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FEMALE PROPERTY CRIME OFFENDERS: EXPLANATIONS FROM
ECONOMIC MARGINALIZATION PERSPECTIVE

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Art
in
Criminal Justice

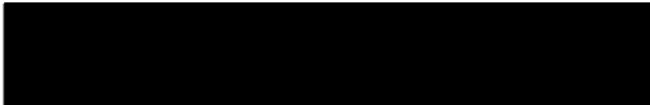
by
Susan Chih-Wen Su
March 2004

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March 2004

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ABSTRACT

The number of females committing crimes has increased at a faster pace compared to men for the last few decades. However, the female offender population has still remains smaller than males. Their offending patterns are distinct due to the differences in social and economic backgrounds. This research examined the social and economic backgrounds of female and male property crime offenders at Glen Helen Rehabilitation Center, San Bernardino, California, a medium security detection facility. Face-to-face individual interviews were conducted with qualified male and female inmates. The crime categories of larceny-theft, fraud, forgery, embezzlement, grand theft auto, vehicle theft, robbery, burglary, and receiving or possession of stolen property were designated as property crimes. The participants' social and economic situations prior to commission of their property crimes were compared between two gender samples. The patterns of the findings and results of the hypothesis explored suggest that the social and economic situations of the females prior to the crimes were considerably more disadvantage, compared to the men. The women were typically younger, used a lower level of literacy, were single parents with minor children, unemployed, and lived in poverty before committing the

property crimes. Relative to the men, the women were socially and economically marginalized, which supports economic marginalization theory.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am deeply thankful to Dr. Scharm, the Chair of my thesis committee, for the time, support, and encouragement that made this project possible. I thank my committee members, Dr. Sechrest and Dr. Tibbetts, for advice and time given me. Most importantly, I thank my parents, [REDACTED] for their unconditional love, financial support, and encouragements.

DEDICATION

To Dad and Mom

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Female Crime Trend Overview

The concept that women are less likely than men to commit criminal acts, once had most criminologists in agreement (Allan & Steffensmeier, 1996). Recent statistical reports indicate decreases in overall crime rates and male participation in crimes; however, the number of female offenders have actually increased and in a more drastic mode (Federal Bureau Investigation [FBI], 2000). Since 1985, the annual rate of growth in the number of female inmates has averaged 11.1% which is 3.5% higher than the average increase in male inmates (Chesney-Lind, 1998). In 1996 alone, the number of female inmates grew 9.5%; meanwhile, male inmates population increased only 4.8% (Chesney-Lind, 1998). However, even though the rate of female inmates is increasing faster, the actual number of female inmates is still lower than men (Bureau of Justice Statistics [BJS], 2002). In addition, female offenders tend to be incarcerated for different categories of crimes. Male offenders are more likely to be involved in violent crimes, especially crimes against another person; on the other hand, a majority of their female

counterparts have been incarcerated for property related offenses, such as embezzlement, larceny-theft, shoplifting, counterfeiting and forgery (Chesney-Lind, 1997).

Socioeconomic Backgrounds

The social backgrounds of female offenders tend to be quite similar to male offenders (Allan & Steffensmeier, 1995). Akin to male offenders, gender differentiations and sex hierarchy in a patriarchal society, economically motivated female offenders are typically of low socioeconomic status, poorly educated, under- or unemployed, perform service production types of jobs, and are disproportionately made up by minority groups (Allan & Steffensmeier, 1996; Padavic, & Reskin, 1994).

Despite the similarity in both genders' disadvantaged demographic background, they share distinct criminal motivations and pathways leading to crimes. Female economically motivated criminality is even more prevalent when a society has sex-gender hierarchy, sexually divided employment, and women living in neighborhoods that are economically marginalized from all but illegal economies (Morash & Schram, 2002; Padavic & Reskin, 1994).

Theoretical Foundations

Since existing criminology theories were developed and intended to understand male crimes, the concern is whether those theories may serve as legitimate explanations in justifying female criminality. There are different macro and micro levels of structural issues that have attempted to explain why females become involved in criminality. The earlier masculinity theory argued the increasing figure of female offenders is due to a series of women's liberation movements which empowered women with some freedom in engaging in the activities they wish. It assumed women were only committing a lesser amount of crime because the patriarchal society had forced a strict form of social control upon them (Merlo, 1995). Women basically had the same criminal characteristics (Merlo, 1995) and were just as prone to crimes as men. Women were also thought to have an inferior psychological composition which precludes them from fighting off social temptations to commit crimes and to have the capability to make correct decisions (Bernard, Snipes, & Vold, 1998). However, the masculinity theory had not been empirically substantiated due to domination of sexist assumptions and mythological measurement flaws.

Researchers after the 1970s began to incorporate social situations into possible explanations for the rising number of female offenders. After women's movements and empowerments, they began to exchange the traditional sex roles with occupational positions. The opportunity theory expected as more women became involved in the labor force, their opportunity to commit occupational related crimes would also increase. However, the opportunity theory would only serve better in explaining employment related crimes. A commonly observed employment related crime among women is embezzlement. One problematic area in measuring the magnitude of women instigating embezzlement is that the crime is often being masked within the general category of theft-larceny (Box & Hale, 1984). It also failed to provide any direct clues or hypotheses for women's motivational reasons for their involvements in occupational related crimes (Box & Hale, 1984).

Scholars tend to theorize female criminality with attempts to identify and explain the reasons why women engage in illegal activity (Merlo, 1995). The economic marginalization theory attempts to identify the etiology of female criminality. The theory predicted females have a higher propensity to commit crime when they are economically marginalized (Merlo, 1995). It is argued the

increasing number of females participating in the work force has not necessarily provided a lift in women's already marginalized economic well being (Landis & Simon, 1981). A sex segregated working sphere, pay discrimination, subordinated social groups, and single mother status have constrained women from striving for a higher socioeconomic status and further marginalize their economic well being (Padavic & Reskin, 1994).

The chivalry theory incorporated social structure factors from a criminal justice procedure perspective for its explanations of rising magnitude of female criminality (Pollak, 1950). It contended the lower number of female transgressors was due to the preferential treatment women have received from the criminal justice system and crime victims (Leonard, 1982). However, women's outcry for gender equality had prompted society and the criminal justice agencies to deal with female offenders in the same manor as male offenders (Chesney-Lind, 1998). An enactment of neutral sentencing guidelines, implementations of determined sentencing policy, and tougher store procedures against shoplifting have contributed to the rise of female arrest rates. The empirical data for the chivalry theory also did not support the contention that women have been

beneficiating preferential and lenient treatments from the criminal justice system.

Research Purpose and Design

The staggering female offender population has produced a gigantic burden on the correctional system and clogged the strained criminal justice process even further. In order to provide resolutions for these two problems, the core concerns for female offenders should shift toward feminized offending patterns, motives, and etiology. The purpose of this research was to understand if social structural factors surrounding the lives of the women in this research were considerably more stratified, compared to men as the economic marginalization theory has assumed. Five hypotheses were drawn based on the social and economic indicators used in Heimer's (2002) research on the economic marginalization theory. The elements of each hypothesis were explored and compared between two gender groups' responses.

The participants were from the Glen Helen Rehabilitation Center, San Bernardino County, California. The participants consisted of 15 male and 15 female adult inmates who had committed property crimes in adult life. The offenders were selected through a disproportionate

stratification sample method of probability of samplings. These individuals were purposely created to be non-representative and only included the offenders who had committed the designated property crimes. The crime categories of larceny-theft, fraud, forgery, embezzlement, grand theft auto, vehicle theft, robbery, burglary, and receiving or possession of stolen property were designated as property crimes in the research.

A face-to-face interview was conducted individually with each participant. The interviews were structured with open-ended questions, which concerned the social, economic and legal backgrounds and experiences of the participants. No suggestive probes were used for clarifying participants' responses.

Participants were asked to describe their property crime offenses and crime motivations. The motivational reasons given were frequently associated with inmates' social, legal, and economic backgrounds and work experience. The interview responses were compared and contrasted cross-case between two gender groups. Relative to the male inmates, the social and economic situations and work experience of the female inmates were considerably less evolved. However, Heimer (2002) asserted stratified social or economic situations itself does not

prompt women to commit property crimes. Thus, the participants were asked about their criminal motivations to understand possible links to their social and economic backgrounds.

Limitations of the Study

With the limited sample size, the results of this research have limited for generalization in attempt to explain the rising population of female offenders who committed the property crimes. Further, the results have limited generalability and could not explain the reasons for a large population of female offenders who had committed the property crimes and served time in different correctional facilities.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Female Crime Trend

Crime in this country has been largely a male occupation. Men have dominated the criminal justice system in roles as offenders, victims, professional workers and researchers. Males have been committing more crimes, especially serious offenses, in comparison with their female counterparts.

Around 48.0% of males in state prisons accounted for violent offenses compared to 32.2% for women. Women accounted for only 22.0% of all arrests in 1998. Based on self-reports of victims of violence, women accounted for 14.0% of violent offenders (BJS, 1999). The number of women in state prisons grew 75.0% from yearend 1986 to yearend 1991. During the same period of time, the number of women in prison increased 75.0% and the number of men only increased by 53.0% (BJS, 1991).

The domination of men in criminality has interested a large pool of researchers to study male criminality. The literature on male offenders has encompassed the etiology of male criminality from biological, psychological and sociological perspectives. The current criminology

theories have been male-orientated. Female criminals have been the silent offenders for the past few decades of criminal justice research and emerged as a popular subject in the 1970s (Daly & Maher, 1985). Female criminality has slowly galvanized researchers' attention since the number of female transgressors has been proliferating at a more rapid rate than their male counterparts.

Theories Prior to 1970

Ferrero and Lombroso (1898) made the earliest attempt in linking female criminality to biological factors. He proposed that criminals are born, whom he labeled as atavistic, with biological throwbacks to an earlier evolutionary stage. Born criminals are more primitive and less highly evolved than their noncriminal counterparts. Atavistics are born with physical deficiencies that would prompt their criminality. Female atavistics possess inferior intelligence than male atavistics. Most females are occasional criminals and criminaloids. Female occasional criminals were not physically stigmatized but might occasionally have been drawn into crimes by a man or by excessive temptation. Women were thought to have lacked a sense of self-control (Ferrero & Lombroso, 1898). Criminaloids were generally without special physical characteristics or recognizable mental disorders, but

under certain circumstances, they would indulge in vicious and criminal behaviors (Bernard, Snipes, & Vold, 1998).

The scarcity of scholarly literature on female deviants may be explained by scholars' acceptance of the notion of an innate biological virtue that is often attributed to women's lack of criminality (Leonard, 1982). Females were envisioned as passive, submissive, less aggressive, weaker in strength and cunning. Women were feminine creatures thought to be incapable of instigating vicious attacks and less inclined toward criminality due to a lack of physical and mental strength that are essential elements of criminality.

The crimes of shoplifting or battered women syndrome illustrate Lombroso's assumption that under certain circumstances and the presence of excessive temptations can provoke women into criminality. However, Lombroso's propositions of innate criminality, both for males or females, were quickly rejected due to the scarcity of scientific methodological operations in his thesis (Bernard, Snipes, & Vold, 1998).

After the abandonment of Lombroso's theory, cultural stereotyping and cultural influences have dominated the explanations of female deviancy in the 1950s. Studies on female criminology concentrated mainly on various

environmental situations that might have influenced the female offenders during this era.

Female criminality was assumed to be inherited from their criminogenic parents. Differential association theory contends crowded living conditions, and inadequate parental supervision prompts young females to have inherited immoral values criminogenically from their criminal parents (Pollak, 1950).

Pollak (1950) also argued married women have a greater accessibility to criminality than unmarried ones. A married woman's living circle is wider, which offers her opportunities to various crimes. Females have a tendency to commit crimes against property, as a married woman would have become responsible for domestic jobs, such as shopping for family or paying bills. Her opportunities for shoplifting and other economic crimes also increase. The sex role identity was thought to casually promote the female criminality. It was related to women perceptions on the traditional female domestic roles.

Pollak (1950) assumed women's crimes are characterized by deceit. Virtually most criminologists are male; thus, the scholarly works of female criminality present the bias of their patriarchal perceptions of appropriate female social roles and standards. The

literature on female criminality was challenged on this basis by Pollak.

As an organic society progresses with a series of social evolutions, the society would become more complex and sophisticated (Bernard, Snipes, & Vold, 1998). Pollak (1950) attempted to assert that females instigated an equal amount of crimes as their male counterparts. An argument is that after a series of female empowerment movements, females would have more opportunity to explore crimes that are traditionally committed by males. However, Pollak (1950) defended his assertion of equal offending rates in both genders by contending females have the propensity to engage in not easily detectable crimes. Females were committing as many crimes as males but the types of crimes committed by them differed from their male counterparts.

Pollak's imperative and profound recognition of women's involvement in crime was connected to their social positions and sex role orientations. The emphasis on his literature has spurred scholars to examine females and crimes from a sociological vantage point (Leonard, 1982). The relationship of females to society was a key in understanding their patterns of deviance (Leonard, 1982).

Since the end of the 1960s, many variations of the women's movement have emerged (Landis & Simon, 1981). These movements and ideologies range from reformist to revolutionary. Prior to the reforms, women were considered to be men's property that had very minimal rights, low social position and were burdened with a tremendous amount of strict social expectations. After the pro-feminist and liberation movements, women were empowered with more liberties.

Theories Post 1970

The increase in female crime rates may be deemed as a result of emancipation of women's liberties and empowerment through feminism. Women were bounded and constrained with traditional patriarchal rules. After the emancipation, women were suddenly granted with many rights and began to face various temptations. With the results of profeminist or liberation movements and surrounded by many temptations, women commit crimes which reflect their inner desires. This corresponds to an earlier assertion made by Lombroso which assumes females' involvement in criminality was due to women's incapability to resist societal temptations.

Austin (1982) used female labor force participation and divorce rates as indicators for female emancipation

and suggested female emancipation should not be rejected as a cause of the increases in female criminality. The pattern of change in the percentage of the female contribution to the American crime rate during the 1960s and 1970s is related to the changes in female emancipation and the existence of the women's liberation movement or female emancipation (Austin, 1982).

Men are being arrested at a higher rate than women. Males, due to their biological and physically composition natures, have a greater propensity to instigate violent crimes, such as murder, robbery, or assaults (Chesney-Lind, 1997). Approximately 90.0% of males were arrested for violent crimes in 1978. Contrary, there were only 15.5% of females were in police custody for violent crimes (FBI, 1978). In comparison, the sum of male arrests had dropped 8.5% between 1978 and 2000. On the other hand, the female arrest rate had slowly risen 6.5% between the same years. In 1979, for example, arrests of males outnumbered those of female, five to one, and even this represented a narrowing of the gap between male and female arrests (Leonard, 1982).

The percentage of women arrested has increased; however, for crimes in general and as well as seriousness of offenses in particular have dropped (Leonard, 1982).

However, females offend differently from their male counterparts, conducting closer speculations on the increased female arrest rates would be beneficial in understanding female criminality. Moreover, to determine the validity of this emergent claim of female criminality, this study reviewed the masculinity, opportunity, economic marginalization, and chivalry theories with comparisons of arrest rates of 1996 and 2000 in an attempt to identify the uniqueness of female criminality.

Masculinity Theory. Several theories have been offered to speculate the validity of emerging crime offending behaviors between both genders. Proponents for masculinity theory argued the increase in female criminality is linked to the changes in subjective attitudes prompted by changes in the substantive nature of sex roles (Adler & Herbert, 1976; Landis & Simon, 1981).

The masculinity theory proposes that women's crime rates have increased with their increasing economic and social independence from men, thereby narrowing the gender gap in offending (Heimer, 2002). The logic of this theory is based on the statements of early criminologists who argued that the gender gap in crime would be greatest when economic and social inequalities between men and women are greatest (Heimer, 2002). The explanation on the trend of

female criminality between 1950s and 1970s has been toward female adaptations of male attitudes, traits, vocations, or raising their female status (Adler & Herbert, 1976). The adoptions of male attitudes led women to a different spectrum of crimes (Adler & Herbert, 1976).

