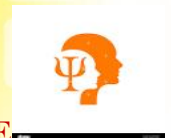




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Moderating Role of Socioeconomic Status in the Relationship between Neighborhood Disorder and the tendency to Commit Crime among Undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka

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Abstract

The study investigated neighbourhood disorder and tendency to commit crime; and the moderating role of socioeconomic status among undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Participants from the study were randomly selected undergraduates who volunteered and were allowed to fill out a Google form, three instruments were used for data collection: criminal behaviour scale, Neighborhood disorder scale and interviewer-rated multivariate assessment of socioeconomic well-being. The study adopted moderated predictive design and analysis was carried out using process macro in the SPSS version 30.0. Results revealed that neighbourhood disorder positively predicted the tendency to commit crimes, socioeconomic status positively and significantly predicted the tendency to commit crimes and socioeconomic status significantly and positively moderated the relationship between neighbourhood disorder and the tendency to commit crimes among undergraduates. It was recommended that the government should provide a secure environment to enable all people's freedom to engage in economic activities.

Keywords: *the tendency to commit crimes, socioeconomic status, neighbourhood disorder*

Introduction

Crime seems to be as old as mankind from the beginning of human settlement (Pieszko, 2016). Since time immemorial various societies world over have been engaged in curbing crimes and Nigeria is no exception. Common experience reveals that many young people especially undergraduates seem to have engaged in one type of crime or the other. Some of these crimes include; telling lies, robbery, burglary, kidnapping, human trafficking, and more recently diverse types of online or digital crimes, other scholars observed intimate partner violence (Dabaghi et al., 2023). In many developing and developed countries, issues of crime are of major concern in the political agenda due to their high societal costs (McCallister et al 2010; In Pak & Gannon, 2023).

Most undergraduates' behaviours go contrary to accepted norms, others abuse drugs, and some fight with any type of weapon at their disposal especially guns. The tendency to make money is at the base of most of their behaviours. Most feel that life is meaningless and death won't be a deterrent for any behaviour they wish to pursue. As a matter of fact, one may not be wrong to state categorically clearly that there is no society without crime. Earlier scholars have examined different factors that relate to crime. All these efforts were directed to curbing crime and yet the proportion of criminal behaviours seems to increase. Regrettably, these scholars seem not to avail themselves of the opportunity to explore the moderation role of socioeconomic status in the relationship between neighbourhood disorder and the tendency to commit crime among undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka.

The plethora of authors defines crime differently, such as any activity which is against the law (Opeyemi Oyelade, 2019a). Other scholars hold that crime is an offence against the value system of any given society. Any behaviour manifested by an individual with or without the intention to hurt another person is a crime. Accordingly, crime originated from the Latin word "Crimen" or "offence" (Onyeneke & Karam, 2022). This supports the earlier position that behaviour against someone or society could amount to an offence. In this regard, the tendency to commit crime appears to take an intentional position, unlike the act of crime. For instance, the thought that could lead to the actual crime. Although the literature has yet to come to a uniform agreement on the definition of the tendency to commit crime. In the context of the present study, the authors are concerned with the psychological position that makes the act of crime appealing to the undergraduate. Therefore, the tendency to commit crime is the propensity of an undergraduate to incline towards crime thought.

Authors advocated two major approaches to the study of crime; mental illness or bad attitude (Becker, 1968) and the economics of crime in the 1980s. While Becker's approach holds that crime was a result of mental illness, acclaiming psychopathy, a more recent approach posits that crime was a result of socioeconomic factors. Today the socioeconomic and demographic approach continues to tilt more grounds in studies on crime and criminal behaviors. Studies reveal different consequences of crime; anxiety, depression, fear, Insecurity, political stability, economic depression, underdevelopment, decline in the educational system, more class differences, and illicit drug use, (Sugiharti et al., 2023; Källmen et al., 2023; Thompson et al., 2022; Gunuboh, 2023). Crimes occur in every society and in every stage of its development, regardless of its structures (Pieszko, 2016). It becomes absolutely necessary for scholars to devote time to explore ways that it can be stemmed. Crimes exist in diverse forms; domestic violence (Dabaghi et al., 2023), kidnapping, car theft, robbery, human trafficking, and cybercrime, among other types of crime may take place. Scholars revealed a significant positive association between crime and poverty (Shaw & Mikay 1942, in Graif et al., 2014). The two most mentioned economic and socioeconomic problems in recent times are crime and unemployment (Opeyemi Oyelade, 2019a).

