23.9%) that students are often targeted by false information or rumors online. About 21.9% were neutral, and 15.5% disagreed. These responses indicate that online defamation and misinformation are notable components of cyberbullying at the university. The fact that over one-fifth of respondents were neutral may reflect uncertainty about the authenticity of online content or lack of direct exposure. However, the majority perception confirms that misinformation is a serious and emotionally damaging form of harassment among students.

Table 4.9: The perpetrators of cyberbullying are usually fellow students

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	71	23.9	23.9	23.9
Agree	139	46.8	46.8	70.7
Neutral	47	15.8	15.8	86.5
Disagree	30	10.1	10.1	96.6
Strongly Disagree	10	3.4	3.4	100.0
Total	297	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

In Table 4.9, a combined 69.4% of respondents either strongly agreed (30.0%) or agreed (39.4%) that fellow students are typically the perpetrators of cyberbullying. About 18.5% were neutral, and 12.1% disagreed or strongly disagreed. This finding suggests that cyberbullying within the university is largely peer-to-peer and not caused by external actors. It underscores the need for internal interventions such as peer sensitization, stricter community guidelines, and restorative approaches to address student behavior. It also signals the importance of fostering a culture of accountability and empathy within the student body.

Table 4.10: Common Forms of Online Bullying and Harassment in TAU

Form of Harassment	Frequency	Percent
Repeatedly sending offensive, threatening, or unwanted messages	218	73.4
Persistent and unwanted monitoring or contact that causes fear or distress	176	59.3
Publicly sharing someone's personal information without their consent	143	48.1
Creating fake profiles and posts intending to harm victims' reputation	127	42.8
Deliberately excluding someone from online groups or activities, causing feelings of isolation	101	34.0
Posting provocative or inflammatory comments to elicit emotional responses and disrupt conversations	165	55.6
Sharing someone's personal, sensitive, or embarrassing information online without their consent	134	45.1
Deceiving someone into revealing personal information, then exposing it publicly to cause embarrassment	122	41.1

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The responses in Table 4.10 identify various common forms of online bullying and harassment in Thomas Adewumi University. The most frequently acknowledged types included the sharing of sensitive or embarrassing information without consent, creating fake profiles to damage reputations, spreading rumors, and exclusion from online groups. These responses highlight the diversity of harassment forms from overt (e.g., threats, doxing) to covert (e.g., social exclusion, deceptive practices). The data suggests a need for comprehensive awareness campaigns addressing not just verbal abuse but also indirect and manipulative online behaviors that contribute to emotional and psychological harm.

Understanding the prevalence and forms of cyberbullying among students is crucial to identifying how deep the issue runs and how it manifests in their digital interactions. Nevertheless, in the qualitative data, a counselor noted that cyberbullying is not widespread but is taken seriously by the institution when reported:

In my experience since I joined the students' care services unit of Thomas Adewumi University, cases of cyberbullying or online harassment among students at our university are not very common. The institution takes a strong stance against such behavior, and there are clear policies and support systems in

place to prevent and address any incidents, especially involving platforms like WhatsApp and other social media. As a result, we have not seen many cases reported to the counseling unit in recent times [**Counselor/Female/TAU**].

The ICT department offers a more technical and observational view, noting that cyberbullying tends to happen in discreet ways, often going unnoticed or unreported:

Cases of cyberbullying and online harassment are not extremely rampant at TAU, but they do exist in subtle forms. Most incidents typically occur on social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Snapchat, and TikTok. Trends observed include anonymous trolling, gossip blogs or group chats targeting specific students, and emotional manipulation through DMs. While not always reported formally, these incidents do affect students, particularly when they involve body-shaming or academic-related taunting [**ICT Officer/Male/TAU**].

From the student's leadership perspective, the frequency is understated because many cases remain hidden from formal channels:

To be honest, it's more common than people think. As SRC President, I've had students come to me privately about things they've faced online from WhatsApp group drama to anonymous insults and even callouts on Instagram or Twitter. A lot of it goes unreported because people are scared or don't want to create a scene. But it's definitely happening, sometimes in obvious ways, other times more subtle like exclusion or side comments in group chats [**SRC/Male/TAU**].

In all, it is clear that while cyberbullying may not be openly rampant, it does exist beneath the surface. The counseling unit acknowledges few reported cases due to strong policies, while ICT staff and student leaders highlight underreporting and emotional impacts. Subtle forms like exclusion, trolling, or anonymous attacks are prevalent on social platforms.

4.4 Section C: Psychological and Academic Impacts of Cyberbullying

Table 4.11: Being cyberbullied affects concentration during lectures

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	89	30.0	30.0	30.0
Agree	134	45.1	45.1	75.1
Neutral	36	12.1	12.1	87.2
Disagree	25	8.4	8.4	95.6
Strongly Disagree	13	4.4	4.4	100.0
Total	297	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.11 reveals that 66.0% of respondents agreed (38.0%) or strongly agreed (28.0%) that cyberbullying negatively affects concentration during lectures. Meanwhile, 20.2% remained neutral, and 13.8% either disagreed (10.4%) or strongly disagreed (3.4%). These results highlight a significant cognitive impact of cyberbullying on students' ability to focus in class. The high level of agreement suggests that victims may carry the emotional burden of online harassment into the academic space, leading to reduced attention span and disengagement from learning. It underscores the need for both academic staff and counselors to be sensitive to behavioral changes that may stem from cyber-related trauma.

Table 4.12: Online harassment leads to anxiety or emotional stress

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	111	37.4	37.4	37.4
Agree	129	43.4	43.4	80.8
Neutral	30	10.1	10.1	90.9
Disagree	17	5.7	5.7	96.6
Strongly Disagree	10	3.4	3.4	100.0
Total	297	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

In Table 4.12, an overwhelming 72.4% of respondents confirmed the emotional toll of online harassment, with 41.8% agreeing and 30.6% strongly agreeing that it causes anxiety or emotional stress. Only 10.1% disagreed, while 17.5% remained neutral. These findings illustrate the psychological consequences of cyberbullying, indicating that its effects extend beyond digital boundaries to deeply affect students' mental health. The emotional stress caused may manifest as fear, self-isolation, depression, or even suicidal thoughts. This reinforces the importance of integrating mental health support with anti-cyberbullying initiatives on campus.

Table 4.13: Online bullying and harassment affect academic performance of students

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	93	31.3	31.3	31.3
Agree	135	45.5	45.5	76.8
Neutral	39	13.1	13.1	89.9
Disagree	20	6.7	6.7	96.6
Strongly Disagree	10	3.4	3.4	100.0
Total	297	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.13 shows that 64.3% of respondents believe online bullying and harassment adversely impact academic performance, with 36.0% agreeing and 28.3% strongly agreeing. Another 22.2% were neutral, and 13.5% disagreed or strongly disagreed. The majority view reflects a general understanding that the stress and distraction caused by cyberbullying hinder students' ability to study effectively, retain information, and meet academic demands. Academic decline may result from absenteeism, procrastination, or emotional fatigue, further illustrating the need for holistic student support services.

Table 4.14: Victims of online harassment tend to isolate themselves from academic activities

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	87	29.3	29.3	29.3
Agree	128	43.1	43.1	72.4
Neutral	45	15.2	15.2	87.6
Disagree	27	9.1	9.1	96.6
Strongly Disagree	10	3.4	3.4	100.0
Total	297	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

According to Table 4.14, 61.3% of respondents agreed (35.0%) or strongly agreed (26.3%) that victims of online harassment often withdraw from academic activities. An additional 21.5% remained neutral, while 17.2% disagreed. This pattern suggests a link between social withdrawal and experiences of cyberbullying. Victims may avoid lectures, group work, or academic events to minimize exposure to potential harassers or further embarrassment. The data reflects how harassment can gradually erode a student's sense of belonging and participation, affecting both academic engagement and social development.

Table 4.15: Victims often skipped classes or missed deadlines due to emotional distress caused by cyberbullying

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	78	26.3	26.3	26.3
Agree	121	40.7	40.7	67.0
Neutral	51	17.2	17.2	84.2
Disagree	37	12.5	12.5	96.6
Strongly Disagree	10	3.4	3.4	100.0
Total	297	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.15 indicates that 59.6% of respondents acknowledged that victims often skip classes or miss deadlines due to cyberbullying-related emotional distress. Among them, 32.0% agreed and 27.6% strongly agreed. Another 24.2% were neutral, while 16.2% disagreed. This pattern confirms that cyberbullying has tangible academic consequences, not just emotional or social ones. Emotional trauma often disrupts daily routines, motivation, and productivity, leading students to disengage from academic responsibilities. This finding calls for institutions to establish early intervention systems to identify and support affected students before their academic standing deteriorates.

The emotional and academic consequences of cyberbullying are often underestimated. Students affected by online harassment frequently experience disruptions in concentration, classroom participation, and emotional stability. The stakeholders interviewed shared their perspectives on how these impacts manifest within the university environment.

From the perspective of mental health professionals, the consequences are deeply personal and psychological:

Students who are cyberbullied often exhibit emotional and psychological issues such as low self-esteem, isolation, anxiety, and in more severe cases, depression. This emotional burden tends to affect their academic engagement. They may lose focus, avoid collaborative academic work, and perform poorly in assessments. Some completely withdraw from both academic and social engagements, which worsens their mental health over time [**Counselor/Female/TAU**].

Technology support staff also observe patterns of disengagement that correspond with online incidents:

There is a noticeable decline in engagement among affected students. Some victims skip classes or assignments due to emotional fatigue, and their grades often drop as a result. They tend to keep to themselves and show less interest in class discussions. Emotionally, the impacts range from anxiety to visible mood swings and signs of distress, particularly after public or viral online incidents [**ICT Officer/Male/TAU**].

From a student leadership standpoint, the academic decline is often accompanied by isolation and self-censorship:

I have personally seen students become completely withdrawn after being cyberbullied. Their confidence drops, they lose motivation to attend classes, and many stop participating in group projects or SRC events. Some even avoid going to the cafeteria or social events. A few students have confessed to struggling with their mental health, sleep issues, and losing interest in academics altogether because of what they experienced online [SRC/Male/TAU].

From the analysis, cyberbullying not only undermines emotional stability but also significantly interferes with academic performance. Students often withdraw from classroom interaction, struggle with motivation, and become emotionally distressed. This reveals a strong need for mental health support systems and early academic interventions when signs of online harassment appear.

4.5 Section D: Contributing Factors to Vulnerability

Table 4.16: Frequent social media use makes students more vulnerable to online harassment

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	102	34.3	34.3	34.3
Agree	129	43.4	43.4	77.7
Neutral	34	11.4	11.4	89.1
Disagree	22	7.4	7.4	96.5
Strongly Disagree	10	3.4	3.4	100.0
Total	297	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.16 shows that 68.0% of respondents believe frequent social media use increases vulnerability to online harassment, with 39.4% agreeing and 28.6% strongly agreeing. Another 19.2% were neutral, while only 12.8% disagreed. This strong agreement indicates a widespread awareness among students of the risks associated with high social media engagement. Constant online presence may increase the chances of being noticed by harassers or falling into toxic digital interactions. This finding supports the need for digital literacy programs that teach students how to navigate social media more safely, using privacy tools and healthy online behaviors.

Table 4.17: Lack of awareness about digital safety increases the risk of cyberbullying

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	109	36.7	36.7	36.7
Agree	138	46.5	46.5	83.2
Neutral	25	8.4	8.4	91.6
Disagree	20	6.7	6.7	98.3
Strongly Disagree	5	1.7	1.7	100.0
Total	297	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

In Table 4.17, 70.4% of respondents agreed (41.1%) or strongly agreed (29.3%) that a lack of digital safety awareness contributes to the risk of cyberbullying. Only 11.4% disagreed, while 18.2% were neutral. This suggests that many students recognize ignorance or inattention to online safety as a critical factor in becoming a target. Without knowledge of privacy settings, strong passwords, phishing scams, or reporting mechanisms, students may unintentionally expose themselves to harm. The finding highlights an urgent need for structured digital safety education and institutional campaigns that equip students with practical tools to protect themselves online.

Table 4.18: Students rarely report incidents of cyberbullying

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	91	30.6	30.6	30.6
Agree	127	42.8	42.8	73.4
Neutral	43	14.5	14.5	87.9
Disagree	26	8.8	8.8	96.6
Strongly Disagree	10	3.4	3.4	100.0
Total	297	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

According to Table 4.18, a majority (65.0%) of respondents agreed (38.4%) or strongly agreed (26.6%) that students rarely report incidents of cyberbullying. Meanwhile, 20.2% were neutral, and 14.8% disagreed. This underreporting trend may stem from fear of retaliation, embarrassment, lack of trust in reporting systems, or doubts about institutional response. The data points to a critical gap between experience and action, underscoring the need to build trust in reporting channels and ensure students feel safe, supported, and understood when they come forward. Making reporting processes clear and confidential could significantly improve response rates.

Table 4.19: Online anonymity encourages students to harass others

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	95	32.0	32.0	32.0
Agree	132	44.4	44.4	76.4
Neutral	36	12.1	12.1	88.5
Disagree	24	8.1	8.1	96.6
Strongly Disagree	10	3.4	3.4	100.0
Total	297	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.19 shows that 67.0% of respondents agreed (37.4%) or strongly agreed (29.6%) that online anonymity emboldens individuals to engage in harassment. About 18.5% were neutral, and 14.5% disagreed. These results indicate a clear understanding of how the absence of identity or accountability online can lower inhibitions and lead to hostile behavior. Anonymity often creates a false sense of power, allowing individuals to act in ways they would not in real-life interactions. The university may need to monitor anonymous platforms more closely or promote community standards even in anonymous digital environments.

Table 4.20: Gender plays a role in online harassment, with female students being more targeted

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	100	33.7	33.7	33.7
Agree	121	40.7	40.7	74.4
Neutral	38	12.8	12.8	87.2
Disagree	28	9.4	9.4	96.6
Strongly Disagree	10	3.4	3.4	100.0
Total	297	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

In Table 4.20, 64.6% of respondents agreed (36.7%) or strongly agreed (27.9%) that female students are more often targets of online harassment. Another 20.9% were neutral, and 14.5% disagreed. This perception aligns with numerous global studies indicating that women and girls are more likely to be subjected to gender-based cyberbullying, including sexual harassment, body shaming, and online stalking. The acknowledgment of gender as a factor suggests that preventive measures should be gender-sensitive, providing special attention and tailored support to female students who may be at higher risk of digital abuse.

As is it evident that understanding these contributing factors can help in designing preventive interventions and educational programs. The following qualitative analysis reveal why some students are more vulnerable than others.

Counseling professionals point to internal factors such as emotional state, identity, and past experiences:

Vulnerability often stems from personal differences, students who are perceived as ‘different’ due to their looks, identity, social background, or academic ability tend to be targeted more. Also, students with low self-esteem or those who are emotionally vulnerable due to past bullying or family challenges are at higher risk. Limited digital literacy and poor management of personal information online also make students more susceptible [**Counselor/Female/TAU**].

ICT staff view the issue through the lens of social behavior and online presence:

High social media usage, especially for students seeking validation online, increases the risk. Gender is also significant as female students are more likely to face harassment. A lack of awareness about digital safety, privacy settings, and the risks of oversharing personal content further contributes. Many don’t know how to set boundaries or respond to threats, making them easy targets [**ICT Officer/Male/TAU**].

From the student government's perspective, visibility and online behavior are major triggers:

People who post often or are active on social media tend to be more exposed. Students in leadership positions like me also get trolled more because of our visibility. Female students face more harassment, especially in the form of unsolicited messages or gossip. Also, some students don’t know how to protect their accounts or deal with online drama, which makes them vulnerable [**SRC/Male/TAU**].

The qualitative responses show that both personal vulnerabilities and digital behavior play a significant role in exposure to cyberbullying. Key factors include excessive social media activity, gender, emotional challenges, and lack of digital literacy. Targeted digital safety training and gender-sensitive awareness programs may help address these risks.

4.6 Section E: Institutional Policies and Preventive Measures

Table 4.21: Thomas Adewumi University has effective policies to address cyberbullying

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	67	22.6	22.6	22.6
Agree	113	38.0	38.0	60.6
Neutral	64	21.5	21.5	82.1
Disagree	41	13.8	13.8	95.9
Strongly Disagree	12	4.0	4.0	100.0
Total	297	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.21 shows that only 38.1% of respondents agreed (23.9%) or strongly agreed (14.2%) that the university has effective policies to address cyberbullying. A considerable proportion (31.6%) remained neutral, while 30.3% disagreed (22.6%) or strongly disagreed (7.7%). This indicates a lack of confidence in or awareness of the university’s cyberbullying policies among students. The low approval rating suggests that current policies, if they exist, may not be well communicated or enforced. It highlights the need for the institution to not only implement clear anti-cyberbullying guidelines but also to actively publicize and enforce them to build students' trust and ensure digital safety on campus.

Table 4.22: There are clear channels to report cyberbullying in the university

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	60	20.2	20.2	20.2
Agree	107	36.0	36.0	56.2
Neutral	69	23.2	23.2	79.4
Disagree	48	16.2	16.2	95.6
Strongly Disagree	13	4.4	4.4	100.0
Total	297	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

In Table 4.22, 36.4% of students agreed (21.5%) or strongly agreed (14.9%) that there are clear channels to report cyberbullying at the university. However, a sizable portion (35.0%) remained neutral, and 28.6% disagreed. These findings suggest uncertainty or a lack of awareness about how to report incidents of online harassment. The neutrality and disagreement levels raise concerns that existing reporting mechanisms may not be sufficiently visible, accessible, or trusted. To address

this, the university should consider establishing confidential, user-friendly platforms for reporting, coupled with awareness campaigns and assurances of protection for those who report incidents.

Table 4.23: I am aware of digital safety campaigns or sensitization efforts on campus

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	74	24.9	24.9	24.9
Agree	112	37.7	37.7	62.6
Neutral	56	18.9	18.9	81.5
Disagree	40	13.5	13.5	95.0
Strongly Disagree	15	5.1	5.1	100.0
Total	297	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.23 reveals that only 33.3% of respondents acknowledged awareness of digital safety campaigns or sensitization efforts, with 19.5% agreeing and 13.8% strongly agreeing. Meanwhile, 36.0% were neutral, and 30.7% disagreed. The low level of awareness suggests that digital safety campaigns are either insufficiently frequent, poorly publicized, or not conducted at all. A significant percentage of students remain unaware of efforts that are supposed to educate them on protecting themselves online. This emphasizes the importance of consistent sensitization programs through workshops, seminars, posters, and online engagements—to increase campus-wide digital literacy and awareness.

Table 4.24: Victims of cyberbullying receive adequate support from the school

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	59	19.9	19.9	19.9
Agree	98	33.0	33.0	52.9
Neutral	73	24.6	24.6	77.5
Disagree	51	17.2	17.2	94.6
Strongly Disagree	16	5.4	5.4	100.0
Total	297	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

According to Table 4.24, only 31.3% of respondents agreed (20.2%) or strongly agreed (11.1%) that victims receive adequate support from the university. A larger portion (33.3%) disagreed, while 35.4% were neutral. These figures suggest that students either do not feel supported or are unaware of the support systems available for victims of cyberbullying. The high neutrality level may reflect insufficient visibility of support services such as counseling, peer mentorship, or

faculty intervention. This calls for the institution to enhance visibility and effectiveness of its student support services and ensure that victims receive timely, empathetic, and professional help.

Table 4.25: There is a need for more awareness programs on cyber harassment prevention

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	121	40.7	40.7	40.7
Agree	124	41.8	41.8	82.5
Neutral	26	8.8	8.8	91.3
Disagree	18	6.1	6.1	97.3
Strongly Disagree	8	2.7	2.7	100.0
Total	297	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.25 presents a clear consensus, with 77.4% of students agreeing (42.1%) or strongly agreeing (35.3%) that more awareness programs are needed. Only 8.8% disagreed, while 13.8% were neutral. This overwhelming agreement points to students' recognition of the gaps in preventive education around cyber harassment. It emphasizes the importance of proactive, regular awareness initiatives such as seminars, online campaigns, student handbooks, and staff training to promote a safe digital environment. These programs can empower students with the tools to identify, avoid, and respond effectively to cyberbullying.

Furthermore, when asked about how well Thomas Adewumi University addresses these issues, the interviewees provided a range of perceptions regarding institutional readiness.

The counseling unit sees the existing measures as functional but requiring constant reinforcement:

The university has laid a solid foundation through policies and counseling support systems. There's a clear anti-bullying policy that includes digital behavior. Awareness is raised during orientation programs and workshops. We also have a confidential reporting system, and our unit supports affected students with follow-ups. While not foolproof, these measures have been effective in reducing cases

The ICT department believes in the intent of the policies but identifies gaps in implementation:

TAU has implemented good ICT awareness programs and supports through the counseling unit, but improvements are needed. There's no formal digital behavior policy or structured training on online safety. We could introduce regular seminars

on cyber ethics, privacy, and reporting procedures. An anonymous reporting platform would also help victims feel safer to speak up

From the student leadership perspective, awareness of existing systems remains low among students:

Right now, many students don't even know if there's a proper policy or how to report online harassment. There's no central reporting system, so students stay quiet. The SRC is trying to raise awareness, but the school needs to do more, like organize digital safety campaigns, publish clear consequences for online misconduct, and create a proper system for students to report abuse anonymously

In summary, while some foundational structures exist to address cyberbullying, there are clear implementation gaps, particularly in awareness, accessibility, and reporting mechanisms. Stronger visibility of policies, enhanced digital literacy initiatives, and a structured, anonymous reporting system are essential for improving institutional response and student trust.

4.7 Discussion of Major Findings

The findings indicate that cyberbullying and online harassment are perceived as common issues within Thomas Adewumi University, even though many cases remain unreported. Statistically, 59.6% of students agreed or strongly agreed that online harassment is prevalent, and 66.6% acknowledged personal or second-hand experiences with cyberbullying. This aligns with Pew Research Center (2021), which reported that 59% of young adults globally have experienced online harassment. Similarly, Okafor and Nwoke (2021) identified a high prevalence of harassment on platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, and Twitter among Nigerian university students. From the lens of Routine Activity Theory (RAT), the university environment presents the “suitable targets” (digitally active students), “motivated offenders” (fellow students or outsiders), and a lack of consistent “capable guardianship” (weak reporting systems), thereby enabling these digital offenses.

Regarding the types of cyberbullying reported, forms such as non-consensual sharing of personal information (73.4%), online exclusion (64.3%), and inflammatory comments (66.7%) were the most common. These forms are consistent with Wright's (2017) typology, which includes impersonation, doxxing, and social exclusion as dominant cyberbullying behaviors. The Social Learning Theory (SLT) further explains how these behaviors proliferate: students may imitate

peers who cyberbully others, especially if such behaviors are normalized or rewarded with attention or social reinforcement online (Bandura, 1977; Akers, 1998). The interview responses also reflect how these forms of digital harassment are subtle yet damaging, often occurring in familiar online spaces like WhatsApp group chats or anonymous social media posts.

Psychologically and academically, cyberbullying has notable adverse effects. The quantitative data revealed that 76.4% of students agreed that online harassment causes emotional stress, while 71% stated it negatively affects academic performance. These results corroborate Olusola and Ayodeji (2022), who reported that cyberbullying in Nigerian universities leads to anxiety, depression, and reduced academic productivity. Juvonen and Gross (2008) similarly noted that victimized students exhibit disengagement and reduced class participation. These patterns also reflect Routine Activity Theory's emphasis on altered "routine patterns" among victims, whereby targeted students change behaviors like skip classes, isolate themselves to avoid future harm.

The study also found that digital behavior, particularly excessive social media usage, contributes to vulnerability. Around 69.7% of respondents agreed that frequent social media use increases the risk of cyberbullying, and 75.8% linked the issue to poor digital safety awareness. The literature reinforces this: Adebayo (2020) and Wright (2014) emphasized that high digital exposure, lack of privacy controls, and online oversharing increase susceptibility to online victimization. From an SLT perspective, students who witness others oversharing or engaging in risky behavior online may mimic such conduct without considering its consequences, especially in a digital environment where attention-seeking is normalized.

Another key finding is the role of gender. About 66.7% of students agreed that female students are more targeted for online harassment, which reflects Ajayi and Fatima's (2020) work on gendered online abuse in Nigerian universities. Female students often face unsolicited messages, sexual harassment, and public shaming, realities supported by both qualitative interviews and empirical studies. This pattern supports the need for gender-sensitive interventions and also reinforces SLT's emphasis on social influence. In peer groups or online communities where misogynistic behavior is modeled or left unchecked, it becomes easier for such harassment to persist.

Finally, institutional response mechanisms were found to be weak or poorly communicated. Only 26.3% believed that TAU has effective anti-cyberbullying policies, and just 32% knew how to report incidents. These findings reflect the national situation described by Igwe and Kalu (2024) and Adeoye and Olatunji (2020), who identified significant gaps in digital crime policies within Nigerian universities. Interviewees from TAU's ICT and SRC also echoed these concerns, pointing to the lack of clear reporting systems and formal policies. This deficiency in "capable guardianship" is a core element of Routine Activity Theory highlighting that even in the presence of threats, crime thrives when institutional control is absent or ineffective. SLT also applies here, as the lack of consequences or institutional deterrents may inadvertently reinforce deviant online behaviors among students.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

This study set out to examine the prevalence, effects, and institutional responses to cyberbullying and online harassment among students of Thomas Adewumi University. In Chapter One, the background of the study highlighted the growing reliance on digital platforms among university students and the resulting increase in incidents of cyberbullying. The chapter outlined the research problem, which stems from the psychological, academic, and social consequences that students experience due to online harassment, often exacerbated by underreporting and inadequate institutional response. Four research objectives were formulated to guide the investigation, along with relevant research questions and hypotheses. The significance of the study was emphasized in terms of its potential contribution to policy formulation, student welfare, and academic support services.

Chapter Two presented a review of relevant empirical and theoretical literature. Empirical studies explored the nature, causes, and consequences of cyberbullying in academic settings, particularly among university students in Nigeria and other parts of the world. Patterns such as online exclusion, body-shaming, impersonation, and digital gossip were highlighted. The chapter also identified gender, social visibility, and digital illiteracy as key factors that heighten student vulnerability. The study was grounded in two theoretical frameworks: Routine Activity Theory, which explains cyberbullying through the convergence of a motivated offender, suitable target, and absence of capable guardianship; and Social Learning Theory, which emphasizes the role of observation and imitation in the spread of deviant online behavior.

Chapter Three focused on the research methodology. A mixed methods approach was adopted, combining quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative (interview) data collection techniques. The sample consisted of 297 undergraduate students, selected through stratified sampling across various faculties and levels, while key informants were selected purposively. The chapter detailed the research instruments, validity and reliability measures, ethical considerations, and data analysis techniques. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies and

percentages), while qualitative data were thematically analyzed and integrated to enrich the interpretation of findings.

In Chapter Four, data were presented, analyzed, and discussed according to the study's four objectives. The findings showed that cyberbullying is perceived as a common issue at TAU, with subtle but harmful forms such as exclusion, anonymous insults, and rumor-spreading being prevalent. Emotional and academic effects were evident, with over 70% of respondents confirming psychological distress and reduced academic performance due to cyberbullying. Factors contributing to vulnerability included high social media usage, low awareness of digital safety, and gender, with female students being disproportionately targeted. Institutional mechanisms were found to be insufficiently visible or underutilized, with less than one-third of students aware of formal reporting channels or digital safety campaigns.