The masculinity perspective of female criminality predicts casual connections between the female liberation movements, changes in female social roles, and the masculinization of female behaviors have attributed to the changes in patterns of female offending (Landis & Simon, 1981). Adler and Herbert (1976) stated the following:

If frequency, duration, and intensity of association are important factors in the transmission of criminal behavior patterns, as girls continue to gain entrance into previously all-male criminal subcultures, the influence of peer pressure will shape their deviancy even further in the direction of male patterns...The criminal potential of women who, in their rebellion against social inferiority, aggressively pursue masculine goals of success and power. (p. 106)

This theory assumes as women's attitudes and behaviors become masculinized through their liberation from traditional male social roles, their criminal offending rates and patterns would increase approximately to men (Landis & Simon, 1981). This change would be evident if the patterns of violent offenses committed by females have increased, which reflect the hypothesized

increasing aggressiveness in liberated women. Evidently, there was a 2.1% increase in the female arrest rate for violent crime index; meanwhile, males had a 13.4% decrease (FBI, 2000). However, several still remain whether liberated women are behaving more aggressively and have more masculine traits.

There are three ways of measuring levels of female criminality in the masculinity theory. The first assumption is that female offenders are people who suffer from feelings of low-esteem, powerlessness, and are characterized as having a poor self-concept (Widom, 1979). The second frequently theoretical contention was that women in prison become confused as to their sexual orientation. The third aspect emphasized the masculinity in terms of sex-role identity. The sex-identity measurement relates to masculine and feminine sex type of self-conception and value system during that ear (Widom, 1979).

Widom (1979) conducted a study on the above-mentioned three frequently made assumptions in determination of the correlation of masculinity to the rise of female criminality. If the hypotheses were valid, the results are expected to find significantly lower levels of self-esteem in female offenders, higher masculinity scores, and a

higher incidence of masculine sex-typing (Widom, 1979). However, the research results indicated female offenders do not have significant differences in self-esteem or personal autonomy scores. Female criminality did not appear to be statistically significant to support whether low self-esteem is a major factor in female criminality. Another noteworthy finding is that the women offenders were significantly less profeminist in their attitudes. These data also indicated women with previous convictions for violent offenses had a tendency to report lower self-esteem scores.

Society stereotypes criminal activities as aggressive and masculine events. However, masculinity appeared to be unrelated to criminality and femininity appears to be significantly negatively associated with female criminality (Widom, 1979). Women with a wide variety of offenses are often assumed to have a greater criminality and perceived to be more masculine. However, women offenders with a wide variety and smaller number of offenses appeared to be equally as criminogenic (Widom, 1979). This indifference may be explained by a number of women offenders who only have limited criminogenic skills to commit certain varieties of crimes. Female inmates indicated a continual process of both increased masculine

and decreased feminine gender-role identity with the passage of the prison stages (Campbell & Winfree, 1988). It may seem plausible to assume that female offenders with more prior convictions would have more criminogenic and masculine identities.

Presumably, traditional females continue to be less involved in crime than males, the growing proportion of female offenders would possess more nontraditional female social traits (Finley, Glaser, & Grasmick, 1984). The women's movement has loosened the traditional sex-role definitions among the contemporary women who are now exposed to similar psychological freedoms, social strains and opportunities that motivated men to commit aggressive criminal acts. Widom (1979) examined whether levels of femininity correlate with concern about the fate of female offenders' victims and more likely to commit violent crimes. The theory is based on the assumption that females who are traditionally more gentle, affectionate, loyal, sympathetic, sensitive, understanding, compassionate, and eager to sooth hurt feelings are more constrained by their gender identities.

However, the female offenders were significantly less profeminist in their attitudes (Widom, 1979). The results additionally provided a very weak support for the theory

of lower femininity scores in violent female offenders (Widom, 1979). In addition, Kuhl, Lasley, and Roberg's (1985) research indicated significant inverse relationships between non-traditional sex-role attitudes held by incarcerated female felons and the relative severity of their prior criminal acts. The findings indicated the women who viewed themselves as traditionally feminine represented the most violent offenders in the researches.

Widom's negative result on the theory of greater masculinity in female offenders contradicted with Cochrane's (1971) findings. Cochrane found female prisoners had more masculine value systems overall than female control groups. Another critical issue is that numerous studies have examined the relationship between criminal or delinquent behavior and role of perceptions and attitudes. The theory of the relationship between either masculine traits or profeminist attitudes and offending behavior was not supported empirically (Landis & Simon, 1981). The researches for masculine and feminine personality characteristics do not necessarily correlate if a female offender was more apt to masculinity, feminine sex-role preference, behavior, or attitudes (Allen, Steffensmeier, & Streifel, 1989). In addition, the largest

increases in female arrests were for larceny-theft, fraud, and forgery offenses which prompted Allen, Steffensmeier, and Streifel (1989) to argue the increases in these offenses were consistent with traditional gender roles and inconsistent with the masculinity theory. Females shoplift, commit fraud, and forge checks while they are conducting their daily domestic roles. Hence, the masculinity hypothesizes a merging in male and female criminality patterns and more aggressiveness in liberated women still remain with much skepticism.

Opportunity Theory. The convergence in male and female criminalities does not seem as apparent to some scholars. Because the female share of arrest rates increased in the past two decades, some believe that men's and women's white-collar crime rates are converging (Daly, 1989). The rate for embezzlement arrests for females increased 35.3% from 1996 to 2000 (FBI, 2000). Unlike the masculinity thesis, the opportunity theory argues that women are neither more nor less moral and inclined to criminality than man (Landis & Simon, 1981). The theory suggests that women have been socialized in ways that block their entrance into crime and posits as the employment patterns of men and women become more similar, so too will their patterns of employment-related crimes

(Forsyth & Marckese, 1995; Landis & Simon, 1981). As women increasingly come to occupy positions in the social structure similar to those men, they increasingly resemble males in their criminality.

Similar to the masculinity theory, the opportunity theory predicts the changes in the social status of women, which have resulted at least in part from the contemporary women's movement, will result in changes in the offending patterns of women. One interesting assertion made by Austin (1982) was that increases in divorce rates suggest that males and females feel less financially and emotionally dependent on one another and are less likely to attempt to continue a marriage simply because of this dependence. Ziet's (1981) study on female embezzlers found that even though the arrest numbers for two genders are becoming more similar, their motivations still remain very distinct. Female embezzlers reported to steal money to maintain a love relationship or family responsibilities as a caretaker rather than personal luxuries (Ziet, 1981).

However, a dissimilarity between masculinity and opportunity theses is that the latter predicts reduced rates of violent offending among women and increased rates of employment-related property offenses (Landis & Simon, 1981). Property offenses are most likely to be committed

by individuals who have access to other people's money and goods. Thus, crimes such as larceny-theft, embezzlement, forgery/counterfeiting and fraud are likely to be committed by the people who occupy the labor force and have a greater opportunity to commit various types of property offenses. "As female employment increases, so might the contribution they make to theft from an employer" (Box & Hale, 1984, p. 477). As women gain more access or opportunity into the working force, their participation in those crimes would also increase. However, the extent to which females' participation in the job market still remain unsupported (Pollock, 1999).

The opportunity theory argues opportunities, skills, and social networks historically have contributed to men's propensity to commit crimes, while these same factors have limited women's chances to criminality (Landis & Simon, 1981). However, as women acquire more education, enter the labor force full-time, and assume positions of greater authority, prestige, and technical skills, they will use the opportunities available to commit white-collar property offenses in the same proportion as do their male counterparts (Landis & Simon, 1981). Moreover, the liberation of women resulted in women entering previously male dominated occupations (Forsyth & Marckese, 1995).

As more women take higher positions, such as executives, managers, and directors, the chances to embezzle a large amount of money would be higher since they are less likely to be subjected to intense surveillance from supervisors. Thus, some women would take that opportunity and engage in what criminal men usually would do. Women who work in higher occupational positions have increased opportunities to engage in embezzlement and employee theft (Austin, 1982). However, Daly's (1989) study on gender differences in embezzlements reported most of the employed women were clerical workers who would be subjected to a high-level of supervision. Adler and Herbert (1976) also contended that as women leave the house and enter the business world, they would be encountered with more opportunities for crime. Adler and Daly's assumptions were based on the idea that large numbers of women would enter into financial positions which would provide them opportunities to commit occupation related crimes, such as fraud, embezzlement, forgery, or employment theft. The increase in these crimes would be reflective of increased opportunity and non-traditional social situations for females (Forsyth & Marckese, 1995).

A dramatic increase in single women with dependent children has caused an increase in poverty, which would also increase the chances of welfare fraud or financial crimes (Steffensmeier, 1993). Austin (1982) found a gradual increase in the divorce rate with no downturns and an increase in the figure of females participating in the labor force between 1964 and 1975. Austin argued, during that period of time, the increase number of divorced women's participation in the labor market could be one of the important causes in rising female criminality in serious crimes, such as robbery, burglary, and auto theft, larceny-theft, fraud, and embezzlement for female offenders also increased (Austin, 1982). In particular, fraud and embezzlement had the greatest increase, which may contribute by the close connection to one's occupation and the increase in female labor force participation (Austin, 1982). Thus, female labor force participation is positively related to anticipated involvement in economic offenses, but not other offenses (Finley, Glaswer, & Grasmick, 1984).

As opportunities become more accessible and socialization experiences are changing for women, so do female crime patterns and behaviors. Changes in labor force and other life conditions might have placed men and

women in structured social situations that ultimately change the courses of male and female criminalities. However, the opportunity theory does face some criticism.

Steffensmeier (1983) opposed to put the focus on white-collar and employment related criminal activity when examining the etiology of rising female criminals. He maintained the trends simply reflected on the traditional sex-role expectations, behaviors, and opportunities. Corporate women are more inclined toward a morality of positive change and more concerned with issues of social responsibility in comparison with men in similar corporate positions (Daly, 1989).

Sex segregation in the labor market or within work organizations does indeed restrict women's opportunities to commit serious white-collar crime (Daly, 1989). The working status of women is still lower than men which limits women to the traditional type of female occupations and provide opportunities for traditionally female crimes. Crime networks, within both work place and the criminal underworld, are still discriminated on the basis of gender (Landis & Simon, 1981). Further, few women were self-employed or owned a business (Daly, 1989).

Daly's (1989) analysis in gender difference in white-collar crime indicated gender played a substantial

role in the differences between men's and women's offenses. For instance, of those arrested for bank embezzlement, 60.0% of the women were tellers and 90% were in some sort of clerical position (Daly, 1989). The high percentage of female bank clerk embezzlers may be contributed by an enhanced level of surveillance in the lower level of white-collar occupational position. With the expectation of sales workers, men were more likely than women to use a business identity or position of authority to carry out their crimes (Daly, 1989).

One criticism made by Steffensmeier (1983) was a different kind of opportunity could be related to the increases in larceny-theft, forgery, and embezzlement. Self service marketing and credit card sales provide increasing opportunities for petty thefts and embezzlements. These opportunities occur in an economic context that has forced the emancipation of many women, requiring them to support themselves and their families with traditionally female and low-paying jobs. The most frequently reported rationale for women's involvement in embezzlement and credit fraud was family financial need (Daly, 1989). Thus, an increase in female property crime is a response to an innovative business market consumption trend and the worsening economic conditions of women

rather than to the liberations or emancipation of women and changing attitude in sex-roles (Steffensmeier, 1983).

In summary, opponents pose that it is the absence, rather than availability, of employment opportunities for women that seems to lead to the increase in female crimes (Allen, Steffensmeier, & Streifel 1989). The opposing theme is labeled as "the economic marginalization theory.

Economic Marginalization Theory. The economic marginalization theory is the most pervasive alternative to the opportunity theory (Allen, Steffensmeier, & Streifel, 1989). Allen, Steffensmeier, and Streif (1989) argued it is the absence and not the increasing availability of employment opportunity for women that seems to lead to an increase in female illegality. Women's participation in larceny/theft crimes is rising not because of recent employment opportunities for women, but rather a recent drop in women's economic stability. Further, the concept of economic marginalization refers specifically to the situation in which women's economic well-being is not keeping pace with men's economic well-being (Heimer, 2002). In other terms, the rising female illegalities correlated with the fact that women are becoming more economically disadvantaged relative to men. Economic deprivation is being viewed as an aspect of

rising female criminality in the economic marginalization theory.

The reduction in the differences of male and female offending patterns is associated with increases in financial instability of women (Heimer, 2002). However, Heimer (2002) contended a simple assumption of growing economic marginalization of women could not serve as a good explanation for the rising figures of female offenders. To understand the increasing number of female offenders would require one to take into consideration of structural factors that caused women to become economically disadvantage, compared to men, and leading the women to translate crime as a type of individual mechanism to overcome their disadvantaged situation (Heimer, 2002).

The greater female participation in the labor force does not necessarily mean either more equality between the sexes or an improved economic situation for women (Landis & Simon, 1981). Although a larger number of women have entered the workforce, their jobs tend to be low level and low paying (Pollock, 1999). A bulk of female offenders, if employed at all, are concentrated in a "pink collar ghetto," and their professional positions are characterized by poor pay and unrewarding and uninsured

work (Landis & Simon, 1981). Since a majority of female felons are lower-class women who have committed non-employment-related crimes, the proponents of economic marginalization theory suggested it was the feminization of poverty, not women's liberation, the social trend had the most relevance to female criminality (Landis & Simon, 1981). The women's movement had only benefited the majority of white middle- and upper- class women who were most involved with the movement. The sex-segregated realm of the labor force would only worsen the lower-class women's financial condition and constrain them even further from striving to attain an improved living condition.

According to economic marginalization theory, female crime has increased because more women are single, becoming the head of the family, and have lesser legal means of economically providing for their families (Pollock, 1999). Even though there has been an increase in the number of families with dual incomes, the figures of female-headed households, divorce rate, birth out of marriage have also substantially increased (Heimer, 2002). However, it is imperative to note that the increasing number single female-headed families simply do not contribute to the overall increase of female crime rates.

It is women's disadvantages in social position, sex-segregated working conditions, and gender gap in wages combined that have worsened female-headed single families' economic and social conditions (Heimer, 2002).

Economic pressures caused by unemployment, inadequate welfare payments, poorly paid employment, soaring number of female-headed single households with dependent children, and the trend of delay of marriage have led more women to seek the fertile benefits of criminality as supplements or alternatives to employments (Heimer, 2002). Some economic marginalization research maintained that the narrowing of the gender gap in offending reflects increases in women's crime rates and was explained by increases in rates of women's poverty (Heimer, 2002).

Allan and Steffensmeier (1996) argued the increases in female offending incidents only substantially changed in certain crime categories such as larceny, embezzlement, and fraud. Larceny-theft constituted the largest percentage of 13.9% of all female arrests in 2000. Around 20% of female felons were arrested for property crime (FBI, 2000). However, Allan and Steffensmeier (1996) maintained the changes in female offending have been modest, and overall have been limited mainly to property crime. The rising number of females involved in property

crimes was deemed to be interrelated with the increasing number of economically disadvantaged women.

Allan, Steffensmeier, and Streifel (1989) contended the economic pressures on women in industrialized nations are aggravated by rising rates of divorce, illegitimacy, and female-headed households, coupled with increasing segmentation of the labor market, greater segregation of women into low-paying and female occupations, and growing inequality between the sexes in the distribution of income. Most newly available job offers are from the rapidly expanding service sectors, which are predominantly occupied by women (Smith, 1984). Although women have become the central force for service industries' economic expansion, they still receive the lowest pay and are subjected to the least desirable employment environment which could offer them with a little chance to climb out of poverty (Heimer, 2002; Smith, 1984). In addition, women wage earners must consider their domestic roles which is the factor that shapes their working experience the most (Smith, 1984).