Perhaps, these two concepts appear to have a link with each other. However, studies have examined contextual factors to crimes and among them include; socioeconomic status, neighbourhood characteristics policy or educational structures (Evans et al 2013 in Vargas et al., 2020). Perhaps the complex nature of the socioeconomic status made it difficult for authors to define it. Among the reviewed works, it was not surprising that authors embarked on their investigation without efforts to seek a definition of the concept of socioeconomic status (Dabaghi et al 2022; Firebone, 2021; Vargas et al 2020; Preszko 2016).

Socioeconomic status is a concept that places each individual in a different hierarchy such as in educational living conditions, health and employment. In the context of socioeconomic status, it is expected that each individual is confined to a living condition consistent with the standard of living at a specific time. For, instance,

one who earns a high income, has employment, has obtained tertiary education, is engaged in high social interaction with family and friends, has access to ICT services, lives in a decent apartment with top-notch waste disposal facilities and has access to professional health personnel has a high socioeconomic wellbeing. In this perspective, it will be unacceptable for one to claim high socioeconomic well-being if the individual resides in a poor neighbourhood with low hygiene facilities. On this basis, each undergraduate may be confined to a living standard which is a measure of socioeconomic status. Authors have linked socioeconomic status to different aspects of behaviours such as migration, unemployment, widening income, poverty, mental challenges, depression and other heinous crimes (Igbinedion, *, n.d.).

One of the contextual aspects of criminal studies is the aspect of neighbourhood disorder (Thompson et al 2022, Vargas et al 2020). Yet other scholars have examined neighbourhood characteristics with diverse concepts such as Neighborhood effects, Neighborhood conditions and Neighborhood gangs (Freedman & Woods, 2013). Among these studies, it becomes worrisome that none was able to define neighbourhood disorder. At best each tried to explain the concept. Neighbourhood disorder refers to the characteristics of the neighbourhood that negatively affect the occupants and may lead to the violation of the fundamental human rights of the individuals. Authors posit that there are two types of neighborhoods, they are; Urban & Rural neighborhoods (Graif et al., 2014). Accordingly, each of these types may have different levels of intention to commit a crime. (Sampson & Raudenbush, 2001) posit that the visual signs of decay silently but forcefully convey messages about the affected neighbourhood. Scholars hold that consequences of neighbourhood disorder include; insecurity, poverty, a rise in crime rate, teenage motherhood, juvenile, crime rate, major depression, and psychosis (Vargas et al 2020; Thompson et al 2022; Gunuboh, 2023; Pak & Gannon, 2023; Graif et al 2014). Some observable elements of neighbourhood disorder include the presence of noise, vandalism, loitering along the streets, lots of abandoned buildings, the presence of drug peddlers, excessive use of alcohol within the neighbourhood, social conflict and reports of crimes. The presence of these factors above may increase the feelings of insecurity, fear, and anxiety and may further lead to depression and probably migration from such neighbourhoods.

Finally, as socioeconomic factors have been pointed out as potential factors that could lead to crime undergraduates, may seek behaviours that could propel them from a specific socioeconomic status to a more beneficial status. Similarly, studies continue to reveal different roles that perceived characteristics of one's neighbourhoods may play in arousing intent to criminal behaviours. Therefore, the present study is motivated to examine if each concept would independently and collectively play roles in the tendency to commit crime among undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka.