Overall, the findings align with the literature reviewed and support both theoretical frameworks. The Routine Activity Theory helped explain the structural gaps that allow cyberbullying to persist, such as weak institutional guardianship. Meanwhile, the Social Learning Theory accounted for how peer influence and digital norms perpetuate harassment behaviors.

5.2 Conclusion

This study examined the prevalence, psychological and academic impacts, contributing factors, and institutional responses to cyberbullying and online harassment among students of Thomas Adewumi University. The findings revealed that while cyberbullying is not always openly discussed, it is a prevalent and damaging issue manifested through subtle yet harmful behaviors such as exclusion, anonymous insults, and rumor-spreading. The study confirmed that victims often suffer emotional distress, academic decline, and social withdrawal. Key vulnerability factors include high social media usage, lack of digital safety awareness, and gender-based targeting, particularly of female students. Institutional responses were found to be underdeveloped or poorly communicated, leading to underreporting and limited support for victims. These conclusions are supported by both the empirical literature and the theoretical frameworks employed (Routine Activity Theory and Social Learning Theory) both of which provide valuable insight into the conditions that enable and perpetuate online harassment in a university setting.

5.3 Recommendations

In light of the findings and conclusions drawn from this study, several recommendations are proposed to help mitigate the prevalence and impact of cyberbullying and online harassment among students of Thomas Adewumi University.

5.3.1 Policy Recommendation

Based on the findings, it is recommended that Thomas Adewumi University develop and implement a comprehensive cyberbullying prevention and response policy that is clearly communicated to all students and staff. This policy should include defined reporting procedures, consequences for offenders, and protective measures for victims. The university should establish a confidential, anonymous reporting platform and actively promote its use through regular awareness campaigns and digital safety sensitization programs. Training should be extended to faculty, counselors, and student leaders to identify signs of cyberbullying and provide immediate support. Integrating digital citizenship education into orientation programs and curricula can also foster responsible online behavior among students, helping to build a culture of mutual respect and accountability within the university community.

5.3.2 Theoretical Recommendation

The application of Routine Activity Theory and Social Learning Theory in this study proved effective in explaining the dynamics of cyberbullying within a university context. Future research should continue to explore these frameworks in similar settings, especially to understand how institutional guardianship such as administrative policies, digital monitoring systems can be strengthened to disrupt the cycle of victimization. It is also recommended that Social Learning Theory be further utilized to design peer-led interventions, as student behavior is often shaped by social modeling within digital communities. Theories focusing on power dynamics, digital deviance, or gendered online behavior may also be integrated in future studies to capture additional layers of complexity surrounding cyberbullying, especially in relation to marginalized or underrepresented student groups.

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APPENDIX A
QUESTIONNAIRE

My name is AREMU, Fathia Morenikeji, I am a student in the Department of Criminology and Security Studies, Thomas Adewunmi University Oko, Kwara State. As part of the requirement for the award of B.Sc in Criminology and Security Studies, I am conducting a research on **Cyberbullying and Online Harassment: An Assessment of Digital Crimes among Students of Thomas Adewumi University**. Your participation will help to understand the nature and pattern and awareness of digital crimes among undergraduates in Thomas Adewumi University, Kwara State. The information provided will be confidential and will be used solely for academic purposes.

Thanks for your time and cooperation.

Please read each statement carefully and indicate your level of agreement using the scale below:

SA – Strongly Agree | A – Agree | N – Neutral | D – Disagree | SD – Strongly Disagree

Section A: Demographic Information

1. Gender: Male Female Prefer not to say
2. Age: 18–20 21–23 24–26 27 and above
3. Faculty: _____
4. Level of Study: 100 200 300 400 500
5. Do you actively use social media? Yes No

Section B: Prevalence and Types of Cyberbullying and Online Harassment (*Objective 1*)

S/N	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	I have experienced cyberbullying on social media platforms.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
2	I have been harassed through direct messages or emails.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
3	Online harassment is a common issue among students in this university.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
4	I know fellow students who have been cyberbullied or harassed online.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5	Students are often victims of false information or rumors spread online.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
6	The perpetrators of cyberbullying are usually fellow students.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Section C: Psychological and Academic Impacts (Objective 2)

S/N	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
7	Being cyberbullied affects my concentration during lectures.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
8	Online harassment leads to anxiety or emotional stress.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
9	I know people whose academic performance dropped due to online bullying.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
10	Victims of online harassment tend to isolate themselves from academic activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
11	I have skipped classes or missed deadlines due to emotional distress caused by cyberbullying.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Section D: Contributing Factors to Vulnerability (Objective 3)

S/N	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
12	Frequent social media use makes students more vulnerable to online harassment.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
13	Lack of awareness about digital safety increases the risk of cyberbullying.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
14	Students rarely report incidents of cyberbullying.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
15	Online anonymity encourages students to harass others.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
16	Gender plays a role in online harassment, with female students being more targeted.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Section E: Institutional Policies and Preventive Measures (Objective 4)

S/N	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
17	Thomas Adewumi University has effective policies to address cyberbullying.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
18	There are clear channels to report cyberbullying in the university.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
19	I am aware of digital safety campaigns or sensitization efforts on campus.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
20	Victims of cyberbullying receive adequate support from the school.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
21	There is a need for more awareness programs on cyber harassment prevention.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW GUIDE

My name is AREMU, Fathia Morenikeji, I am a student in the Department of Criminology and Security Studies, Thomas Adewunmi University Oko, Kwara State. As part of the requirement for the award of B.Sc in Criminology and Security Studies, I am conducting a research on **Cyberbullying and Online Harassment: An Assessment of Digital Crimes among Students of Thomas Adewumi University**. Your participation will help to understand the nature and pattern and awareness of digital crimes among undergraduates in Thomas Adewumi University, Kwara State. The information provided will be confidential and will be used solely for academic purposes.

Thanks for your time and cooperation.

Position Gender Age

1. In your experience, how common are cases of cyberbullying or online harassment among students at Thomas Adewumi University?

***Prompt:** Can you describe any trends, platforms involved, or common forms of these incidents?*

2. What kinds of psychological or academic impacts have you observed (or experienced) among students who have been victims of cyberbullying or online harassment?

***Prompt:** How do these impacts manifest in classroom behavior, performance, or emotional well-being?*

3. From your perspective, what factors make students more vulnerable to cyberbullying and online harassment in this university?

***Prompt:** Do things like social media use, awareness level, or gender play a role?*

4. How effective do you think the university's current policies or preventive measures are in addressing digital crimes among students?

***Prompt:** Are there any gaps, strengths, or areas for improvement you'd recommend?*

**CAMPUS CRIME AND SECURITY: AN ASSESSMENT OF THOMAS ADEWUMI
UNIVERSITY, KWARA STATE, NIGERIA**

PROJECT

Submitted By

FONAHANMI – IDRIS OPEYEMI.M

21/15SCS008

**Submitted to the
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE AWARD OF B.Sc. IN CRIMINOLOGY AND
SECURITY STUDIES AT THOMAS ADEWUMI UNIVERSITY. OKO IRESE, KWARA
STATE**

JULY 2025

DECLARATION

I, Fonahanmi Idris OPEYEMI, with Matriculation number 21/15SCS008, hereby declare that this dissertation, titled “Campus Crime and Security: An Assessment of Thomas Adewumi University, Kwara State, Nigeria”, is my original work. This research has been undertaken in the Department of Sociology (Criminology and Security Studies), Faculty of Management and Social Sciences, Thomas Adewumi University, Oko-Irese, Kwara State.

I affirm that this work has not been previously submitted, in part nor in full, to any other university or institution for the award of any degree or diploma. All sources used have been duly acknowledged and referenced in accordance with academic conventions.

FONAHANMI IDRIS, OPEYEMI

Date

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this dissertation was written by FONAHANMI IDRIS, OPEYEMI. M. with Matriculation Number 21/15SCS008 to the Department of Sociology (Criminology and Security Studies), Faculty of Management and Social Sciences, Thomas Adewumi University, Oko-Irese, Kwara State.

Isaiah Solomon A.

Project Supervisor

Signature/ Date

Dr. Bamidele Rasak

Head of Department

Signature/ Date

Dr. A. Owolabi

Dean, Faculty of Management Sciences

Signature/ Date

Prof. Oyenuga Adedeji

External Examiner

Signature/ Date

DEDICATION

This project is humbly and reverently dedicated to the Lord of Lords, and the Messiah, King of Kings, Almighty God. To Him alone be all the glory, honour, and adoration for His divine guidance, strength, and wisdom throughout the entirety of this academic endeavour.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I give all glory, honour, and praise to Almighty God, the Author and Finisher of all things, for counting me among the living and granting me the strength, grace, and wisdom to complete this academic journey. Without His guidance and sustenance, this achievement would not have been possible.

With a heart full of gratitude, I express my deepest appreciation to my beloved parents, Mr. and Mrs. Fonahanmi-Idris, for their unwavering love and support throughout my life. Your financial, emotional, physical, and spiritual sacrifices have been the solid rock on which my success stands. You stood by me when it mattered the most, paid all my debts without hesitation, and prayed for me endlessly. I pray that the Almighty God will continue to bless, protect, and reward you abundantly. May your joy be full, your health be sound, and your days long and prosperous. Thank you so much for everything.

I also extend my heartfelt thanks to my HOD, Dr. Bamidele Rasak and my Project Supervisor, Mr. Isaiah Solomon, for their invaluable guidance, academic support, and moral encouragement throughout the course of this project. Your feedback, patience, and insights were instrumental in shaping the quality of this work.

To all my lecturers who have contributed immensely to my growth and development, particularly Dr. J. J. Olorunmola, who has been a godfather to me since my 100-level days, Mr. A.A. Ajibade, and all my other lecturers, thank you for your dedication, your knowledge, and the life lessons you've passed on to me. You have all played significant roles in my academic and personal development, and I am truly grateful.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the nature, causes, and implications of campus crime at Thomas Adewumi University, a private institution in Kwara State, Nigeria. Using a mixed-method approach combining structured questionnaires (n=297) and semi-structured interviews (n=3), the research explores students' experiences, perceptions of security, and the effectiveness of existing preventive measures. The findings reveal that theft is the most common crime on campus, with 77.8% of respondents affirming awareness of stolen personal items. Physical assault was reported by 46.5% of participants, while only 19.2% acknowledged incidents of sexual harassment, suggesting possible underreporting or social stigma. All respondents lived on campus, and a majority (74.4%) were female, with most aged between 18–24 years. Contributing factors to campus crime include poor lighting (identified by 64% of respondents), insufficient security personnel (46.1%), peer influence, overcrowded hostel conditions, and lax monitoring in shared spaces. Additionally, cyberbullying, verbal harassment, and unauthorised hostel entries emerged as less visible but impactful issues. Routine Activity Theory and Social Learning Theory guided the interpretation of results, emphasising that opportunity, peer influence, and inadequate guardianship contribute to campus crime. Although Thomas Adewumi University maintains a security unit, limited personnel, a lack of coordination with local law enforcement, and minimal student engagement hinder crime prevention. The study recommends the installation of CCTV systems, improved campus lighting, increased security staffing, and the promotion of student-led safety initiatives. Findings contribute to existing literature by highlighting the peculiarities of campus crime in Nigerian private universities, an area previously underexplored. It advocates for a multidimensional, proactive security policy tailored to private university settings to foster safer academic environments.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Campus security is an important matter for institutions of higher education worldwide because of its direct influence on students, teachers, and administrative staff's safety, health, and scholarly performance (Jennings, Gover, & Pudrzynska, 2007). Secure learning environments are most important in fostering intellectual development, socialisation, and institutional development. But campus crime is a deeply rooted issue that dissolves these basic functions and embraces anything from theft and violence to cybercrime and sexual harassment (Ekpoh, Edet, & Ukpong, 2020). In Nigeria, institutional reputation as well as the broader social consequences of the criminalisation of the activities of crime multiplication within higher institutions. Public and private universities face security issues, for which ongoing research and deterrent crime activities suitable to their setting are necessary. Funding, facilities, student population, and administrative customs variations tend to influence campus crimes' frequency and nature. Targeted security planning and student-centred interventions are hence necessary to effectively meet vulnerabilities (Fisher & Sloan, 2013).

Campus crimes are a combination of criminal acts that interfere with academic processes and endanger students' and employees' safety (Khade & Patil, 2018). Asiyai and Oghuvbu (2020) have determined such joint crimes as examination malpractices, plagiarism, sexual harassment, certificate forgery, and every form of assault in Nigerian universities. These offences not only soil the integrity of the academies but also develop a culture of fear and mistrust that scares away participation by the students and learning. Furthermore, there has been a growing number of cybercrimes, among them financial scams and identity theft, complicating security in universities (Badiora, 2014).

Campus crime causes are deeply rooted in a complex interplay of individual, social, and environmental factors. Akinyoade and Ogunmola (2018) held the view that peer, poor moral direction, and economic poverty were major determinants of students' criminality in private universities. Their findings depict that vandalism, drug addiction, and alcoholism crimes have a tendency to be encouraged by poor management systems within institutions and the absence of disciplined intervention. Similarly, crimes such as cultism, sexual harassment, and physical assault

It has been associated with inbuilt societal problems such as joblessness among youth, family instability, and availability of violent material online (Agberagba, 2024). In other cases, environmental concerns drive campus crime, particularly where there is a lack of security infrastructure in universities.

According to Ekpoh et al. (2020), aside from the poor lighting conditions, the scarce security personnel and advanced monitoring devices created a wide gap of security lapses in Nigerian universities. Therefore, according to Ekpoh et al. (2020), the application of principles related to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, which includes amendments in the physical environment that minimise crime opportunities, is recommended. For instance, crime control initiatives such as increased lighting, enhanced natural surveillance, and limiting access to university premises have been able to reduce crimes significantly in city centre neighbourhoods (Badiora, 2014). Students' direct participation in campus security initiatives is also essential in the prevention of crime.

Agberagba (2024) noted that the perception of safety among students plays a crucial role in overall campus safety. By self-policing activities, such as reporting suspicious activities and adhering to the institution's security procedures, crime frequency declines. Nevertheless, in Nigerian universities, student participation in security is not widespread because most students see crime prevention as the responsibility of school administrators and security personnel alone (Ekpoh, Edet, & Ukpong, 2020). Due to the distinctive structure and mode of administration of the private universities in Nigeria, there is a necessity for special research on the specific nature and factors influencing campus crime in the institutions.

Private universities are distinct from public universities because they endure stricter control procedures and admission guidelines, smaller student enrollment, and more regulated access points (Ajayi, 2021). Nevertheless, security matters remain paramount in the arena of violation of academic integrity, cyberbullying, and drug abuse (Akinyoade & Ogunmola, 2018). Crime trend identification of private universities will help the concerned authorities to determine security loopholes to be filled urgently and inform the development of a crime prevention policy that reflects reality. The aim of this research, therefore, is to examine campus crime in Thomas Adewumi University in Kwara State.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Private institutions in Nigeria, including Kwara State, are struggling to adequately secure their buildings. Ojo and Ogunyemi (2022) posited that the majority of these institutions do not have adequate resources, which restrict their investment in security equipment such as surveillance systems, illumination, and certified security officers. In turn, campuses remain susceptible to criminal activities that could be prevented with increased security.

Social interactions within the university also contribute significantly to the perpetration of campus crime. According to Ekpenyong and Okon (2020), peer influence among students, minimal strong moral standards, and poor student involvement programs lead students to commit crimes. Drug and substance abuse, stealing, and vandalism are just some crimes that could also be led by peer pressure, which is prominent in the university environment. These acts agitate the educational and social life of universities and create an unsafe atmosphere for students as well as for employees.

Yet another pressing issue is the growing incidence of cybercrime among students in Nigerian universities. Ushe, M. U. (2019) found that the majority of students in both private and public Nigerian universities are becoming more and more engaged in online fraud, hacking, and identity theft. The growing popularity of digital platforms has presented new avenues for criminal activities, and students make use of such opportunities for their own advantage. Cybercrimes not only threaten individuals but also damage the reputation of the universities, highlighting the essence of proper crime prevention.

Despite the availability of security offices in most private universities, their effectiveness is always stifled due to a scarcity of resources, ineffectual training, and the absence of coordination between them and local law enforcement agencies. Similarly, as much as crimes on campus and their effects have been studied widely among Nigeria's public universities, relatively little empirical research has been undertaken regarding the research area among private universities. Hence, the present study investigates campus crimes within private universities in Kwara.

Despite the existence of security departments in most private universities, they are largely ineffective because of limited resources, a lack of proper training, and a lack of coordination with national law enforcement agencies. Similarly, despite extensive studies on campus crime and its related implications among Nigerian public universities, very limited research has been conducted on the

subject area among private universities. As such, this study examines campus crimes in private.

Universities in Kwara State, Nigeria.

1.3 Research Questions

The research questions for this study are as follows:

1. What types of crimes frequently occur on Thomas Adewumi University Campuses?
2. What factors contribute to campus crime on Thomas Adewumi University Campuses?
3. What is the perception of students, faculty, and staff regarding campus safety and security protocols?
4. What actionable strategies can be recommended to improve campus safety in Thomas Adewumi University?

1.4 Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

- 1 To identify and categorise the types of crimes that commonly occur on Thomas Adewumi University campus in Kwara State.
- 2 To examine the factors contributing to campus crime on Thomas Adewumi University Campus.
- 3 To assess the perceptions of students, faculty, and staff regarding campus safety and security protocols in Thomas Adewumi University.
- 4 To recommend actionable strategies for improving campus safety at Thomas Adewumi University.

1.5 Scope of the Study

The ambit of this research centres on the evaluation of campus security and crime in private universities in Kwara State, Nigeria. The research will centre on Thomas Adewumi University (TAU). It will evaluate the nature, cause, and effect of different crimes being committed on such campuses, violent as well as non-violent. In addition, it will examine social, economic, and environmental causes of crime and survey the perception of students, staff, and faculty toward campus safety and security.

Practices. Lastly, the study will determine the effectiveness of current security procedures and suggest effective measures to enhance campus safety.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is significant not only for its practical utility in helping to make campuses safer but also for its theoretical contribution to the research literature on crime prevention on college campuses.

Practically, this study provides enlightening information on the specific security challenges of private universities in Kwara State, namely Thomas Adewumi University (TAU). By establishing the types of crime that recurrently occur on this Campus and understanding the underlying causes of these crimes, university managers can embark on targeted interventions to address the underlying causes of campus crime. The findings will also inform the development of more robust security policies, keeping students, staff, and faculty safer. Moreover, by proposing actionable suggestions, this study can help foster collaboration between universities and local police departments, leading to more comprehensive and effective crime reduction initiatives. Thus, one of the most significant aspects of this study is that it can be utilised to maximise campus security, protect the university community, and provide a safer and more nurturing educational environment.

Theoretically, this study will contribute to the knowledge of campus crime and security in Nigerian universities. While the majority of the literature has focused on public universities or general crime trends, this study fills a gap as it focuses on private universities, particularly in Kwara State. The research will analyse the interplay between social, economic, and environmental factors in the causation of campus crime, with contributions to the theoretical explanations of crime causation and prevention in institutions of higher learning. Additionally, through an exploration of campus security and safety perceptions, the study will provide a better understanding of the relationship between security measures and the general perception of safety in university communities. This theoretical contribution will be beneficial to researchers and policymakers who want to have a better understanding of the dynamics of campus security in the Nigerian context and beyond.

1.7 Operational Definitions of Key Terms

Campus Crime: Any criminal activity that occurs on the physical campus of a university, including theft, assault, vandalism, drug abuse, and cybercrime. Campus crime in this study will be used to describe cases presented at Thomas Adewumi University (TAU) in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Campus Security: The procedures and policies put in place to protect and secure the university community (students, staff, and visitors). These encompass physical security features such as CCTV cameras, security personnel, and emergency response services within TAU.

Environmental Conditions: These are physical and social factors that enable or promote crimes within the university environment. These can include the location of the campus, infrastructure, lighting, accessibility, and provision of adequate security factors and technologies.

Faculty: The teachers who are employed by the university to teach as well as guide students in their research.

Perceptions of Safety: the personal judgment by members of the university community (students, staff, and faculty) of their sense of safety or lack thereof on campus. It will encompass perceptions of the TAU university community regarding crime and the effectiveness of existing security measures.

Private University: A higher educational institution that is privately owned and operated, as opposed to a public university. TAU is a private university in Kwara State, Nigeria, and the subject of this research.

Security Protocols: The established procedures and policies that guide the management of security on campus, including crime reporting, emergency response, and crime prevention strategies. These protocols will be assessed at TAU to determine their effectiveness in addressing campus crime.

Students: Individuals enrolled at a university to pursue academic courses and programs. In this study, students refer to individuals enrolled in undergraduate programs at TAU.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Preamble

This chapter offers a critical appraisal of campus crime and security literature. It explains the conceptual frameworks of campus crime, security, and crime prevention strategies based on both international and national research. The chapter also explains the prevalent types of campus crime in Nigerian universities, causal factors behind such crimes, and perceptions about campus security by the public. In addition, it also reviews empirical studies on campus security and takes into consideration theoretical models that provide the foundation of knowing crime trends in institutions of higher learning. Finally, it identifies gaps in existing literature to justify this research.

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Campus Crime

Campus crime is a growing phenomenon in universities across the world, including Nigeria, where public and private institutions are grappling with various forms of criminality. Campus crime, in the Nigerian university setting, is an overarching category of offences ranging from theft, sexual assault, drug abuse, and vandalism to cybercrime. These offences not only pose a threat to the safety of students, workers, and lecturers, but they also disrupt the academic climate to the extent that the quality of education and overall university experience are adversely affected (Ogunyemi, 2020). It is therefore crucial to examine the causes and types of campus crimes and the effectiveness of crime prevention measures, so that the learning and social environments can become safer.

Socio-economic status of the students is one of the major contributing factors to campus crime. Poor students are likely to become involved in crime due to economic constraints, peer influence, and lack of social support. These could find expression in criminal behaviours such as theft, robbery, and substance abuse, which are common in campus reports.

As posed by Ekpenyong and Okon (2020), socio-economic tensions such as unemployment and poverty have the tendency to drive students into criminal behaviour in a bid to alleviate their challenges. Also, institutions with poor support mechanisms are likely to experience high levels of

Campus crime may occur because students may resort to illegal means of survival.

Another causal factor is poor security arrangements on campus. All the universities in Nigeria, particularly the private institutions like Thomas Adewumi University, usually have the challenge of offering security due to meagre budgets and resources (Ojo & Ogunyemi, 2022). With insufficient infrastructure, such as poor lighting, poorly trained security officers, and no surveillance system, there are avenues for crime. Without any security precautions, the universities are easy prey for criminal elements, who take advantage of the loopholes to commit various offences.

Peer pressure also plays a significant role in campus crime. Being that colleges and universities are very social environments, they provide opportunities for the students to become tight-knit groups where behaviour and norms are established. Some of these peer groups will condone criminal behaviour, and such members will engage in criminal behaviour such as the use of drugs, bullying, or cheating. Ekpenyong and Okon (2020) also argue that peer pressure, especially in the early years of university life, heavily influences students' choices, with a resulting increase in criminal activities. The peer interactions, together with the absence of strong moral guidance, are determinants that contribute to the prevalence of crime on campus.

Cybercrime is yet another new type of campus offence that has gained vigour in the past decade, especially with the increased application of online platforms for educational and social life. Nigerian university students, such as those based in TAU, have been accused of engaging in online fraud, hacking, and identity theft of other individuals, exploiting the anonymity afforded by the internet. Ushe, M. U. (2019) mention the growing phenomenon of cybercrime that has been discovered to be on the rise among university students, since it is stated that most people utilise their technical know-how for illicit purposes such as phishing and online scams. Rising cybercrime among university students can be better related to the necessity of digital campus policies.

2.1.2 Security

Security, in the context of university campuses, refers to the range of measures and systems put in place to protect the university community from threats in the form of crime, violence, and natural disasters. Effective campus security is a combination of physical, technological, and social measures that strive to offer safety and well-being to the students, faculty, and staff. According to Komer et al. (2019), campus security must react to threats from outside and also to internal matters such as student

behaviour, institutional policies, and the university's physical environment. A safe campus offers an

An enabling environment for learning removes fear among members of the campus community and guarantees that criminality does not disrupt academic activities.

A key aspect of campus security is the physical environment, which includes security cameras, security personnel, lighting, and access control points. Physical security in the form of CCTV cameras and highly professional security personnel acts as a form of deterrence to crime, say Braithwaite and Johnson (2017). These not only help prevent crime but also act to give valuable evidence in the event of any untoward incidents. In the majority of universities across the globe, for instance, in Nigeria, security guards and modern surveillance devices have been found to reduce crime greatly because criminals are more likely to be apprehended or deterred by these systems.

In addition to physical protection, there is an increasingly important role played by technological innovation in enhancing campus security. Use of computer-based security equipment, such as emergency response systems, cellular security apps, and campus monitoring software, has become prevalent in many universities. For instance, US and European universities have adopted mobile applications in which students can report unusual activities, call emergency services, and receive real-time safety alerts (Taylor et al., 2020). Such technologies improve response times and give students and personnel instant access to aid in emergencies. But in Nigerian universities such as Thomas Adewumi University (TAU), the adoption of such technologies is in its infancy stage, showing a gap to be filled.

Besides, social factors such as the involvement of the campus community in security initiatives are instrumental in creating a culture of security. As Nwogwugwu and Nwachukwu (2018) discuss, campus security is not only for security agents but requires the contribution of students, staff, and lecturers. Awareness drives, security training, and community policing are some of the initiatives that can contribute significantly toward making efforts at security effective. Universities that encourage collaboration between campus security and the community have lower crime rates and increased security measures. An organised campus security plan, in which everyone is involved in making the campus safe, is key to long-term success.

2.1.3 Crime Prevention Strategies

Crime prevention programs are strategies and interventions aimed at reducing or stopping criminal activity in chosen settings, such as university campuses. Crime prevention programs are necessary to

construct a safe and secure environment for the faculty, staff, and students. Clarke (2018) recommends

Crime prevention programs can be categorised into situational and social prevention strategies. Situational crime prevention addresses the physical and social setting to reduce opportunities for crime through, for example, enhancing illumination on campuses, the installation of closed-circuit television, and securing entrances. Social crime prevention, addressing the root causes of crime such as poverty, illiteracy, and alienation, seeks to reverse these through initiatives that promote positive attitudes and civic engagement.

A well-tested situational crime prevention strategy is the use of environmental design, or Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). This entails modifying the built environment to avoid crime by promoting natural surveillance, access control, and territorial reinforcement. Good examples include lit walkways, open lines of sight, and restricted building access that can decrease opportunities for crimes like theft, assault, and burglary. It has been proven that CPTED applications on university campuses are reducing crime to a great extent (Jeffery, 2019). In Nigerian universities like Thomas Adewumi University (TAU), their use in campus planning can successfully counter the security issues.

The second pillar of crime prevention is the adoption of community policing programs. Community policing, as Kelling and Wilson (2020) posit, is the creation of intimate relationships between the campus community and law enforcement to facilitate trust, cooperation, and communication. Some of the strategies for community policing in colleges could involve including students, faculty, and staff in crime prevention forums, instituting neighbourhood watch programs, and spurring people to report suspicious activity. By establishing a collective sense of responsibility for campus security, community policing promotes an awareness and solidarity attitude that makes it more difficult to commit crimes and go undetected.