This paradoxical situation for the American women's economic well-being is what Heimer (2002) called feminization of poverty. Allan, Steffensmeier, and Streifel (1989) then argued the magnitude of female

criminality is parallel with related women's disadvantaged living structural conditions, which provoked them in favor of learning criminal skills and attitudes or violence to resolve living problems. In turn, the social inequality and economic insecurity have increased the pressures on women to commit consumer-based crimes such as shoplifting, welfare fraud, or check forgery (Allan, Steffensmeier, & Streifel, 1989; Hartnagel, 1982). Women in poverty are also inclined to use financial disadvantage as a rationale for decisions to commit property crimes. They believe committing shoplifting, fraud, or larceny-theft would solve their financial difficulties quickly.

In addition to consumer-based crimes frequently committed by economically deprived women, they often would engage in prostitution as a means to earn some fast money in a short amount of time. Nevertheless, there was a 13.5% of decrease in overall female arrest rates from 1996 to 2000 (FBI, 2000). More numbers of available welfare or social programs available may explain the large reduction in the prostitution arrests for economically deprived women.

In the summary, unlike men, women who decide to commit crime may be more influenced by concerns of taking care of families and others (Heimer, 2002). However,

recent ethnographic research on women's crime demonstrates that crime is a matter of choice and emphasizes that choices often are constrained by structural circumstances (Heimer, 2002). The creation of females' economic downward situation and its relation to criminality should be examined from structural level, family composition, earning inequality, and decay of welfare programs (Heimer, 2002).

Chivalry Theory. The fundamental belief of the chivalry theory is that the smaller number of female arrests is only because criminal justice personnel have been treating female offenders with more lenient treatment compared to their male counterparts (Landis & Simon, 1981). It is based on the assumption of disparity practices that had operated in the criminal justice processing and its officials had refused to recognize female criminality (Landis & Simon, 1981). Women are less criminal because decision makers treat women differently and less likely to utilize formal legal process (Pollack, 1950). As Pollak (1950) illustrated, "men hate to accuse women and thus, indirectly, to send them to their punishment, police officers dislike to arrest them, district attorneys to prosecute them, judges and juries to find them guilty and so on" (p. 151).

However, judges and police officers have historically been treating female juvenile delinquents with much more severe punishments with the intention to punish and curb their inappropriate behaviors through reform and mold their behaviors with traditional female roles. For example, the high percentage of prostitution and commercialized vice could be attributed by proliferating double standards, bias legislation regulations to the oppression of female sexuality in the patriarchal society from the early years and continue to the 1970s (Leonard, 1982).

The proponents of the chivalry theory contend females receive lenient treatment by criminal justice personnel due to paternalism (Landis & Simon, 1981; Leonard, 1982). Women are less likely to be convicted, detained before trial, or punished as severely as men (Leonard, 1982). One imperative note made by Pollock (1999) is that when examining the issue of leniency for female offenders, one should consider previous preferential treatments that females might have enjoyed before a sentencing decision.

Previous studies indicate an informal selective law enforcement practice on shoplifters done by victims tend to favor in women who are suspected of shoplifting over their male counterparts (Chesney-Lind, 1978). Earlier

researchers also asserted women have long enjoyed some extra benefits from this filtering process; however, recent studies have indicated this pattern has eroded (Chesney-Lind, 1978; Moyer, 1981). The low arrest rate of women before 1960 may have been the result of decisions by shop owners not to prosecute, on the rationale that it did not pay to go through the trouble of a court trial if the stolen merchandise was recovered when the woman was apprehended (Feinman, 1986).

There were other covariables, such as social status, demographic backgrounds and the style of shoplifting, changes in store policies, and the magnitude of shoplifting, were found to have significant effects on the store owners or managers' determination whether to have the women arrested (Chesney-Lind, 1978; Feinman, 1986). Therefore, before police officers were being called, female shoplifters had enjoyed a pre-legal filtering process that would subject women to lenient treatments. However, the pre-legal filtering processing had eroded in recently years due to the public awareness of various strict governmental policies against crime. Due to the changes, female shoplifters are now being prosecuted more than usual.

Another frequently examined aspect of chivalry treatment was police officers' discretionary enforcement practice. Police officers employed the discretionary enforcement practice in an attempt to meet the public's demand for law and order with limited enforcement resources, which could substantially affect the number of women arrested for criminal misconduct (Chesney-Lind, 1978). Since a majority of women offenders are arrested and tried for relatively trivial offenses, many of them may have been filtered out at the very beginning of the criminal justice process if the victims refuse to press the charges.

In addition, police discretion on making arrests was affected by formal or informal public policy (Feinman, 1986). Feinman (1986) illustrated how the public's informal beliefs could influence policing practices by citing the occurrence of New York police officers' decision not make arrests for marijuana use offense due to an increased use of marijuana among middle- and upper-class people who also attempted to pressure the public for decriminalization of the drug.

Chivalry treatment from law enforcers' perspective was only reserved for white middle- and upper- class women who disobey culturally expected behaviors for ladies

(Feinman, 1986). Farnworth and Teske (1995) identified this kind of practice as a selective chivalry theory which proposes only certain socioeconomic and racial groups of female offenders had received chivalry treatment in the system.

On the other hand, there is evidence for a get-tough policy by store managers and owners in recent years (Feinman, 1986). Since 1960 arrests for shoplifting have increased so much that it has become a major cause for overall female arrests (Feinman, 1986). Shoplifting or larceny-theft is the most prevalent offense among female arrests. The offense constituted the largest percentage of female arrest. In 1995, women were responsible for 33.3% of all larceny/theft arrests (Pollock, 1999). Sixteen percent and 13.9% of women were arrested for larceny-theft in 1996 and 2000, respectively (FBI, 1996, 2000).

The rates of larceny/theft are influenced by official reactions. Many researchers have suspected that the increase in women's imprisonment is due to a series of policy changes within the criminal justice system, rather than a change in the seriousness or magnitude of females' crime (Chesney-Lind, 1998). In relation to females' shoplifting habit, with more stolen items on them, they are more likely to raise suspicions of store managers. The

image presented in the news media of more aggressive, masculinized women criminals has prompted store owners to treat them as criminals whereas in previous years women caught shoplifting were released without arrest if the merchandise was returned immediately (Feinman, 1986).

In addition, stores' methods in detecting shoplifting have become more sophisticated (Pollock, 1999). The enhanced shoplifting procedures could be considered one of the attributes to the increase of female shoplifters. A study conducted by Moyer (1981) indicated shoplifting received the most severe reaction from the police followed by possession of marijuana, public drunkenness, traffic offense, and assault. This switch of attitude might have increased of store owners' concern for shoplifters to be arrested.

Feinman (1986) argued women receive favorable treatment in court due to paternal reasons. Studies done in the 1960s and 1970s to determine the importance of chivalry had contradictory findings and suggested that arrests and sentencing of women were influenced by many factors. For example in the arresting phase, some studies have concluded if women conform to stereotypical behavior by crying or showing deference to police or concern for their children, they are less likely to be arrested

(Feinman, 1986). However, researchers have found police to be responding in a similar manner to the demeanor of both men and women. Furthermore, Moyer's (1981) imperative finding was a negative demeanor produces a more a severe reaction from police than does a positive one. Other variables such as sex and race had a negligible effect on the police officers' disposition (Moyer, 1981).

The nature of the offense and the manner in which the offender behaves when confronted by the officer are the major variables in determining how police officers would respond to the incidents. However, the effect of the demeanor also depended upon the type of crime committed (Moyer, 1981). The most variance in officers' responses to women offenders was due to the main or the direct effects of crime type and demeanor (Moyer, 1981). Hence, along with the get tough policy, if a woman committed a crime that would directly impact the welfare of her children, police officers would be inclined to make an arrest. Thus, the female larceny-theft arrest rate has appeared to be higher than their male counterparts.

During a sentencing stage, Kramer, Steffensmeier and Streifel (1993) analyzed guideline sentencing data from Pennsylvania for the years 1985 to 1987 on the influence of gender on judge's imprisonment decision making. Kramer,

Steffensmeier and Streifel (1993) found "gender has a small effect on the likelihood of imprisonment toward lesser jailing of female defendants but has a negligible effect on the length-of-imprisonment decision" (p. 411). However, their qualitative data suggested the sentencing preferential treatments of judges are influenced by two focal concerns of blameworthiness and practicality. Judges in the research indicated the determination of the blameworthiness includes a female defendant's prior record, level of involvement in the crime and remorse into mitigating factors in the sentencing stage. In addition, practicality concerns with child care responsibility, pregnancy, emotional or physical problems, and availability of adequate jail space in female prisons. An interesting conclusion made by Kramer, Steffensmeier and Streifel (1993) was that:

Gender has no effect on the length-of-sentencing decision but only females receive slightly longer sentences for minor offenses but receive slightly shorter sentences for serious offenses. (p. 435)

The chivalry theory actually does not support the theoretical assumption that women have been receiving more lenient treatment by law enforcement authorities. The rising female offenders population is due to the shifts in

public's attitude about crimes and traditional sex-roles and the implementation of mandatory sentencing policy.

Recent Years of Statistics

Females comprised 22.2% of all persons arrested in the United States during 2000, which is a slight 1.2% increase from 1996 (FBI, 1996, 2000). In comparing 1996 and 2000 arrest statistics by gender, the number of arrested males had gradually decreased. However, the overall arrest rates for both genders would not provide an obvious indication of the relationship between female masculinity and criminality. A five-year trend comparison of 1996 and 2000 arrest data indicated arrests for both males and females decreased 6.4% and 0.2% (FBI, 2000). One justification for the small amount of decrease in the female arrest figure is that females have been committing a smaller amount of crime; thus, female arrest statistics would have a smaller degree of reduction.

Male were predominately being arrested for violent crimes in 1996 and 2000 (FBI, 2000). Approximately 79.0% of arrested male in 1996 and 82.6% in 2000 were arrested for violent crimes (FBI, 2000). Women were likely to engage in theft, fraud, drug offenses, forgery, embezzlement, and prostitution (Merlo, 1995). A majority of females were arrested for property offenses

(Chesney-Lind, 1997). Females were most frequently being arrested for larceny-theft with 16.0% and 13.9% of all female arrests in 1996 and 2000 (FBI, 1996, 2000). The decreasing number of female arrests in larceny-theft in those two years may be explained by the increasing number of females entering the job market.

With more females entering the business market, the embezzlement rate jumped 35.3% during 1996 to 2000, respectively (FBI, 2000). If the increased percentage of embezzlement arrests were one of the negative impacts of the shift in the social role and increase female autonomy, the number of driving under the influence arrests would also have increased. Evidently, female arrest rates for driving under the influence raised 10.6% from 1996 to 2000 (FBI, 2000). The rising female violent and drunk driving offenses could be explained with masculinity theory, which assumes the increasing incidents of female illegality are the result of female emancipation and nontraditional self-perceptions of the female sex-role.

The number of women being arrested for embezzlement took a large jump of 35.3% compared to only 12.2% of increase for their male counterparts between 1996-2000 (FBI, 2000). The rising number of embezzlement offenses in female criminality reflects the opportunity theory which

argues as the employment patterns of men and women become more parallel, so too will their patterns of employment-related crimes (Landis & Simon, 1981). The increased number of female embezzlers may be the fact that women were more likely to hold clerical position jobs, which subject to intense surveillance (Daly, 1989).

The economic marginalization and chivalry theories might be useful in explaining some aspects of increasing women's involvement in crime; however, "the third variable of drug use may be a significant factor as well" (Merlo, 1995, p. 126). As Merlo (1995) stated:

Increases in the prison and jail populations of women convicted for possession and distribution of drugs, and the increasing number of women under the influence of drugs at the time of their offenses suggest that drugs may be a more important factor than was previously realized. (p. 126)

There was a 12.2% of increase among the women being arrested for drug abuse violations between 1996 and 2000 (FBI, 2000). With the denial of occupational opportunity, possessing no marketable skills, and economic deprivation, women turn to drugs as a form of self-medication for emotional problems and street level of distribution as economic survival mechanism (Chesney-Lind 1997; Morash & Schram, 2002). The waging war on drugs combined with the implementation of The Omnibus Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988

and gender-neutral sentencing guidelines have also contributed to the increase in the soaring female population in prisons (Bush-Baskette, 2000).

Summary

With the rising number of female arrests, the changes must be scrutinized with evidence that a change might occur in either victims' reporting behavior or police's law enforcement techniques (Chesney-Land, 1997). Masculinity theory for masculine and feminine personality characteristics did not appear to have been directly related to sex-role preference, sexual orientation but women's personal attitudes and beliefs toward criminality. Studies interviewing female inmates indicated the participants did not report to be more masculine and androgynous but to be more feminine. The invalidity of masculinity theory may be explained by the fact a majority of the female offenders are lower-class women who have reported to be less pro-feminist in several studies. The women's liberation movement was dominated by the upper- and middle-classes women. Thus, it might seem plausible to assume there should have been an increase in the arrest rates for the upper- and middle-class women for different categories of crimes.

Unfortunately, the prevalence of lower-class women in the criminal justice system might only be a reflection of social class inequality, government's attempt of imposing social controls upon certain social groups and injustice. Hence, the masculinity theory, which proposes a merging in male and female criminality patterns and emancipation of women that leads to more aggressiveness in liberated women, have not been substantiated with empirical data.

There are compelling reasons to believe that changes in the gender gap in offending covary with changes in the economic well-being of women as compared with men (Heimer, 2002). A large number of social demographic economic indicators provide evidence those roughly parallel changes in the gender in crime (Heimer, 2002).

The opportunity theory argued that as women become more economically self-sufficient due to increases in educational attainment and labor force participation, the chances for them to engage in occupational related crimes also increased. It is assumed as more women are positioned as executives, managers or accountants, they would also have a greater avenue to instigate white-collar crimes. However, higher levels of occupational positions are still dominated by males. In addition, most female embezzlers were reported to be working in clerical levels where they

were subjected to an enhanced surveillance, which produced a higher percentage of female embezzlement arrest rates. This analysis leads to the economic marginalization theory.

The economic marginalization theory assumed it is the absence of employment opportunities for women that prompts female crime. Heimer (2002) contended the variables used in many studies were only intended to measure the economic marginalization level among the women who are living in poverty rather than their economic well-being. The high percentage of unemployed women does not directly infer they are living in poverty (Heimer, 2002). However, strain theory explains criminality is provoked when a person is so stratified by her social conditions that her desires can only be achieved through illegal means (Bernard, Snipes, & Vold, 1998). This is evidence that a majority of female offenders are lower-class women who have worked, if ever employed, in low pay jobs. Hence, the assumption of the opportunity theory may only again be better in explaining upper- and middle-class women who commit embezzlement since they have a better chance being educated and acquired higher corporation positions. Nevertheless, the lesser labor market opportunities and the increased burden in household production, indicating

that economic models applied to female criminality are not the same models that are applied to male criminality (Milkman & Tinkler, 1993).

The treatment of a small number of women offenders maybe explained by the concept of "chivalry" which explains the subservient role that women have held to men (Moyer, 1985). However, chivalry can also be recognized to have had some adverse effects on women. Women were less likely to be convicted, detained before trial, or punished as severely as men. Women also lack protection since they are less likely to have an attorney, a preliminary hearing, or a jury (Leonard, 1982). However, after the women's liberation movement and demand for gender equality, politicians and law enforcement agencies have adopted practices that promote equal treatment for both genders and gender neutral approaches. Thus, gender is no longer a factor influencing police on processing practices.

The declining use of chivalry, with increasing social and economic equality between the sexes, the observed rise in female criminality may be due to more equal criminal processing rather than an increase in crimes among women (Pollock, 1999). A paradigm would be the so-called general neutral approaches which guideline with no mitigation for

family circumstance or "spilt the difference approaches" which have had influenced female defendants more than male defendants (Pollock, 1999, p. 95). The dark side of the equity or parity model of justice is to treat women offenders as though they were men or what some called equal opportunity incarcerator (Chesney-Lind, 1998). Women are much more likely to end up in prison today for any given offense than they were 10 or 15 years ago (Pollock, 1999).