Statement of the Problem

Crime is an integral part of every society, and Nigeria is not an exception. Earlier scholars examined how unequal societies lead to higher crime (De Courson and Nettle 2021), the relationship between the unemployment rate and high crime (Opeyemi, 2019), socioeconomic factors and impact on crime (Pieszko, 2016), higher income inequality and high crime (Sugiharti, et Al 2023). Regrettably, authors have yet to examine the effect of neighbourhood disorder on the tendency to commit crime among undergraduates. Similarly, others examined the impact of neighbourhood on crime (Thompson et al, 2022), parental poverty and juvenile crime (Gunuboh, 2023), the presence of gangs and the tendency to commit a crime (Dustmann et al, 2023), the effect of increase crime rate on mental wellbeing (Pak and Gannon, 2023). Yet there is no empirical evidence in studies on socioeconomic status and tendency to commit crime among undergraduates. Finally, there was no available evidence on the moderating role of socioeconomic status on the existing relationship between neighbourhood disorder and the tendency to commit crime among undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

Review of Related Literature

Courson & Nettle (2021) reported a study on how humans sometimes cooperate to mutual advantage and sometimes exploit one another. In industrialized societies, the prevalence of exploitation, in the form of crime, is related to the distribution of economic resources: more unequal societies tend to have higher crime, as well as Lower social trust. They show that the optimal action for individuals who are close to the desperation threshold is to exploit others. This remains true even in the presence of severe and probable punishment for exploitation, since successful exploitation is the quickest route out of desperation, whereas being punished does not make already desperate states much worse. Making the distribution of resources more equal or increasing social mobility is generally effective in producing high cooperation, and high trust equilibrium; increasing punishment severity is not.

Similarly, Oyelade (2019) examined the determinants of crimes in Nigeria from economic and socioeconomic perspectives: A macro-level analysis using a time series of data covering the period of 1990 to 2014. Both economic and socio-economic factors that determine crime were included in the model. The economic factors include GDP per capita; male unemployment rate; female unemployment rate and poverty rate while the socioeconomic-demographic factors include higher education enrolment; urban population and rural population. The study embraces the autoregressive distributed lag (ARDL) model to empirically analyze the model since the variables were stationary at levels I (0) and first difference I (1). The empirical results in the long- run indicated that gross domestic product per capita and the female unemployment rate were found to have a negative significant effect on the crime rate in Nigeria while in urban and rural populations, male and female unemployment rates were found to have a positive significant effect on crime rate in Nigeria. Also, the results of the short-run indicated that gross domestic product per capita and higher education were found to have a negative significant effect on the crime rate in Nigeria while urban population, male unemployment rate and poverty rate were found to have a positive significant effect on the crime rate in Nigeria in the short- run.

Contrary to Courson & Nettle (2021) & Oyelade (2019), Sugiharti et al., (2023) examined whether income inequality and poverty are determinants of crime rates across 34 provinces in Indonesia. Three indicators of income inequality and four poverty measures are tested to examine whether the dimension and degree of unequal welfare distribution are linked to crime occurrences. The findings indicate that higher income levels and wider income inequality are associated with higher crime rates. Poverty is also positively associated with crime. The wider the poverty gap (a measure of poverty) and the severity index, the higher the deprivation levels among the poor, which leads to more crime. The significant and positive effect of poverty on crime rates, and the positive nexus between crime, income, and inequality suggest that Indonesia will face a higher crime risk as the country becomes increasingly more affluent.

On the other hand, Dabaghi et al., (2023) examined domestic violence can include controlling or coercive behaviours and acts, as well as physical, sexual, psychological, and financial elements. The findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between socioeconomic status and domestic violence against women in Isfahan, with women from lower socioeconomic backgrounds being more vulnerable to violence. Similarly, Igbiniedion and Ebomoyi (n.d) investigated the association between socioeconomic and demographic determinants of crime in Nigeria, using an error-correction modelling approach for 1981-2015. The results indicate that the twin macroeconomic problems of inflation and unemployment positively impact on crime rate in Nigeria. The level of education was also found to be significant and negatively related to crime rates. Accordingly, Finebone, (n.d.) discussed the socio-economic conditions and crime rate in Rivers State. The

paper examines how these conditions contribute to the rate of crime in Rivers State. The study shows that unemployment, poverty and inequality account for the increasing crime rate in Rivers State.