Prevention efforts could also include educational and sensitisation programs meant to transform attitudes and behaviour in the direction of crime. Colleges and universities, for instance, have orientation programs, workshops, and campaigns to expose students to the dangers of drug abuse, sexual harassment, and other crimes. They depend on being able to engage staff and students in realising the value of safety and how they can help prevent crimes (Sampson & Laub, 2017). By integrating such education programs with other crime prevention programs, higher education institutions are able to tackle both the body and the mind of crime, making it difficult for crimes to occur.

2.2 The Prevalent Types of Campus Crimes in Nigeria

Campus crimes in Nigerian universities are a great threat to the security and safety of students, lecturer, and staff members. They do tend to destabilise the academic scene as well as establish an atmosphere of fear and insecurity. Among the offences, the most prevalent offence is theft, and small-scale thefts spread out as stealing phones, laptops, as well as other personal effects. Petty theft is prevalent, Oloyede and Akinpelu (2019) argue, due to socio-economic reasons, including economic hardships and the lack of efficient security systems within institutions of learning. The transience of university populations and the lack of surveillance systems offer room for theft to occur daily. Students, at times, steal to meet their needs, and therefore, the problem is further compounded.

Yet another very common offence on Nigerian university campuses is sexual assault, rape, sexual harassment, and other gender-based violence. Ushe, M. U. (2019) refer to the prevalence of sexual violence on Nigerian university campuses, and how female students tend to be the principal victims. The variety of reasons for this crime is vast, varying from a limited understanding of consent to campus security measures. The victim-blaming culture on campuses further hinders victims from reporting such incidents. The failure to implement stringent legal frameworks in universities also continues to fuel the sexual assault culture. As a result, the majority of the students experience emotional trauma and distress, and the perpetrators are not brought to book as a result of poor reporting mechanisms and institutional laxity.

Cultism is a very rampant problem at Nigerian universities. Cult organisations, which on occasion have been able to partake in violent activities such as initiation rites, attacks, and extortion, have a long history on the majority of university campuses. Olajide and Balogun (2021) have contended that the prevalence of cults on university campuses is driven by social identity, protection, and peer pressure tied to membership. Members are known to assault other students with violence, harass other students, and extort other students on the pretext of giving protection. Poor security measures in universities, such as dark alleys and open gates, provide ample space for cult operations, and it is difficult to restrict their activities by the authorities.

Drug abuse also exists at Nigerian universities because the majority of the students have turned to using drugs such as marijuana, cocaine, and other hard drugs. According to Ofoegbu et al. (2021),

drug availability and use are linked to a very broad spectrum of criminal activities, including

Examination malpractices, theft, and assault. Students primarily use drugs as a coping strategy against pressure, stress, or to be part of peer groups that consume drugs. Drug abuse among students not only presents a threat to the health and safety of the students but also aggravates the incidence of crime on university campuses. Lack of an efficient drug prevention program and peer pressure are some of the reasons why drug abuse has been a persistent issue in Nigerian universities.

Cybercrime is a new looming threat among Nigerian university students. As the internet keeps growing in prominence as a primary source of intellectual and social endeavours, some of them engage in criminality such as phishing, identity theft, and cyber fraud. Ushe, M. U. (2019) reveal that university students, with their technical savvy and online platforms' availability, have a high likelihood of utilising the anonymity affordance of the internet to engage in crime. These crimes have severe consequences for the criminals as well as the victims because they can lead to losses, negative reputation, and prosecution. University cybercrime is also a concerning aspect because it is difficult to monitor cybercrime and profile criminals on time.

Violent crimes, such as physical fights and confrontations, are also common on some Nigerian university campuses. These are typically caused by issues like bullying, student conflict, graffiti, or cultism. Sampson and Laub (2017) state that the prevalence of violent crime in universities is a consequence of the breakdown in social order, ineffective conflict resolution channels, and a lack of proper preventive measures by university management. This violence not only attacks the victim but also frightens other students, diverting their attention from focusing on study and social life.

Finally, initiation rituals and cult group-related hazing in Nigerian universities pose a very real security threat. These rituals, such as physical attack and psychological harassment, are expressions of organised crime in university campuses. Cult members employ the exercises as a form of exercising control over potential members and asserting control over their group. Olajide and Balogun (2021) posit that not only is hazing a violation of the human rights of the victims, but it also contributes to the development of a wider culture of threats and violence on the campuses of the universities. Efforts at curbing cultism notwithstanding, such operations still flourish in some universities, engendering a culture of violence and fear on campus.

2.3 The Causal Factors of Campus Crimes in Higher Institutions

The causal determinants of university campus crimes are diverse and can be linked to a multitude of

individual, social, economic, environmental, and institutional factors. Social and peer pressure is one.

Of the principal determinants of campus crimes. Peer influence, according to Eck and Maguire (2000), is among the primary factors responsible for the majority of crimes committed on college campuses. The students can engage in delinquent activities, such as drug use, cultism, or theft, to fit into a social group or be accepted by their peers. In Nigerian universities, this is particularly reflected in the spread of cultism, whereby students join secret societies to gain social power or protection (Olajide & Balogun, 2021). The need to fit into peer expectations causes most students to engage in activities that they would not otherwise do, and this serves to perpetuate the occurrence of campus crime.

Poor socioeconomic conditions are yet another major cause. Economic adversity can create conducive grounds for crime to flourish. Siegel (2015) explains that students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds could turn to stealing, fraud, or drugs as a means of coping with economic adversity or attaining material possessions. In Nigerian universities, where a vast majority of students live in dire financial challenges, petty theft and other criminal activities are continually being reported. Oloyede and Akinpelu (2019) further point out that economic disparity among students triggers campus crimes as some students are driven by the urge to meet their basic needs, while others engage in crime due to a feeling of entitlement or inequality in wealth.

Availability of alcohol and drugs is also a top cause of campus crime, particularly about drug and alcohol abuse. According to a study conducted by Ofoegbu et al. (2021), alcohol and drug abuse on the college campus is common, and such drugs have a strong effect on criminal behaviour, including violence and robbery. Such students can do things they would not otherwise do, such as physical battles and robbery, which lead to more crime on campus. Lack of stringent regulation to bar the sale and use of the substances further contributes to the problem, leading to more crime among the students.

Inadequate campus security and poor implementation of the law are institutional causes for campus crimes. Institutions with insecure security systems and equipment and whose workers have poorly trained security guards tend to have high crime rates, Koper (2004) contends. There are few surveillance cameras, inadequate lighting, and few security officers at vulnerable spots where such offences can be carried out more easily without detection. Such problems in Nigerian universities are also exacerbated by shortages of resources and security officers' inadequate training, leading to a lack of ability to curb or act on offences like burglary, rape, and cultism (Ushe, M. U., 2019).

Psychological factors are stress, depression, and alienation. Wang et al. (2015) say students who have a high level of stress and mental health conditions are likely to become criminals. The pressure of academism, compounded by the inability to cope with university life, might drive several students into criminality as a means of coping. In the poorly developed university mental health services in Nigeria, students would likely employ drug abuse, stealing, or violence as their coping strategies (Ofoegbu et al., 2021).

Campus silence culture and lack of reporting mechanisms also facilitate the occurrence of crimes on campuses. Ushe, M. U. (2019) write that students are afraid to report crimes because they will be stigmatised, retaliated against, or because they do not believe the university will intervene effectively. This applies particularly to sexual assault, where the victims remain silent because they fear social and academic sanctions for what they do. Secondly, institutions lack adequate grievance procedures, and therefore, underreporting takes place, and criminals get away, thus leading to more crime being perpetrated.

Physical conditions such as the physical design of the campus, the availability of secluded spots, and crowding can also facilitate campus crimes. Criminology theory, as expounded by Cohen and Felson (1979), states that crime will occur more often in a context where there is no guardianship and no direct access to a potential victim. Low-lit areas, secluded buildings, and overpopulated hostels in Nigerian campuses offer a haven where the incidence of drug abuse, theft, and sexual harassment can take place. The environmental condition, when combined with other economic and social factors, gives the environment an impetus that leads to the growth of crime.

Finally, the inadequate crime prevention strategies also help sustain the rate of campus crime. Sampson and Laub (2017) state that institutions that do not have advanced crime prevention strategies, such as awareness campaigns, security analysis, and community policing, tend to experience an elevated crime rate. In Nigerian universities, the lack of properly designed crime prevention schemes and cooperation with the local law enforcement authorities makes the security in universities more reactive than proactive in character (Olajide & Balogun, 2021). Failure to invest in crime prevention programs allows for the continuity of the crimes.

2.4 The Public Perception of Campus Safety and Security Protocols in Higher Institutions

In the majority of universities, especially in developing countries like Nigeria, one of the sectors of

mistrust of security arrangements is noted. Ajayi and Ojo (2020) conducted research that established

The fact that the majority of Nigerian university students do not feel secure, even when security personnel and equipment are present. They attributed this insecurity to the perceived ineffectiveness of the campus security staff, inadequate training of the workers, and inadequate security coverage in certain areas of the campus. If the general public sees the security forces as not being able to or refusing to respond, then it can lead to a failure of confidence in the effectiveness of the security measures and even to campus criminality becoming tolerated.

Moreover, the openness of security policies impacts the perception. According to Chukwuma and Ogunniyi (2017), there is a wide communication gap between students, academic staff personnel, and staff within the university, and the security officers in universities. Most people in the university community are not informed about the measures taken in terms of security, for example, the emergency response policy, campus-wide warning, and reporting. It will lead to an aspect of fear and confusion, especially in the case of failure. The public trust is enhanced when individuals feel that they have open channels of communication through which they can bring up matters and incidents that will be listened to and responded to within a given timeframe.

Another major influencing factor is the way crime cases affect people's perception. Where there are frequent cases of crimes such as theft, assault, or even worse cases such as cultism and sexual violence, they create an atmosphere of fear and tension. There is greater insecurity if these crimes are not reported or given attention. Ushe, M. U. (2019), in their study, discovered that the prevalence of violent crimes in Nigerian universities would lead to erosion of trust in the security mechanisms available. This is even escalated in cases where the criminals committing crimes on the campuses are not apprehended or when the victims feel they are not given a serious hearing by the authorities.

On the other hand, good security practices and proactive measures can indeed influence the perception of security. When universities actively strive to make students, teachers, and staff feel secure, for example, by carrying out regular security drills, spending on better surveillance systems, and installing sufficient lighting in poorly lit places, they end up scoring better on safety ratings. Koper's (2004) research observed that universities that involve the entire campus community in awareness campaigns and provide regular crime trend reports have fostered more positive public images of security. Such collaboration can establish an atmosphere of shared responsibility and improve reporting of suspicious activity, hence improving campus security.

There are also cultural and environmental elements in the perception of campus safety. In some

In countries where crime is more common or where universities are located in high-crime areas, students and faculty may have a more cynical or fatalistic view of campus safety. University students in Nigeria, according to Oloyede and Akinpelu (2019), are also wary of the ability of university authorities to provide security, particularly in areas of the campus where there is no presence of security personnel or CCTV cameras. The socio-political climate, including whether or not there is political instability or whether or not there are student unions with a record of violence, can also influence overall perceptions of safety on campuses.

Last but not least, one cannot overlook the role of the media in shaping public perception of campus safety. Media coverage of campus crime, or lack thereof, significantly affects public perception of security policies. In most cases, overemphasis by the media on violent crimes or attacks, which are seldom indicative of the overall level of safety on campus, skews perceptions and incites fears beyond what is reasonably supported by facts. However, when the universities themselves publicise success stories in crime prevention and stipulate positive outcomes of security measures, they will be in a position to foster public confidence in their security measures (Sampson & Laub, 2017).

2.5 The Possible Strategies to Improve Campus Safety and Security in Higher Institutions

Improving safety and security in college campuses within institutions of higher learning is a process that requires both reactive and proactive approaches. One of the approaches is improving physical security elements. These include the installation of surveillance cameras, adequate lighting in dark areas, and the design of secure entrance points that can prevent unauthorised access. Anderson (2019) states that surveillance systems have been known to reduce crimes on campus by a significant percentage. Security measures that are visible not only deter potential criminals but also reassure students and staff, encouraging a sense of safety. Security staff also need to be well-trained and equipped to respond quickly to security incidents of any nature. Building campus community engagement is another important strategy.

Engaging students, staff, and faculty so that they feel they are part of security processes can enhance perception and quality of campus security programs. Students who are told about steps taken for safety and feel accountable to assist in maintaining security are more likely to report suspicious activity. Johnson et al. (2018) found in research that college campuses with active crime prevention programs, such as neighbourhood watch groups and student safety patrols, have lower crime rates. Community

policing systems, where the security team engages students in open spaces, also help create a higher.

Levels of cooperation and trust between the students and the security agencies. Coordination with the local police is also important.

Most of the offences that occur on campuses are extended beyond campus to the communities around campuses, and with cooperation with local police, institutions can extend their reach and respond more rapidly in the case of an emergency. Local police can provide additional resources, intelligence, and personnel to support campus security programs. A study conducted by Carmichael and Huff (2020) identified that American colleges, which operated in collaboration with the police, saw a reduction in on-campus crimes such as drug dealing and violent attack. In Nigeria, collaboration can be especially helpful to reduce the amount of violence involving cultism in campuses, Ushe, M. U. (2019). Computer security software and technology contribute even more significantly to improving campus security.

The deployment of cell phone safety applications, emergency alert systems, and online reporting systems can endow staff and students with the ability to report effectively and safely. Lee and Kim (2021) report that South Korean universities, which instituted digital platforms for safety notices and incident reporting, lessened crime and enhanced students' satisfaction with campus security. They enable instant response to threats and enable the campus security officers to watch over potential threats. In Nigerian universities, such technology would help complete the vacuum that currently exists between security men and university members, especially in huge campuses. Another effective approach is applying preventive education and sensitisation programs.

Student, staff, and lecturer preventive education on crime prevention, personal safety procedures, and reporting crime can go a long way in suppressing campus crime. Kenyan universities that incorporated safety training, crime prevention workshops, and sensitisation in the orientation programs have registered drops in gender-based violence and cases of petty theft, states Tanyi (2020). Anti-cultism, anti-sexual violence, and anti-drug abuse campaigns are most applicable in Nigerian universities. Regular seminars, workshops, and student organisations can play a key role in instilling security awareness and responsibility amongst the university community. Finally, policy development and application play a significant role in campus security improvement.

Colleges and universities need to have properly communicated, clear crime prevention policies, security measures, and offence sanctions. Properly enforced policy systems remind workers and

students of the policies and the offence punishments. Nigerian universities that had good anti-bullying

And anti-cultism policies had fewer incidents of campus violence, according to Okafor (2017). They have to provide arrangements for the establishment of grievance redressal forums and provide safety and support to the victims of crime. Periodic reviews of policies are necessary to address changing security issues.

2.6 Empirical Review of Campus Crimes in Nigeria

Oluwaseun et al. (2020) conducted a survey of the cause and prevalence of campus crime in Nigerian universities, but with more focus on students' perception of safety in the University of Lagos. The study affirmed that most of the crimes involved theft, sexual harassment, and violence resulting from cultism. The authors note that poor security personnel, poor lighting, and no surveillance were some of the issues that contributed to the rising rates of crime. The study recommended increasing security devices and student sensitisation programs to address university crime.

Tanyi (2020) analysed university crime and security in Kenyan universities and emphasised prevention education programs. The research highlighted that although security systems like patrols and lighting were implemented, there was minimal interaction with students on awareness campaigns of crime prevention. Tanyi's research implied that the nature of campaigns would be capable of curbing cases of theft, assault, and sexual harassment by informing the student population on how to identify and report crime.

Ushe, M. U. (2019) conducted a study on cultism and its impact on gender security in Nigerian universities. From their research, the major perpetrators of violent crimes on campuses, like physical assault, kidnappings, and even murders, were cult groups. Peer influence and socio-economic pressure, the authors assert, were key drivers in the growth of cult groups. The writers promoted a more forceful law enforcement system and instituted support mechanisms against cult recruitment of vulnerable students.

Bogaerts et al. (2020) examined whether security cameras deter crime in American campuses. In an empirical study, they found that the occurrence of crimes such as theft and assault decreased considerably in areas where surveillance systems were installed. They concluded that public exposure to cameras acted as a deterrent and a tool for solving crime after the fact. The research called for technological intervention for campus security policy.

Anderson (2019) sought to examine the part played by security officers in the management of the campus.

Crime in South African universities. From the research, though the security officers played a crucial part in managing emergencies, they were inadequately visible and accessible. Anderson supported the use of more officers during rush hour and training sessions so they could enhance their capacity to manage diverse security matters, ranging from armed robberies to student protests.

Henderson and Hart (2021) evaluated student safety and campus crime in comparative research involving Australian and UK universities. They found that the two nations' universities applied the same security elements, such as campus patrols, alarm systems in case of emergencies, and crime-reporting hotlines. Yet, students from the two nations complained about campus security's response time, prompting the authors to suggest the inclusion of local police in an attempt to effectively combat the challenge.

Agwu and Odoh (2018) tested the effectiveness of crime prevention policy at Nigerian universities, specifically targeting the Federal University of Lafia. They concluded that measures taken by the university to secure itself by engaging security personnel and deploying crime-reporting systems were not adequate in preventing serious security issues such as sexual assault and theft. The paper emphasised the importance of improved infrastructure and a master plan with students and employees in security measures. Lee and Kim (2021) explained how computer security technologies affected enhancing campus security in South Korea. Findings from the study revealed that the use of mobile safety applications and emergency alerting systems in real time played a significant role in improving students' and staff's perception of safety. The authors explained how such technologies made timely reaction possible to security events, for example, suspicious individuals or emergencies and enabled more extensive communication between university members and security officers.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

2.7.1 Routine Activity Theory

Routine Activity Theory (RAT) was formulated by Lawrence E. Cohen and Marcus Felson in 1979. They formulated their theory based on their observation that patterns of crime are influenced not only by social conditions but also by individuals' everyday lives and activities. According to their theory, crime occurs when there are three components that converge: a motivated offender, a vulnerable target, and a lack of effective guardianship. It centres on the reality that crime is primarily an

opportunity-based product and not entirely dependent upon social or environmental determinants.

(Cohen & Felson, 1979).

Routine Activity Theory also depends on three main assumptions: motivated offenders, accessible targets, and a lack of capable guardianship.

1. Motivated Offenders: The theory is dependent on the fact that potential offenders are always present in society. It assumes that people are inherently crime-prone whenever the opportunity arises, particularly where the likelihood of being caught is minimal (Cohen & Felson, 1979). It does not venture too far as far as the psychological or social forces that create individuals crime-prone are concerned, which can be regarded as the downfall of the theory (Tseloni et al., 2010).

2. Suitable Targets: A suitable target is a person, object, or place that is attractive and vulnerable to crime. Targets are ideal if they are easily accessible, valuable, and inadequately defended (Felson & Clarke, 1998). For instance, if students of a school leave their properties in open spaces or if a school premises is inadequately manned, it becomes an easy target for criminals.

3. Lack of Capable Guardianship: This is the absence of controls, individuals, or systems that will deter crime. Guardianship may be physical protection like guards and CCTV cameras, or social guardianship in terms of individuals who can get involved and prevent criminal activity if they witness it occurring (Cohen & Felson, 1979). The theory takes it on faith that the presence or absence of these aspects of guardianship may influence the occurrence of crime significantly.

Routine Activity Theory is particularly useful in accounting for campus crimes in private universities like Thomas Adewumi University (TAU). The daily routines of university students, staff, and faculty, such as attending classes, studying in libraries, or socialising in common areas, create opportunities for crime to be perpetrated. For example, if students habitually leave their bags in lecture halls or dormitories, they are prime targets for theft. The theory identifies that these crimes are more likely to occur when there is a lack of effective guardianship, such as the absence of security personnel at late hours or poor surveillance cameras at a location (Cohen & Felson, 1979).

Moreover, RAT can help authorities establish the times and places around campus where crime is most probable. For instance, crimes like vandalism, theft, or even drug use could be more prevalent during nighttime or weekends when fewer people are around to act as guardians. Such information allows universities to optimise their security efforts, such as increasing patrols or monitoring at times or places with low lighting. By aligning security measures with students' routines, colleges can pre-

empt the occurrence of crimes by reducing opportunities for motivated offenders to strike (Felson & Clarke, 1998). Last but not least, Routine Activity Theory can guide policy recommendations in improving campus safety.

By calling attention to the lack (or presence) of effective guardianship, the theory suggests university administration invest in the creation of security hardware, for instance, surveillance systems, lighting, and campus patrols. The theory also encourages the inclusion of the entire campus community to assist in the prevention of crime because social guardianship, for instance, peer intervention or faculty vigilance, can be an important element in crime reduction (Felson, 2002). This approach can make the campus a safer environment and reduce the likelihood of campus crime by controlling the situational factors that enhance the likelihood of crime.

2.7.2 Social Learning Theory

Albert Bandura developed Social Learning Theory in the 1960s as a theory of human learning of behaviour based on observation, imitation, and reinforcement. The theory contends that crime and deviance are socially learned and not the result of environmental or individual causes (Bandura, 1977). The theory posits that individuals learn crime by observing role models, social interaction, and reinforcement by rewards or punishment. It is centred on peer influence, media exposure, and cultural norms in criminality construction.

Social Learning Theory is based on several underlying assumptions. To begin with, it's based on the assumption that individuals learn criminality from direct or indirect experience but primarily through observing and imitating others in their environment. Secondly, the theory assumes that positive or negative reinforcement is a determining factor in informing individuals whether to persist with deviant behaviour or not. If the reward for the behaviour of crime is either material or social, then the crime will more than likely be repeated (Akers, 1998). Third, the theory also assumes that crime is more likely to happen if one spends more time, more frequently, and with greater intensity in the company of criminal or non-criminal models. Another major advantage of Social Learning Theory is that it describes how crime is learned via social interaction, and that it works best when used for group crimes such as gang crime or cybercrime.

It gives an explanation of the way peer groups, family, and the media are sources of crime and, therefore, can inform policymakers on how to develop interventions in the form of education and

socialisation (Akers & Jensen, 2006). The theory also gives a rationale for the prevention of

Criminality through rehabilitation by highlighting that it is possible to change behaviour through positive reinforcement and exposure to good role models. Social Learning Theory can be applied in the study of campus crime and security in universities, especially in environments where students are exposed to peer groups that are delinquent or cultural norms that are deviance-permissive.

For example, higher education institutions like Thomas Adewumi University (TAU) can be affected by crime as students learn and adopt offending behaviour from their social groups. If criminal behaviour, i.e., drug use or stealing, is the norm among some student groups, other students will imitate them, particularly if they observe them being rewarded or punished. Further, university environments in which students may be exposed to deviant peers or are themselves unsupervised have the effect of normalising crime. To counteract crime, universities can reinforce positive role models, strengthen mentorship programs, and reward prosocial behaviour with rewards and sanctions, according to the model. Peer mentoring, leadership development, and academic advisement programs can nullify negative peer influences and reduce the spectre of criminality.

The last use of Social Learning Theory in this study is that interventions that change social interaction have a key role to play in the reduction of campus crime.

To this degree, a culture of legal behaviour can be established in colleges through positive student interactions, moral leadership, and strict rules against deviant behaviour. Through public service announcements, student engagement initiatives, and behavioural programs targeted at specific problems, universities can help prepare a setting where crime will not be learned and reenacted (Akers, 1998).

2.8 Gaps in Literature

The gaps in literature observed are: the majority of the previous research on university crime and security focused on the general public universities in Nigeria, but scarcely undertook any research on the private ones, particularly Thomas Adewumi University (TAU). Further, there is little research on the cumulative impact of social, economic, and environmental factors on university crime in Nigerian institutions. Additionally, studies on the relative studies of adequacy of security measures prevalent in such institutions are few. Furthermore, further study is necessary on students' attitudes, faculty attitudes, and staff attitudes concerning campus security, as well as the possible partnership with local police in crime prevention, being an under-researched topic.

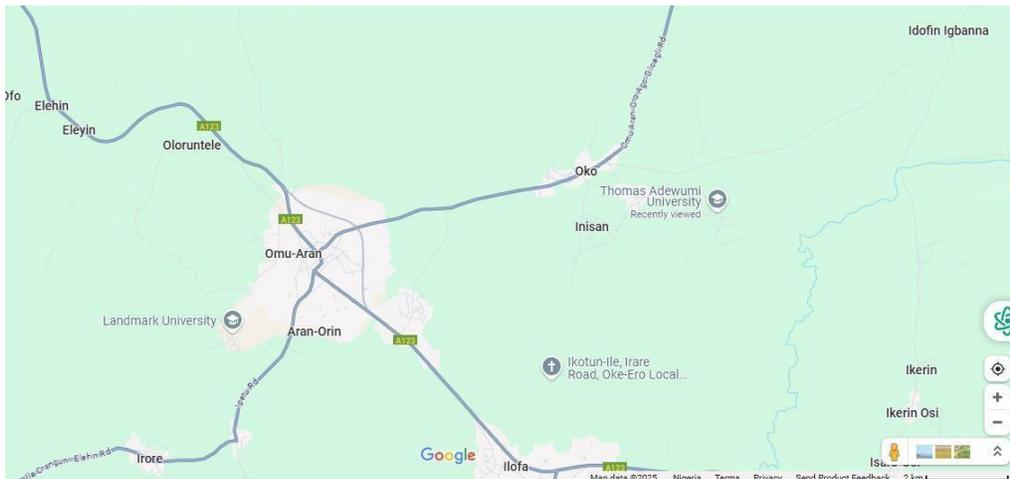
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study will employ a descriptive survey research design, which is suitable for identifying the nature, causes, and prevention of campus crime at Thomas Adewumi University in Kwara State. A survey design enables the measurement of quantitative and qualitative data from a representative sample, providing a comprehensive description of crime patterns, the causes leading to it, as well as security measures (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This is appropriate as it facilitates systematic gathering of data from lecturers, students, and security officers in Thomas Adewumi University (TAU) through guided questionnaires and interviews. Descriptive research is appropriate for determining campus security experiences, perceptions, and trends and remains objective with generalizability of findings (Babbie, 2020).

3.2 Study Area



The study area for this research is Kwara State, being one of the states located in the North-Central region of Nigeria that has become a central location for public and private institutions of tertiary education.

Kwara is rapidly developing a student population due to the increase in the number of universities,

one of which includes Thomas Adewumi University (TAU), where this study is based. Kwara State

has a total of about 3.6 million inhabitants (National Population Commission, 2022), and a considerable percentage of its residents are academically involved. Thomas Adewumi University (TAU) has approximately 1,300 students as of 2025 (National Universities Commission [NUC], 2020).

Thomas Adewumi University (TAU), established in 2021, has grown very rapidly and has specialty areas such as social sciences, humanities, and business. The university is relatively small, thus the campus security is more personalized to deal with, but this implies that criminal activity will have a disproportionate impact on students. Thomas Adwumi University West Campus and East Campus are a suitable combination of campus environments and security management systems and are therefore suitable case studies to utilize in this study (National Universities Commission [NUC], 2020).

3.3 Population of the Study

The study population are the ones directly interested in university life at Thomas Adewumi University (TAU), Kwara State, Nigeria. The study centers on a multi-group of stakeholders, that is, the principal actors in campus security, crime prevention, and safety management in general. Because the study is interested in the examination of the nature, causes, and prevention of campus crime, the study population is made up of students, lecturers, administrative staff, security officers, and university administrators. These units were chosen in order to gain a complete overview of campus crime from a wide variety of viewpoints, so the study can account for both the conditions of prospective victims as well as the reaction of those in charge of security.