In a summary, the chivalry theory can operate for and against females in the criminal justice system. Box and Hale (1984) argued the increasing number of women committing theft from their employers appeared to be related to female emancipation. They further argued the simple assumption of an increased opportunity for females to take roles in the work force only offered opportunity explanation but failed to provide any direct clarification of their criminal motivations. Moreover, Rosenthal, Sheehan, and Steffensmeier (1980) criticized the gender equality to crime theories as being simplistic. They suggested that both female roles and crime should be seen as outcomes of complex socioeconomic, political, and historical factors would be considered, rather than gender equality, in explaining the rising amount of female crime.

A greater economic insecurity or marginality of women, the greater opportunities for female crimes; thus, governments would impose a greater formalization of agencies for social control. The staggering number and variability of female arrests cannot simply be understood by one theory alone.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Purpose

Even though women are now committing more crimes, their crime categories and crime patterns do not appear to be similar to their male counterparts. Unlike men, a majority of women offenders have been limited to engaging in property crimes, especially larceny-theft (Chesney-Lind, 1998). In 1996, larceny-theft was the crime for which females were most often arrested (FBI, 1996). It accounted for 16.0% of all female arrests (FBI, 1996). In 2000, around 13.9% of all the females were arrested for larceny-theft (FBI, 2000). In 1966, besides the crime of larceny-theft, females were frequently arrested for crimes of fraud, drug abuse violations, driving under the influence, disorderly conduct, receiving or buying stolen property, and vandalism (FBI, 1996).

Women who commit property crimes are typically of low socioeconomic status, poorly educated, under- or unemployed, disproportionately from minority groups, and have dependents who rely on them for economic support (Allan & Steffensmeier, 1995). Thus, in order to

understand the reasons for the increasing numbers of female property crime offenders, it is imperative to examine some structural factors that surrounded their lives before being incarcerated (Heimer, 2002).

This research explores whether women offenders who committed property crimes suffer from feminization of poverty, and social deprivations as asserted by the economic marginalization theory. Social deprivations include being a single parent with dependent children at home, main financial supporter of a household and primary caretaker to minor children. Feminization of poverty is when women and men suffer from the social deprivations but women economic wellbeing is considered more disadvantaged than the men. Additionally, the following five hypotheses were designed with the major social indicators used in Heimer's (2002) research. The hypotheses were explored through comparisons between the responses of two sample groups.

Hypothesis One: Being the primary caretaker of minor children, women are more likely to commit property crimes than men.

Hypothesis Two: Women would have a lower level of educational attainment compared to men.

Hypothesis Three: Living in poverty, women are more likely to commit property crimes than men.

Hypothesis Four: Being the main financial supporter of their households, women are more likely to commit property crimes than men.

Hypothesis Five: Women are less likely to participate in the labor market compared to men prior to their arrests.

To understand if the female participants suffered from social deprivations and lived in marginalized economic situations prior to their crimes, several factors were examined. These included their social demographic characteristics, economic backgrounds, work experiences, and crime motivations, which were compared and contrasted with the male respondents. The results of each hypothesis are discussed and supported with direct quotations from the interviews, criminology theories and literatures. Themes were developed based on the explorations of the hypothesis. The hypotheses were to understand if the economic marginalization theory could explain the women's commitment of property crimes prescribed in this research.

Besides being socially and economically disadvantaged compared to men, comparisons were made between the two groups of participants criminal motivations. Further, the

criminal motivations were compared to explore if they related to their socioeconomic backgrounds and supported the hypotheses.

Data Collection and Analysis

Procedure

The research design is a nonexperimental research approach to understanding and measuring how the lives of the women were marginalized from social and economic perspectives, as compared to the men. Qualitative research methods and face-to-face interviews with open-ended questions were conducted with every participant individually in the classroom or workroom in inmates' units. Qualitative interviewing allowed the researcher to access the perspectives of the interviewees matters that can not be observed but only be described and explained by the individual who has experienced them first hand (Patton, 1990). The individual face-to-face interviews approach insured the participants some privacy which allows them to be more comfortable in disclosing their personal life experiences and pathways to property crimes.

A general interview guide was used to structure the interviews. This guide with open-ended questions was prepared to assure the same questions were being

addressed. Open-ended questions were directed to gather the most in-depth and natural responses from the respondents with their own words or terminology to express their personal perspectives and experiences (Patton, 1990).

A positive side of using the interview guide approach was that it provided topics or subject areas within which the interviewer was free to explore, probe, and ask questions that would elucidate a particular subject and prevent the interview from getting into areas of topics that are not the foci of the research purpose. In addition, the interview guide approach allowed the questions to be arranged in a particular sequence to desensitize the participants (Patton, 1990).

Samples. The samples were selected from Glen Helen Rehabilitation Center, San Bernardino County, California. All the participants were over the age of 18 and had been arrested for one of the crime categories designated as property crimes in this research. The crime categories of larceny-theft, fraud, forgery, embezzlement, grand theft auto, vehicle theft, robbery, burglary, and receiving or possession of stolen property are designated as property crimes in the research. Inmates who could not understand English were excluded.¹ The samples constituted 15 male

inmates from the medium and minimum security units and 15 female inmates from the women's medium security unit at the Center. All participants were volunteers. No interviews began without an informed consent form (see Appendix A) signed by the participant. Each participant was given a debriefing statement (see Appendix B) after he/she has completed the interview.

At the Center, the computer system was not equipped to systematically produce a list of booking numbers of inmates that had committed the designated property crimes before. A Sheriff's officer provided great assistance in the data gathering process, made announcements to the inmates about the research, and asked for volunteers for the interviews.

During the first few days of the interviewing, the inmates were very willing to participate. As the inmates' enthusiasm lessened, they began to refuse to volunteer without gaining some benefit. A Sheriff's officer scanned through the lists of the inmates' numbers and looked them up in the computer system to see if an inmate had been arrested for one of the designated property offenses before. If an inmate appeared to be qualified, he or she was called and asked for his or her interest of being interviewed. All participants were asked about their

property crime charges before each interview session started as an assurance that they had committed one of the designated property offenses.

The sample selection process was not an ideal way of selecting the samples because it was not a randomized sample selection method. It was a convenient sample. However, with limited resources and time available to spend in the facility, it was considered the most efficient method of selecting the samples. The participant of the inmates was voluntary.

Measurement. The social demographic, economic, and legal backgrounds, early life experiences, and prison life were compared between the two groups. Each of categories was being compared cross-case with percentages and emphasized with direct quotations from the interview sessions. The comparisons were to explore if the women's social and economic structural situations before their crimes were more disadvantaged compared to the men in the research. The explorations of the hypotheses were completed by comparing the interview results between the female and the male participants. The comparison results for each of the hypotheses were presented with percentiles and participants' direct narratives to understand.

Hypothesis One: Being the primary caretaker of minor children, women are more likely to commit property crimes than men. The economic marginalization theory asserts relative to men, women are more likely to commit property crimes when they are the primary caretaker of children. It is assumed the women who are the sole caretakers to their minor children are exposed to a greater level of pressure in life associated with making the assurance that the household production is being met more immediate than men.

Hypothesis Two: Women would have a lower level of educational attainment compared to men. Based on the economic marginalization theory, the social situations of women who commit property crimes are more disadvantaged relative to men. One of the social disadvantages included women being under-educated. A tabulation with percentages was created for comparing the differences in the levels of educational achievements completed by all the female and male participants.

Hypothesis Three: Living in poverty, women are more likely to commit property crimes than men. This was designed to explore the assumption made by Heimer (2002) that living in poverty, women are more likely to commit property crimes compared to men. The poverty level of a family was determined with the sum of the monthly

household income, which only included the legal money the participants' family members were making. The family incomes were compared with United State Census Department's poverty threshold guideline (see Appendix C). Based on the guideline, the sum of a participant's family income was divided by a prescribed national income levels which varies upon the number of people living in a household at the time. If the ratio equals less than one, the family was deemed poor. A family with a ratio less than 1.25 was considered near the poverty level.

Hypothesis Four: Being the main financial supporter of the households, women are more likely to commit property crimes than men. This hypothesis is also associated with the traditional women's role of being the caretaker of the household. The male and the female participants were asked the question of who was the primary wage earner for their families around the time of their crimes.

Hypothesis Five: Women are less likely to participate in the labor market compared to men prior to their arrests. The economic marginalization theory asserts that when the economic well-being of women becomes stratified, they are prone to committing property crimes. Women who participate in the labor market would gain a certain level

of financial independence; thus they would not have to solely rely on other financial resources or support systems. With that, the study explored whether a greater number of the women were unemployed compared to the men prior to their crimes.

Instrument

The interviews were only conducted face-to-face with qualified respondents, individually. An interview guide structured with open-ended questions was used by the researcher (see Appendix D). A tape recorder was used during each interview session with the consent from the participant. To desensitize the participants and reduce reactivity responses, questions regarding their property crimes were addressed first. The interviewees described their property crime offenses by stating the names of the property crime arrests and giving details on the motivational reasons for committing the crimes. When they began explaining why they had committed the crimes, the inmates provided detailed information about family situations, problems with work, or financial turmoil they had suffered. Questions regarding the participants' prior property crime convictions and criminal history were addressed afterwards. Heimer (2002) and Zietz (1981) indicated women rationalize their property offenses by a

traditional female role of caretaker; the researcher asked the inmates what the factors were which prompted the participants to property crimes. For inmates who have children, the questions of who takes care of and supported the minor children were addressed. These questions reflected hypothesis two and three.

Reflecting on the economic marginalization theory, women have been economically disadvantaged in society. Sex segregation has proliferated in the labor force which prevents women from climbing out of poverty. Hence, comparisons were made between the two sample groups regarding their last occupational experiences, such as job description, length of employment, attitude toward the job, and salary they received.

In addition, the interviewees expressed their perceptions on whether their participation in the labor force provided them with any help in lessening their household production burdens. The interviewees were asked if they were receiving any governmental funding, such as welfare aid or Social Security Income or monetary support.

Besides the inmates' criminal history, they were asked whether they had run away from home or had been involved in juvenile probation. If the participants had run away from home during their teenage years, the

questions of how they supported themselves and whether they learned to commit crime during that same period of time followed.

Finally, when the interviewing atmosphere became more comfortable, the participants were asked about their basic demographic background. The demographic background information included race, age, marital status, the last year of completion of education, and the number of dependent children.

Gathering information through the use of face-to-face individual interviews was considered economical for the purpose and the sample size of this research. With restricted time and financial resources, utilizing the interview research approach offered the more in-depth information needed to understand if the economic marginalization theory could be used to explain the female participants' involvement in the prescribed property crimes.

The reliability of the responses to the interviews was fairly high. Since the researcher was interested in understanding the participants' occupational experiences, economic well-being, family composition and situation before committing the property offenses, the likelihood of the interviewees exaggerating their responses was

estimated to be low and difficult to do. One possible means to check the reliability of the data was to gather the same information through self-report survey. However, self-report survey would leave the participants with their own discretion on detailing information they wished to provide to the open-ended questions. Exploratory questions might have only received superficial responses from the participants. However, those responses might be enough to verify the reliability of the data.

Contrarily, conducting face-to-face individual interviews with open-ended questions in this research had posed a low validity. Since it only collected information from focused sample units in the facility, the responses were not representative of the population as a whole. Additionally, the individual interviewing method and the gender of the interviewer might have had some influence on the respondents' discretion on the detail of the information they were willing to reveal. Thus, the limited generalizability was high. It would be problematic to generalize the findings of this research to the real world.

External validity of this proposed research project was small since the demographics of the sample groups were not representative of all ethnicities and across diverse

socioeconomic groups of the entire female prisoners population across the United States.

Analysis

Since the amount of data gathered was enormous, the content of each interview conversation recording and field notes were transcribed as soon as the interview was completed. The interview guide used during the interviews was used as the framework of analyses. The analytic categorizing method was also utilized to categorize the participants into groups according to their responses in each of the interview questions (Bernard, 2000). The interview questions and answers were arranged into social demographics, economic and employment backgrounds, legal, early life experiences, and prison life categories.

The elements in the social demographic category included the comparisons of two sample groups' race, age, educational level, marital status, status of full time employment prior to arrest, and information related to inmates' dependent children. The participants' responses and opinions about their prior work experiences, weekly wages earned through legal jobs, amount of weekly illegal income, types of jobs, length of employment, attitudes toward the jobs, if the inmates received monetary support from family members or governmental benefits, the inmates'

attitudes on the legal money they were making in terms of meeting up with family's needs were classified in the economic and employment backgrounds category.

The legal category was broken down into three sub-groups: property crime categories, history of drug abuse, and crime motivations. A category of early life experiences included if a participant had run away from home, learned to commit crime at an early age, or was involved in juvenile probation in early life. The last category was called "prison life," which included the types of prison programs available in the facility, the number of inmates who participated in the programs, and their attitudes toward the programs and finding a job post-release.

In addition to exploring the five hypotheses through comparing the responses between the two sample groups, the interpretations of each category were analyzed with the grounded theory approach and inductive analysis (Bernard, 2000; Patton, 1990). With inductive analysis, the descriptive responses of each category and the hypotheses were examined for regularly emerging patterns, themes, and categories in the participants' responses during the interviews and originate concepts from them (Bernard, 2000; Patton, 1990). Bernard (2000) stated, "The grounded

theory approach is a set of techniques for identifying categories and concepts that emerge from text and linking the concepts into substantive and formal theories" (p. 433).

All of the above-mentioned categories were illuminated with percentages, tabulations, and emphasized with direct quotations from the inmates' comments. Then, the results of each category from both sample groups were compared and contrasted for differences and to understand if the overall social and economic well-being of the women showed considerably more disadvantage compared to the men. There was also a hypothesis section for analyses and results of the proposed hypotheses. Each hypothesis and category was explored, and interpreted with cross-case or cross-interview analysis strategy between two gender groups with direct quotations from the interviews, percentages, existing literatures, and discussions (Patton, 1990).

Key phrases or repeatedly spoken terms used by the interviewees were identified since they might possess different meanings to the conventional world. Those terms helped to understand the participants' experiences. Some key phrases and major findings were either identified or presented with direct quotations from interviewees'

responses. The key phrases then became the "in vivo coding" in the analyses (Bernard, 2000). After the in vivo coding was completed, it became a vital clue that helped in recognizing and developing some potential patterns and themes from the data.

Convergent analysis was utilized to pull the in vivo codings for several interview questions together for cross-case comparison between the two sample groups (Patton, 1990). The convergent analysis was used to uncover the differences between social structural factors that surrounded the female participants' lives before their involvements in the prescribed property crimes in comparison to their male counterparts.

Different types of motivation for the participants' involvements in the prescribed property offenses were categorized and contrasted between the two groups. The criminal motivations served as another aspect of justifying and emphasizing the factors that had prompted the inmates' crimes since a several criminal motivations did not directly correlated to their social and economic backgrounds.

However, the data had some interview responses that did not fall into the mainstream of the rest of the answers. Comparisons and contrasts were made between the

clustered answers and the answers that did not fall into the main stream of the provided responses. The comparisons and contrasts helped to sharpen the developed concepts and made some explanations for exceptional cases. It helped to understand which social and economic factor played a larger influential role in participants criminal motivations.

In addition, the elements that were coded and played minimum influential roles in the participants' lives before their engagement in the prescribed property crimes were factored out. Hence, the codes that the participants expressed as the strongest reasons for their commitments to the prescribed property crimes were identified as hypothetical key variables or interviewing variables. The hypothetical key variables helped in understanding their correlations to the sample units' property crimes from social and economic perspectives. On the other hand, the codes that were not identified as hypothetical key variables were perceived as secondary variables in the participants' property crimes depending on their occurrence. The secondary variables were the variables that alone themselves had not triggered the participants' desire to commit the property crimes. They served as

boosting elements to the reasons for the interviewees' commitments in the prescribed property crimes.