Similarly, Onyeneke & Karam, (2022) explored the research questions such as What is the level of influence of economic deprivation and residential mobility weights on criminal activities within vulnerable neighbourhoods in urban centres? This research focuses on the urban social structural theory of social disorganization, to investigate how socioeconomic, demographic, and physical characteristics affect criminal behaviour. The study found that sociological factors such as economic deprivation and socioeconomic inequality lead to the gradual integration of delinquency in cities.

Gunuboh, (2023) examined the effect of parental poverty and neighbourhood conditions on juvenile crime rates. It employs two distinct regression models: the OLS linear regression model and the negative binomial regression model to test for several hypotheses. The findings in the first regression (OLS) results indicated a significantly positive relationship between parental poverty and juvenile violent crime rates; it shows that a per cent increase in parental poverty in a county will cause the juvenile crime rate to increase by about 0.53 per cent. Likewise, the incidence rate ratio of the negative binomial regression model (1st NBRM) indicates that if the percentage of families in a county who are living in poverty increases by a unit, the number of juvenile arrest counts for violent crimes is likely to increase by a factor of 1.48, while holding all other variables constant.

Meanwhile, Dustmann et al., (2023) using an identification strategy based on the random assignment of refugees to different municipalities in Denmark between 1986 and 1998, findings are that strong evidence links gang crime rates in the neighbourhood at assignment increase the probability of boys to commit crimes before the age of 19, and that gang crime (but not other crime) increases the likelihood of teenage motherhood for girls. In another study, Ricard et al., (2024) Research highlights risk factors across systems, from person to community, for understanding antisocial behavior. However, limited research used person-centred analyses to investigate how individual, familial, neighbourhood, and structural risk factors cluster and relate to antisocial behaviour. A five-profile solution fits best (1: Low Risk; 2: Elevated Personality Risk; 3: Elevated Family and Structural Risk; 4: Elevated Personality, Family, and Neighborhood Risk; 5: Elevated Neighborhood and Structural Risk). The Elevated Personality, Family, and Neighborhood Risk profile had the strongest relationship to risky behaviour and an antisocial personality disorder diagnosis. The Elevated Neighborhood and Structural Risk profile showed the strongest relationship to the number of crimes. These results elucidate patterns of co-occurring risk within people, and across systems, and reveal important commonalities and dissociations among forms of antisocial behaviour. On the contrary, Pak & Gannon, (2023) provided new evidence on the indirect cost of neighbourhood crime rates on the mental wellbeing of residents. Results show that the increase in local and spatial crime rates against the property negatively affects the mental well-being of residents. The negative impact of spatial crime rates against the person is also present and is 6.7 times larger than the effect of property crime rates.

Rational choice theory developed by Cornish & Clark (1986) served as the theoretical framework for the present study. This theory of rational choice theory has the capacity to link up the independent and moderator variables (neighbourhood disorder and socioeconomic) to the dependent variable (tendency to commit a crime). Rational choice theory gives a comprehensive explanation which provides a framework for understanding crime. According to the Rational Choice theory, before an individual commits a crime such individual must analyze the possible outcome. Such an individual must have understood why and what the outcome of the crime would look like. Finally, the individual must have understood the benefit that the behaviour would bring to him/her

and the possible loss when caught. In the end, crime is assumed to take a cognitive process before it would be carried out. In other words, no crime could be an accident. Overall, all crimes are pro-self and not pro-social, and they arise as a result of both economic and social deprivations.