The study population is divided into three broad categories. The students form the first category, who are the largest and most exposed population in the universities. Their orientation plays an important role in the incidence, type, and causation of crimes on the campus and their perception of security measures. The second category is administrative and faculty staff who typically are the reporters or observers of crime and also are responsible for helping to formulate institutional policy regarding security. Their feedback will be utilised to gauge the effectiveness of existing security regimes and identify areas of concern. The third category is security officers and university administrators who are responsible for enforcing security protocols and crime prevention programs. Their feedback will offer vital information on security policies, crime prevention matters, and

interactions with the local police. Incorporating such subtopics, the research guarantees an exhaustive.

Investigation of campus crime and security at Thomas Adewumi University in Kwara State.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

For this study, the sample size will be determined using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table, which is a widely accepted method for calculating sample sizes based on a known population.

Table 3.0 Determining Sample Size Formula

N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S
10	10	100	80	280	162	800	260	2800	338
15	14	110	86	290	165	850	265	3000	341
20	19	120	92	300	169	900	269	3500	246
25	24	130	97	320	175	950	274	4000	351
30	28	140	103	340	181	1000	278	4500	351
35	32	150	108	360	186	1100	285	5000	357
40	36	160	113	380	181	1200	291	6000	361
45	40	180	118	400	196	1300	297	7000	364
50	44	190	123	420	201	1400	302	8000	367
55	48	200	127	440	205	1500	306	9000	368
60	52	210	132	460	210	1600	310	10000	373
65	56	220	136	480	214	1700	313	15000	375
70	59	230	140	500	217	1800	317	20000	377
75	63	240	144	550	225	1900	320	30000	379
80	66	250	148	600	234	2000	322	40000	380
85	70	260	152	650	242	2200	327	50000	381
90	73	270	155	700	248	2400	331	75000	382
95	76	270	159	750	256	2600	335	>100000	>384

According to the Krejcie and Morgan table, 297 sample participants will be sufficient for 1,300 people of the population at a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error. The findings of the research with this sample will be statistically significant and representative of the population. For qualitative data, 3 participants will be selected, and thus a total of 300 participants will be utilised in the research.

In terms of sampling strategies, the study will utilise stratified random sampling for the quantitative

strand. Stratified random sampling will be used to ensure equal representation of various groups within

The population, such as students, teachers, and staff. Strata will be formed on the basis of relevant categories, such as academic level (e.g., undergraduate, postgraduate), faculty (e.g., science, humanities), and gender. This technique ensures the sample is proportionally representative of diversity within the population to allow for more confident generalisations from the data.

Table 3.2 Sample Distribution for Questionnaire

University	Estimated Student Population	Proportion (%)	Sample Size
Thomas Adewumi University (TAU)	1,300	100%	297

For the qualitative section, purposive sampling will be applied. It involves the selection of participants with unique knowledge, experience, or understanding related to the research. For this study, purposive sampling will aim at 3 key stakeholders, such as university administrators, security personnel, and students who have either directly participated in or been affected by campus crime. This approach allows space to collect wide data from individuals who can give wide insights on campus security, safety practices, and shortcomings.

Table 3.3 Sample Distribution for Interview

University	Category of Participants	Number of Participants
Thomas Adewumi University (TAU)	Security Personnel	1
	University Administrator	1
	Student Representative	1
Total		3

The combination of stratified random sampling for the quantitative part and purposive sampling for the qualitative part will ensure that the study covers general trends and detailed, accurate information on campus crime and security. Both will provide a general overview of the issues TAU has regarding campus safety.

3.5 Methods of Data Collection

The data gathering will be quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative study will use the structured questionnaires. The questionnaires will be distributed to a randomly drawn sample of TAU students, employees, and faculty members. These will elicit respondents' experience of campus crime, perceptions about security measures, as well as demographic characteristics. Closed-ended questions will enable statistical analysis, while open-ended questions will enable comprehension of the individual experience and perception of participants. Pretesting is also to be conducted to assess clarity and relevance. Also, the qualitative method entails semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews are to be conducted with the key informants, including university administrators and campus security personnel. These will give us a qualitative wealth of information regarding the performance of security, issues being encountered by the university, and measures that can add to increased campus safety.

3.6 Instruments of Data

For the aim of this study, two primary data collection instruments will be utilised: structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, both of which will yield quantitative as well as qualitative data to sufficiently capture issues of campus crime and security at Thomas Adewumi University (TAU).

The structured questionnaire will obtain quantitative data using a combination of closed-ended questions such as multiple-choice, Likert-scale, and yes/no questions. The questions will obtain information about respondents' experience of campus crime, sense of security initiative, and demographic characteristics. Closed-endedness of questions will allow trends and generalizable findings to be statistically analysed. Pretesting will determine that the instrument is understandable and trustworthy before full administration.

Semi-structured interviews will be utilised to collect qualitative information. Open-ended questions will aid the researcher in probing deeply into the participants' experience and knowledge of security on campus. The main informants, including university administrators, campus security officers, and students selected through sampling, will be interviewed. The semi-structured approach will be adaptable enough to enable the researcher to delve deeper into certain issues, eliciting depth of insight into the strengths and weaknesses of current security strategies. Blending quantitative with qualitative approaches will yield more balanced and realistic findings.

3.7 Methods of Data Analysis

For this study, both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods will be employed.

3.7.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

The quantitative data from the structured questionnaires will be analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and mean scores. This will summarise respondents' demographic information, their experiences with campus crime, and perceptions of security.

3.7.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

Thematic analysis will be applied in analysing the qualitative data that will be collected through semi-structured interviews. Interviews will be coded and transcribed to identify key themes and patterns related to campus crime and security. This will allow meticulous examination of attitudes, experiences, and advice by participants on how security controls can be improved.

The qualitative and the quantitative will be merged during the interpretation stage to have a balanced analysis. The statistical findings will be supplemented with the rich data of the interviews, an effort to disclose not only trends, but also why they are occurring.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Respect, confidentiality, and voluntary consent principles will govern ethical issues in the present research. The participants will be briefed on the intent of the research and consent before data collection. The participants' answers will be assured of confidentiality by making their personal details anonymous and ensuring safe storage. They will also be allowed to withdraw from participation at any time without negative repercussions. In addition to that, ethical issues about how the participants are treated will be upheld to the level that the research does not damage anything and does not disrupt the participants' rights and dignity. Application for ethical clearance was made from the Students' Care Services before gathering data. In guarantees of voluntariness and confidentiality of response, written informed consent from the participants was secured. Data were safely archived, available only to the research team, and destroyed after analysis according to institutional policy.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Preamble

This chapter discusses the major findings that emerged from the data gathered through questionnaires and interviews. The discussion is structured according to key thematic areas derived from the research objectives, including demographic patterns, students' awareness and experiences of campus crime, contributing factors to insecurity, perceptions of safety, and preferred safety interventions. The findings are critically examined in relation to the theoretical frameworks that guided the study, Routine Activity Theory and Social Learning Theory, as well as relevant empirical literature.

4.1 Section A: Socio-demographic Information of Respondents

This section presents the socio-demographic information of the respondents, including age, sex, level of study and student residential arrangement. The result for this section is presented in Table 4.1 below.

According to the gender distribution results, the majority of the research participants were females (74.4%), and only 25.6% were males. This result suggests either a higher female enrollment in the university programs or a higher female response rate to the survey. This imbalance needs to be noted, especially when analysing awareness and experiences of crimes like sexual harassment, which often have gendered implications. Furthermore, the table illustrates the age of the respondents. Accordingly, the results indicate that the majority of the respondents are between 18 and 24 years old (62.5%). The result also shows that 36.7% of the respondents are less than 18 years old, and only 4.6% are 25 years old or older. The minimum age of respondents is 16, the maximum age is 34, and the average age of the respondents is 19.2 with a standard deviation of 3.17. The age distribution of the respondents suggests that the majority of the students were young people, mostly teenagers and young adults.

Table 4.1 further shows the respondents' current year of study. According to the result, the majority of respondents were in their 100 level (49.5%), indicating that nearly half of the surveyed students are in their first year at university. The second-largest group of respondents were 200-level students (22.6%), followed by 500-level students (10.4%). Very few respondents were in the 300 level (9.8%) and

400 levels (7.7%). The high population of 100-level students could be due to the larger population of 100-level students in the university.

Table 4.1: Percentage Distribution of the Socio-economic and Demographic Information of Respondents

Variable		Frequency (N=297)	Percent (100%)
Age	Less than 18	97	36.7
	18-24	186	62.5
	24 and Older	14	4.6
	Total	297	100
	$\alpha=19.21 (\pm 3.17)$, Min =16, Max =34		
Sex	Male	221	74.4
	Female	76	25.6
	Total	297	100
Current year of study	100 level	147	49.5
	200 level	67	22.6
	300 level	29	9.8
	400 level	23	7.7
	500 level	31	10.4
	Total	297	100
Residential arrangement	On Campus	297	100
	Off Campus	0	0
	Total	297	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Finally, the results in Table 4.1 indicate the residential arrangement of the students. As shown in the table, all the respondents lived on campus. This result reflects the nature of living arrangements available in the study area, as the university is residential and students are only allowed to live on campus.

4.2 Experience and Awareness of Campus Crimes

This section discusses the experience and awareness of campus crime among students at Thomas Adewumi University, Oko, Kwara State. The result for this section is presented in Table 4.2. below.

The respondents' awareness of theft was first examined. According to the result, the majority of respondents (77.8%) agreed or strongly agreed that theft of personal items occurs on campus. This result suggests that theft of personal items commonly occurred the within the school environment. Only 8.8% disagreed or strongly disagreed, indicating that relatively few students deny the occurrence of such incidents, while 13.5% were neutral, possibly reflecting uncertainty or lack of personal experience.

Table 4.2: Percentage Distribution of the Experience and Awareness of Crimes on Campus

Variable		Frequency (N=297)	Percent (100%)
I am aware of incidents of theft of personal items occurring on campus	Strongly Disagree	10	3.4
	Disagree	16	5.4
	Neutral	40	13.5
	Agree	145	48.8
	Strongly Agree	86	29.0
	Total	297	100
I am aware of incidents of physical assault or violence occurring on campus	Strongly Disagree	27	9.1
	Disagree	44	14.8
	Neutral	88	29.6
	Agree	106	35.7
	Strongly Agree	32	10.8
	Total	297	100
I am aware of incidents of sexual harassment or assault occurring on campus	Strongly Disagree	32	10.8
	Disagree	105	35.4
	Neutral	103	34.7
	Agree	44	14.8

	Strongly Agree	13	4.4
	Total	297	100
I am aware of incidents of property damage occurring on campus	Strongly Disagree	12	4.0
	Disagree	75	25.3
	Neutral	97	32.7
	Agree	71	23.9
	Strongly Agree	42	14.1
	Total	297	100
I am aware of incidents involving substance use or distribution on campus	Strongly Disagree	21	7.1
	Disagree	124	41.8
	Neutral	64	21.5
	Agree	49	16.5
	Strongly Agree	39	13.1
	Total	297	100
Are you aware of other kinds of crimes that happen on your campus that have not been mentioned above?	No	263	88.6
	Yes	34	11.4
	Total	297	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Regarding physical assault or violence, 46.5% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that such incidents occur on campus. However, 29.6% of the students remained neutral, while 23.9% disagreed or strongly disagreed. The result indicates that the majority of respondents are aware of the occurrence of physical assault and violence on campus.

The result further showed that only a small portion of the respondents (19.2%) are aware of sexual assault and violence on campus, while a combined 46.2% disagreed or strongly disagreed. A notable 34.7% chose a neutral stance. For awareness of property damage, the study showed that about 38% agreed or strongly agreed that such incidents occur, 32.7% remained neutral and 29.3% disagreed or strongly disagreed. This result suggests that property damage may not be a prominent issue on campus, or that it occurs less frequently compared to other types of crime.

Regarding substance use or distribution, the majority of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed

(48.9%) to its occurrence on campus. Only 29.6 agreed or strongly agreed, and 21.5% were neutral.

Finally, when asked about the presence of other types of crime not listed in the questionnaire, 11.4% of the respondent's confirmed awareness of additional criminal activities, while 88.6% said no. This result implies that the types of crime highlighted in the table do not exhaust all possible threats to safety and order on campus. Other forms of violations or minor offenses mentioned by the respondents include: (1) cyberbullying through social media, (2) unauthorized hostel entries, (3) verbal harassment, (4) noise disturbances during quiet hours, and (5) illegal sales of unapproved products on campus. While these offenses may not be classified as severe crimes, they contribute to a climate of insecurity and discomfort for students.

Results from the quantitative analysis were corroborated by results from the qualitative data. According to the qualitative data, most participants perceived theft and cyberbullying as a major crime on Thomas Adewumi University campuses. A participant from the counselling unit asserted that:

Over two years of my appointment at the counselling unit, I have mostly experienced and recorded issues like theft and online harassments among students on both campuses

(Participant A/ Female/ 34/ University Counsellor)

Also, the Student Representative Council (SRC) President explained his experiences over his four years stay on campus, he revealed that:

From my experience, the most commonly reported issues are theft related. While serious crimes are rare on campus, students often complain about missing phones, chargers, or personal items especially in the hostel, cafeteria, and sometimes even inside faculty buildings. *There are also occasional cases of fights or verbal confrontations among students*

(Participant B/ Male/ 21/ SRC President).

Transcript excerpt from interview with the security unit further supports the results presented above. The university's Chief Security Officer (CSO),

We handle series of violations across campuses with the sophisticated gadgets provided to the unit by the school management. But talking about the most common violation as you asked, our records show that minor theft or missing item as mostly reported cases

(Participant C/ Male/ 64/ CSO)

4.3 Factors Contributing to Campus Crime

This section identifies and discusses the factors associated with campus crime on Thomas Adewumi University campus. Responses were measured on a five-point Likert scale and the results are presented in Table 4.3 below.

One major issue identified through the survey is insufficient campus security personnel. The majority of respondents (46.1%) agreed or strongly agreed that insufficient security presence contributes to campus crime. Meanwhile, 22.2% remained neutral (uncertain or indifferent) and 31.6% disagreed or strongly disagreed, suggesting a portion of the respondent group do not believe that personnel shortages are a major factor. The results indicate that inadequate security contributes to campus crime.

The above finding is supported by insights from the interview with the Student Representative Council President. According to the participant,

...a mix of carelessness and lack of strong monitoring in certain areas contributes to it [Campus crime]. In places like the cafeteria or classrooms, people leave their things unattended, and that creates opportunities for theft. In the hostel, overcrowding or poor roommate matching can also lead to tension or petty theft. Sometimes, outsiders find their way onto campus too, which adds to the problem

(Participant B/Male/21/SRC).

Poor lighting in campus areas also emerged as a factor contributing to campus crime. A majority of respondents, 64% (36.4% agree and 27.6% strongly agree), identified inadequate lighting as contributing to crime. Only 18.9% disagreed or strongly disagreed, while 17.2% remained neutral. This highlights how environmental design, especially lighting, plays an important role in shaping perceptions of safety and the likelihood of criminal activities on campus.

Table 4.3: Percentage Distribution of the Factors Contributing to Campus Crime

Variable		Frequency (N=297)	Percent (100%)
Insufficient campus security personnel contribute to crime on campus	Strongly Disagree	22	7.4
	Disagree	72	24.2
	Neutral	66	22.2

	Agree	84	28.3
	Strongly Agree	53	17.8
	Total	297	100
Poor lighting in campus areas contributes to crime	Strongly Disagree	15	5.1
	Disagree	41	13.8
	Neutral	51	17.2
	Agree	108	36.4
	Strongly Agree	82	27.6
	Total	297	100
Unrestricted access to campus contributes to crime	Strongly Disagree	23	7.7
	Disagree	74	24.9
	Neutral	82	27.6
	Agree	82	27.6
	Strongly Agree	36	12.1
	Total	297	100
Alcohol or drug use among students contributes to crime	Strongly Disagree	144	48.5
	Disagree	36	12.1
	Neutral	84	28.4
	Agree	33	11.1
	Strongly Agree	0	0.0
	Total	297	100
Financial hardship among students contributes to campus crimes	Strongly Disagree	2	0.7
	Disagree	39	13.1
	Neutral	44	14.8
	Agree	113	38.0
	Strongly Agree	99	33.3
	Total	297	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

When asked about the impact of unrestricted access to the campus, responses were relatively mixed.

While 39.7% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that open access contributes to crime, a

sizable portion (27.6%) remained neutral, and 32.6% disagreed or strongly disagreed. This distribution suggests some uncertainty among students about how access policies affect campus security, though a significant number still view it as a contributing factor.

Interestingly, when asked whether alcohol or drug use among students contributes to campus crime, nearly half of the respondents (48.5%) strongly disagreed, and only 11.1% agreed. A large percentage, 28.4%, remained neutral, and just 12.1% disagreed. Notably, no respondent strongly agreed. The low level of agreement may point to a disconnect between actual behaviour and perceived risk or to a cultural minimization of the dangers associated with drug and alcohol abuse. It could also reflect students' reluctance to implicate peers in criminal framing.

In contrast, financial hardship among students was widely seen as a key contributor to campus crime. A large majority (71.3%) either agreed (38.0%) or strongly agreed (33.3%) that financial difficulties can lead to criminal activities. Only a small minority (13.8%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, while 14.8% chose a neutral response. This suggests that students are highly aware of the socioeconomic pressures that may push individuals toward crime.

Also, a participant from the counselling unit reinforces the above assertions, by stating thus:

For theft, I believe one of the main causes is financial inequality. Some students do not have enough, and they get attracted to things they cannot afford. Out of that temptation, they may steal. Sometimes, they sneak out the stolen items. In some cases, they don't even have the confidence to use them openly. But because they want to belong, look good, or impress others, they resort to stealing.

(Respondent A/Female/34/Counselling Unit).

Additionally, some of the participants believe that aside from poor socio-economic status, students' family background contributes to involvement in criminal or deviant behaviours on campus. According to the president of the SRC,

...Their parents might not be aware. That's why they find it hard to stop. If they are not properly guided, it could lead to inappropriate behaviour

(Respondent C/Male/64/SRC).

Similarly, a participant commented on factors responsible for cyberbullying on campus. As recounted by the participant

... physical bullying is rare, but verbal bullying is more common. Students sometimes ridicule others, make them feel inferior, or mock how they dress or speak. These actions affect others' psychological well-being

(Respondent A/Female/34/Counselling Unit).

Put together, the results in this section show that environmental factors such as poor lighting, inadequate security personnel, financial problems/ socio-economic challenges and family background are the most potent factors contributing to campus crime.

4.4 Section D: Perceptions of Safety and Security Protocols

This section discusses students' perceptions of safety and the effectiveness of security protocols on campus. Responses were measured on a five-point Likert scale and the results are presented in Table 4.4 below.

When asked if they had ever been in a situation on campus where they felt frightened or anxious, 38.7% of the respondents said yes, while 61.3% indicated no. This suggests that while a majority of students generally feel secure, a significant portion have experienced moments of fear or anxiety, indicating the need for improved security measures.

Similarly, 43.1% of respondents reported that there are areas on campus that feel unsafe to them, while 56.9% disagreed. These close response percentages suggest that while more than half of the respondents feel generally safe in all parts of campus, a large minority perceive certain areas, possibly isolated or poorly lit spots, as dangerous. This aligns with earlier findings related to poor lighting and inadequate security.

In terms of time-specific perceptions of safety, students feel significantly safer during the day than at night. According to the results, 73% either agreed or strongly agreed that they feel safe on campus

during the daytime, while only 8.4% expressed disagreement. However, at night, perceptions shift.

noticeably: only 39.4% of respondents felt safe (agree or strongly agree), while 22.5% disagreed or strongly disagreed, and a notable 38% were neutral. This highlights a clear gap in perceived safety based on the time of day. This is an important finding that campus security enforcement agents may need to pay attention to. The perception of safety during the day may also relate to the active campus movement and activities that correlate with a sense of safety or security. The presence of visible staff and students during these periods also provides natural guardianship.

Table 4.4: Perceptions of Safety and Security Protocols

Variable		Frequency (N=297)	Percent (100%)
Have you ever been in a situation on campus where you felt frightened or anxious?	No	182	61.3
	Yes	115	38.7
	Total	297	100
Are there areas on campus that feel unsafe to you?	No	169	56.9
	Yes	128	43.1
	Total	297	100
I feel safe on campus during the daytime	Strongly Disagree	9	3.0
	Disagree	16	5.4
	Neutral	55	18.5
	Agree	145	48.8
	Strongly Agree	72	24.2
	Total	297	100
I feel safe on campus at night	Strongly Disagree	28	9.4
	Disagree	39	13.1
	Neutral	113	38.0
	Agree	98	33.0
	Strongly Agree	19	6.4
	Total	297	100
Security personnel are visible and accessible	Strongly Disagree	26	8.8
	Disagree	42	14.1

	Neutral	92	31.0
	Agree	106	35.7
	Strongly Agree	31	10.4
	Total	297	100
Campus emergency procedures are effective	Strongly Disagree	58	19.5
	Disagree	65	21.9
	Neutral	108	36.4
	Agree	51	17.2
	Strongly Agree	15	5.1
	Total	297	100.0
The university clearly communicates safety guidelines	Strongly Disagree	31	10.4
	Disagree	29	9.8
	Neutral	109	36.7
	Agree	99	33.3
	Strongly Agree	29	9.8
	Total	297	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The findings that campuses are safe in the daytime are also corroborated by insights from the qualitative data. A participant from the counselling unit in an in-depth interview recounted that:

To a certain extent, campus security is effective. We have CCTV cameras installed in strategic areas such as corridors, walkways, and classrooms. However, we are limited in placing cameras inside hostel rooms due to privacy concerns

(Respondent A/Female/34/Counselling Unit).

The finding about poor perception of safety during the nighttime aligns with previous concerns about poor lighting and insufficient security presence. It also signals the need for increased nighttime patrols and perhaps a campus transportation or escort system for late hours to enhance safety confidence after dark.

Conversely, a participant presented a contrary opinion regarding the poor perception of campus safety at night. According to the participant,

...the CCTV coverage has helped deter crime and has been useful in investigating incidents. In addition, security personnel are stationed in key locations to monitor activities on campus
(Respondent B/Male/21/SRC).

Regarding the visibility and accessibility of security personnel, 46.1% of respondents agreed, while 22.9% disagreed or strongly disagreed. A sizeable portion, 31.0%, remained neutral. This implies that although nearly half of the students acknowledge the presence of security officers, their overall visibility and approachability may still need enhancement to boost confidence in the campus security system. Similarly, the result suggests that while there may be effective visibility, other areas remain underserved or lack proactive engagement. The finding also supports earlier results about personnel numbers and deployment patterns and suggests that training on student interaction could also improve perceived accessibility.

Qualitative results also support the quantitative results on visibility and the lack of visibility in other parts of the campus. According to a participant:

...security is generally present, especially at the main gates, but within the campus, the presence isn't always strong. In areas like the hostels and cafeteria, there are times when you barely see any security personnel. I would say the current measures are helpful to an extent, but they're not very proactive. Things only tighten up after something happens

(Respondent C/Male/64/SRC).

Perceptions of the effectiveness of campus emergency procedures were less positive. Only 22.3% of respondents believed the procedures are effective (agree or strongly agree), while a larger portion (41.4%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. Additionally, 36.4% chose a neutral stance. This result reflects uncertainty or low confidence in the institution's ability to respond promptly and effectively in times of crisis. It indicates either a lack of awareness about emergency protocols or ineffective past experiences. Contrary to this result, qualitative insights show how the university responded to an

emergency situation. Although this might be a rare occasion, the respondent noted that

... just last month, an outsider attempted to scam students by distributing an account number. Thanks to CCTV, we were able to trace how the person entered and interacted with students. These efforts show how vital CCTV is, even though it might be costly. It should be maintained and utilized effectively

(Respondent A/Female/34/Counselling Unit).

On the communication of safety guidelines, 43.1% of students agreed or strongly agreed that the university communicates safety policies clearly. However, 20.2% disagreed, and 36.7% remained neutral. These findings suggest communication efforts are insufficiently comprehensive or engaging. It also suggests that many students are unaware of where or how safety information is shared.

4.5 Section E: Recommendations for Improving Campus Safety

This section discusses the recommendations for improving campus security as provided by the respondents. The results for this section are presented in Table 4.5 below.

When making recommendations, the majority of students believe that increasing the number of security officers would improve campus safety. Specifically, 39.7% agreed and 18.5% strongly agreed, making a combined 58.2% in favor increasing the number of security personnel on campus. Only a small portion of the respondents (10.4%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, while 31.3% remained neutral. This result aligns with prior concerns expressed about insufficient campus security staffing and supports the notion that a more robust and visible security presence can deter crime, though such an increase must be paired with proper training, deployment, and student engagement strategies.

Table 4.5: Percentage Distribution of Factors Contributing to Campus Crime

Variable		Frequency (N=297)	Percent (100%)
More security officers would improve campus safety	Strongly Disagree	12	4.0
	Disagree	19	6.4

	Neutral	93	31.3
	Agree	118	39.7
	Strongly Agree	55	18.5
	Total	297	100
Better lighting and CCTV will help reduce crime	Strongly Disagree	13	4.4
	Disagree	22	7.4
	Neutral	60	20.2
	Agree	123	41.4
	Strongly Agree	79	26.6
	Total	297	100
Restricting access with ID checks would improve safety	Strongly Disagree	8	2.7
	Disagree	25	8.4
	Neutral	96	32.3
	Agree	113	38.0
	Strongly Agree	55	18.5
	Total	297	100
Safety awareness programs for students would be beneficial	Strongly Disagree	0	0.0
	Disagree	17	5.7
	Neutral	65	21.9
	Agree	147	49.5
	Strongly Agree	68	22.9
	Total	297	100
Installing more emergency contact points will enhance safety	Strongly Disagree	0	0.0
	Disagree	14	4.7
	Neutral	43	14.5
	Agree	146	49.2
	Strongly Agree	94	31.6
	Total	297	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Transcript extract from an interview with the president of a the SRC supports recommendations about

increasing the number and quality of security personnel on campus. According to the participant,

... hostel porters should be better trained and more observant. They should try to monitor and understand the students better. That way, they can detect unusual behaviours early and report them appropriately...

(Respondent C/Male/64/SRC).

The respondents expressed even stronger support for technological solutions such as better lighting and the installation of CCTV cameras. According to the result, 68% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that these measures would help reduce crime, while only 11.8% disagreed. The remaining 20.2% were neutral. The relatively low disagreement suggests broad student endorsement for technological and spatial interventions to reduce insecurity. These findings align with previous results where poor lighting was identified as a significant contributing factor to campus crime. Better lighting can deter criminal activity by increasing visibility, while surveillance systems enhance monitoring and post-incident investigations.

On same note, participants in the interview sessions also acknowledged the role of the CCTV in facilitating campus safety. The respondent stated:

...I think more CCTV cameras should be installed in hotspots like the cafeteria, lecture halls, and hostel hallways. Security officers should also do regular patrols not just during events or emergencies. It would also help to create a proper lost-and-found or complaint tracking system, so that students can follow up and feel that their issues are being taken seriously. Lastly, sensitization programs on personal safety and securing one's belongings could go a long way

(Respondent C/Male/64/SRC).

...To improve security, the school should continue monitoring CCTV footage actively. For example, when an item went missing at the reception, the CCTV helped identify the culprit. There is always a security officer monitoring the screens

(Respondent B/Male/21/SRC).