With the establishment of identification of hypothetical keys and secondary variables, emerging themes were compared with the existing economic marginalization theory (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). Theoretical concepts originated from the data were illuminated with examples of direct quotations from the interviews and were presented with explanations and figures. Themes and theoretical concepts generated from the data were compared and contrasted with the economic marginalization theory to determine the extent of agreement.

Endnotes

¹ The exclusion of non-English speaking inmates has created some bias in the sample of the research. The exclusion has been considered acceptable with limited resources and time available. However, the social and economic situations of the non-English speaking inmates prior the property crimes may not be justified with the results and conclusions of this research.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Presentation of the Findings

The Facility

At the time the interviews took place, the facility had a female inmate population of 185 and a male inmate population of 944. Inmates were housed according to their actual age, mental age, medical conditions, sophistication of their criminal backgrounds, and current crime type.

The 15 female participants were all from the medium security section of the women's unit at the facility. Inside the unit were housed approximately 100 female inmates. Face-to-face individual interviews were conducted in a little room the female inmates utilized as a library.

The library had no window or air conditioning; the room was filled with stuffy air, which had a strong odor of detergents and cleaning products. It was lighted by strips of fluorescent fixtures. With a high value placed on the participants' privacy, as to their interview content, the glass door to the library had to remain shut during each interview session. The air in the rest of the women's unit was circulated with air conditioning. There was a phone next to the library door. A glass door

adjacent to the phone leads the women to their daily exercise area. The women were typically playing basketball or dodgeball, chatting in small groups under the sun, making phone calls, or concentrating on the movies that the sheriffs' officers had put on when I arrived in the noontime.

The women's movements were free as long as they stayed within the premises of the unit and stood behind the waiting line when they needed to talk to correctional officers at the counter. The female inmates sleep, shower, and keep their personal belongings in three big rooms; these rooms were separated by tall glass windows from the day room. Everything inside the three rooms was visible to sheriffs' officers from their working counter and desks.

The first 10 male cases sampled were from the medium security part of the male unit. The males here were not permitted to work inside the facility. Due to the male inmates' class schedule, their interviews were conducted in the later hours of the afternoon in a classroom at the unit. The classroom was not very different from typical college classrooms, except there were phones mounted on a wall of the classroom. The classroom door had rusting metal wires on it instead of a piece of glass as a vantage point. The door could be locked from the outside

but could not be unlocked without a key from a sheriffs' officer.

Across the hall, away from the classroom, there was an exercise area for the medium security male inmates. The area was covered with dirt and three or four concrete trails. The men walked three or four in a horizontal line, at the same speed, with the same intimidating looks on their faces in the wire fenced exercising area. Sometimes, there would be three or four lines pacing within the fence and others would be working on muscle building with steel equipment sets mounted to the dirty ground.

The chairs and the tables in the day room, where the inmates watch television, movies, and play games, were also mounted to the cold concrete floor. Unlike the women's unit, the sheriffs' officers' counter has wire fences built up all the way to the ceiling. Interactions between the on-duty sheriffs' officers and the male inmates were being done through a twenty inch tall opening. A sense of tighter security measures was implemented in the medium security male unit at the facility.

Because of rigorous class schedules and inmate's unwillingness to volunteer for the interviews, the last five male participants were drawn from the minimum

security male unit across the street from the medium security men's unit. The male inmates at this unit had less sophisticated criminal backgrounds or a lower level of intelligence which was determined by testing at the jail. The male inmates in the minimum unit are also called the working inmates. They were distinguished by the blue-colored jump-suits.

Being the working inmates, they enjoyed a few more freedoms than the orange-colored jump-suit male inmates in the medium security unit. Walking from the female unit approaching the two male units, it was not unusual running into the blue-colored jump-suit working inmates walking and working around the facility. In the later hours of afternoon, the gate of the unit is unlocked and the inmates go to play basketball, soccer, sunbathe, or sit and chit- chat in small groups freely on the lawn in front of their unit.

There was no classroom in the unit of the blue-working-jump-suit inmates; this is may be because the inmates are assigned to work around the facility. The five interviews were completed by obtaining approval and assistance from the sheriff officers who were on-duty that day to shut down the inmates' working room, where they do chores, for several hours.

Social Demographics

The mean age of female respondents was 29.7 years (see Table 1). Around 53.3% completed the education level under the 12th grade, 26.7% had a high school diploma/G.E.D., and 20.0% received 1-3 years of college education. Forty percent of the female respondents were single and 26.7% were divorced/widowed. Around 40.0% of

Table 1. Summary and Comparison of Social Demographic

	Female Inmates (N = 15)	Male Inmates (N = 15)
Mean age	29.7	32.2
Racial background (%)		
African American	13.3	40.0
Hispanic	33.3	6.6
White	40.0	53.3
Other	13.3	-
Marital Status (%)		
Single	40.0	53.3
Married	13.3	20.0
Divorced/Widowed	40.0	20.0
Separated	6.6	6.7
Children		
Have children (%)	93.3	86.7
Average number of minor children	2.1	1.3
Mean age of minor children	8.2	8.2
Living with prior to incarceration	58.8	40.0
Supporting children prior to incarceration (%)	26.7	53.3
Educational level (%)		
Under 12 th grade	53.3	13.3
High school diploma/G.E.D.	26.7	13.3
1-3 years college	20.0	73.4
Full-time employment prior arrest (%) ^a	26.7	53.3

Note. The figures do not add up to 100.0% due to rounding.

^a Full time employment prior arrest includes participants who were full-time and part-time employed at the same period of time before their arrests.

the female respondents were White and 33.3% were Hispanic. In regard to their employment history, only 26.7% of the females were employed full-time around the time of the property crime arrests. Around 94% of the female interviewees were parents. On average, each female participants had 2.1 minor children with the mean age of 8.2 years old.

The mean age of the male inmates was 32.2 years old, which was slightly higher than the mean age for the female inmates. The male participants most frequently had 1 to 3 years of college education (73.74%). A little over half (53.3%) of the male interviewees were single, 20.0% were divorced, and 20.0% were divorced/widowed. White constituted the largest male ethnic/racial in this research with 53.3%, followed by 40.0% African American. Slightly over half of the male interviewees (53.3%) were employed full-time around the time of their property crime arrests. Akin to the female participants, a high percentage (86.7%) of the male inmates was fathers. On average, a male respondent had 1.3 minor children with the mean age of 8.2 years old.

In summary, a majority of the female inmates were white, typically younger, less likely to be working, had only completed a lower level of educational attainment,

and had a higher number of dependent children compared to the male inmates. One similarity between the two sample groups was a majority of the inmates were single.

Economic and Employment Backgrounds

The employment backgrounds of female inmates were quite different from their male counterparts. Approximately 73.0% (see Table 2) of male respondents were employed, either full-time, part-time, or a combination of the two, around the time of their offenses. The male respondents average weekly legal income was \$486.30 dollars. Their median weekly legal income was \$325.00 dollars. Legal income included all the money the inmates earned through legal occupations. Compared to the men, only one-third (33.4%) of the women had a job around the time of the property offenses. The mean of the working women's weekly income earned through holding legitimate jobs was \$229.10 dollars, which was \$257.20 dollars less than their male counterparts. The median for the same group of women was \$301.50 dollars. When comparing the medians of the men and the women inmates legal incomes, the women inmates were earning \$23.5 dollars less than the men inmates.

Table 2. Economic Characteristics

	Female Inmates (N = 15)	Male Inmates (N = 15)
Prior incarceration (%)		
Full-time employed	20.0	46.7
Part-time employed	6.7	20.0
Combination	6.7	6.7
Unemployed	66.7	26.7
Mean weekly income (Dollars)		
Legal method	229.10	486.30
Illegal method	937.50	1525.00
Whole household legal income only	813.10	735.00
Median weekly income (Dollars)		
Legal method	301.50	325.00
Illegal method	925.00	1425.00
Whole household legal income only	862.50	237.50
Support money received		
Family/Friend	33.3	20.0
State assistance	20.0	13.3
No money support	46.7	66.7

Note. The figures do not add up to 100.0% due to rounding.

The female inmates had a higher weekly whole household income than the male inmates. The average weekly whole household income for the female inmates was \$813.10 dollars which was only \$78.10 dollars higher than the male inmates. However, when the same categories being compared with medians, the median of the female inmates weekly household income was \$625.00 dollars higher than the male inmates. The difference may be that four male inmates reported to have weekly household incomes over a thousand dollars, which the mean was pulled in the direction of extreme scores. In this case, the median of the male inmates weekly household income was not affected by the

extreme scores and is considered more appropriate for making comparison.

The participants who were working in both sex groups were asked about their feelings on the money they were making in terms of feeding their families around the time of their crimes. All the female inmates who were in the labor market had a positive outlook on the money they were making which was considered "adequate," "ok," or "enough" in supporting their families.

F15: I was satisfied about feeding my family with the amount of money I saved up through working as a security guard. Everything was perfect and ok in the house. Bills were taken care on time.

One of the female participants expressed the fact that her children were not living with her and she was not supporting them. Thus, the money she earned was enough in terms of just supporting herself.

F3: I was lucky that my kids were not with me. It was enough to support myself. I put all my money away but all away, but all away in bottles. I had [a] drinking problem. I should have saved up the money for my children. I was not being responsible with the money I made.

A majority (40%) of the males who were working had the same positive feelings about feeding their families with the money they were earning through legal jobs, as were the females. Approximately 30.0% of them expressed the money was "good" to meet up with families' needs. However, 20.0% of the male respondents came up with the negative feeling of the money was "not enough" to take care of the households' needs but still had a positive attitude about being the provider to the families. However, when the money came up short, several of the males admitted they would seek illegal activities for extra financial support.

M15: I felt good about it, [working] and providing the family. But, it was just not enough. When it is not enough, I would steal. The money I get from stealing, half of it went to drugs and the other half went to cover the household needs or the child.

M17: The money all went too fast and quick. It was not enough. The money I made goes to bills, car insurance, rent and et cetera.

In all the jobs held by the female participants, 83.3% (see Table 3) of the occupations were service providing related type of jobs, including cashier, in-house service maid, or security guard. On the contrary,

Table 3. Comparisons of Types of Jobs Held by the Inmates (%)

	Female Inmates (N = 15)	Male Inmates (N = 15)
Construction	16.6	58.3
Manufacturing	-	41.7
Service-providing	83.3	-

Note. The figures do not add up to 100.0% due to rounding.

58.3% of the occupations held by the males were labor intensive and construction related. Approximately 42.0% of the work held by the males was in the manufacture industry.

The participants were asked about their attitudes concerning the jobs they did for a living before the crimes. Only 33.4% of the female inmates were working; however, all of the female inmates who participated in the labor force full-time or part-time had positive thoughts about the jobs they were doing. Twenty percent of the female inmates indicated that they "loved" the jobs they had. The rest of the female inmates who worked previously expressed either "liked" or "enjoyed" their occupations. The most frequent reasons the previously-employ-women they liked the jobs were that they got to produce some results, offered a sense of accomplishment at the end of the day, and liked working with customers.

F9: Even though it [the job] requires lots of energy,
I still like to do it. I like doing jobs that I can

turn in results. I like to stand back and look at the results I have done.

F10: I like it [the job]. ... I like to work with customers or people.

One unique reason was given by female participant F15. She was a single mother, the sole provider to her household, the primary caretaker, and financial supporter to the minor children prior to her crime. She expressed her work schedule actually gave her the opportunity to make money and take care of her children at the same time.

F15: It was an easy job for me. I like working as a security guard in a warehouse. I had [the] graveyard shift which means I got to take care of my children when they are awake during the daytime.

Unlike their female counterparts, the male inmates who were in the workforce shared somewhat mixed attitudes; however, it might due to a larger population of males who were working. Approximately 73.0% of the male participants engaged in the labor force before being arrested; however, only 18.2% of them indicated they "loved" the jobs they had. Similar to the female inmates who loved their jobs, a sense of accomplishment and the love of working and having interactions with people were the major reasons the male inmates loved the jobs given by the previously working

male inmates. Around 36.0% of the male inmates reported they "liked" their jobs because they simply enjoyed the tasks they were performing and the jobs were not hard to do. The modest feelings of "alright" or "fine" were expressed by 36.4% of the male inmates because they treated the jobs without any special emotions or passions for them. To those male inmates, having a job was a way of keeping their families functioning.

M4: I was fine with it. I was working. It was a job, a way of living and make money. I had to provide for my family. I don't have problems with working. If someone gives me a job that no one [would] want [to have], I probably wouldn't want it myself. But, if it means food on the table and cloths on the back, I would do it.

M17: It was alright. I just got to do it to pay bills.

Around 10% of the male inmates had negative attitudes toward their jobs. However, the reasons for the negative feelings given by a young male participant were alarming:

M8: I am only 18 years old. ... I did not like the job as landscaping that I was doing with my parents. It was hard for me since it needs lots of labor. I was doing it because I needed it for money. ... I did

not care about the work since dealing drugs gets more money to me.

The young participant evaluated the costs and the benefits of making money through a legal occupation with an illegal job, then supported and applauded on how much quicker and easier to earn money it was through drug dealing.

Aside from earning money through legitimate jobs, 40.0% of the female and 66.7% of the male inmates also received money through illegal methods. Illegal methods included the money the inmates had received through committing crimes or means that are not permitted by laws such as money gained through distributions of drugs, selling of stolen property, or stealing. The women reported making an average \$937.50 dollars of illegal money weekly. The males made around \$1525.00 dollars of illegal money per week. On average, both sample groups were making three to four times more money through illegal than legal methods. However, it was problematic for several interviewees to come up with some actual figures on the amount of dollars they were getting through illegal means:

F15: I have no clue; it came and went so quickly.

M3: [It] depends on what I take. The street value drops. It's not the stuff would be in the trend forever.

M5: I could not put down a number on it. I wasn't shoplifting to make money. I was homeless and hungry. I needed the cinnamon roll to eat and survive.

M10: [I made on an] average of \$2,100 dollars per week. That's cash; it does not include the goods that people would bring to me to collect off the dope. People would bring jewelries, gold, electronic appliances, guitar, drums, surf board, mountain bike or cars to you.

M15: [I get on an] average of \$100 per week. But, I was also receiving some stolen goods or properties.

In sum, more of the men were working and earning double the amount of the money the females were making prior to being arrested. However, the households of the female inmates had a higher weekly income than the males. The women were receiving more money support and governmental benefits than the males. All of the females who were participating in the labor market indicated their wages were considered "adequate," "ok," or "enough" in making household burdens met; on the contrary to only 40%

of the males. However, some male inmates expressed the wages they were receiving were not sufficient to meet household needs.

Legal Category

Criminal History. When the female interviewees were asked if they had any prior felony or misdemeanor property crime arrests, 60.0% stated at least one prior property crime arrest. In overall criminal backgrounds, the female inmates had on average of 1.7 prior felony arrests and 3.3 prior misdemeanor arrests (see Table 4). On the other hand, the male inmates had a higher mean number for prior felony and misdemeanor counts than the female inmates. On average, the males had 5.1 prior felony arrests and 4.4 prior. Even though the males had higher means for both prior felony and misdemeanor arrests, only 53.3% of the men had prior felony or misdemeanor property crime arrest compared to 60.0% of the women, 6.7% lower than their female counterparts. Thus, over half of the male and female inmates had at least one previous felony or misdemeanor property crime arrest.

Table 4. Summary of Criminal History

	Female Inmates (N = 15)	Male Inmates (N = 15)
Types of property crimes committed (%)		
Forgery	6.3	5.9
Burglary	12.5	29.4
G.T.A./Vehicle theft	25.0	17.6
Petty theft	25.0	29.4
Robbery	12.5	11.8
Receiving stolen property	18.8	5.9
Grand theft of personal property		
Prior property crime arrest (%)	60.0	53.3
Mean of prior felony arrests	1.5	5.1
Mean of prior misdemeanor arrests	3.3	4.0

Note. The figures do not add up to 100.0% due to rounding.