Restricting access to the campus through ID checks was also seen as a potentially effective safety measure by a majority of respondents. About 38% agreed and 18.5% strongly agreed, totalling 56.5% in support. However, 32.3% remained neutral, and 11.1% disagreed or strongly disagreed. The high level of agreement suggests that students support a move toward managed entry points, digital ID scanning, or access gate protocols that balance safety with accessibility.

Furthermore, there was a high-level of support for the implementation of safety awareness programs targeted at students. Nearly three-quarters (72.4%) of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that such programs would be beneficial, while only 5.7% disagreed and 21.9% were neutral. The complete absence of “strongly disagree” responses suggest broad consensus on the importance of preventive education in enhancing campus safety. The results show students' recognition that crime prevention goes beyond infrastructure, it also involves behavior, knowledge, and culture. This suggests the need for regular training, workshops, seminars, and campaigns addressing topics like self-defense, emergency responses, and bystander intervention.

During the interview, the university counsellor identified the importance of educating students on good behaviour and reminding them that deviant behaviours have consequences as follows;

...students need to understand that university life is just a phase. Records are being kept, and their actions now could affect their future. We should encourage students to be content with what they have and assure them that better days are ahead, so they shouldn't resort to stealing.

(Respondent A/Female/34/Counselling Unit).

Finally, respondents reacted very positively to the idea of installing more emergency contact points like panic buttons and emergency phones to increase their sense of safety. A total of 80.8% (49.2% agreed, 31.6% strongly agreed) supported this intervention, while just 4.7% disagreed and 14.5% were neutral. The availability of emergency response systems provides psychological reassurance and practical functionality, potentially reducing response time during emergencies like assault, medical crises, or fire outbreaks.

A participant from the security unit emphasized the importance of parenting in improving campus security. According to the participant;

...I suggest that parents should play a stronger role. Before their children return to school, they should make sure the students are advised and trained properly from home

(Respondent C/Male/64/SRC).

4.6 Discussion of Findings

The demographic data showed a large percentage of 100-level students (49.5%) and female-dominated (74.4%) population. This population, as observed by A Ushe, M. U. (2019), is often more vulnerable to crime. According to Ushe, M. U. (2019), female students, particularly their early years of study, reported higher victimization and fear rates on Nigerian campuses. This population also fall within the definition of “suitable target” specified by the routine activity theory (RAT), especially in the absence of capable guardianship in the form of adequate security or surveillance.

Among the types of crimes occurring on campus, theft (77.8%) was most commonly cited followed by physical assault (46.5%). While sexual harassment occurred on campus, it was less frequently mentioned. As noted by Ekpoh et al. (2020), the majority of students in Nigerian universities are desensitized to harassment, such that they normalize or underreport the same due to stigma. The same trends were also followed in the interviews, with the students labeling some verbal abuse as what one could expect or not that big of a deal. This is in line with the hypotheses of SLT, where repetitive exposure and non-consequence lead to tolerant behaviour, thereby fostering destructive peer group behaviours.

Furthermore, the study identified the factors influencing the occurrence of crimes on campus. According to the result, inadequate lighting was the most cited cause of crime, followed by unrestricted access to the campus, and insufficient security personnel on campus. Interview results also identified poorly lit hostels and secluded pathways as places of greatest risk. These findings align with Ajayi and Ojo (2020), who found that environmental design played a significant role in perceived crime in Nigerian universities. Based on Routine Activity Theory, these physical vulnerabilities decrease capable guardianship and increase offender opportunities. The fact that such crime-permissive spaces exist means even minor crimes like theft or assault can be committed with reduced risk of detection.

Socio-economic conditions such as the lack of finances were also identified as a common cause of student involvement in campus crime, while only a few respondents identified drug or alcohol use as

a factor. These findings are corroborated by Ekpenyong and Okon (2020) who found that while desperation economics may fuel crime like fraud and stealing, tolerance of drug use in culture holds no imagined connection to crime back. According to the social learning theory, when students observe individuals engaging in such activities with no institutional sanctions, the act is imitated and socially reinforced. This further supports Akinyoade and Ogunmola's (2018) finding that deviance within universities is more influenced by peer approval than formal deterrents.

Similarly, while the majority of students reported feeling safe in the daytime, very few students reported feeling safe at night. The respondents also reported low availability and proximity of security personnel and found emergency procedures to be ineffective. This concurs with Agberagba (2024), who referred to lack of trust in response systems on campus as one safety inhibitor. The interviews reinforced these perceptions by mentioning late responses and absent patrols. RAT adequately accounts for the way in which these institutional inefficiencies leave students vulnerable to harm, particularly where they are unpagged. Without an effective guardian system, deterrence will fail, and the potential for crime, and more especially opportunistic crime rises exponentially.

Regarding recommendable strategies, most respondents suggested more security staff (58.2%), increased lighting and CCTV (68%), ID checking access points (56.5%), and especially safety awareness schemes (72.4%). Interviews also placed emphasis among students on the need for further practical training and enhanced emergency protocols. These are preferences that place support behind Clarke's (2018) argument that situational crime prevention must combine infrastructure with awareness. The social learning theory also aligns with this because it argues that behaviour change comes from knowledge, modelling, and reinforcement, hence the vast preference for awareness programs. When used in conjunction with RAT, findings suggest that cultural reconditioning and environmental control must be implemented to reduce campus crime and improve security.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

This research explored the pressing issue of campus crime at Thomas Adewumi University (TAU), a private institution in Kwara State, where the need for a safe learning environment remains critical to students' academic and personal growth. Despite being a private university, TAU is not immune to crimes such as theft, drug use, cyberbullying, and occasional physical or sexual harassment. Rooted in Routine Activity Theory and Social Learning Theory, the study revealed that crimes often arise when opportunities exist and behaviours are learned or reinforced by peers. Factors like peer pressure, financial hardship, inadequate lighting, and weak security structures were consistently cited as enablers of crime on campus. Through a combination of survey responses from 297 students and in-depth interviews with security officials and student leaders, the study captured both the statistics and the lived experiences of students who described unsafe areas, lack of trust in emergency systems, and feelings of fear, especially at night.

The findings paint a clear picture: while 73% of students felt relatively safe during the day, that number plummeted to 39.4% at night, with poorly lit areas and limited security patrols being the main concerns. Theft was reported as the most common crime (77.8%), followed by drug use (54.9%), and a low but likely underreported awareness of sexual harassment (19.2%). Many students expressed that poverty, ineffective security, and unrestricted access to hostels contribute to the insecurity they face. Despite the presence of CCTV and patrol services, less than half of the respondents felt that security personnel were visible or effective, and a notable portion questioned whether emergency systems would work in a crisis. Students offered strong and actionable suggestions such as improved lighting, increased patrols, better access control, and inclusion in safety initiatives to make their campus safer. Ultimately, the study highlights the importance of blending security infrastructure with a student-informed safety culture, reinforcing that safety isn't just about walls and cameras, but about trust, community, and collective vigilance.

5.2 Conclusion

This research aimed to examine the nature, causes, and prevention of crime within the Thomas Adewumi University, Kwara State, campus. The research confirmed that in the controlled setting of a private university, there is still prevalence of theft, bullying, and occasional assault. The study also confirmed that financial hardship, peer pressure, poor campus lighting, and insufficient security presence were the main drivers of the crimes. Most of the respondents indicated that they felt safe during the daytime but not so much during nighttime, especially in poorly lit and less-policed areas. These findings confirm the relevance of social learning theory and routine activity theory to explain crime on campus, where crimes occur due to the convergence of willing offenders, suitable targets, and absence of effective guardianship, as well as acquirable peer-supported learned behaviours.

The research concludes that though Thomas Adewumi University has performed remarkably well in installing surveillance cameras and deploying security officers, loopholes in crime prevention and safety awareness still exist. Problems here require a comprehensive approach, which is both environmental and social. Both increased lighting, additional security personnel, and restricted access to the campus form part of the environmental solutions, while student involvement in safety programs and education against crime constitute social solutions. Moreover, economic pressures on students will be addressed through provision of financial aid and counseling services to mitigate crimes driven by financial need, such as theft.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the research findings, the study however recommends that Thomas Adewumi University should:

1. Improve lighting in dark and isolated areas to enhance natural surveillance and reduce opportunities for crimes, especially at night.
2. Recruit and deploy more trained security officers across the campus, ensuring their visibility in hostels, cafeterias, classrooms, and walkways.
3. Introduce ID-based entry points and gate monitoring to limit unauthorized access to campus premises.

4. Expand the coverage and functionality of CCTV cameras, ensuring real-time monitoring and timely responses to incidents.
5. Organize regular workshops and campaigns to educate students about personal safety, crime prevention, and reporting procedures.
6. Strengthen emergency protocols through training drills, clear communication channels, and faster response mechanisms during security threats.
7. Encourage students to take active roles in safety initiatives, such as forming peer safety committees and neighborhood watch groups.
8. Expand scholarship opportunities, financial aid, and welfare programs to reduce the economic pressures that may push some students toward crime.
9. Provide confidential and accessible means for students and staff to report crimes or suspicious activities without fear of victimization or stigma.

5.4 Limitations of the study

While this study provides valuable insights into campus crime at Thomas Adewumi University, several limitations should be acknowledged. Firstly, the research was originally designed to cover both Thomas Adewumi University and Landmark University, with the aim of offering a broader comparative analysis across private universities in Kwara State. However, Landmark University delayed their cooperation significantly and ultimately did not provide the necessary data or access, which limited the scope of the study to a single institution. This reduced the study's generalizability and prevented a richer, multi-institutional perspective on campus crime and safety.

Additionally, the reliance on self-reported data from students and interviews with key stakeholders introduced the possibility of response bias. Some respondents may have underreported sensitive issues such as sexual harassment or drug use due to fear, stigma, or distrust, despite assurances of confidentiality. The study was also conducted within a specific timeframe, meaning that emerging incidents or shifts in campus security practices after data collection were not captured. Despite these limitations, the research remains a useful and focused contribution to understanding crime trends and

safety perceptions within the context of a private Nigerian university.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

Future studies on campus crime and security should expand beyond Thomas Adewumi University to include multiple private and public universities in Kwara State and other regions of Nigeria to enable broader comparisons of crime patterns and security practices. In addition, future research could focus on evaluating the long-term effectiveness of implemented security measures and student-centered safety programs. Qualitative studies involving more in-depth interviews with perpetrators, victims, and security personnel could provide more understanding on the root causes of campus crimes. Lastly, investigating the role of mental health, technology adoption, and social media influence on campus safety will further contribute to developing holistic crime prevention strategies in higher education environments.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Introduction

My name is Fonahanmi-Idris Opeyemi, a student of the Department of Criminology & Security Studies, Thomas Adewumi University.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. This session is part of a research study titled *“Campus Crime and Security: An Assessment of Thomas Adewumi University, Kwara State”* The purpose of this study is to explore the nature of crimes that occur on university campuses, understand the factors contributing to these incidents, assess perceptions of safety among campus members, and recommend effective strategies for improving campus security.

Your participation is entirely voluntary, and your responses will be kept strictly confidential. The information you provide will be used solely for academic purposes and will not be shared with any third party. You are free to skip any question or stop the interview at any time without any consequence.

This interview will take approximately 10–20 minutes. With your consent, I may take notes or record the conversation to ensure accuracy. There are no right or wrong answers; we are interested in your honest opinions and personal experiences.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

University _____

Position/Occupation _____

Age _____

SECTION B: QUESTIONS

1. From your experience, what types of crimes are most commonly reported or witnessed on your campus?
2. In your opinion, what are the main factors contributing to criminal activities on your university campus?
3. How would you describe the current state of campus security and the effectiveness of safety measures in place?
4. Have you or someone you know ever reported a crime on campus? If so, how was the response handled?
5. What specific strategies or improvements would you recommend to enhance safety and reduce crime on your campus?

APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE

My name is Fonahanmi-Idris Opeyemi, a student of the Department of Criminology & Security Studies, Thomas Adewumi University. I am conducting a study on *“Campus Crime and Security: An Assessment of Thomas Adewumi University, Kwara State”*. The purpose of this study is to identify common types of campus crime, factors that contribute to these crimes, and perceptions of safety among the university community.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary, and all responses will be treated with strict confidentiality and used solely for academic purposes. The questionnaire comprises five sections and should take approximately **10 minutes** to complete. Please answer all questions honestly.

For questions on a 5-point Likert scale, please use: **1 = Strongly Disagree | 2 = Disagree | 3 = Neutral | 4 = Agree | 5 = Strongly Agree**

If you have any questions or concerns, you may contact me at: crm.opeyemi.fonahanmi-contact@tau.edu.ng.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. What is your current year of study?

- a. 100 Level
- b. 200 Level
- c. 300 Level
- d. 400 Level
- e. 500 Level
- f. Postgraduate

2. What is your age?

3. What is your gender?

- a. Male
- b. Female
- c. Prefer not to say

4. Where do you currently reside?

- a. On-campus
- b. Off-campus

SECTION B: EXPERIENCE AND AWARENESS OF CAMPUS CRIMES

	Question	SD	D	N	A	SA
6.	I am aware of incidents of theft of personal items occurring on campus.					

7.	I am aware of incidents of physical assault or violence occurring on					
	Campus.					
8.	I am aware of incidents of sexual harassment or assault occurring on campus.					
9.	I am aware of incidents of property damage occurring on campus.					
10	I am aware of illegal drug use or distribution on campus-distribution.					

SECTION C: CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO CAMPUS CRIME

	Question	SD	D	N	A	SA
11.	Insufficient campus security personnel contribute to crime on campus.					
12.	Poor lighting in campus areas contributes to crime.					
13.	Unrestricted access to the campus contributes to crime.					
14.	Alcohol or drug use among students contributes to crime.					
15.	Financial hardship among students contributes to campus crimes.					

SECTION D: PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY AND SECURITY PROTOCOLS

	Question	SD	D	N	A	SA
16.	I feel safe on campus during the daytime.					
17.	I feel safe on campus at night.					
18.	Security personnel are visible and accessible.					
19.	Campus emergency procedures are effective.					
20.	The university clearly communicates safety guidelines.					

SECTION E: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING CAMPUS SAFETY

	Question	SD	D	N	A	SA
21.	More security officers would improve campus safety.					
22.	Better lighting and CCTV will help reduce crime.					

23.	Restricting access with ID checks would improve safety.					
24.	Safety awareness programs for students would be beneficial.					
25.	Installing more emergency contact points will enhance safety.					

Thank You for Your Participation

**ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CORRECTIONAL PROGRAMS ON THE
REFORMATION, REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION OF OFFENDERS IN
OKE KURA CORRECTIONAL CENTER ILORIN, KWARA STATE.**

Submitted to the

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

**IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE AWARD OF BSC IN CRIMINOLOGY AND
SECURITY STUDIES AT THOMAS ADEWUMI UNIVERSITY, OKO-IRESE, KWARA
STATE.**

BY

SARUMI YUSUF OMOBOLANLE

21/15SCS012

SEPTEMBER, 2025

DECLARATION

I, SARUMI YUSUF OMOBOLANLE, do hereby declare that this work, titled: **ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CORRECTIONAL PROGRAMS ON THE REFORMATION, REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION OF OFFENDERS IN OKE KURA CORRECTIONAL CENTER ILORIN, KWARA STATE** is a result of my research carried out in the department of Criminology and Security Studies, faculty of Management and social science, Thomas Adewumi University under the supervision of Mr Oluwatobi Akano . I further wish to declare that it has not been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any other university or institution of higher learning except where due Acknowledgement has been made on citation.

Date: _____

SARUMI Yusuf Omobolanle

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this project by SARUMI, Yusuf Omobolanle, with Matric No. 21/15SCS012 has been read and approved as meeting the requirements of the Department of Criminology and Security Studies, Thomas Adewumi University, oko, Nigeria, for the Award of Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) degree in Criminology and Security Studies.

Oluwatobi Akano.
Project Supervisor

Signature/Date

Dr. Bamidele Rasak
Head of Department

Signature/Date

Prof. Oyenuga Adedeji
External Examiner

Signature/Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research project to Almighty Allah, my late mother and to every scholar whose works of intellect were referred to during this research.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All praise and adoration go to Almighty Allah, the Creator of the heavens, earth, and all within, the Author and Finisher of my faith, who made everything possible. With deepest appreciation, I thank my supervisor, Mr. Oluwatobi Akano, for his thorough and diligent guidance, without which this study would not have been possible. I am proud to have learned from you, and each stage of this research under your mentorship was amazing. Thank you for your professional guidance, patience, and the fatherly love I received throughout my study period. Additionally, I acknowledge and appreciate Associate Prof. Bamidele Rasak, Head of the Department, for his insistence on excellence and scholarship. I also extend my gratitude to all the lecturers in the department for their invaluable knowledge, which has greatly contributed to our academic and social development. I sincerely appreciate all my lecturers. The efforts of every scholar and non-academic staff in this esteemed department are sincerely appreciated; your reviews, comments, and every input are greatly acknowledged. God bless you all abundantly.

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Abstract

This study investigates the effectiveness of correctional programmes specifically vocational training, educational activities, psychological counselling, and moral instruction on the rehabilitation, reformation, and reintegration of offenders at the Ilorin Custodial Centre, Oke-Kura, Kwara State, Nigeria. The research was guided by a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative (structured questionnaires) and qualitative (key informant interviews) data collected from 100 inmates and 10 correctional staff. Findings reveal that while correctional programmes are widely available and attended particularly vocational training and anger management their implementation remains inconsistent due to structural deficiencies such as limited funding, overcrowding, and inadequate facilities. Most inmates reported behavioral improvement, skill acquisition, and a more positive outlook toward reintegration. However, only a minority indicated a complete shift in views about crime, highlighting a gap between behavioral compliance and internalized transformation. Moreover, programme outcomes were found to be constrained by poor post-release support, insufficient employment opportunities, and societal stigma, which collectively contribute to high recidivism rates. The study concludes that although correctional interventions at the facility show promise, their long-term effectiveness depends on structural reforms, proper classification of inmates, and sustained post-release support mechanisms. The findings contribute to penal reform discourse and provide evidence-based policy recommendations for improving rehabilitation infrastructure and reducing recidivism in Nigerian correctional settings.

Keywords: Correctional programmes, rehabilitation, reformation, reintegration, Ilorin Custodial Centre, vocational training, recidivism, Nigeria, offender behavior, penal reforms

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The Nigeria Correctional Service (NCoS), which was previously the Nigerian Prisons Service, has its foundation in the colonial period, tracing its official beginnings to 1872 when the British colonial government opened the first official prison in Lagos. At first, the prison system was concerned mainly with the punishment and custody of offenders through corporal means like whipping, banishment, forced labor, and in severe cases, capital punishment. With time, though, the philosophy of correctional institutions changed particularly after Nigeria's independence to a rehabilitative and reformatory one that emphasizes the reformation and reintegration of inmates into society.

Worldwide, correctional services are no longer seen as simply punishment mechanisms but as strategic behavior modification and offender reintegration institutions. In Nigeria, this changing perspective is evident in the 2019 Nigerian Correctional Service Act, which officially initiated non-custodial sentencing, prioritized rehabilitation, and made it compulsory to have programs aimed at inmates' reintegration. Regardless of these reforms, implementation issues still influence outcomes particularly in under-resourced areas such as Ilorin, Kwara State, where overcrowding, dilapidated infrastructure, and shortages of personnel are characteristic of custodial facilities (Ajomo, 2021).

Besides chronic systemic constraints, the COVID-19 pandemic also severely impacted correctional systems around the world and Nigeria was not an exception. One of the most negatively impacted areas of correctional management was rehabilitation programs that are at the core of the contemporary philosophy of incarceration. Public health measures put in place during the pandemic caused the suspension of essential services in prison settings, including vocational training, religious services, psychological counseling, and educational programs (Akinwale, 2021). The interruptions compromised inmates' psychological well-being and disrupted their rehabilitation schedules, postponing reintegration and potentially escalating post-release recidivism.

Additionally, mental health stressors intensified these losses. Fear of contracting the virus, along with isolation and limited availability of medical and psychological services, heightened anxiety, aggression, and depression among prisoners (Ilesanmi et al., 2021). Support that normally depended on close human contact like counseling, peer mentoring, and spiritual guidance was either suspended or replaced with virtual equivalents that most correctional facilities were not well-prepared to provide because of digital infrastructure deficiencies (Adebisi & Lucero-Prisno, 2021).

This is complicated further by the demographic truth in Nigerian prisons. The population of adult inmates has risen appreciably in recent years, and more than 70% of them are functionally illiterate (Ajomo, 2021). This gap in literacy restricts the participation of inmates in academic and vocational programs aimed at preparing them for reintegration. While the 1971 White Paper on the Reformation of Nigeria Prisons made custody, diagnosis, correction, training, and rehabilitation some of the functions of the prison system (Alemika, 2020), most of the correctional centers today are not well prepared to perform these functions optimally.

Rehabilitation of offenders is a foundation of contemporary criminal justice across the world. Its aim is to convert convicted offenders into law-abiding citizens via organized interventions that tackle both their offending behaviors and root risk factors. According to Andrews and Bonta (2010), successful rehabilitation should not only alter behavior, but also provide offenders with life skills, educational credentials, and a new lifestyle. Empirical research has persistently demonstrated that prisoners who undergo vocational training, literacy classes, and psychological treatments are considerably less prone to recidivate after release (Lipsey et al., 2007).

In particular, vocational training programs seek to equip inmates with practical, marketable skills that heighten employability and self-sufficiency. Such programs are not simply economic instruments but are also vehicles for advancing self-esteem, discipline, and behavioral change. Likewise, cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), literacy education, and restorative justice initiatives address the psychological and social causes of criminality from substance abuse and anger management problems to trauma histories and social marginalization (Cullen, Jonson & Nagin, 2011). The integration of these programs is key to recidivism reduction and public safety protection.

However, in Nigeria particularly in states such as Kwara the execution of such programmes is frequently irregular, poorly supervised, or confined to urban custodial centers. The present study

thus attempts to explore the effectiveness of correctional programmes presently employed in Ilorin custodial center Oke -Kura, Kwara State, and specifically how they affect the reformation, rehabilitation, and reintegration of offenders. A systematic assessment of these interventions is necessary not just for future policy guidance but also for strengthening the human rights standards and long-term results of Nigeria's correctional system.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria, the correctional system has evolved from a punitive to a rehabilitative model, as seen in the Nigerian Correctional Service Act of 2019. The law prioritizes rehabilitation and reintegration ahead of punishment, marking a major policy change (Alemika, 2020). Although such reforms have been put in place, the performance of correctional programmes continues to be uneven, with most facilities hampered by insufficient funding, overcrowding, dilapidated infrastructure, and limited trained staff. These limitations prevent uniform implementation of rehabilitation programmes, leading to extensive variation in programme outcomes throughout the nation (Ajomo, 2021). The Ilorin correctional centre reflects many of these systemic issues while also embodying a possible model for focused rehabilitation via organized programmes.

Vocational training in tailoring, carpentry, and agriculture has been added to literacy, counseling, and religious studies. Yet, the effectiveness of such programmes in actual inmate rehabilitation and societal reintegration is largely under-researched and under-assessed. This information gap hinders the evaluation of intervention effectiveness for reducing recidivism and enhancing post-incarceration outcomes. Based on Nigerian Correctional Service statistics (2023), more than 75% of Nigerian correctional centres are over their design capacity, and many inmates do not have access to ongoing rehabilitation programs. Furthermore, PRAWA (2022) indicated that only around 35% of Nigerian inmates are engaged in any type of vocational or educational rehabilitation programme, usually as a result of insufficient resources and irregular programme implementation. This underuse demonstrates incongruence between policy and practice, counteracting the rehabilitative objectives of the system.

To back this up, Ajomo (2021) noted that statistics from 19 Nigerian prisons show that more than 60% of prisoners are recidivists, i.e., previously convicted offenders who commit offenses again. This percentage points to the failure of correctional interventions to eliminate the causes of criminal tendencies. Amnesty International (2020) also reported that most Nigerian prisons have

no functional rehabilitation facilities and face irregular program implementation, especially for remand prisoners and those sentenced to short terms. Such system weaknesses diminish prospects for effective personal transformation.

Cullen et al. (2011) underscored that most ex-offenders revert to crime not out of desire, but because they lack life skills, employability, and community support, which often results from insufficient or irrelevant correctional programmes. In the same vein, Lipsey et al. (2007) observed that while most offenders undergo rehabilitation programmes during incarceration, the lack of post-release support and market-relevant skills usually results in a relapse into criminality, consequently undermining correctional services' fundamental mission. In spite of concerted efforts at prison reform in Nigeria, the incidence of recidivism continues to remain high, bringing into serious question the effectiveness of correctional programmes. The Nigeria Correctional Service (NCoS) 2023 Annual Report revealed that more than 68% of inmates released from prison between 2019 and 2022 were re-arrested within 24 months, an apparent indication that current reformation and rehabilitation measures are not yielding long-term behavioral change.

This fact is exacerbated by congestion, inadequate funding, lack of aftercare services, and restricted access to certified vocational training all of which frustrate the reintegration of ex-offenders into society. Prisons, such as the Ilorin Custodial Centre Oke-Kura, persist in having systemic issues in preparing offenders with the cognitive and economic skills necessary for reintegration.

Furthermore, although a variety of vocational and psychological intervention programs are available, there is limited empirical evidence to support their effectiveness from the point of view of the most affected offenders themselves. The research is thus required to examine whether such interventions are meeting their stated objectives of reformation, rehabilitation, and reintegration, or merely institutional routine formalities.

This study, therefore, assessed the effect of correctional programs on the rehabilitation, reintegration and reformation of offenders in the Ilorin correctional facility. By evaluating the structure, implementation, and impact of these interventions, the research aims to generate

evidence-based recommendations that can enhance rehabilitation outcomes, reduce recidivism, and contribute to safer, more inclusive communities.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the effect of vocational training and other correctional programmes on the rehabilitation reintegration and reformation of offenders in Ilorin. Specifically, the study seeks to;

- i. assess the types of correctional programmes available at Ilorin correctional centre Oke-Kura.
- ii. examine the contribution of vocational training programmes to reducing recidivism in Ilorin correctional center Oke-Kura,
- iii. determine the factors that affect the effectiveness of correctional rehabilitation reformation and reintegration programmes at Ilorin correctional centre Oke-Kura,

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions will be answered in the course of the study.

- i. What are the types of correctional programmes available at Ilorin correctional centre Oke-Kura,
- ii. To what extent do vocational programs impact recidivism Ilorin correctional center Oke-Kura?
- iii. What are the factors that affect the effectiveness of correctional rehabilitation, reformation and reintegration programmes at Ilorin correctional centre Oke-Kura?

1.5 Scope of the Study

This research was aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of correctional programs in the reformation, rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders at Ilorin custodial center Oke-Kura. It investigates the degree to which these interventions aid in the acquisition of skills, change of behavior, and reintegration into society. The study encompassed vocational training programs, education, psychological counseling, and other rehabilitation activities being undertaken in correctional centers in Ilorin.

The research aimed at both the inmates involved in such programs and the correctional officers who implement them. It addressed the success of the programs at lowering recidivism, enhancing employability, and promoting social reintegration. The geographical coverage is confined to prisons within Ilorin correctional center Oke-Kura, and the temporal coverage looked at recent information from the last five to ten years in order to get current trends and advancements.

In addition, the research used a mixed-method design, employing surveys, interviews, and case studies to collect qualitative and quantitative data. The results give insight into the strengths and weaknesses of current correctional programs, making recommendations on how their effectiveness in the rehabilitation of offenders can be improved.