Property Crime Categories. When the female participants were asked about the property crimes they committed, one inmate indicated she was being arrested under two property charges at the same time. There were a total of 6 property crime categories that were committed by the 15 females. When comparing cross-cases, grand theft auto/vehicle theft and petty theft constituted the leading two property crime categories (25.0%) committed by the female respondents. Receiving stolen property (18.8%) was the second largest crime category committed by the female inmates.

Two male respondents were arrested under two different offenses for their last property crimes. The 15 male participants committed 7 different property crime categories. Similar to their female counterparts, petty

theft (29.4%) was the leading crime category that the male respondents committed, along with burglary (29.4%) were the other major crimes most of the males were arrested for. Around 17.6% of the male participants were arrested for G.T.A./vehicle theft, which constituted the third largest property crime category committed by this group of participants. The property crime categories of G.T.A./vehicle theft, petty theft, and burglary were the leading three property crimes committed by both genders by sample groups in this research.

History of Drug Abuse. Morash and Schram (2002) pointed out "female state prison inmates typically have a history of drug abuse (p. 25). The assertion is supported by the 86.7% of the interviewed females that had addictions to illegal substances in this research. But, only 40.0% (see Table 5) of all the women had a history of drug related arrests. Drug related arrests include under the influence, possession, manufacturing, or distribution of illegal substance. Additionally, 46.7% of the female respondents were under the influence of drugs when they committed the offenses. Further, the most prevalent of illicit drugs used by the women was methamphetamine. The average years of drug use was 5.4 years for the female inmates.

Table 5. Summary of Drug Abuse

	Female Inmates (n = 15)	Male Inmates (n = 15)
Prior drug use experience (%)	86.7	93.3
Mean of drug use years	5.4	9.8
Prior drug related arrests (%)	40.0	46.7
Under the influence when committed the property crimes (%)	46.7	66.7
Types of drugs the inmates were under the influence when committed the crimes (%)		
Cocaine	-	18.2
Marijuana	-	9.1
Methamphetamine	100.0	63.6
P.C.P.	-	9.1

Similar to the high percentage of female respondents who admitted to having previous experiences with illicit drugs, 93.3% of the male inmates had used illegal substances in their adulthood. However, only 46.7% of them had drug related arrests. On average, the male respondents had used drugs for 9.8 years, which was nearly double the amount of time the female respondents had been using. Around 67.0% of the male inmates were under the influence of drugs when they committed the offenses. Methamphetamine was also the leading drug that the male inmates (63.6%) were under at the time of their offenses, followed by 18.2% using cocaine.

F15: I was very high on drugs. I just loose my mind.

M1: I was high on crystal methamphetamine that night.
I went pretty high.

M7: I was on the way down of my crack cocaine rush.

M9: I was binging on crack cocaine in the previous
three days. ... I was going to use the alcohol to
bring me down to a lower level of intoxication.

F16: I didn't have to buy drugs. They were given free
to me by the people who I met on the street. There are
women who have to do things for drugs, but I wasn't one of
them. I just had so called "drug friends." If you want to
do drugs, they want to do drugs and you are in the crowd
with them, you do it with them. They didn't care if you
have money or stuff to give them. Some of them are so
lonely and they want you to use drugs with them. That was
how I got my drugs.

Crime Motivations. When comparing motivational
differences in committing the prescribed property crimes,
drug related issues were the major causes for both groups.
For all 19 crime motivations given by the 15 female
respondents, 26.3% (see Table 6) of the reasons for
committing the property crimes were directly motivated by
their addiction to illegal substances. Male respondents
gave 16 motivational reasons for their engagements in the

Table 6. Summary of Crime Motivations (%)

	Female Inmates (N = 15)	Male Inmates (N = 15)
Crime motivation (%)		
Greed for money or material goods	10.5	12.5
Drug related	26.3	31.1
Anger/Revenge	10.5	12.5
Child support	15.8	6.3
Chronic stealing problem	10.5	-
Family Pressure	5.3	-
Personal use	5.3	6.3
Hunger	-	6.3
Easier to steal than buying	-	6.3
Related to another crime	-	12.5
Just wanted to steal	5.3	-
A spirit of moment thing to do	-	6.3
Unaware the item was stolen	10.5	-

Note. The figures do not add up to 100.0% due to rounding.

property crimes. Identical to their female counterparts, 31.1% of the reasons given were drug related issues.

F1: It was all because greed and drugs. I had everything I wanted anyway.

F15: I don't think there was a reason for the stealing but being messed up by drugs.

M1: What got this whole thing started is that I was doing crystal methamphetamine. It seems that was the easiest way to go about to support my high.

M13: I was going to sell the stolen property to get some money to support my drug addiction.

M15: I needed the money for drugs.

The second most commonly given explanation for committing the property crimes by the female participants

was associated with supporting children (15.8%). As mentioned in the social demographic section, 58.8% of the minor children of the females were living with their mothers prior to their arrests. However, only 26.7% of the inmate mothers were financially supporting their children. The other 73.3% of the female inmates' children were either adults who had their own sources of income, financially supported by the birth fathers or female inmates' boyfriends at the time, parents or grandparents of the female inmates, or through governmental benefits such as Social Security Income (S.S.I.) or Women, Infants and Children (W.I.C.).

F1: I was using the money I got from forging checks to support my children and my drug habit as well. ... We were getting S.S.I..

F6: I tried to apply for S.S.I. but the process took longer than I expected. ... Basically, we were running out of money. ... We had not had hot pizza for a long time and my children wanted to have some hot pizza.

F8: I stole some batter[ies] from a store for my baby's thermometer. ... Two of my adult children they make their own money. But, S.S.I. supports my three minor ones.

There were three second commonly reported crime motivations by the male inmates regarding their crimes. The motivations were greed for money or material goods (12.5%), anger/revenge (12.5%), and the property crimes were related to other crimes (12.5%).

M6: It was the money thing It was good money, that's all.

M10: I stole the vehicle to carry some stole[n] items that I have planned on stealing. ... I got caught before I can actually steal the stuff.

M4: Basically, I was upset they [the company] had fired me.

One interesting note is when combining the need for money or material goods and child support categories, the female inmates were more likely to commit the property crimes for money, compared to the male inmates.

Early Life Experiences

Some criminals started off their criminality early during their teenage years. During this time, certain teens would become rebellious to parental authority and household rules. Several interviewees indicated they had run away from home as a way to seek for freedom and autonomy. A greater population of the male inmates [40.0%] (see Table 7) had run away from home at an early age,

Table 7. Summary of Early Life Experience with Law

	Female Inmates (N = 15)	Male Inmates (N = 15)
Ran away from home (%)		
Yes	26.7	40.0
No	46.7	60.0
Did not have to run away	26.7	-
Learned to commit crime (%)		
Yes	62.5	83.3
No	37.5	16.6
Involved in juvenile probation		
Yes	26.7	40.0
No	73.3	60.0

Note. The figures do not add up to 100.0% due to rounding.

contrasted to only 26.7% of the female inmates. In addition, 40.0% of the men had come in contact with juvenile probation, compared to 26.7% of the women. However, it is imperative to know a unique parents were not around the house all the time, which left them with abundant freedom to do whatever they wished. After combining the "Yes" and "Did not have to run away" categories, 53.4% of the females did not have close parental supervision in their younger years.

F3: I was pretty much on my own since 11. My mother was very open. I didn't have to run away. I got lots of freedom to do whatever and which I did. That's probably where I went wrong, a lot of it. F6: When my parents divorced, I was left behind and abandon[ed]

in the house and on street when I was only 12 years old.

F16: I didn't have a stable life when I was young. If I didn't come home for a week, it was ok. My parents weren't at home a lot. My mother worked in bars late at night. My father wasn't home that much. They both had drug problems as well. I had [a] free leash. I didn't break curfews since I didn't really have one. I was free to do anything I wished.

Inmates who stated they ran away from home or were left alone at home frequently in their juvenile years were asked if they learned how to commit crime during that period of time. A large proportion of the male inmates learned to commit crime when they ran away from home. Approximately 83.3% of the male inmates and 62.5% of the female inmates admitted they learned to commit crime when they ran away from home.

F1: Oh yeah, [I learned to] steal cars. I thought that was the coolest thing to do.

F3: I was pretty much brought up around it. My father and the people who he had around the house would commit crimes. It was kind of natural in a way. I didn't like it but it has surrounded my life.

F7: Yeah, that was how I survived.

F14: I guess, but not really. Crime is everywhere. If you really want to learn about crime, it is not so hard. I learned how to shoplift when I was a child from my mother who used to be a heroin addict.

M2: I learned how to steal from other older people around me at the time.

M5: I learned to commit crime mostly when I was in juvenile hall. I only learned a little on the street.

M15: At the beginning, I learned it from friends. Then, I started doing it by myself. I practiced it a lot.

M17: Yes, I learned it from the street and on the job training of how to sell dope.

For the 53.4% of the females and 40.0% of the males who admitted running away from home or were being left alone at home a lot, they were asked about the means they used to support themselves during this period. Unlike the majority of the males [83.3%] (see Table 8) who survived on the streets by committing crimes, only 12.5% of the females indicated commitment of criminality was a form of survival mechanism.

Table 8. The Most Influential Person in the Inmates' Lives (%)

	Female Inmates (N = 15)	Male Inmate (N = 15)
Mother	20.0	33.3
Father	6.7	6.7
Grandmother	26.6	6.7
Grandfather	6.7	-
Uncle	20.0	-
Siblings	6.7	6.7
Spouse	-	6.7
Children	13.3	-
No one	-	13.3
Others	-	26.7

Note. The figures do not add up to 100.0% due to rounding.

F7: I stayed at friends' houses and supported myself by committing crimes of stealing cars or stealing from stores.

M2: I stole and burglarized places.

M5: Being a run-away-15-year-old, ... my way to survive [was] to commit petty crime. So, commit[ting] petty crime was just a survival instinct moving from the earliest age. ... We would do petty crime and burglary in a gang. It became a pattern with me.

M15: "I got no place to go. The people who I met on street would let me hop between their places. In return, I sold meth [methamphetamine] for them.

The majority of the females (62.5%) received aid from friends or neighbors when they ran away from home or were abandoned at home. Around 13% of the women and 16.6% of the men got help from relatives.

The inmates were also asked who had been the most influential person in their lives. The most influential person would be an individual who has made some positive effects on the inmates' lives. Many women (26.7%) reported their grandmothers had been the most influential person to them. Around 34.0% of the men and 20.0% of the women expressed their mothers had had played the greatest positive influential roles in their early parts of lives.

There were two frequently given reasons as to why a person had been the most influential person in the inmates' lives. First, the person had offered the inmates unconditional emotional support; despite the types of situations the inmates had put themselves into. Second, the person had given the inmates the values of family or becoming a good person and forgiving others.

F4: My grandmother has been the most influential person to me in life. She raised me. I used to talk to her whenever I [had] problems. But, I started using drugs when she died. I was raped and she wasn't around already. Then, I began the self destruction path because I was so angry for what had happened and my grandmother wasn't there for me anymore. I began to hang out with the wrong crowd.

F14: Whenever I was in trouble, I would go talk to her [grandmother]. She has been teaching and explaining things to me. ... What are the things that are right and wrong. She made me realize that if I really want to change things in life, I am the only person who can make it happen.

M3: My mother. Whenever I am down, she has always been there and be supportive.

M13: Grandmother, she has always been there. She always has good advice. Even when I am messed up or down, she would always tell me I could do this and do that. She has always been my positive motivations and tell me I can be whatever I want to be.

M15: My mother, she raised me and I love her. She taught me to think before I do stuff and work not to steal. But, she has taught me a lot of bad things. She is the first person who introduced me to drugs. She still does drugs. But, she tells me its' a bad thing I should not be doing it. But, how am I supposed to know?

The male inmate M15 was unable to name a person who had some positive influenced on him. However, he quickly stated his mother had a greatest impact on his life but negatively. The comment quoted above contains some

alarming messages on how easy it could be for children to learn criminality and how inappropriate parental modeling could create negative effects in their early stages of development.

Around 20.0% of the women also stated their blood related uncles had been the most influential person in their lives. The explanations were because the women had acquired some working skills from their uncle earlier in their lives. Those working skills had equipped the women and abilitated them to obtain jobs and gain financial independency.

F3: I was living with my grandparents or my aunt's family when my father gets in trouble. My uncle helped me with some of the skills I have today. My uncle used to lay cement and brick work; so, I did a lot of that with him.

The 26.7% of the men in the "other" category indicated they had met some older men who they considered to have the greatest influence in their lives. Those older men gave the inmates the father figure they did not have in early childhood.

M10: A catholic priest. He saw things in me that I didn't see. ... told me I can make differences not just in my life [but] also in other people. That

means a lot to me since I grew up without a father. In a strange way, I've been looking for an older male role model to look at me as a person with potential. That's what or why this man makes a difference [in my life].

Approximately 13.3% of the male inmates stated no one had made any positive effect in their lives. The reasons being that the inmates had either run away from home at an early age or had lost contact with their families for a long period of time. They expressed the wish to have had a person who would have influenced them positively in life.

M5: No one. I wish there has been a role model in my life. The last time I saw my mother was in Europe. I haven't seen her for 15-20 years. I don't even if she [still] lives today. My blood father lives close by but we never get along since my younger years.

M17: Nobody. I left home at 14 [years old], got picked up, and sent to a foster home. I saw my mother again at 18 and [my] father has died. I haven't seen my mother for a while now. I don't even know if she lives. I was living in hotels with my mother [during] younger years. She was cooking methamphetamine in there [hotel rooms]. She was the one who expose[d] me to drugs. She [has been] a drug addict. I was selling

methamphetamine, which I [got] from her, to make money at school. I have seen people and my mother using it [methamphetamine] and that's how I learned it.

Prison Life

With the awareness that almost all the inmates will return to the world that the rest of law obeying citizens dwell, the Glen Helen Rehabilitation Center has programs that are designed to meet the crucial needs that inmates should be equipped with before being released. The INROADS program, which stands for "Inmate Rehabilitation Through Occupational and Academic Development System has five core components-cognitive behavior group, substance abuse group, anger management, living skills, and pre-lease. There were also educational classes such as parenting, Teaching and Loving Kids (T.A.L.K.), H.I.V., men's health, family planning for women, G.E.D. classes that were presented on an "as needed" basis for the inmates to attend voluntarily. However, not all classes are offered to both gender inmates. Men's health and women's health classes are only offered to the same gender inmates. Additionally, vocational training classes of auto body repair, landscape maintenance and design are only offered to male inmates.

Overall, Table 9 reveals that the male inmates had participated in more varieties of inmates' programs at the facility. An equal percentage (33.3%) of male and female inmates had enrolled in one of the educational programs at the facility. None of the female inmates had participated in the INROADS programs.

Table 9. Participations in the Inmate's Programs (%)

	Female Inmates (N = 15)	Male Inmates (N = 15)
INROADS		
Cognitive behavior group	-	40
Substance abuse group	-	40
Anger management	-	20
Living skills	13.3	20
Pre-release	-	6.7
Educational classes	33.3	33.3
Vocational training	20.0	-

One of the most reoccurring reasons for the women's low participation in the INROADS program was due to their short sentencing period at the jail. The short stays preclude the women from participating in any of the programs at the facility. With a large population of males with a history of drug abuse, only 40.0% of them had participated in the inmate substance abuse treatment programs of the cognitive behavior group and substance abuse group.

Approximately 13.3% of the female and 20.0% of the male participants had participated in the living skills class. The key components of the living skill class are to help inmates prepare resumes on computers, learn to fill out job applications, and social interaction skills. The inmates would have their resumes saved on disks that they can take with them when they are being released. However, a post-release inmate may not have access to a computer to utilize the resume they have composed while in the facility. But, male inmate M1 expressed the living skill class had several positive impacts on him. He stated the following:

I was able to really see my personal problems and behaviors to as far as I learn to pick up my values again. I think this time when I get out, I will not choose to go out and get high. I will get a job and accomplish some personal goals that I hold inside. I was going through the problem with my divorce 4 years ago. ... Drugs made me not to feel the pain I had. But, what I really need was some professional counseling. I didn't know how to go about getting them. ... I know my values again and a man again to accept the things that God wants me to do. I want to be a good and productive member of the society.