As a result of institutional policies, security issues, and ethical limitations, access to prisoners was restricted. In most instances, researchers are allowed to engage with pre-selected populations under the monitoring of corrections staff, something that could have affected the openness and honesty of prisoner responses. Additionally, some segments of prisoners particularly those in maximum-security facilities or subject to disciplinary sanctions, were not allowed to participate, something that may have biased the results.

The research findings are context-specific and might not be generalizable outside the Ilorin correctional setting. Correctional centers in other locations in Nigeria could be very different in relation to resources, programme implementation, composition of inmates, and administrative support. Caution should therefore be taken in generalizing the conclusions to the national level in the absence of comparative studies.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This research is important for a number of reasons. In the first place, it presents empirical data from the field collected directly from correctional officers and inmates on the effectiveness of correctional programmes in Ilorin custodial center Oke-Kura, Kwara State. In examining both the experiential benefits and structural shortcomings of these interventions, the study presents a critical assessment of Nigeria's existing rehabilitation infrastructure.

Second, the results have applied policy relevance, particularly for stakeholders like the Ministry of Interior, the Nigerian Correctional Service (NCoS), and NGOs operating within the criminal justice system. The findings from a study like this can be used to guide program redesign, resource reallocation, and the incorporation of certified vocational curricula that enhance post-release employability.

Thirdly, this research adds to the general discussion on penal reform in Nigeria in that it identifies the post-release conditions that commonly result in recidivism like stigma from society, unemployment, and poor aftercare structures. The study therefore closes the gap between custodial programming and post-custodial effects by providing evidence-based solutions for a more integrated and sustainable model of correction.

1.7 Operational Definition of Key Terms

Recidivism: is defined as the tendency of previously incarcerated individuals to reoffend and return to prison, remains a significant challenge worldwide.

Correctional Programmes: refers to structured interventions that aid in the social reintegration of inmates and lower recidivism, such as education, vocational training, work programmes, and cognitive-behavioral treatments.

Reformation: Reformation is the internal process of change in the behavior and attitudes of offenders through incarceration with a view to changing them into law-abiding citizens. It entails those correctional interventions that are designed to impact criminal thinking, moral reasoning, and social responsibility for the purpose of internal rather than merely external change.

Rehabilitation: one of the fundamental aims of imprisonment. Section 10(1) prioritizes "affording opportunities for the education, vocational training, and moral reformation of prisoners."

Reintegration: Reintegration is the procedure by which a released offender is effectively returned to society, both economically and socially, having served a sentence. It involves offering support mechanisms that assist the ex-offender in settling back into society and not committing another crime.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Conceptual Review

2.1 Rehabilitation/Correction

Rehabilitation or correction is the process of helping individuals, especially inmates, re-adjust to society or return them to their productive function within it. The American Psychological Association (2018) defines rehabilitation as the attempt "to restore to useful life, as through therapy and education," or "to restore to good condition, operation, or capacity." The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2018) emphasizes that rehabilitation approaches must be adapted to the individual needs of offenders and the institutional environment. These can consist of educational and vocational training to improve employability, psychological treatment for individual behavioral problems, and more. The underlying assumption of correctional rehabilitation, as supported by Cullen and Gendreau (2000), is that criminality is not fixed; instead, individuals can be changed and integrated back as productive members of society.

The word "correction" indicates the set of measures to alter unwanted behavior among individuals especially offenders so that they can become law-abiding and productive members of society. Correctional practice, as defined by Cullen and Jonson (2017), includes diverse techniques and programs such as therapy, education, vocational training, and moral reform, with the objective of lessening recidivism and reintegrating criminals into society. These practices are not simply punitive but are intended to correct criminal behavior by infusing prosocial attitudes and enhancing psychological well-being.

In Nigeria, the Nigerian Correctional Service (NCoS) is charged with the responsibility of providing not just secure custody for convicted and awaiting-trial offenders but also ensuring their reformation, rehabilitation, and reintegration into society. As stated in the Nigerian Correctional Service Act (2019), the roles of the NCoS include safe custody, the enforcement of sentences, and the administration of correctional programmes that will prepare offenders to acquire the skills and values necessary to live responsibly after discharge. The correctional institution is thus a dual institution: it is an institution of lawful punishment and a transformative institution designed to ensure no future offending.

In addition, a correctional centre, as stipulated under South Africa's Correctional Services Act No. 111 of 1998, is any institution created for the reception, detention, confinement, treatment, training, or rehabilitation of offenders. The centres could be police lock-ups or temporary holding facilities, particularly for young adults aged 18 to 20 years. The institutions are not only supposed to implement custodial sentences but also act as channels for the correction of behaviour and reintegration into society through well-planned and humane interventions (Republic of South Africa, Department of Correctional Services, 2019).

2.2 Nature of Correctional Programmes available for Nigerian Prisons

There are several correctional programmes which Nigerian prison utilizes in order to rehabilitate its wards. Section 58 of the Standard Minimum Rule contends that imprisonment can fulfill its purpose of protecting society from crime and therefore be justified only if the time of imprisonment is utilized in a way to ensure as far as possible, that when an offender returns to society, he/she is not only willing but also prepared to lead a law-abiding and self-supporting life (UN Standard Minimum Rules-section 58 and 59). The most significant among these programmes are vocational and academic education, social welfare services and religious programmes, recreations and the re-establishment or maintenance of wholesome communication between the prisoner and his family and friends (Osayi, 2015). In the view of Orakwe (2011), the following are significant corollaries of a prison rehabilitation process:

2.3 Communication

Communication with the outside world is deemed to be of utmost importance for a prison inmate. It is among the social welfare programs initiated to assist prison inmates in writing and receiving letters to and from family members and friends as well as visits. These correspondences are however monitored by the prison authorities. This is in accordance with section 37 of UN Standard Minimum Rule which permits the prison inmate under essential supervision to communicate with their families and respectable friends at regular intervals, both by correspondence and by receiving visits. By supervision, the authorities demand to know what is written in the letters they write and receive. Sometimes, some letters are withheld or part of it blotted out with ink pen for security reasons. Obioha (2011) noted that the prison needs to know what is written in their letters and where it is found to give information about the prison; the prison authorities reserve the right to protect prison security by seizing the letters or ink over the sections that are unacceptable. Beyond

merely preparing the ground for their successful reintegration into the society upon release, the right of the prison inmate to receive letters and visitors is of a vital importance to him and his survival.

2.4 Recreation

A sentence of imprisonment is typically a sterile interval in the life of the offender, characterized by the atrophying of skills and talents and an all pervading, unrelenting and unremitting boredom. A fundamental problem in every prison system is how to counteract and keep at bay this physical, psychological and spiritual deterioration of the prison inmate. The contemporary prison combats these challenges through a twin programme of recreation and education (Orakwe, 2011). Regrettably, the Nigerian prison acknowledges, in theory, the necessity to provide the prison inmate with time for recreation. Things are entirely different in practice, however. From the reports of the Civil Liberties Organization, the opportunity or facilities to exercise body and mind for mental and physical well-being is entirely out of the question since only a few prisons have games and sporting facilities. Most have neither football fields nor basketball courts, neither race tracks nor gymnasium (Otu, M. S.2015). The only games they have according to the report are either ludo or some card games which the prison inmates succeed in smuggling past the warders. Due to the lack of this essential rehabilitation programme, Osayi (2015) noted that since the prison inmates have little or nothing to do at these times, they are not always easy to handle; they were a potential source of danger to prison security. They are always, running around and it is not possible to see all of them at the same moment. They can easily hatch something and can easily start rioting. But if they are busy playing football or other team games, their minds will be preoccupied and one can easily keep one's eyes on them and the handful who are doing nothing. That is why in the majority of prisons, they are not let out due to insufficient recreational facilities to keep them occupied and for fear that they can devise and attack the warders and attempt to escape (Osaze, 1996).

2.5 Education and Vocational Training

If the provision of games and sports facilities is poor, educational resources are in poorer conditions. As at the time of the Nigeria Prison Service Annual Report in 2009, only sixty-seven prisons out of the one hundred and twenty-nine prisons and two hundred and thirty-two lock-ups in Nigeria have anything resembling libraries. According to the report, most of these libraries are

actually nothing more than reading rooms with a handful of volumes, predominantly of Bible and the Koran on bare and dusty shelves.

Basically, Nigerian prison service operates educational and vocational training programs with the aim of empowering the prison inmates with trades with which to earn decent livelihood upon the completion of their sentences of imprisonment. Aside from preparing them for such pre-examination tests as the general certificate of education, the program is meant to prepare prisoners for various trades, such as tailoring, woodwork, weaving, soap making, art, house painting, electrical installations, farm work, etc.

A research on four prisons in Kwara State, Oke-Kura (Ilorin), Madala, Omu-Aran, and Lafiaji, pointed out that inmates frequently find the current library situation unhelpful. Most of them use religious buildings, including mosques and churches, to satisfy their information needs. Some of the challenges it discovered were inadequate funding, limited use of library materials, and lack of infrastructure facilities, which together affect inmates' access to educational and rehabilitation activities.

In an attempt to solve such problems, the Kwara State chapter of the National Library of Nigeria took its Annual Readership Promotion Campaign to the Borstal Training Institute at Ganmo. This was done to inculcate the habit of reading in the inmates by giving them chosen books to satisfy their information needs, thus facilitating personal development and rehabilitation.

2.6 Vocational Training

Vocational education, is a form of education that seeks to "equip learners with knowledge, skills, and competencies required for specific occupations, trades or classes of occupations or trades." (Chiang et al., 2022). Vocational education and training (VET) is a method of education that is focused on practical skills development and application of learning outcomes within the labor market (Mustapa et al., 2015). VET differs from general education, in that it is not normally organized in a uniformed framework, and may be provided by a range of training providers, including state, non-governmental and private institutions, with diverse interests, administrative structures, and traditions.

Vocational training, which is an essential element of CE, includes career and technical education programs that aim to provide inmates with job-ready skills. Rivera (2016) argues that the broad

aim of vocational training is to eliminate offending behavior by preparing inmates with the skills to find jobs after release. This argument is reinforced by various studies that show the rehabilitative impact of vocational training on offenders. For example, quantitative and qualitative studies in South Africa illustrate that correctional education programs have a significant transformative impact on offenders as they enhance their self-confidence, improve literacy levels, and provide them with practical skills (Vandala & Bendall, 2019).

In addition, VET is more concerned with pre-service training and education, which prepares students to address particular labor market demands. Public formal VET, nonetheless, overlaps clumsily with both the school and tertiary education systems, and responsibility for VET policy is frequently divided between Ministries of Education and Ministries of Labor and/or Employment (Bosch & Charest, 2018). In other cases, for example, apprenticeship systems in the USA or Canada, there could be no institutionalized connections with the general education system, and responsibility for training may rest exclusively with the social partners or enterprises. Even so, the state can continue to shape training by enforcing labor or product market regulations, for example, licensing, levy systems, or quality standards.

The decline of vocational training systems in liberal market economies has led to a shortage of vocationally qualified labor (Bosch & Charest, 2018). Governments in countries such as Australia, the United Kingdom, and Canada are attempting to elevate the status of vocational training and establish new apprenticeship systems. School-based vocational training is also being expanded, and universities are increasing their offering of courses with strong vocational content in countries with weak vocational training systems.

Vocational education and training are critical to closing the gap between theoretical education and practical work capabilities. Through direct access to the labor market, VET improves individual professional careers, raises earnings, enhances economic productivity, and promotes social cohesion (Biavaschi et al., 2022). Young individuals who do not have adequate training, however, can experience long-term detrimental consequences of early unemployment in an unstable job market position that can lead to poor future opportunities (Scarpetta et al., 2020). The appeal of vocational training is dependent in large measure upon its connection to the labor market, with decent remuneration and possibilities for career progression. Pure on-the-job training can lead to higher remuneration in the short term compared to being engaged in qualifying training programs

which give a more organized method to acquire skills and prepare for the workforce. Vocational training, therefore, has high potential in achieving a smooth transition from school to work, reducing the adverse impacts of early youth unemployment and idleness, and improving economic and social outcomes.

2.7 Rehabilitation Programmes

Rehabilitation programmes are described by the World Health Organisation (WHO) (2023) as a collection of interventions aimed at maximising functioning and minimising disability in people with health conditions in interaction with their environment. Within correctional services, rehabilitation programmes target reoffending specific risk factors, and are created to aid offenders in living within the community without committing offences (Department of Correctional Services Australia Annual Report 2021-22).

Different rehabilitation programmes are available to enable the rehabilitation of offenders, including youth offenders in correctional services. Rehabilitation programmes are described by the World Health Organisation (WHO) (2023) as a collection of interventions aimed at optimising functioning and minimising disability in individuals with health conditions in interaction with the environment. For this matter, they are intended to help offenders to be as independent as possible in daily activities and enables participation in education, work, leisure and meaningful life roles such as caring for the family (WHO 2023). For this reason, these programmes are well-planned processes which need to be finished over a specific time frame. The Department of Correctional Services Annual Report (2021-22) identifies that most programmes target specific risk factors for reoffending and are meant to help offenders to live in the community without offending. To this end, the department provides:

- i.** Tailored rehabilitation – aimed towards an offender’s individual risk and protective factors.
- ii.** One-to-one rehabilitation – designed for complex offenders for whom group-based approaches would be inappropriate or ineffective.

- iii. Clinical/case/criminogenic formulation – conducted by clinicians, and aims to identify the underlying causes for an individual’s problematic behaviours, and how they should be targeted through treatment; and
- iv. Cognitive-behaviour therapy (CBT) – a type of psychotherapy that aims to help the offender to change unhelpful or unhealthy habits of thinking, feeling and behaving, which involves practical self-help strategies designed to effect positive and immediate change in the offender’s quality of life.

2.8 Recidivism

Schoeman (2002) and Gaum, Hoffman and Venter (2006) describe recidivism as a cycle of repeated sentencing. Recidivists are repeat offenders who commit offences more than once. Quan-Baffour and Zawada (2012) describe recidivism as the percentage at which imprisoned offenders resume crime (and correctional institutions) following release from incarceration. Correctional vocational training; social rehabilitation and integration can go a long way in mitigating recidivism if more comprehensive approaches to interventions are adopted towards offenders.

Criminal recidivism rates are frequently employed as one of the main measures of the effectiveness of criminal justice systems. Specifically, they are employed to determine which offender management programmes are implemented on a large scale (Robinson et al., 2021). Recidivism rates are collected routinely by the majority of countries and reported by specialized governmental agencies (Federal Statistical Office, 2015; Ministry of Justice, 2023; SPAC, 2018). Recidivism is operationalized differently, and previous systematic reviews identified that the 2-year reconviction rate is the most frequently reported outcome in released prisoners and individuals completing community sentences (Yukhnenko, et al., 2019). Recidivism rates are mainly utilized to evaluate the performance of state and national justice systems or rehabilitation programmes over time. Governments and agencies commonly aim to introduce policy and practice changes that reduce recidivism rates. Nevertheless, reported recidivism rates are influenced by numerous factors, many of which are not necessarily linked to the effectiveness of the rehabilitation and reintegration of sentenced individuals. They include the source of data, the definition of recidivism employed, and the follow-up period (Andersen & Skardhamar, 2017; Yukhnenko, Sridhar, & Fazel, 2019). Recidivism rates should also be understood against the background of general crime rates that are

reliant heavily on general economic and demographic factors (Anser et al., 2020). Due to the complex, multicausal nature of reported recidivism rates, their utilization for international and inter-jurisdictional comparison is frequently problematic. Yet, despite this, recidivism rates are commonly and inappropriately used to compare the effectiveness of alternative approaches to criminal justice across different countries, particularly by the media (BBC News, 2019).

2.8.1 Measuring Recidivism

Quite possibly the most contentious matter concerning recidivism is how challenging it is to quantify its occurrence. The rates of recidivism have been estimated to be anywhere from 40% to 80% in the United States and Canada, for instance. What explains these varying rates? One reason is the type of measurement employed.

Yukhnenko, Sridhar, and Fazel, (2019), three methods are commonly used. Firstly, criminologists look at rearrest rates. This method provides fairly simple access for information gathering (through comprehensive police and Federal Bureau of Investigation reports). The records also tend to include prior offender histories of arrest and conviction, and an arrest tends to lead to conviction and imposition of a new sentence. Even so, whereas this measure does possess merits, some consider that it is not an accurate gauge of recidivism (Browne, 2020). Individuals who are arrested are not always convicted or even charged. As such, discrepancies are likely to occur, particularly with small-scale research. These discrepancies are likely to lead to disproportionate or inaccurate recidivism rates.

A second strategy employed by researchers is to study reconviction rates. This indicator has the benefit of being a direct measure of recidivism in which a formal finding of guilt is rendered by a court. In addition, state and federal records are easily accessible for researchers to analyze, and reconviction will frequently involve an offender entering a guilty plea, thus reaffirming a trend of recidivism (Thailand Institute of Justice, 2021; Tsai, I.-C., & Wu, Y.-T. 2022). Yet this indicator likewise has its drawbacks. For a finding of guilt to be rendered in a trial, a certain burden of proof must be established. Although the legal requirement is an essential guarantor of due process and justice, it periodically leads to distorted recidivism rates. Put another way, a lack of a finding of guilt does not always imply that an individual taken into custody did not perpetrate a crime. The burden of proof merely may not have been established. Therefore, recidivism based on

reconviction may fail to portray the true rate of reoffending (Balduzzi, Rücker, & Schwarzer, 2019).

One last measure of recidivism is that of resentence to prison. This measure of data depends on state and federal corrections to report data on offenders who are incarcerated. Recidivism, under this approach, is measured by the number of individuals who are currently incarcerated but have been previously convicted of other offenses. This measure has the unique benefit of being very detailed, with information on the arrest, the conviction, the sentence length, the prior sentence, along with an evaluation of how effective prior sanctions were at reducing recidivism (Stewart, et al., 2019). This measure, however, only shows recidivism in instances where there is incarceration. Since many convictions end in alternatives to incarceration, this method will also underreport the rates of reoffending (Yukhnenko et al., 2019).

2.8.2 Influence of Vocational Training Programmes on Recidivism in Nigeria

A unit called Prison Furniture Cottage Industry aimed at providing some vocational training to offenders was set up in Nigeria. It is a reformation centre where doors, office accessories, beds, household furniture, key holders, walking sticks etc. are made. Other vocational trainings are also offered to offenders, particularly those who did not have any stable job prior to their incarceration (Oluwakuyide, 2021). Nigerian Prisons System provides vocational rehabilitation programme to offenders. The primary purpose of setting up correctional services is to offer rehabilitation to offenders. However, a casual look at the population that comes in and out of the Nigerian prison service indicates that there is an issue in the system; thus the system has not been able to play its expected role in terms of vocational rehabilitation programmes.

Scholars in Nigeria like Osayi (2023) have corroborated that there is a rise in the rate of reoffending and that male offenders are more likely to reoffend. Many offenders have reoffended because past efforts have not garnered the expected results. These involve remodeling offenders to be better off than when they were imprisoned. Offenders are rehabilitated in order to be endowed with new skills (Obiaka, 2021). Based on the research work carried out in twelve Nigerian states, most offenders have poor literacy levels and are poorly rehabilitated (Joseph, 2022). The poor attention given to offenders can escalate the rate of recidivism instead of curbing increases in crime rate. It is for this reason that recidivism is on the rise in Nigeria. Carpentry, tailoring, signwriting and carving are some of the vocational skill training programs that are offered at the Nigerian prisons.

These skills are too archaic and are not able to offer sustained post-sentence rehabilitation via self-employment. It must be understood that ex-offenders can only venture into self-employment since it is the policy of governments in Nigeria that it is not easy to be offered work in government service.

In the same vein, members of the organized private sector are not willing to offer employment to ex-offenders. Aside from the limited numbers of vocational skills training programs being offered in prisons in Edo State, human and material resources are not sufficiently provided (Imhabekhai, 2002). A large percentage of Nigerian young adult offenders require vocational training (Joseph, 2012). Young adult offenders are lower than the average for the general population in the areas of education levels, work experience, and skills (Obiaka, 2011). The majority of prison services in Nigeria are inundated with young adult offenders, males with a high rate of high school dropouts.

2.8.2 Factors Inhibiting the Success of Correctional Rehabilitation Programmes in Nigeria

There are also factors inhibiting the success of rehabilitation programmes, one of the foremost being no facilities and inadequate classification of offenders.

(a) Lack of Facilities/Infrastructure

Nigerian prisons service are deprived of facilities for rehabilitation and reformation of offenders. Facilities such as workshops for the training of offenders are not provided. Such workshops usually are used for the training of offenders in handcrafts so that they can fall back to them up on gaining freedom. However, these workshops are not present in the prisons service, and where they are provided, they are slow. Other facilities such as recreational grounds are not also provided. This is one of the factors that lead to ineffective offender rehabilitation in Nigeria Otu M. S. (2015). In a recent study conducted by Amali, Barkuizen and Petrus (2017) it was discovered that only a 27 percent of offenders were involved in rehabilitation programmes with the balance (73%) were not involved at all in any rehabilitation programmes. The quantitative data also revealed that only 26.5 percent of offenders were satisfied with the existing rehabilitation programmes.

From the information provided above, it is clear that the majority of the offenders are not contented with the rehabilitation facilities and programmes. Vocational programmes were deemed sufficient

considered adequate by only 7.3 percent of the offenders. This suggests that the majority of offenders perceived vocational training inadequate. Lack of funding appears to be the main reason

for lack of materials and failure to replace worn-out equipment and machines used for reformation and rehabilitation (Umah, 2004). In a study conducted in Nigeria Edo State, inmates indicated that available materials were inadequate for effective provision of correctional education especially vocational training programs in Edo State prison (Imhabekhai, 2002).

(b) Lack of Proper Classification of Offenders

In Nigeria, crime was seen as an illness which must be treated and as a result, at the point of entry offenders were diagnosed and assessed scientifically for the symptoms of this illness which is crime. The results of the diagnosis determined classification of offenders (Asokhia & Osuman, 2013). Lack of proper offender classification is another factor that hinders the effectiveness of rehabilitation in Nigeria. Different classes of offenders are lumped together in correctional cells because of space; overcrowding Otu, M. S. (2015). This is supported by Adetula & Fatusin, (2010) who stated that, in most correctional facilities in Nigeria, the remand and convict population, the minor and serious offenders and the younger and old offenders are not systematically sorted into different cells. The Standard Minimum Rules for imprisonment are not upheld which prescribes that offender should be locked up according to their category. In terms of rehabilitation programmes, offenders are not allocated to programmes based on their needs, they are not assessed for their risk/needs. First time offenders and recidivists are locked up in the same cells thereby giving room for first offenders to learn criminal way of life from the recidivists (Otu, M. S. 2015)

2.9 Factors Influencing Recidivism After Release

2.9.1 Unemployment

The lack of work experience and skills, when combined with low education levels make it difficult for young adult offenders to obtain employment upon release and can contribute to further criminal behaviour (Lawrence, Mears & Dubin, 2009). Otu, M. S. 2015) states that unemployment is a factor that is usually linked with crime and recidivism. Unemployment usually leads to poverty which is even a worse social problem. Both of them are therefore interwoven. The most pressing social problem in Nigeria today and indeed all over the developing world stem from lack of employment. Otu, M. S. (2015) proposed that government seems to have little or no provision for gainful employment opportunities or arrangement for proper rehabilitation of discharged offenders

in the society. The social stigma ex-convict attached to them seems to have contributed to their problem of resettlement in the society. It looks as if one automatically becomes an outcast and ostracized once one is discovered to have been in and out of prison Work has a central position in all of our lives because it is an economic necessity. It consumes much of our world of reality and it also have the power to bind us to reality in a mental health fostering fashion. Unless offenders are helped to want work (employment), to prepare for it, to embark on it and to pursue it through regular employment, they will work only irregularly or will not work and will continue to commit crime to obtain things, experiences or satisfaction they want or need (Inusa, D. 2021)

2.9.2 Housing

High recidivism rate indicates that offenders are not prepared to come back to society as law-abiding citizens. This is because major issues about their resettlement is poorly coordinated and has failed to address social exclusion issues such as housing and addiction problems that could lead people back into crime. Offenders are normally set free without proper arrangement for their further rehabilitation and reintegration in the society. Instead, the law itself denies them some civic rights as free citizens. They are not allowed to hold public offices as they are seen as being untrustworthy and unreliable (Osayi, 2013). The researcher is of the opinion that, these are strong factors that work against offenders' successful reintegration within the community. Although there are a number of non-governmental agencies who are trying to champion the course of released offenders, their efforts are quite insignificant. This has been found to be one of the reasons for the high incidence of recidivism in Nigeria (Osayi, 2013).

2.9.3 Inadequate Post-Prison Support Systems

The lack of comprehensive post-release support structures hampers the reintegration process. Reports indicate that insufficient rehabilitation programs, limited access to mental health services, and the absence of community support increase the risk of recidivism. Without proper guidance and resources, ex-inmates struggle to adapt to societal norms, making reoffending more likely (Ike, et al., 2023).

2.9.4 Limited Access to Legal Aid and Justice

Many inmates lack awareness of their legal rights and access to legal aid services. This deficit hinders their ability to navigate the justice system effectively, both during incarceration and after

release. The absence of legal support can lead to unresolved legal issues, contributing to recidivism.

2.9.5 Rehabilitative/Vocational and Correctional Facilities Existing in the Nigerian Prison System

According to Asokhia and Agbonluae (2013), convicted criminals are sentenced to prison for purpose of rehabilitation. Rehabilitation services are notable for their pivotal prison role in changing lives of the inmates. Change is possible for everyone. Even prison inmates can change for the better and become productive citizens. However, changing for the better and becoming productive citizens need a little sacrifice from the prison inmates and a great help from government and concerned agencies. Prison rehabilitation services were established in Nigerian prisons for the purpose of reforming the inmates. For any meaningful rehabilitation to take place in the prisons system, rehabilitation services must first be improved upon; adequate provisions made and these should be accessible to the inmates.

A study by Amnesty International (2008) on the status of Nigeria prisons found Nigeria prisons to be overcrowded with cells that hosts several under-aged children and adults, convicted felons as well as first time offenders, who are lumped together to share the same dormitory. Many of these people actually committed environmental offences. Many are in jail for such simple offences as being framed for offending a policeman who picks such persons up, frames the charges, gets the inmate sent for remand and the files gets missing for three to six years. This is the sorry state of Suleja prison.

2.2 Theoretical Review

2.2.1 The Risk, Need Responsivity (RNR) Model

The Risk, Need Responsivity (RNR) Model first emerged out of Canada in the 1980s, by Andrews, Bonta, and Hoge, during the times of doubts around rehabilitation being effective. The scientific study of criminal justice interventions has a short history, from which the first publications on the RNR model of offender rehabilitation emerged little more than 20 years ago (Polaschek, 2012). The Risk, Need and Responsivity Principles became the core of the theoretical framework used in correctional systems around the world that use science as a basis for offender rehabilitation. Founded on three core principles of offender classification; risk, need, and responsivity; today the

RNR model remains the only empirically validated guide for criminal justice interventions that aim to help offenders to depart from that system and reduce recidivism (Polaschek, 2012).

The Canadian psychologists during the 1980s and 1990s adopted the new technique of meta-analysis to create a turning point in the scientific understanding of how to reduce re-offending risk (Andrews et al., 1990). The what works research literature had an important role in the development of the RNR model, which was first published in full form in 1994 (Andrews & Bonta, 1994). The Risk, Need and Responsivity (RNR) model (Andrews & Bonta, 2010) has been the prominent approach to the treatment of offenders in Canada, as well as other parts of the world (e.g., the U.K, New Zealand & Australia) for three decades. The RNR approach and the theoretical model on which it is based have resulted in measurable gains in terms of the reliable assessment of offenders, as well as significant reductions in rates of recidivism among offenders treated in programmes that have adopted this perspective (Andrews & Bonta, 2010).

Andrew's theoretical ideas and original research were at least as important in shaping the RNR model. Andrews began in the 1970s to translate promising crime theories into effective correctional service practices (Andrews, 1982). Its strengths as a theoretical framework for offender rehabilitation are substantial; it distils a very large volume of aetiological and intervention-related information into a series of transparently simple principles for application. Notwithstanding on-going development since 1994, areas of weakness remain, but perhaps more troubling are some of the ways in which their work has been translated into practice (Andrews, 1982).

2.2.2 Social Learning Theory

Social Learning Theory, as developed by Edwin H. Sutherland and expanded by Ronald L. Akers, offers a robust explanation for how behavior, including criminal and rehabilitative conduct is acquired and maintained. Sutherland (1947) introduced the concept of Differential Association, which posits that criminal behavior is learned through interaction with others, particularly within intimate peer groups. According to him, individuals internalize values, attitudes, and techniques favorable to criminal behavior when exposed more frequently to such influences than to conforming behaviors. Ronald Akers (1998) extended this theory by incorporating behavioral psychology concepts such as reinforcement and punishment. He argued that individuals not only learn behaviors through associations but also through observing others and experiencing the

consequences of their own actions. This extension accounts for both the acquisition and maintenance of behavior patterns.

Social Learning Theory is well-suited for this study, which focuses on the rehabilitation and vocational training of inmates in Ilorin Correctional Facility. Rehabilitation inherently involves behavioral change, which occurs through exposure to new skills, pro-social values, and structured environments, precisely the mechanisms that the theory emphasizes (Akers, 1998; Sutherland, 1947).

In Nigeria, recidivism often occurs when ex-offenders return to the same peer networks and social settings that originally reinforced criminal behavior (Chukwumerije, 2023). Social Learning Theory helps explain why this happens and how correctional interventions—such as vocational training, counseling, and group therapy, can serve as positive socializing agents that encourage lawful behavior. These programs provide inmates with opportunities to observe, imitate, and internalize pro-social behaviors and skill sets that can aid reintegration (Ike et al., 2023).

- **Behavior is learned through observation and imitation:** Inmates in correctional programs often learn new attitudes and skills by observing trainers, counselors, and even fellow participants (Akers, 1998).
- **Reinforcement shapes future behavior:** When inmates receive praise or rewards (e.g., certifications, privileges) for participating in vocational training or rehabilitation programs, they are more likely to repeat these behaviors (Akers, 1998).
- **Peer influence is crucial:** Sutherland (1947) emphasized that the balance of social influences whether pro-criminal or pro-social determines behavioral outcomes. In the prison environment, peer groups can either reinforce deviance or promote transformation.

This theory applies directly to the current study, which investigates how vocational and correctional programs in the Ilorin facility influence inmate rehabilitation. These programs offer structured environments where inmates not only acquire new skills but also observe positive behavioral models, such as successful reintegrated ex-offenders and supportive correctional staff (Ike et al., 2023). These observations, coupled with rewards or recognition, reinforce behavior change.

Moreover, such interventions serve to counteract the negative peer influences that inmates may have previously experienced, replacing them with networks that promote accountability and personal development. Through repeated exposure to positive role models and reinforcement mechanisms, inmates are more likely to adopt and maintain prosocial behaviors, thereby reducing the likelihood of recidivism (Chukwumerije, 2023).

2.2.3 Empirical Review

Denis et al., (2023) did a study on criminal recidivism rates globally: A 6-year systematic review update. The study aimed to systemically review data on recidivism rate internationally and explore sources of between-country variation. Recidivism rates in individuals released from prison and given community sentences. The study also systematically searched peer-reviewed and gray literature focusing on publications since a systematic review in mid-2019. Data were extracted on reoffending, reimprisonment, and re-arrests. To examine the association between index offences and recidivism rates and risk ratios were calculated. Meta-regression was used to determine the association between recidivism in released prisoners and country-level variables. Reported effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on recidivism rates was also summarized. Findings from the 33 countries examined revealed that released prisoners had 2-year reconviction rates between 18% and 55%, while individuals given community sentences had rates between 10% and 47%. Recidivism rates varied based on proportions of index offences. Country-level factors like homicide, robbery, and imprisonment rates were associated with prisoner recidivism. Lower rates during COVID-19 were linked to disruptions in criminal justice processes, reduced prison populations, and fewer crime opportunities.

Aliyu and Mustafa (2022) did a study on prison correctional rehabilitation programme for the empowerment of inmates in Nigeria. The study investigated the effect of rehabilitation programs on prisoners and ex-offenders in terms of empowerment and recidivism, and the greatest advantages gained by inmates were in the areas of improved literacy skills, correctional and empowered vocational training. The qualitative element was dominated by a focus group with 10 informants from Oke Kura prison in Kwara State, North Central Nigeria, and it was analyzed thematically using NVivo 10. In general, determining the rehabilitation program that shapes the trajectory of recidivism among offenders. The findings revealed that correctional rehabilitation programs are the key players in the process of re-integrating inmates into society. The findings

revealed that correctional rehabilitation programs are the key players in the process of re-integrating inmates into society. The study's findings also revealed that the major factors impeding the prison rehabilitation program include rejection, assimilation challenges, and difficulty in maintaining the program's continuity, as well as insufficient training materials and a conducive learning environment, which affects inmates' performance in learning outcomes and practices of their skills.

Inusa (2021) examined perceived impact of vocational skills acquisition on reformation and reduction of recidivism by ex-convicts of Gombe central correctional centre. The main focus of the study was to assess the perceived impact of vocational skills acquisition on reformation and reduction of recidivism by ex-convicts of Gombe Central Correctional Center, Nigeria. The study used 30 ex-convicts who were jailed between six months and eight years. The instrument used for data collection was structured questionnaire which was validated by specialized in measurement and evaluation, and reliability test conducted in Faculty of Education, University of Maiduguri. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics, mean and standard deviation. The findings revealed that most of the ex-convicts were male, with informal education and age range of between 21 and 40 years. The respondents engaged more in carpentry (37%) and Welding (33%). The vocational skills acquired by inmates had great and positive impact on their reformation.

Rowlands, Palk, and Young, (2020), did a study on Recidivism rates of sex offenders managed under the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003: an evaluation of actuarial justice. The study examined sexual recidivism rates of a sample of DPSOA offenders. Court files of 104 community-supervised dangerous sex offenders (Mage \bar{M} 50.7 SD \bar{S} 10.8) were examined to determine date and type of reoffending. Recidivism was operationalised as time until arrest (for a sexual conviction/contravention). The overall level of sexual recidivism was low (7.69%).

Adepoju, O. A. et al. (2020), did a study on an appraisal of the vocational technical skills training programmes in Rivers State prisons. The study focused on appraisal and evaluation of vocational technical skills training programmes in Rivers State prisons in order to improve its value and quality to the society. A descriptive survey design approach was adopted. Data were gathered from the study's sample size that comprised of 400 male prison inmates and 200 female prison inmates. The simple random sampling techniques were used to select the respondents. Data collected were

by 27- items structured questionnaire and were analyzed with frequency, percentage and mean statistics. The study found among other things; that the number of personnel is not adequate, training given to prison inmates are not effective, tools and equipments for training are obsolete, number of persons in the prison halls are more than the size of halls.

Benjamin and Joshua (2017) did a study on the challenges facing vocational training of prison inmates in Nigeria. Stratified sampling method was used to draw sample from 307 respondents: 117 inmates awaiting trials, 147 convicts, 5 lifers and 38 prison staff. Questionnaire and in-depth interviews were used to generate data for the study. Results reveal that the following vocational facilities do not exist in the Nigerian prison system: barbing and hair dressing saloon, auto repairs and mechanics, shoe making, fashion designing, carpentry and electrical repairs. Also, the recreational facilities that are lacking include: table tennis, basketball and volleyball. The only recreational facility available is football. In addition, the Nigerian prison system also lacks the following educational facilities: library and teaching aids. Level of education of prison officers was found to be significant with awareness of the expected correctional facilities in prisons. There was no significant relationship between sex and attribution of availability of skill acquisition facilities as a prerequisite for effective correction of inmates.

Among the studies on dangerous offenders, Neller and Petris (2013) used an estimation model to consider risk level of offenders likely to be classified as sexually violent predators (United States). From a population of 20,000 sex offenders, 740 persons were assumed to be committed under the sexually violent predator (SVP) law. Their estimate suggested a high rate of recidivism (65%) within 10 years.

2.3 Literature Gap

While the reviewed studies offer valuable insights into the impact of correctional programs and vocational training on recidivism, several limitations are evident. Notably, there is a scarcity of localized, Nigeria-specific studies, particularly those that focus on Ilorin or Kwara State, which is the primary context of this research. Although Aliyu and Mustafa (2022) conducted a study involving Oke Kura prison in Kwara, most other empirical works are either global in scope (e.g., Denis et al., 2023; Rowlands et al., 2020) or focused on correctional facilities in other Nigerian states like Gombe (Inusa, 2021) and Rivers (Adepoju, O. A. et al. (2020). This geographic disconnect limits the applicability and generalizability of findings to the Ilorin context.

Additionally, many studies rely heavily on descriptive survey methods or qualitative focus groups, with limited longitudinal or experimental approaches to measure long-term rehabilitation outcomes. There is also an under-exploration of gender differences, post-release support systems, and the role of community perception or reintegration structures, all of which are critical to fully understanding the effectiveness of vocational and correctional programs. Consequently, this study aims to filled the gaps by focusing on the Ilorin correctional facility, using both qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate the real-world impact of correctional initiatives on offender rehabilitation.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a Mixed-Methods Research Design, which combines both quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a robust and multidimensional understanding of the effectiveness of correctional programmes. The quantitative component allows for the systematic collection and statistical analysis of numerical data on offender outcomes such as behavioural change, participation rates, and recidivism levels while the qualitative component captures the nuanced experiences, perceptions, and insights of inmates, correctional staff, and ex-offenders. By integrating these two methodologies, the study seeks to overcome the limitations inherent in relying on a single method and to offer a more holistic, evidence-based evaluation of reformation, rehabilitation, and reintegration efforts at Ilorin Correctional Center, Oke-Kura, Kwara State..

3.2 Area of the study

Ilorin was founded by the Yoruba, one of the three largest ethnic groups in Nigeria, in the late 18th century. It became a provincial military headquarters within the Oyo Empire until 1817, when the local Kakanfo (field marshal) named Afonja rebelled, supported by the Hausa Shehu Alimi, an itinerant Islamic preacher and teacher. Their alliance eventually broke down over the Muslims' increasing power and Afonja's refusal to convert, and he was eventually assassinated. Alimi's son Abd al-Salam pledged allegiance to the Sokoto Caliphate in 1823. Modern Ilorin is mainly inhabited by the Yoruba people, although its traditional ruler has a Fulani heritage.

The Nigerian Correctional Service (NCoS), formerly known as Nigerian Prison Service (NPS), is a government agency of Nigeria which operates prisons. The agency is headquartered in Abuja, and it is under the supervision of the Ministry of the Interior and the Civil Defence Immigration and Correctional Service. The name was changed from the Nigerian Prisons Service to the Nigerian Correctional Service by President Muhammadu Buhari on 15 August 2019 after signing the Nigerian Correctional Service Act of 2019 into law.

The Nigerian Correctional Service is an arm of the Criminal Justice System domiciled in the Ministry of Interior. The Nigerian Correctional Service is a federal phenomenon, i.e. there are no State Correctional Services in the Nigeria. Every Custodial Centre is a Federal Facility. The

operation of the Service is supervised by the Ministry of Interior and the Civil Defence, Fire, Immigration and Corrections Board.

3.3 Population of the Study

The target population for this study includes inmates in the Ilorin correctional facility, Oke-Kura who have participated in correctional programs. Additionally, correctional officers responsible for implementing these programs are included in the population. The inclusion of both inmates and officers ensures a comprehensive understanding of the programs' impact from both the participants' and administrators' perspectives.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Technique

3.4.1 Quantitative

The study adopted a mixed method research design, focusing on the Ilorin Medium Custodial Centre in Kwara State. A simple random sampling technique was applied to ensure inclusiveness and objectivity, supported by a convergent mixed-method approach combining quantitative and qualitative data.

The sampling process involved a clustered approach, where the inmate population was stratified based on program participation (e.g., vocational training, formal education, spiritual counselling). From these clusters, simple random sampling was used to select inmates, allowing each eligible participant an equal chance of selection.

In addition, purposive sampling methods were used to select correctional officers, rehabilitation personnel, and facility administrators, based on their roles, availability, and relevance to the research objectives. This non-random sampling ensured that participants who could provide credible and context-rich information on the implementation, impact, and challenges of correctional programmes were included.

The final sample size consisting of slightly over 100 inmates and a smaller group of 10 officers was determined using Cochran's formula and subsequently adjusted based on access restrictions and institutional approval protocols.

This research design and sampling approach were selected to enable a comprehensive and indepth understanding of how correctional programmes in Ilorin custodial center Oke-Kura affect reformation, rehabilitation, and reintegration. The use of a mixed method of data collection (questionnaires, interviews, and observations) was vital to achieving triangulated, reliable, and policy-relevant findings.

3.4.2 Qualitative

For the qualitative, purposive sampling was used to select the participant for the key informant, a total number of 10 participants were chosen for the key informant aspect of the study. The participants were heterogeneous in nature so as to give the research more validity and reliability and respondents.

3.5.1 Quantitative Sample Size

Given the unavailability of precise population data regarding the number of inmates participating in correctional programmes at the Ilorin Custodial Centre (Oke-Kura), the study adopted Cochran's (1977) formula to determine the appropriate sample size for a infinite proportion in large or unknown populations. The formula is expressed as.

$$n = \frac{Z^2 [p(1-p)]}{E^2}$$

Where

n=sampling size

Z= standard normal score = 1.96

P= the estimated proportion of people inmates in Ilorin custodial center= 0.5

E= sampling error that can be tolerated=5

$$n = \frac{1.96^2 [0.5(1-0.5)]}{0.05^2}$$

$$n = 3.8416 \cdot 0.25$$

0.0025

n=0.9604

0.0025

n=384.16

For finite population because the estimated population of inmates is 250

$$\frac{384.16}{1 + (384.16 - 1)/250}$$

$$= \frac{384.16}{1+1.53264}$$

$$= \frac{384.16}{2.53264} = 151.7$$

Based on credible estimates, the Oke-Kura Custodial Centre currently houses approximately 250 inmates (CLEEN Foundation, 2020). Using Cochran’s sample size formula with finite population correction (FPC), the ideal sample size for this population was calculated to be approximately 152 inmates, assuming a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. However, due to institutional restrictions and ethical clearance limits, only 100 inmates were approved for participation in the study. Despite this reduction, the sample was considered statistically sufficient for the quantitative component of this mixed-methods research. Additionally, triangulation with qualitative data from correctional officers enhanced the depth and credibility of the findings.

3.5.2 Qualitative sample size

For the qualitative phase of the study, purposive sampling was used to identify participants with specific insights into the operations and outcomes of correctional programmes. In line with As supported by Braun & Clarke (2006) and Guest, Bunce, & Johnson (2006), 10–12 interviews are often sufficient in focused qualitative research where participants share a common context and the research question is narrow in scope.

3.6 Method of Data Collection

The study adopted a triangulation method, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to gather comprehensive data from both inmates and correctional officials. This mixed-method strategy allowed for a robust assessment of correctional programmes and their perceived impact on reformation, rehabilitation, and reintegration.

3.6.1 Qualitative Method

For the qualitative phase of the study, purposive sampling was used to identify participants with specific insights into the operations and outcomes of correctional programmes. In line with As supported by Braun & Clarke (2006) and Guest, Bunce, & Johnson (2006), 10–12 interviews are often sufficient in focused qualitative research where participants share a common context and the research question is narrow in scope. Therefore, the final number of interviews conducted (10) was not only a result of field limitations but also methodologically sound and justified by data saturation and contextual constraints.

10 Key Informant Interviews (KII): with correctional officers, reintegration officers, and administrators within Ilorin Custodial Centre.

Participants were selected from across various functional departments within the facility using clustered sampling, ensuring that voices from different programme areas (education, religious instruction, vocational training, and psychological services) were represented. An heterogeneous selection approach was employed, capturing perspectives across gender, age, and rank (for staff), and across sentence type and participation level (for inmates). Interviews continued until data saturation was reached.

3.6.2 Quantitative Method

For the quantitative phase, structured questionnaires were distributed to inmates using a combination of clustered sampling (to divide inmates by programme type) and stratified random sampling to ensure representation across the different intervention categories.

The inclusion criteria for participation were as follows:

- Must be at least 18 years old
- Must have spent a minimum of 6 months in the correctional facility
- Must have participated in at least one correctional programme (e.g., vocational, educational, spiritual, or psychological)
- Must be able to understand and respond to basic survey questions independently
- Must consent willingly to participate

Participants who did not meet these conditions were excluded.

A total of just over 138 questionnaires were administered and 100 responses were gotten back . Respondents were selected based on their availability, eligibility, and willingness to participate. The instrument captured key variables such as programme participation, skill acquisition, behavioral change, and perceived reintegration preparedness.

Data was collected from primary sources, including direct responses from inmates and staff through

Structured questionnaires

Key informant interviews

The qualitative component helped to deepen understanding of the institutional challenges and personal experiences, while the quantitative data offered broad statistical insights on programme access and perceived outcomes.

3.7 Method of Data Analysis

The study employed a mixed-method data analysis strategy, aligning with its triangulation research design. This allowed the researcher to analyze both quantitative and qualitative data in an integrated and meaningful way.

3.7.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data were collected using structured questionnaires administered to inmates at the Ilorin Medium Custodial Centre. The data were entered into and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 25.

The analysis involved:

- **Descriptive statistics:** including frequencies, percentages, and mean scores to summarize the demographic characteristics of respondents and their responses regarding programme participation, skill acquisition, behavioral change, and reintegration readiness.

Data were presented in the form of tables, alongside narrative explanations to aid interpretation.

3.7.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data were obtained through Key Informant Interviews (KII) with correctional officials and vocational officers. The data were analyzed using the Thematic Analysis approach outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006).

The analysis involved:

1. Transcribing recorded interviews into textual format
2. Familiarization with the data through repeated reading
3. Coding relevant segments and categorizing them into themes
4. Identifying patterns and organizing codes into major and sub-themes
5. Interpreting the themes in relation to the research questions and objectives

The coding was conducted manually, allowing the researcher to maintain close interaction with the data. Thematic findings focused on recurring issues such as “attitude transformation,” “vocational empowerment,” “religious and moral reformation,” and “challenges to reintegration.”

This dual approach ensured that both statistical trends and context-rich narratives were captured, offering a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of correctional programmes in the study area.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

This study adhered strictly to ethical standards required for research involving human participants, particularly within correctional environments. Approval was obtained from the researcher's institutional ethics committee, and official permission were sought from the Nigerian Correctional Service (NCS), Kwara State Command, to access the Ilorin Correctional Facility. Participants, both inmates and correctional officers, were clearly informed about the objectives of the study, their roles, and their rights to voluntary participation without any form of coercion or influence.

Informed consent was obtained from each participant, and adequate time was provided to consider participation. In cases where participants have low literacy levels, verbal explanations will be given in a language they understand, and verbal consent was documented. Confidentiality and anonymity will be ensured by avoiding the collection of personal identifiers and by securely storing research data. Responses were used solely for academic purposes, and findings was reported in a manner that protects the identities of all participants.

Furthermore, the study ensured non-maleficence, meaning no harm psychological, physical, or legal, will come to participants as a result of their involvement. The researcher employed a respectful and non-intrusive approach to data collection, and participants had the freedom to withdraw from the study at any point without penalty. These measures are designed to uphold the dignity, rights, and safety of all individuals involved.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter deals with analysis and interpretation of the data collected for the study. It involved the descriptive analysis of the demographic characteristics of the respondents sampled. Thematic analysis was used to test the research hypotheses generated based on the variables.

4.0 Descriptive Statistics

The socio-demographic profile of respondents depicts the background knowledge of the respondents. It is important to place in proper perspective some demographic factors that could influence opinion. The distribution of the demographic profiles of the One hundred (100) respondents that participated fully in the study is presented. Table 4.1 summarizes the demographic profile of respondents.

Table 4.1.1 Frequency Distribution Analysis of Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics	Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)
Age (Years)	18-25 years	18	18.0
	26-35 years	46	46.0
	36-45 years	26	26.0
	46-55 years	8	8.0
	Above 55 years	2	2.0
	Total	100	100.0
Gender	Female	18	18.0
	Male	82	82.0
	Total	100	100.0
Religion	Christianity	52	52.0
	Islam	42	42.0
	Others	6	6.0
	Total	100	100.0
Marital Status	Single	58	58.0
	Married	34	34.0
	Divorced	8	8.0
	Total	100	100.0

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Level of Education	None	12	12.0
	Primary	74	74.0
	Secondary	14	14.0
	Total	100	100.0
Sentence Length	Less than 1 year	28	28.0
	1-3 years	48	48.0
	4-6 years	20	20.0
	7 years and above	4	4.0
	Total	100	100.0
Are you a first-time offender	No	10	10.0
	Yes	90	90.0
	Total	100	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The demographic characteristics of the respondents were examined to provide a contextual understanding of the population under study. A total of 100 respondents participated in the survey, and their background information is summarized and interpreted as follows:

In terms of age distribution, the majority of the respondents fell within the age bracket of 26 to 35 years, representing 46% of the total population. This was followed by those aged 36 to 45 years, who constituted 26%. Respondents within the age range of 18 to 25 years accounted for 18%, while 8% were between 46 and 55 years of age. Only 2% of the participants were above 55 years. This indicates that the study population is predominantly youthful and in their economically active years. The high concentration of individuals in the 26–35 age category suggests that this age group may be more involved in or exposed to the experiences under investigation in the study, such as rehabilitation, vocational training, or first-time offending behavior.

With respect to gender, the distribution was highly skewed, with male respondents comprising 82% and females accounting for only 18% of the sample. This significant gender imbalance may reflect broader social or institutional patterns, such as the gender composition of correctional

facilities or the nature of the offences committed. It may also underscore the need for gender-sensitive interventions or policies in addressing the issues examined in the study.

Regarding religious affiliation, Christianity was the most represented religion among the respondents, making up 52% of the total. Islam followed closely at 42%, while 6% identified with other religious beliefs. This distribution mirrors the general religious demographics of many Nigerian regions and suggests that religious values and beliefs could play an influential role in shaping the attitudes and behaviors of the respondents, particularly in relation to crime, rehabilitation, and moral orientation.

In terms of marital status, a majority of the respondents (58%) were single, while 34% were married, and 8% were divorced. The predominance of single individuals may have implications for the types of social support systems available to the respondents, which in turn could affect their coping strategies, rehabilitation prospects, and likelihood of reoffending. Educational attainment among the respondents was relatively low. A substantial 74% had attained only primary education, 14% had completed secondary education, while 12% had no formal education at all. This educational profile highlights a potential link between low educational background and vulnerability to crime or incarceration. It also emphasizes the importance of incorporating educational programs into correctional or rehabilitative interventions aimed at equipping individuals with the necessary skills for reintegration into society.

With regard to sentence length, the largest proportion of respondents (48%) were serving sentences ranging from one to three years. A further 28% were serving less than one year, while 20% were serving between four and six years. Only 4% had sentences extending to seven years and above. The dominance of short- to medium-term sentences suggests that most of the offences committed

were likely non-violent or less severe. This finding may be pertinent in formulating rehabilitation policies that target short-term inmates who have higher chances of reintegration and reform.

Finally, the analysis revealed that an overwhelming majority of the respondents (90%) were first-time offenders, while only 10% had been previously convicted. This suggests that most of the individuals in the study were encountering the correctional system for the first time, which may positively influence their responsiveness to rehabilitation programs. It also underscores the potential for preventive strategies and early interventions aimed at reducing recidivism rates among first-time offenders.

Overall, the demographic data provides valuable insight into the characteristics of the respondent population, serving as an essential foundation for understanding the broader themes of the study, such as rehabilitation, offender management, and policy development.

Table 4.1.2 Frequency Distribution Analysis on Types of Rehabilitation programmes for offenders at Ilorin Correctional Centre

Characteristics	Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)
Have you participated in any correctional programs while in custody?	No	4	4.0
	Yes	96	96.0
	Total	100	100.0
Which programs are available to you?	Educational Programs	12	12.0
	Vocational Training	30	30.0
	Anger Management	16	16.0
	Drug Rehabilitation	12	12.0
	Counseling or Therapy	6	6.0
	Religious Programs	4	4.0
	Other	20	20.0
	Total	100	100.0
How frequently do you attend these programs?	Several times a week	74	74.0
	Once a week	26	26.0
	Total	100	100.0
How did you learn about these programs?	Staff orientation	84	84.0
	Fellow inmates	16	16.0

	Total	100	100.0
Were you encouraged or assigned to participate?	Encouraged voluntarily	72	72.0
	Assigned by staff	16	16.0
	Both	4	4.0
	Neither	8	8.0
	Total	100	100.0
Who facilitates your program(s)?	Internal correctional officers	38	38.0
	External professionals	60	60.0
	Volunteers	2	2.0
	Total	100	100.0
What motivated you to join?	Personal interest	56	56.0
	Reduction in sentence	16	16.0
	Rehabilitation goals	10	10.0
	Social interaction	8	8.0
	Staff recommendation	10	10.0
	Total	100	100.0
Have the programs improved your behavior?	No	20	20.0
	Yes	80	80.0
	Total	100	100.0
Have they changed your views about crime?	Strongly Disagree	34	34.0
	Disagree	50	50.0
	Neutral	8	8.0
	Agree	6	6.0
	Strongly Agree	2	2.0
	Total	100	100.0

Source: Author's computation using SPSS

This section presents an analysis of the types, accessibility, frequency, facilitation, and perceived impact of correctional programs available to inmates in custody based on objective one set in the study. The findings provide insight into how correctional programs are structured, delivered, and received within the custodial environment.

An overwhelming majority of the respondents (96%) indicated that they had participated in at least one correctional program while in custody, while only 4% had not taken part in any such intervention. This finding suggests a high level of program exposure among the inmate population,

indicating that correctional institutions are actively providing opportunities for rehabilitation and reformation. Furthermore, when asked about the types of programs available to them, 30% identified vocational training as their primary correctional activity. This was followed by anger management programs (16%), other unspecified programs (20%), educational programs and drug rehabilitation (each at 12%), counseling or therapy (6%), and religious programs (4%). The predominance of vocational training reflects the emphasis on skills acquisition as a strategy for rehabilitation and post-incarceration reintegration. However, the relatively low accessibility of counseling and religious interventions may point to resource gaps in addressing the psychological and moral dimensions of inmate reform.

In terms of attendance frequency, 74% of the respondents reported participating in these programs several times a week, while 26% attended once a week. This high frequency of attendance highlights the structured and consistent delivery of these programs, which may enhance their overall effectiveness in promoting behavioral change. The majority of respondents (84%) learned about the available programs through staff orientation, while the remaining 16% were informed by fellow inmates. This underscores the importance of formal communication and staff engagement in ensuring that inmates are aware of and understand the opportunities available to them for personal development and rehabilitation.