Approximately 47.0% of the female and 53.0% of the male interviewees had not participated in any of the programs at the facility. Overall, the male inmates had participated in more varieties of the programs available at the rehabilitation center. An inmate's eligibility to

participate in a program is evaluated by his or her crime type, history of drug abuse, the inmate's behavior in the facility, and availability of space for the programs.

Attitude on Obtaining a Job Post-Release. None of the male inmates had participated in the vocational training programs since they arrived at the facility. However, male inmate M16 stated he learned to weld when he helped to build some walls and rolling doors of in a new office when he first arrived in the facility. He did not know how to do welding when he first arrived in the facility. It was unclear if the majority female inmates had marketable skills; however, only 20.0% of them had participated in the vocational programs while serving time. With negligible numbers of inmates participating in the vocational training programs, all inmates from both sample groups were being asked about their feelings about getting a job post-release.

Close to half of the female inmates [60.0%] (see Table 10) and 53.4% of the male inmates expressed they had positive or optimistic attitudes about getting a job post-release. However, the positive attitude was not related to the vocational programs that were available at the facility since only 20.0% of the women and none of the men participated in the programs. The recurring

Table 10. Attitudes on Obtaining a Job Post-Release (%)

	Female Inmates (n = 15)	Male Inmates (n = 15)
Positively	60.0	53.4
Modest	6.7	6.7
Negatively	13.3	26.7
Plan on going back to school first	20.0	13.3

Note. The figures do not add up to 100.0% due to rounding.

justifications for the positive attitude were either the inmates had their family members contact the previous employers concerning re-obtaining a position in the same companies or they had a good relationship through telephone contact with previous bosses who promised to keep their jobs for them while they are serving time.

Around 13.3% of the female inmates and 26.7% of the male inmates felt negatively about obtaining a job after being released. Those female inmates who had a negative outlook on getting a job stated they did not think they had any work skills. Further, they worried about the stigma society would place on them for having a prior criminal record and felt having a criminal record would make their path of getting a job more challenging. Some male inmates also expressed the same concern.

F6: I am all for it, about getting a job. I wish to work after [I'm} done here. I am concern[ed]

[whether] anyone would hire a violent offender or someone who could freak out and go crazy.

M4: After being here, the concern would be [to] just get a job. That's [what] my concern is. The conviction that's on me right now, it's like a thing that is against me at the back. When I fill out job applications, they want to do a felony check; I would have to check it. ... I have no problem about checking the box and letting people know that ahead of time. I'm just worried [about] people stereotyping.

Some of the female inmates (20.0%) planned on returning back to school for some vocational training, such as medical billing or nursing. They hoped by doing so, finding a job would become an easier task. Around 13.3% of the male inmates planned to go to trucking school or heavy equipment operation school post-release to acquire special working skills.

One very interesting comment was made by male inmate M10 concerning working and being able to make enough money to support the needs of his family:

I would like to get a job, but I'm worried about not be[ing] able to make enough money. I am worr[ied] about being part of the America's working poor who work very hard but [are] only able to make \$30,000 a year. But, I'm going to

take what I can get and not to pass anything on.
I'm very willing to work.

The following section contains the results of the hypothesis. To determine whether a hypothesis was supported, the comparisons of the findings from both sex groups were conducted. Additionally, arguments and explanations for supported or non-supported hypotheses are also presented in the next section.

Hypothesis

Hypothesis One

Being the primary caretaker of minor children, women are more likely to commit property crimes than men. The hypothesis was supported by the data. During the interviews, the participants from both sample groups were asked who took care of their minor children around the time of the crimes. Their responses have been categorized into eight groups (see Table 11).

The first group of "Inmate" includes the inmate who was the primary caretaker to their minor children. The "Inmate's parents" category in the table encompassed the inmates whose minor children were primarily being cared by inmates' parents-in-law and parents. The group, "Inmate's intimate partner," includes the inmates' boyfriend, girlfriend, or fiancé at the time of arrests. If the minor

Table 11. Inmates' Minor Children's Primary Caretaker (%)

	Female Inmates (n = 13)	Male Inmates (n = 13)
Inmate	38.5	-
Inmate's parents	23.1	7.7
Inmate's intimate partner	-	30.8
Inmate's parents	-	15.4
Ex-spouse	15.4	-
Inmate's ex-intimate partner	-	15.4
Inmate shared the job with other people	15.4	30.8
Other	7.7	-

Note. The figures do not add up to 100.0% due to rounding.

children were under the care of inmates' ex-girlfriends or ex-boyfriends who are the parents of the children, the responses were placed under "Inmate's ex- intimate partner" group. Some inmates indicated they were not the sole caretaker of their children but shared the job with another person who were their partners, spouses or fiancé, or parents. This unique group of inmates was classified under the group of "Inmate shared the job with other people. "The "other" group includes the inmates whose children were under the care of any two of the other seven groups.

Results show there was a higher percentage of female participants who were the primary caretaker to their dependent children. Out of the 92.8% of the mother inmates, 38.5% of them were the sole caretaker to their minor children. In contrast, no father inmate was the primary caretaker of their minor children. Around the time

of the offenses, the father inmates were most likely to have their minor children being cared for by their intimate partners (30.8%) or by themselves with some help from other people (30.8%). Nevertheless, only 15.4% of the mother inmates received help from other people while they were taking care of the minor children. Following the 38.5% of the mother inmates who were the sole caretaker, 23.1% of the mother inmates' parents or parents-in-law were taking care of the minor children.

The results indicate a higher percentage (38.5%) of mother inmates that were the primary caretaker of their minor children. None of the father inmates were the primary caretaker to their dependent children prior to their arrests. Hence, the data from this research supports the hypothesis of "Being the primary caretaker of minor children, women are more likely to commit property crimes than men that are in the same position as the women."

Several plausible reasons for being the primary caretaker of minor children, the mother inmates are more likely to commit the crimes than the father inmates in the research. Since no father inmates were the primary caretaker to the minor children and a higher percentage of the father inmates received help from a girlfriend, fiancée, or parents to take care of their minor children,

the responsibility and pressure associated with taking care of the minor children was shared.

The second most frequently given explanation for committing the property crimes by the female participants was associated with supporting children. Reflecting on Tables 1 and 2, 93.3% of the female inmates are mothers and the overall unemployment rate for the women is 66.7%. On the other hand, 86.7% of the males are fathers and 26.7% were unemployed among all the male inmates. More women were mothers, unemployed, and sole caretaker to the minor children. Compared to the women, more men were employed and financially supporting their dependent children through their means of legal income.

Additionally, a majority of the father inmates received assistances from other people when taking care of the minor children. Thus, the father inmates had not experienced the pressure of material needs required for taking care of the dependent children as immediately as the 35.7% of the mother inmates who were the primary caretaker.

Women being the sole caretaker to minor children would increase their chances of committing the prescribed property crimes than men in this research. The factors of being unemployed and not having financial independency for

the women translates into being economically marginalized, compared to the men. The social structure of being the primary caretaker to the minor children had further stratified the women's marginalized economic well-being.

Hypothesis Two

Women would have a lower level of educational attainment compared to men. A majority, 73.4% (see Table 12), of the male inmates had received 1-3 years of college level education; on the other hand, the female inmates (40.0%) commonly reported to have completion of under the 12th grade level of education.

Table 12. Comparisons of Educational Attainment of the Two Sample Groups

	Female Inmates (n = 15)	Male Inmates (n = 15)
Educational level (%)	-	-
Under 8 th grade	13.3	-
Under 12 th grade	40.0	13.3
High school diploma/G.E.D.	26.7	13.3
1-3 years of college	20.0	73.4

Note. The figures do not add up to 100.0% due to rounding.

Approximately 14.0% of males had obtained a high school diploma/G.E.D. Further, 13.3% of the female inmates reported to have under an 8th grade level of educational achievement. Only 14.0% of the male inmates had received under the 12th grade level of education. In addition, only

20.0% of the female inmates had gone to a college for one to three years.

A larger population of male inmates (86.7%) who had received a high school diploma/G.E.D. and 1-3 years of education in college. On the other hand, the majority (80.0%) of the women had only received a high school diploma/G.E.D. or had only completed grade levels lower than 12th. Thus, the women appeared to have a lower level of education attainment compared to the men in this research. The hypothesis of "Women would have a lower level of educational attainment compared to men" has been supported by the data in this research.

A lower educational achievement decreases the employability opportunities of the female inmates which further deteriorates their already disadvantaged living situations. The female inmates characteristically had to care for their minor children, had low employability relative to being under-educated, lacked economic independency. Thus, the propensity of those females committing the designated property crimes becomes higher.

The women had a lower educational attainment in contrast to the men; however, being in the rehabilitation center without participating in the vocational training or educational programs had not prepared the women for

reentry to the world outside. As female participant F1 stated "I would like to work but I am not sure I will be able to get used to the world outside since I have been institutionalized for a couple months now." It was unclear if the women were less skilled than the males. But, 66.7% of the women were unemployed prior to the property crimes and only 20.0% of all the women had or were participating in the vocational training in the facility.

Approximately 53.3% of the women had less than a 12th grade level of literacy but just 33.3% of all the females were enrolled or had completed one of the educational programs at the center. The low participation rates in the two types of programs were due to limited space available and short sentencing periods. Some of the female inmates expressed there was no reason for them to take part in any of the programs because their sentences were less than 30 days. They would have been released before completing any of the programs. Others expressed they were "not interested" by stating that only they wanted to do their time and take nothing with them when leaving. Therefore, the women were not receiving some form of adequate programming before being released from the rehabilitation center.

Hypothesis Three

Living in poverty, women are more likely to commit property crimes than men. The inmates in both groups were asked about the monthly household income prior to their property crimes. The sum of the monthly household income only included the legal money the participants' family members were making. The family incomes were compared with U.S.C.D's poverty threshold guideline. Based on the guideline, the sum of a participant's family income is divided by a prescribed national income level which varies upon the number of people that live in the household. If the ratio equals less than one, the family would be deemed poor. A family with a ratio less than 1.25 would be considered living near poverty. One imperative note to the U.S.C.B.'s guidelines used to measure the poverty level was that they did not vary geographically. However, the guidelines for measuring the poverty level are being updated annually to take account for inflation using the Consumer Price Index (USCB, 2002). It was considered to be the best available guideline to use as a measurement for this research.

According to the U.S.C.B., the estimated median household income for San Bernardino County was \$38,497 with 90% of confidence interval between \$36,384 to \$40,733

in 1999 (USCB, 2002). Two of the female respondents [13.3%] (see Table 13) and one male (6.7%) respondents were unable to provide their household incomes. They are classified as the "undetermined" category.

Table 13. Inmates' Families Living in Poverty Prior to Incarcerations (%)

	Female Inmates (n = 15)	Male Inmates (n = 15)
Level (%)		
In poverty	60.0	53.3
Not in poverty	26.7	33.3
Undetermined	13.3	13.3

Note. The figures do not add up exactly 100.0% due to rounding.

Excluding those three undetermined values, the female respondents' families had a mean income of \$16,346.77 dollars prior their property crimes. The male participants' families had an average of \$27,292.86 dollars of income, which was \$10,945.79 dollars higher than their female counterparts.

More than half of the male and female respondents' families were living in poverty prior to their incarceration, according to the U.S.C.B.'s threshold guideline. Approximately 53.0% of male and 60.0% female respondents' families were considered living in poverty. The percentile of the female participants' families that lived in poverty is 7.0% higher than their male

counterparts. None of the families in the "Not in poverty" category was living near poverty. Thus, a greater number of female interviewees' families were living in poverty prior to their crimes.

Hypothesis three was supported by the data. The percentage of the women's families that lived in poverty was greater than the males. Thus, living in poverty, women are more likely to instigate property crimes than men.

The increasing number of female crime correlated with the fact that women are becoming more economically disadvantaged relative to men (Heimer, 2002). The economic marginalization theory assumes women's increasing financial instability is the core factor to their rising participation in crime. A financially deprived family might prompt the woman in the house to seek criminality as an alternative means to ensure household productions are being met. Strain theory explains stratified social conditions could provoke a person to achieve her desires through illegal means (Bernard, Snipes, & Vold, 1998). Poverty status is a significant predictor of involvement in property crime but not violent crime (Gfroerer & Harrison, 1992). However, it is imperative to note any one of the simple factors of a family in poverty or other above-mentioned social structural disadvantages alone is

not the only related issue to the women's engagements in the property crimes in this research.

Heimer (2002) argued the variables used in many studies only intended to measure women's poverty level rather than their economic well-being. The women with dependent children and lived in poverty had a greater propensity to receive support from family members, friends, or the state in this research. Approximately 53.0% of the females were getting monetary support from friends, relatives or government social welfare agencies, compared to 33.3% of the males. The women's families may be measured living in poverty based on the guideline with the sum of the families' incomes; however, their economic well-being might not be considered poor or unbearable since half of the women's families were receiving some form of financial support. Therefore, if the women's families were poor but received fiscal assistance from any of the three resources, some of the underprivileged families might not be considered poor. Thus, the causes of the women's commitments in the property crimes may need to be inspected from different aspects.

Hypothesis Four

Being the main financial supporter of the households, women are more likely to commit property crimes than men.

This hypothesis was determined by asking the participants who were making the most amount of money for their families. Two females and one male inmates were excluded from the analysis because they had lived on the street for a period of time prior committing the crimes. Inmates' responses were categorized into six groups. In the group of "inmate's intimate partner" includes the inmates whose live-in boyfriend, girlfriend, or fiancé were offering support around the time of the arrests.

Contrary to the hypothesis, only 15.4% (see Table 14) of the female inmates were the main financial support to their families, and half of the male inmates were the main financial resource for their families before the crimes. Another 15.4% of the female inmates indicated their intimate partner or parents were earning the largest amount of money in the households. Around 14.3% of the male inmates' intimate partners made the most of the money for their families. It is imperative to note, a majority of the women inmates' families (38.5%) were not employed around the time of their arrests. The 38.5% of the female inmates' families to either depended on other family members, relied on social welfare benefits, or just simply weren't getting any support system at all.

Table 14. Person Who Made the Most of Amount Money in the Inmates' Households (%)

	Female Inmates (n = 13)	Male Inmates (n = 14)
Inmate	15.4	50.0
Inmate's intimate partner	15.4	14.3
Inmate's parents	15.4	7.1
Spouse	-	7.1
No one worked	38.5	21.5
Others	15.4	-

Note. The figures do not add up exactly 100.0% due to rounding.

Female participant F1 justified her action of robbing a pizza man, stated the following:

I had no support. My husband had just passed away. Relatives and neighbors would only help so many times. Our application for Social Security Income was not getting approved. We ran out of food banks to go to. We were out of money, utilities, and my kids were hungry.

In sum, the overall data in Table 15 did not support the hypothesis since the majority of the women were not the main financial supporter of their households. Their engagements in the crimes have to be given explanations with different social structural factors that surrounded their lives other than being the main monetary supporter of a household.

Hypothesis Five

Women are less likely to participate in the labor market compared to men prior to their arrests. Based on the previously-mentioned in the inmates' work experiences,

a smaller population of the women inmates were employed compared to the male inmates around the time of the arrests. The results show 66.7% (see Table 15) of the female inmates were unemployed around the time of their crimes, compared to 26.7% of the male inmates. Approximately 47.0% of the male inmates were full-time employed which more than doubled the number of female inmates who were full-time employed. Only 20.0% of the females were employed full time around the time of the arrests. Furthermore, not only were more of the males previously employed full-time but they were also more likely to be employed part-time before committing the crimes compared to the females. Around 20.0% of the males were employed part-time, contrasted to 6.7% of the females. An identical percentage of 6.7% of the males and females were employed both full-time and part-time. In combin, 73.3% of the males were participated in the labor market, compared to 33.3% of the female inmates. Not as many of the women participated in the work force as the men around the time of their crimes. The data supported the hypothesis that women are less likely to participate in the labor market compared to men prior to their arrests.