Regarding the manner of program involvement, 72% of the respondents indicated that they joined voluntarily out of personal interest or encouragement, while 16% were assigned by staff. Notably, 4% reported being both encouraged and assigned, while 8% claimed they were neither encouraged nor assigned but likely joined out of their own initiative or peer influence. This suggests that while a large proportion of participation is voluntary, institutional assignment still plays a role in ensuring inmate involvement. As for program facilitation, 60% of the respondents stated that

external professionals conducted the sessions, while 38% were facilitated by internal correctional officers. Only 2% mentioned that volunteers facilitated their programs. This suggests that institutions are leveraging external expertise to deliver specialized interventions, which may improve program quality and perceived credibility among participants.

Motivation for participation varied among the respondents. A majority (56%) cited personal interest as their primary motivation, indicating a willingness for self-improvement. A further 16% participated to obtain sentence reductions, while 10% joined with rehabilitation goals in mind. Another 10% were influenced by staff recommendations, and 8% sought social interaction. This range of motivations illustrates both intrinsic and extrinsic drivers of participation, highlighting the need to tailor programs in ways that appeal to varied inmate interests and needs. In evaluating the impact of these programs, 80% of the respondents reported that the programs had improved their behavior, while 20% indicated otherwise. This suggests that the majority of inmates found the interventions to be beneficial in terms of behavioral correction, which aligns with the core objectives of correctional programming.

However, when asked whether the programs had changed their views about crime, the responses were less optimistic. Half of the respondents (50%) disagreed, while 34% strongly disagreed. Only 6% agreed, 2% strongly agreed, and 8% remained neutral. This implies that while behavioral improvements were reported, the programs may have had limited impact in reshaping inmates' deeper beliefs and attitudes toward criminal behavior. This finding highlights the need to review the content and philosophical approach of existing programs to ensure they address not only behavioral aspects but also underlying cognitive and moral frameworks.

Table 4.1.3 Frequency Distribution Analysis on Contribution of Correctional programmes to Reducing Recidivism

Characteristics	Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)
Have you learned a specific skill through correctional programmes?	No	12.0	12
	Yes	88.0	88
	Total	100.0	100
Do you think this skill is valuable outside the correctional center?	Disagree	6	6.0
	Neutral	14	14.0
	Agree	18	18.0
	Strongly Agree	62	62.0
	Total	100	100.0
Would you consider using the skill for legal employment after release?	No	30	30.0
	Not sure	12	12.0
	Yes	58	58.0
	Total	100	100.0
Have you earned any certification through the correctional programmes?	No	92	92.0
	Not sure	8	8.0
	Total	100	100.0
Have you seen others benefit from the correctional programmes after release?	No	60	60.0
	Not sure	10	10.0
	Yes	30	30.0
	Total	100	100.0
Did the correctional programmes increase your self-confidence?	Strongly Disagree	22	22.0
	Disagree	14	14.0
	Neutral	12	12.0
	Agree	20	20.0
	Strongly Agree	32	32.0
	Total	100	100.0
Do you consider yourself reformed due to the correctional programmes?	Strongly Disagree	14	14.0
	Disagree	20	20.0
	Neutral	14	14.0
	Agree	24	24.0
	Strongly Agree	28	28.0
	Total	100	100.0
Would you recommend vocational programs to others?	No	12	12.0
	Yes	88	88.0

	Total	100	100.0
Does training reduce your interest in criminal behavior?	Strongly Disagree	2	2.0
	Disagree	6	6.0
	Neutral	42	42.0
	Agree	8	8.0
	Strongly Agree	42	42.0
	Total	100	100.0
Have you experienced barriers in continuing your correctional programmes?	No	12	12.0
	Yes	88	88.0
	Total	100	100.0

Source: Author's computation using SPSS

Table 4.3 presents the result of respondents' perceptions of the impact of correctional programmes on skill acquisition, employability, behavioral reform, and ultimately, the potential to reduce recidivism. The data reflects how participants internalize and apply the outcomes of correctional interventions.

Result revealed that a substantial majority of the respondents (88%) reported having learned a specific skill through correctional programmes, while only 12% indicated otherwise. This suggests that the programmes are largely effective in delivering practical and hands-on training. Furthermore, 80% of the participants (combining 62% who strongly agreed and 18% who agreed) considered these acquired skills to be valuable outside the correctional center. Only a minority expressed disagreement (6%) or uncertainty (14%), which implies that most inmates perceive the skills as transferable and potentially useful in reintegration.

In terms of post-release intentions, 58% of the respondents indicated a willingness to use the acquired skills for legal employment, while 12% were unsure, and 30% were not inclined to do so. This result shows a favorable disposition towards the application of correctional training in lawful economic activities, although a significant proportion remains skeptical or undecided, which may

be due to external barriers such as stigma, limited job opportunities, or lack of formal qualifications. This latter concern is reinforced by the finding that 92% of respondents had not received any form of certification for their participation in correctional programmes. Only 8% were unsure about their certification status. The absence of formal recognition may reduce the credibility or usability of these skills in the open labor market, thereby limiting their effectiveness in preventing recidivism.

When asked whether they had seen others benefit from correctional programmes after release, 60% responded negatively, and 10% were unsure. Only 30% affirmed observing such benefits. This perception gap may point to systemic weaknesses in post-release support systems, monitoring of outcomes, or employment linkages necessary for the sustained success of rehabilitated inmates.

On the psychological front, 52% of the respondents (20% agreeing and 32% strongly agreeing) stated that correctional programmes had increased their self-confidence, while 36% disagreed (22% strongly disagreed and 14% disagreed), and 12% remained neutral. Although the majority reported a positive impact, the relatively high level of disagreement suggests the need for more consistent and personalized program delivery to ensure psychological empowerment for all participants.

Regarding reformation, 52% of respondents affirmed feeling reformed as a result of their participation in correctional programmes (24% agreed, 28% strongly agreed). However, 34% disagreed (14% strongly disagreed, 20% disagreed), and 14% were neutral. This mixed response indicates that while many inmates acknowledge a positive change, a considerable number remain unconvinced of the transformative potential of these interventions, pointing to variability in program efficacy or inmate readiness for change.

In terms of program endorsement, an overwhelming 88% stated they would recommend vocational programmes to others, demonstrating high levels of satisfaction and perceived value. Only 12% declined to recommend them, suggesting that most participants recognize the benefits of skill-based rehabilitation approaches. A deeper look into the effect of training on criminal inclination shows a divided perception. While 42% strongly agreed that training reduced their interest in criminal behavior, another 42% remained neutral, with smaller portions disagreeing (6%) or strongly disagreeing (2%). The high neutrality level may reflect uncertainty about long-term behavioral change or a lack of confidence in post-release support structures.

Lastly, a significant 88% of respondents experienced barriers in continuing their correctional programmes, with only 12% reporting otherwise. This indicates that despite high engagement, numerous institutional, logistical, or personal challenges hinder consistent participation. These barriers could include limited access to materials, overcrowding, program unavailability, or inconsistent facilitation, all of which may diminish program outcomes and contribute to relapse into crime.

Table 4.1.4 Frequency Distribution Analysis on Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of Correctional Programs

Characteristics	Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)
Are all inmates given equal access to programs?	Disagree	12	12.0
	Neutral	38	38.0
	Agree	12	12.0
	Strongly Agree	38	38.0
	Total	100	100.0
Is the learning environment safe and supportive?	Disagree	26	26.0
	Neutral	30	30.0
	Agree	10	10.0
	Strongly Agree	34	34.0
	Total	100	100.0
What would improve the overall effectiveness of these programs?	Proper funding	34	34.0
	Good instructors	10	10.0
	Enough equipment for inmates	38	38.0
	Government aids	4	4.0
	More space to avoid congestion	10	10.0
	More feeding	4	4.0
	Total	100	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2025

Table 4.4 presents the result on understanding the factors that influence the effectiveness of correctional programs is essential for improving their design, delivery, and outcomes.

The question on ‘Are all inmates given equal access to programs’, reveals evenly responses from respondents. While 38% of respondents strongly agreed that access is equitable, another 38% remained neutral, suggesting uncertainty or inconsistent experiences. Only 12% agreed outright, while an equal 12% disagreed. This distribution indicates a lack of consensus among inmates regarding access, possibly pointing to issues of favoritism, administrative discretion, limited program slots, or disparities based on inmate behavior, sentence type, or institutional policies. The

neutrality of a significant portion of respondents may also reflect a lack of awareness of access procedures or unequal communication within the institution.

In assessing whether the learning environment is safe and supportive, 34% strongly agreed and 10% agreed, suggesting that nearly half (44%) perceived the learning environment positively. However, 26% disagreed, and 30% remained neutral, indicating that for a significant number of inmates, the environment may be perceived as unsafe, unfriendly, or inadequate for effective learning. This mixed response suggests variability in the implementation of learning standards across facilities, with potential barriers such as overcrowding, noise, insufficient security, or hostile interactions negatively affecting the learning atmosphere.

Respondents were also asked what improvements would most enhance the overall effectiveness of correctional programs. The most frequently cited need was the provision of adequate equipment, selected by 38% of the participants. This underscores the importance of access to functional tools and materials, especially in vocational and technical training. Without such resources, inmates may struggle to acquire practical skills, and facilitators may face challenges delivering quality instruction. A considerable proportion (34%) identified proper funding as the most critical factor for improving program outcomes. This points to systemic financial constraints within correctional institutions, affecting everything from infrastructure and materials to staffing and curriculum development. Without sufficient budgetary support, even well-intended programs may fall short of their rehabilitative goals.

Other recommendations included the need for more competent instructors (10%), more space to reduce congestion (10%), increased food supply (4%), and government assistance (4%). While these suggestions were less frequently mentioned, they highlight important secondary concerns that can influence the learning experience. For example, overcrowding may reduce access to

programs and create an uncomfortable environment, while inadequate nutrition can affect concentration, energy levels, and overall health. Similarly, the call for more qualified instructors reflects a desire for improved teaching quality and engagement.

4.2 Thematic Analysis of Interview Responses

This section presents the thematic analysis of qualitative data obtained from correctional staff at Ilorin Correctional Centre. The responses are organized around three core themes: (1) Types of rehabilitation programmes available; (2) Success factors influencing programme effectiveness; and (3) Threats to the effectiveness of rehabilitation initiatives. Verbatim excerpts from participants are included to provide contextual clarity and enhance data validity.

Theme 1: Types of Rehabilitation Programmes

A range of rehabilitation programmes are reportedly available to inmates at the Ilorin Correctional Centre, mostly centered on vocational and educational skills. These include tailoring, barbing, carpentry, welding, electronics, and tutorial classes aimed at furthering education.

One respondent emphasized the scope of available programs:

"Tailoring, barbing, tutorial to further education and carpentry." – (Male, Super Interdependent, 16 years' experience).

Another officer added:

"Tailoring, carpentry, electrician, welding, barbing." – Male, Super Interdependent, 20 years' experience

Some respondents also highlighted the availability of welfare services, religious programmes, and NGO-supported workshops:

"Welfare service, workshop." – (Male, ASC II, 16 years' experience)
"Welding, barbing, tailoring, religious program." – (Female, DNC, 14 years' experience).

Participation in these programmes was mostly described as optional, and often influenced by inmates' interests or conviction status:

"Based on choice, from continuity." – (Male, Super Interdependent, 16 years)
"Only convicted inmates, people willing to learn." – (Male, Super Interdependent, 20 years)
"People who have done it before jail term or people willing to participate." – (Male, Gatekeeper, 17 years).

Theme 2: Success Factors

Respondents acknowledged that the rehabilitation programmes have recorded some degree of success, especially among inmates who are willing to participate. Several success factors were identified:

a. Frequent Practice and Skill Assessment

Many officers emphasized the value of hands-on engagement:

"We assess it through continuous practice." – (Male, Chief Warden, 12 years)
"Regular practice, trade test." – (Female, DNC, 14 years).

b. Behavioral Change and Transformation

The respondents observed tangible changes in inmate behavior:

"Yes, they are doing better than before." – (Male, Super Interdependent, 16 years)
"Yes, they change." – (Female, DNC, 14 years)
"It has helped." – (Male, ASC II, 16 years).

c. Aftercare and NGO Involvement

Several officers noted the importance of continued support after release:

"Aftercare service in order to know the wellbeing of offenders." – (Female, Medical Officer, 10 years)
"NGO, after service care." – (Male, ASC II, 16 years).

These success stories, however, were often qualified with the phrase *"to some extent"*, reflecting the limitations posed by systemic challenges.

"To some extent, it has been successful." – (Male, Super Interdependent, 16 years)
"It has assisted to some extent." – (Male, Chief Warden, 12 years).

Theme 3: Threats to the Rehabilitation Programmes

The most common barriers to the success of correctional rehabilitation were lack of resources, congestion, inmate apathy, and inadequate government support.

a. Insufficient Equipment and Training Facilities

This was the most frequently cited constraint:

"No proper funding from government." – (Male, Super Interdependent, 20 years)

"Not enough government, not enough funding." – (Male, Chief Warden, 12 years)

"Lack of tools, unwilling participation." – (Male, ASC II, 16 years)

"Lack of training facilities." – (Male, Bookkeeper, 20 years).

b. Overcrowding and Limited Space

Many staff identified congestion as a logistical barrier:

"Congestion among inmates." – (Male, Super Interdependent, 16 years)

"Not enough space, congestion." – (Female, Medical Officer, 10 years)

"Lack of spacing and poor funding from government." – (Male, Bookkeeper, 20 years).

c. Lack of Interest and Motivation Among Inmates

Some inmates show low enthusiasm toward the programmes:

"Unwillingness to participate." – (Male, Super Interdependent, 16 years)

"Lack of interest from inmates." – (Female, DNC, 14 years)

"Lack of interest." – (Female, Medical Officer, 10 years).

d. Need for More Government Support

The repeated call for increased funding and government involvement was a key theme:

"Government should assist in equipment." – (Male, Super Interdependent, 20 years)

"More funding from government." – (Male, Chief Warden, 12 years)

"Government should try to put more equipment, proper funding, aftercare service." – (Female, DNC, 14 years).

4.3 Discussion of Findings

The study examines the effect of correctional programmes on the reformation rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders in Ilorin custodial center Oke-Kura. The key findings from the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative (interview-based) data on correctional reformation rehabilitation and reintegration programmes at the Ilorin Correctional Centre are discussed. The results are examined in relation to existing literature and anchored in relevant theoretical

frameworks, including Good lives Theory, Social Learning Theory, and the Risk-Needs-Responsivity (RNR) Model.

The study revealed that the majority of respondents were young males (26–35 years), with relatively low levels of education, and most were first-time offenders. These findings are consistent with previous research by Adebayo (2020), which found that young, low-educated males are more likely to be incarcerated in Nigeria due to socio-economic vulnerabilities and unemployment. The implication of these demographics is significant for designing effective correctional programmes. According to Good lives theory, younger inmates are more likely to benefit from skill-building and behavior modification programmes due to their greater cognitive flexibility and higher reintegration potential (Cullen & Gendreau, 2000). The fact that most respondents were first-time offenders further supports the application of early-intervention models, which suggest that prompt and structured rehabilitation can reduce the likelihood of recidivism (Latessa & Lovins, 2019).

Moreso, the study found high participation in vocational and educational programmes, with tailoring, barbing, carpentry, and anger management being the most common. An overwhelming 96% of inmates had participated in at least one programme, and 74% attended several times a week. This aligns with the findings of Ojo and Lawal (2018), who reported that vocational training in Nigerian prisons has high enrolment due to inmates' desire for empowerment and societal reintegration. The qualitative interviews also confirmed the availability of these programmes, but pointed out variations in access based on conviction status, interest, and facility resources. These findings correspond with Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977), which argues that individuals learn new behaviors through observation, practice, and reinforcement. Frequent attendance enables inmates to internalize new skills and prosocial attitudes, thereby reducing antisocial tendencies.

Moreover, the role of external professionals and NGOs as facilitators, reported by 60% of respondents, suggests that collaboration between correctional institutions and civil society can enhance programme quality and credibility. This echoes the findings of Ekun (2021), who advocated public-private partnerships in prison reform for sustainability.

Findings from Table 4.3, which is the analysis on the objective two indicate that 88% of inmates learned a specific skill, and 80% reported behavioral improvement as a result of programme participation. However, only 30% had witnessed others benefiting post-release, and 42% remained neutral on whether training reduced criminal inclination. These results reflect a mixed perception of long-term programme effectiveness. The Risk-Needs-Responsivity (RNR) Model (Andrews & Bonta, 2010) offers a useful lens here. The RNR model emphasizes the importance of aligning rehabilitation with the offender's criminogenic needs and ensuring responsiveness to individual learning styles and motivation. While many respondents gained skills and confidence, the lack of post-release support, certification, and aftercare services, as highlighted in the interviews, undermines the effectiveness of rehabilitation in the reintegration phase. Furthermore, the absence of formal certification (92%) limits employability, which may explain the skepticism expressed by some inmates regarding the utility of the acquired skills. This finding supports Ugwuoke's (2015) study, which noted that lack of formal recognition for prison-based training reduces its market value in Nigeria's competitive job economy.

Findings from table 4.4, which is analysis on objective three reveals several key barriers to programme effectiveness were identified, including inadequate tools and equipment (38%), poor funding (34%), and prison congestion. These constraints were also echoed in all qualitative interviews, where officers lamented "lack of training facilities," "unwilling participation," and "no proper funding from government." These systemic issues highlight the structural limitations of

Nigeria's correctional system, which, as noted by Akinwale and Olowojolu (2017), suffers from underinvestment and policy neglect. The neutral responses from 38% of respondents on equal access to programmes also suggest disparities that may result from favoritism or inadequate programme slots. The RNR model again proves relevant, particularly its "responsivity" principle, which requires a supportive learning environment for effective rehabilitation. The lack of space, overcrowding, and limited instructor manpower directly impede the ability of programmes to deliver personalized and impactful training.

Findings of table 4.5 showed that study was the statistically significant relationship between inmates' participation in correctional programmes and their perceived behavioral change. The Chi-square test yielded a value of 4.62 with 1 degree of freedom and a p-value of 0.031, indicating that the association is significant at the 0.05 level. This implies that inmates who participated in structured correctional activities such as vocational training, spiritual counselling, and educational programmes were more likely to report positive behavioral transformation compared to those who did not participate.

This result supports the first research objective, which aimed to assess the effectiveness of correctional programmes in reforming offender behavior. It aligns with previous studies such as Otu (2015) and Inusa (2021), who both found that structured reformation and rehabilitation programmes significantly reduce the likelihood of recidivism by improving inmates' attitudes and skills. The implication of this finding is that correctional programmes do not merely function as institutional routines, but have real impact on inmate reform, particularly when delivery is consistent and goal-oriented. Therefore, this result reinforces the need for increased funding, staff training, and certification mechanisms within the Nigerian Correctional Service to enhance the quality and outcomes of such programmes to reform rehabilitate and reintegrate offenders.

5.0 CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This research investigated the efficacy of correctional programs in the reformation, rehabilitation, and reintegration of offenders at Ilorin Medium Custodial Centre in Kwara State. The research employed a mixed-method design, using both quantitative questionnaires and qualitative interviews to collect data from correctional officers and inmates.

5.1 Summary

The major findings include:

A high rate of inmate involvement in vocational, religious, and educational programs in the facility. Most prisoners indicated positive behaviour and attitude change after going through the programmes. Nonetheless, gaps were found in certification, post-release job prospects, and formal reintegration assistance.

Qualitative findings highlighted challenges such as overcrowding, inadequate resources, and the absence of structured aftercare mechanisms. These results suggest that although Ilorin correctional programmes have beneficial effects, systemic problems continue to undermine their long-term influence on reintegration.

5.2 Conclusion

The research concludes that correctional programmes available at the Ilorin Custodial Centre are moderately effective in bringing about inmate transformation and reformation. The majority of the participants admit to having improved personal behavior and attained basic life or vocational skills. The limited provision of recognized certifications, inadequate institutional funding, and absence of aftercare systems, however, sabotage the reintegration process.

Successful rehabilitation will need to reach beyond imprisonment and address reintegration mechanisms involving family, community, employers, and support networks. If not, the cycle of recidivism can continue unabated regardless of institutional effort.

5.3 Recommendations

On the basis of the findings, the following recommendations are given:

1. **Implement Certification Mechanisms:** Collaborate with national vocational and technical boards (i.e., NABTEB, NVRC) to issue recognized certification to prisoners who complete skill-based programs.
2. **Enhance Reintegration Assistance:** Provide aftercare services and halfway houses for ex-prisoners, such as job placement and counseling.
3. **Improve Institutional Resources:** Government should allocate adequate funding to expand training facilities, supply tools, and reduce overcrowding in correctional centres.
4. **Capacity Building for Correctional Officers:** Ongoing training and welfare assistance should be given to officers who implement the programmes.
5. **Stakeholder Collaboration:** NGOs, faith-based organizations, and private sector stakeholders need to be involved in both in-prison and post-release programming to enhance long-term results.

5.4 Limitations

A number of limitations impacted the study's scope and generalizability:

1. **Limited Access to Respondents:** Because of custodial procedures and security measures, only a subset of the inmate population and officers were accessible to participate.
2. **Time Constraints:** Administrative delays and short access periods constrained the fieldwork, impacting the volume of interviews undertaken.
3. **Single-site Case Study:** The results are Ilorin Custodial Centre-specific and might not represent experiences in other Nigerian prisons.
4. **Self-reported Data:** Inmate responses could contain social desirability bias, particularly in behavioral change reporting.

5.5 Recommendations For Further Study

To build upon this research and resolve its limitations, future researchers are encouraged to:

1. Longitudinal Studies: Tracking ex-inmates after release to assess long-term impact of correctional programmes on recidivism and reintegration.
2. Comparative Multi-State Research: Investigating correctional programme effectiveness across several Nigerian states or regions.
3. Gender-specific Studies: Addressing female prisoners, whose needs for rehabilitation and experiences of reintegration could be different.
4. Community-based Reintegration Models: A study of the contributions of family, religious institutions, and community leaders in maintaining post-release change.
5. Psychological Rehabilitation: Examining the mental health aspect of offender rehabilitation and its application in correctional programming.

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APPENDIX I

THOMAS ADEWUMI UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINOLOGY AND SECURITY STUDIES

**Assessing the Effectiveness of Correctional Programs in the Reformation and
Rehabilitation of Offenders in Ilorin, Nigeria.**

Request to complete a questionnaire.

Dear Respondent,

**I am a undergraduate student of the Department of Criminology and Security Studies:
Thomas Adewumi University. I am currently conducting a research on Assessing the
Effectiveness of Correctional Programs in the Reformation and Rehabilitation of Offenders
in Ilorin, Nigeria.**

**The purpose of the questionnaire is designed for the purpose of collecting data and
providing data on the Assessing the Effectiveness of Correctional Programs in the
Reformation and Rehabilitation of Offenders in Ilorin, Nigeria. This questionnaire is
designed for academic research alone and all responses given would be treated with utmost
confidentiality in relation to the ethical principles governing research. Thank you for your
anticipated cooperation.**

SECTION A: Socio-Demographic Characteristics

(Please tick or fill in the blanks as applicable)

1. Sex: Male Female

2. Age: _____

3. Religion: Christianity Islam Others (Specify): _____

4. Marital Status: Single Married Divorced Widowed

5. Level of Education: None Primary Secondary Tertiary

6. Sentence Length: <1 year 1–3 years 4–6 years 7 years and above

7. Are you a first-time offender? Yes No

SECTION B: Objective 1 – Types of Correctional Programs Available

1. Have you participated in any correctional programs while in custody?

Yes

No

2. Which programs are available to you? (Select all you know)

Educational Programs

Vocational Training

Anger Management

Drug Rehabilitation

Counseling or Therapy

Religious Programs

Life Skills Training

Other (please specify): _____

3. How frequently do you attend these programs?

Daily

Several times a week

Once a week

Occasionally

Never

4. How did you learn about these programs?

Staff orientation

Fellow inmates

Posters or notices

Caseworker recommendation

Other: _____

5. Were you encouraged or assigned to participate?

Encouraged voluntarily

Assigned by staff

Both

Neither

6. Which program do you participate in most often?

7. Who facilitates your program(s)?

Internal correctional officers

External professionals

Peer facilitators

Volunteers

Other: _____

8. What motivated you to join?

Personal interest

Reduction in sentence

Rehabilitation goals

Social interaction

Staff recommendation

Other: _____

9. Have the programs improved your behavior?

Yes

No

10. Have they changed your views about crime?

strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

strongly disagree

SECTION C: Objective 2 – Contribution of Correctional programmes to Reducing Recidivism

11. Have you learned a specific skill through correctional programmes?

Yes

No

12. Do you think this skill is valuable outside the correctional center?

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly disagree

13. Would you consider using the skill for legal employment after release?

Yes

Not sure

No

14. Have you earned any certification through the correctional programmes?

Yes

No

15. Have you seen others benefit from the correctional programmes after release?

Yes

No

Not sure

16. Did the correctional programmes increase your self-confidence?

Strongly agree

- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

17. Do you consider yourself reformed due to the correctional programmes?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

18. Would you recommend vocational programs to others?

- Yes
- No

19. Does training reduce your interest in criminal behavior?

- strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- strongly disagree

20. Have you experienced barriers in continuing your correctional programmes?

- Yes (please specify): _____

No

SECTION D: Objective 3 – Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of Correctional Programs

What are the factors affecting the effectiveness of these correctional programmes?

21. Are all inmates given equal access to programs?

strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

strongly disagree

22. Is the learning environment safe and supportive?

strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

strongly disagree

23. What would improve the overall effectiveness of these programs?

APPENDIX II

THOMAS ADEWUMI UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINOLOGY AND SECURITY STUDIES

Assessing the Effectiveness of Correctional Programs in Reformation and Rehabilitation of Offenders in Ilorin, Nigeria.

Dear Participant,

I am a undergraduate student of the Department of Criminology and Security Studies: Thomas Adewumi University. I am currently conducting a research on Assessing the Effectiveness of Correctional Programs in Reformation and Rehabilitation of Offenders in Ilorin, Nigeria.

The purpose of the interview is to get credible, reliable and firsthand information that would assist in the conduct of this research. Please be informed that the discussion is mainly for academic purpose and any information provided will be treated with utmost confidentiality. It would be highly appreciated if you provide necessary information ta the questions asked. Thanks for your anticipated cooperation.

SECTION Socio-demographic characteristics of participant.

S/N CHARACTERISTICS

1. Sex_____
2. Age_____
3. Level of Education_____
4. How long have you worked in the correctional service_____
5. Whats your current role or position in the correctional centre_____

SECTION B: Questions for Correctional Officers on Assessing the Effectiveness of Correctional Programs in Reformation and Rehabilitation of Offenders in Ilorin, Nigeria.

1. What are the types of correctional programmes available at Ilorin correctional Centre?
2. How are inmates selected or encouraged to participate in these programs?
3. How do you assess the effectiveness of these programs in reforming offenders?
4. Have you observed any noticeable behavioral changes in inmates who participated in these programs?
5. What challenges do you face in implementing or sustaining these programs?
6. What are the factors that affect the effectiveness of correctional rehabilitation programmes at Ilorin correctional Centre?
7. In your experience, how successful are these programs in preventing repeat offenses

(recidivism)?

8. What improvements or reforms would you recommend to enhance program effectiveness?