Table 15. Prior Work Experiences (%)

	Female Inmates (n = 15)	Male Inmates (n = 15)
Full-time employed	20.0	46.7
Part-time employed	6.7	20.0
Combination	6.7	6.7
Unemployed	66.7	26.7

Note. The figures do not add up exactly 100.0% due to rounding.

Another indicator for measuring women's social and economic structural factors surround the women's lives in relation to their propensity to commit property crimes is employment experiences. The economic marginalization theory assumes women are inclined to be socioeconomically disadvantaged when unemployed. The socioeconomic disadvantage may be consequential for women's crime (Heimer, 2002).

In summary, 66.7% of the women were unemployed compared to 26.7% of the men in this research. The unemployed women were financially dependent on other resources prior their property crimes. Based on the assumption, the women who committed the property crime suffered more socioeconomic deprivation compared to men.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS

Overview of the Results

Discussions

Literature. The economic marginalization theory stresses women, who commit property crimes, on average are more economically disadvantaged compared to men. However, the prevalence of poverty in women is a complex phenomenon which requires considering a number of social structural factors that cumulate among women's lives and further deteriorate women's economic disadvantages, relative to men (Heimer, 2002). It would be useful to understand how stratified social structural conditions might lead women to translate the designated crimes as a means to overcome their marginalized economic situations, compared to the men in this research.

Characteristics of the Inmates. Similar to the male participants, the women were characteristically around the age of 29.7 years old, White, single or divorced/widowed, had completed the literacy of under a 12th grade level, unemployed and had children prior committing the crimes compared to the males in this research. The majority of women families were in poverty prior to their property

crimes based on the U.S.C.B.'s guidelines. Around the same time, more of the women were also the primary caretaker to their dependent children compared to the men. However, the majority of the women were not the main economic resource for their families and financial supporter to the minor children, relative to the men. The women participants who were employed prior to their crimes, a large population of them participated in service providing types of occupations. Conversely, the majority of the men that held jobs that were construction related. However, with a small sample size in this research, analyses of how social and economic factors related to various race groups could not be done with extracting some meaningful message. Relative to the men, the social situations of the women were considerably strained as assumed by the economic marginalization theory.

The women's engagements in the property crimes may be deemed as an outlet to strive to overcome their deprived socioeconomic situations. The frustration and the powerless feelings that are caused by being marginalized socially and economically had prompted the women's involvements in the property crimes.

The social and economic situations surrounding the women's lives before committing the crimes had

considerably more drawbacks or disadvantage compared to the men. Each of the socioeconomic disadvantaged attributes alone might not have triggered the women's involvements in the property crimes as a survival mechanism. Other factors such as drug addiction, and the pressure of supporting dependent children, combined with the strained social and marginalized economic characteristics exacerbated the women's propensity of committing the property crimes. It was the joint effect of all the social and economic underprivileged attributes that increased the women's tendency to commit the crimes.

Reflecting on Table 5 which summarized the criminal motivations of all the participants, the principle cause for the crimes for the females was drug related issues. Drug related issues were also the leading reason for the males' involvement in the prescribed property crimes. Drug related issues included being under the influence of illegal substances, addiction to narcotics, and the need for money to support the high.

Since a greater number of the women were the primary caretaker to their minor children than the men, the second crime motivation given by the women was the need to support their minor children. On the other hand, the three second most frequently reported crime motivations from the

males were greed for money or material goods, anger/revenge related, or the property crimes were related to another crime.

Following drug related issues, the women were more likely to report they committed the crimes to support their minor children. The women's second justification for their involvement in the crimes reflected on the economic marginalization theory's assumption that women engage in property crimes as a means for child support or to supply family needs. The property crimes committed by the women were not because of improving social standards but a means for the women to achieve the necessities for life. It was the continuing marginalization of the aspects of the women's social and economic lives that forced the women into lives of the property crime.

Hypothesis Results. Being the primary caretaker of the minor children, living in poverty, unemployed, addicted to illicit drugs, and having a lower level of literacy, the women were more inclined to commit the designated property crimes compared to the men; despite the fact that the principle criminal motivation was not directly related in response to their strained socioeconomic situation in this research. However, the hypothesis which predicted that being the main financial

supporter of the household, the women were more likely to commit the crimes, was not supported by the data since the majority of the women were unemployed and were not the main financial support. The positive results of the other four hypotheses coincided with Hemier's (2002) research conclusion that the social and economic structural factors surrounding the lives of the women were marginalized prior to their property crimes, compared to the men.

The majority of the women were living in poverty, primary caretakers to the dependent children, had a lower level of educational achievement, and were less likely to participated in the labor market prior to their crimes. Those social and economic disadvantages together may have played a key influential role in the etiology of the women's involvement in the prescribed property crimes. In order to understand the relationships between increasing marginalization in women's economic situations and their involvement in property crimes, it would require consideration on how social and economic deprivations interplay with their criminal motivations and activities.

Limitations. This research only focused on the fifteen male from the medium and the maximum security units and fifteen female inmates from the medium security unit at the Glen Helen Rehabilitation Center. A large

population of offenders was omitted because they had served time in prisons across the United States for the prescribed property crimes. Additionally, this research only concentrated on thirty male and female inmates who had committed one of the designated property crimes at the center. A number of other property crimes was also excluded from the research. The results and conclusions of the research can not be further generalized to explain the causes of the rising female inmate population, or how their prior social and economic situations might relate to property crimes across the United States.

Furthermore, the exclusion of the participants who do not understand English left out a great number of offenders who had committed the prescribed property crimes in this research. Due to the language barrier, the non-English speaking offenders who committed the prescribed property crimes might have suffered greater financial and social deprivations than the rest of the population. Therefore, the results and conclusions generated from this research may not serve as adequate explanations for their engagement in the prescribed categories of property crimes. Additionally, some inmates who had committed a designated property crime refused to be interviewed without gaining some benefits.

The gender of the interviewer may have some influence in the participants discretion on disclosing the amount of detailed information regarding their social and economic situations prior the property crimes. The female interviewer may have presented herself as a sentimental and sympathetic individual who is concerned about the experience of female inmates. Thus, the female inmates might have been more willing to provide a greater amount of personal experiences with the researcher, compared to the men. The male inmates might have reserved some information to preserve a male masculine image.

One imperative note to the U.S.C.B. guidelines utilized to measure the poverty level was that they did not vary geographically. However, the guidelines are being updated annually to take account for inflation using the Consumer Price Index (USCB, 2002). With restricted time and monetary resource, they are considered to be the best available guideline to use as a measurement for this research.

Recommendations

Two interesting comments made by a male respondent and a female respondent regarding their reasons for minimum participations in earning illegal money.

M3: I was working full-time which I didn't really have the time to steal as many things [as] I want to, which is good. That way keeps me out of jail more.

F3: It wasn't whole lot [of illegal money I was making]. I didn't want to do that anymore since it's no fun and you end up in jail. It's not worth it.

Plus, I had two jobs.

The two comments are hidden with a couple of important factors which might justify the reasons for some inmates' minimum involvement in making illegal money.

First, having a full-time occupation with a rigorous work schedule would leave one lesser time to engage in extra criminal activities. The second reason relates to rational choice theory (Akers, 2000) and the swiftness, the certainty, and the severity of the punishment.

Based on the rational choice theory, a potential offender compares the expected efforts that take to execute crime and the probable rewards in return against the costs of crime, which include the likelihood of being apprehended and severity of punishment (Akers, 2000).

Hence, respondent F3 who became less interested in making illegal money when the adrenaline thrill she received from making illegal money eroded and the possibilities of being caught and punished ran high. Their lesser degree of

engagement in making money through illegal methods was negatively related to the amount of the time they spent at work. Therefore, if the women were employed with good jobs that could offer them with financial independency and occupy their time, their propensity of committing the property crimes would have become slimmer.

Drugs and crimes are inextricably interrelated to some extent with this group of women. Knowing which social and economic structural factors influenced the women inmates to commit in the property crimes, questions of what can be done to curb and deter these deviant behaviors arise. Three commonly used terms in the field of criminal justice are brought to the forefront: prevention, intervention, and rehabilitation.

Policy Implications

Prevention. Understanding how being under-educated, unemployed, the primary caretaker of the minor children, and possessing a minimum of or no marketable skills had marginalized the women's social and economic situations, the tasks of reducing the chances of the women being marginalized economically and socially are related to the availabilities of social welfare benefits and job training programs in society. Implementing more social welfare benefits alone would not resolve the women's economic

hardship but only further increase the financial burden on society and the government.

To lower the recidivism rate among these women with children in-need and preventing them to translate criminal activities as alternative avenues to overcome social and economic deprivations again, one efficient means could be developing combined support systems. This joint support system would include governmental aids and work skill training together. Social welfare benefits could help the women and their children for the first couple of months once the mothers were enrolled and participated in vocational training programs post-release. After the completion of a vocational training program, there would be job placement assessments which would help the women to find jobs and obtain employment, and eventually gain financial independence.

Intervention. Intervention would be targeting certain existing deviant behaviors exhibited by female jail inmates. Addiction to narcotics was the prevalent issue among the women inmates. Further, drug related issues were the principle motivational reason for their property crimes in this research. Individuals who engage in one form of deviance are also likely to engage in other forms of (Gfroerer & Harrison, 1992). Gfroerer and Harrison

(1992) asserted people's involvements in property crime are consequential to drug use. Property crimes could be the consequence of the high costs of illicit drugs. Regardless of this fact, none of the women had participated in the substance abuse program.

Rehabilitation. To rehabilitate this group of inmates, educational programs available in the jail that introduce inmates to the dangers of substance abuse and harmful effects on health and daily life would foster understanding for some inmates. In addition, more sections of drug awareness classes should be established to meet up with the rising population of drug addicts who also commit property crimes. Further, due to many jail inmates only having short sentencing periods, a compressed form of the drug awareness program may be developed to comply with this unique group of jail inmates. Besides having correction-based substance abuse awareness programs, mandatory participation in a community-based substance abuse programs for short sentencing periods jail inmates post-release could serve as a support system to their continual drug rehabilitation process.

Vocational Training. Vocational training is another needed area for jail inmates. It was unclear if the women in the research had minimum or none marketable skills;

however, a majority of them were under-educated. With the combination of having minimum or no marketable skills and being under-educated, these women's chances for employability are slim, which creates instability in their financial situations. Vocational training that emphasizes special trades would be beneficial to jail inmates and the society they eventually will return to. In addition, the meetings of vocational classes should be more compacted to make them available to short-term jail inmates.

Addiction to narcotics, being under-educated, being unemployed, having minor children and not possessing minimum marketable skill were the risk indications for the women's involvement in property crimes. Poverty status of the women was a key boosting element to their property crimes. To control the rising number female property crime inmates in jails, tasks of prevention, intervention, and rehabilitation of the indicators and key element should be targeted.

APPENDIX A
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

**Individual Face-to-Face Interviews at Glen Helen
Rehabilitation Center, San Bernardino**

Informed Consent Form

The study in which you are being asked to participate is designed to investigate the relationship between offenders who have committed property crimes and their social and economic situations before imprisonments. This study is being conducted by Susan C. Su under the supervision of Dr. Dale Sechrest, professor of the criminal justice department at California State University, San Bernardino. This study has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board of California State University San Bernardino.

In this study, you will be asked about your social and economic situations before your current property crime. The face-to-face interview will be conducted individually and take about 30 minutes to complete. All of your responses will be held in the strictest confidence by the researcher. Your name will not be reported with your responses. All data will be reported in group form. Only your assigned number, which given by the researcher, will be used in reporting for research or statistical purposes.

Your participation in this study is totally voluntary. You are free not to answer any questions and withdraw at any time during the interview without penalty. None of this information can be used in any way without your consent. When you complete the interview, you will receive a debriefing statement describing the research in more detail. The researcher also asks you not to talk about any of the interview questions with your fellow inmates.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact Professor Dr. Sechrest through the Criminal Justice Department at California State University, San Bernardino.

By placing my initial below, I acknowledge that I have been informed of, and that I understand, the nature and purpose of this study, and I freely consent to participate. I also acknowledge that I am at least 18 years of age.

If you have read the above and agree, please put your initial here _____

Please write your inmate number: _____

Today's date: _____

APPENDIX B
DEBRIEFING STATEMENT

Debriefing Statement

The interview you have just completed was intended to understand the social and economic well-being of the women who have committed property crimes. The interview questions were designed to uncover in what magnitudes your social and economic situations might have played as influential roles in your decision for committing a property crime. Your contributions might be able to persuade the society and legislators to implement better educational and vocational programs which would provide assistance to the women who suffer from social and economic deprivations.

Thank you for your participation and not discussing the contents of the interview questions with other inmates. If you have any questions, please contact Capt. Brown who will direct your concerns to the researcher.

APPENDIX C
POVERTY LEVEL MEASUREMENTS FROM UNITED
STATES CENSUS BUREAU

**Poverty Thresholds for 2002 by Size of Family and Number
of Related Children Under 18 Years**

Size of family unit	Related children under 18 years								
	None	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven	Eight or more
One person (unrelated individual)									
Under 65 years	9,359								
65 years and over	8,628								
Two persons									
Householder under 65 years	12,047	12,400							
Householder 65 years and over	10,874	12,353							
Three persons	14,072	14,480	14,494						
Four persons	18,556	18,859	18,244	18,307					
Five persons	22,377	22,703	22,007	21,469	21,141				
Six persons	25,738	25,840	25,307	24,797	24,038	23,588			
Seven persons	29,615	29,799	29,162	28,718	27,890	26,924	25,865		
Eight persons	33,121	33,414	32,812	32,285	31,538	30,589	29,601	29,350	
Nine persons or more	39,843	40,036	39,504	39,057	38,323	37,313	36,399	36,170	34,780

Note: If the sum of a family income < threshold, the family is not be considered poor according to the official poverty measure.

Source: United States Census Bureau, (2002).

APPENDIX D
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Questions

1. Can you tell me about your current property crime offense?
 - a. What did you do?
 - b. What were the reasons for committing the property crime?
2. What are other crimes you are also serving time for here?
3. Have you ever been arrested for a property offense before?
(larceny-theft, forgery, embezzlement, grand automobile theft, handling of stolen properties)
 - a. If YES
 - b. How many times?
4. How many felony arrests do you have?
5. How many misdemeanor arrests do you have?
6. Have you ever being arrested for using or possession of illegal drugs?
7. Were you on drugs when you committed the crime?
 - a. Which drug?
8. What kind of work did you do for a living before the property crime?
9. Were you employed full time before you got arrested?
 - a. How long did you have the job?
 - b. If not, why?
10. When was the last time you were employed full time?
11. What do you feel about the work you did for a living before the property crime?
12. How long did you do that?
13. How much money were you making in a week or month through the legal job?
14. What do you feel about the money you were making in terms of feeding your family?
15. Who made the most of the money for your family around the time of the property crime?
16. How much money was your family making a month?

17. What types of money support or governmental benefits were you receiving?
18. How many people were living in your house?
 - a. Who were they?
19. If the participant has children, what are their ages?
20. Who was taking care of the children?
21. Who was supporting the children?
22. What kinds of job training or working skills you are receiving right now?
Are you enrolled in any vocational training program?
23. What was the last grade you finished? or Have you been enrolled in a GED certificate program?
 - a. Are you enrolled in any educational/academic program in here?
24. What are your feelings about getting a job or a better job (if employed before) after being here?
25. Are you participating in any other programs (such as pre-release activities, crisis intervention, and voluntary on-site programs) here?
26. Did you ever run away or try to run away from home at a younger age?
 - a. If YES
 - b. How did you support yourself?
27. Have you ever been involved in juvenile probation?
28. Who has been the most influential person to you in life? (Who has had the most positive effect on your life?)
 - a. why?
29. What is your race?
30. What is your age?
31. What is your current marital status or is there anyone special in your life?

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