Hypotheses

1. There will be a positive and significant relationship between socioeconomic status and the tendency to commit crime among undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.
2. There will be a positive and significant relationship between neighbourhood disorder and the tendency to commit crime among undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.
3. Socioeconomic status will positively and significantly moderate the relationship between neighbourhood disorder and the tendency to commit crime among undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

Method

Participants

A total number of two hundred ninety-seven (297) undergraduates from the department of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka served as participants in the study. The Participants were randomly selected from the Department of Psychology. Age range between 17 to 43 years, with a mean age of 21.96 and a standard deviation of 3.180. The participants were from different levels; two participants were from year 1, 80 participants were 200-level students, 97 undergraduates were from 300 level, and 116 participants were from 400 level students. The participants also included: Christians (291), Muslims (1) and others (3). The Crime Behaviour Rating Scale (CBRS) was developed and validated by Animasahun (2011). It consists of a thirty-three (33) items scale, these thirty-three (33) items scale was used to measure the tendency to commit a crime. It is designed to measure behaviours and characteristics that can easily predispose an individual to commit a crime. The 33 items were directly scored. The scoring was done on a five-point rating scale ranging from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree" indicating the extent to which the items apply to the participants. Sample items of the (CBRS) include statements such as "behaviours often go contrary to acceptable norms", and "I can find any means to make money to survive".

Animasahun (2011) reported internal consistency reliability estimates (Cronbach Alpha) for CBRS 0.94 and the validity was obtained by inter-item correlation ranging from 0.56 to 0.88; convergent validity of 0.86 and discriminant validity of 0.02. In this study, the scale was subjected to a test for reliability coefficient and a Cronbach alpha's coefficient of 0.91 was obtained. The was Interviewer Rated Multivariate Assessment of Socioeconomic well-being (IRMASW) developed by Obi-Nwosu et al (2018). It is a 5-item questionnaire that measures socioeconomic status and well-being. A possible lowest total score is 12, while a possible highest total score is 60. The higher the score, the better well-being is assumed; however, scores 12 to 36 depict low general socio-economic well-being. The items represent the results of item analysis conducted on a Nigerian sample. The authors reported a reliability coefficient of 0.68. In the present study, a Cronbach alpha of 0.60 was found. The Perceived Neighborhood Disorder Scale (PNDS) was developed by Ross & Mirowsky (1999), is a 15-item 4-point Likert-type scale consisting of two sub-scales: Social Disorder (n=9 items) and Physical Disorder/Decay (n=6 items). Each item was rated on a 4-point Likert-type rating scale ranging from 1 Strongly disagree" to 4 "strongly agree".

All instruments for the study were processed, and administered through the use of Google Forms. Google Forms questionnaires were distributed to the students of the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Social Sciences. Each course rep was asked to present the Google form link on their WhatsApp group. Participants were made to understand that they had a right to consent to the study and also to back out at any point. All participants were assured of their confidentiality. All questionnaires were fully answered and completely submitted which was received via email. The responses were downloaded in a spreadsheet which was converted to Excel and eventually to Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 30.0, and analyzed through the Process Macro Model.

Design and statistics

The design for this study was a moderated predictive design. Statistics used for data analysis was Process Macro Model 1 using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 30.0.

Results

Table 1: Demographic representation of the study participants

S/N		Mean	SD	N
1	Age	21.96	3.180	297
2	Religion			297
3	Nationality			297
4	Qualification			297
5	Gender			297

Table 2: Model Summary of Neighborhood disorder and Tendency to commit crime: Role of SES

R	R-square	F	df1	df2	P
.10000	.10000	3.342	3.0000	292.0000	.0000

Table 2 above revealed the results of neighbourhood disorder and the tendency to commit crime: moderation role of socioeconomic status among undergraduates. Overall, changes in the model are explained by 10% changes in R-Square $f(3,292) = 3.342$, $P < .0001$.

Table 3: Moderation table of Neighborhood disorder on Tendency to Commit Crime: Role of SES

	B.coefficient	t	P	LLCL	ULCL	Se
Constant	68.6655	3.784	.0000	68.665	.6655	.0000
Neighbourhood	.0000	.6422	.5213	.0000	.0000	.0000
Socioeconomic	1.0000	.0000	.00001	.0000	1.0000	9.208
Int-1	.0000	-.19308	.0545	.0000	-.0000	.0000

Similarly, the table further showed the predictive strength of the independent variable, the moderating variable and the interaction effects. Specifically, neighbourhood disorder was not significant at ($B=.0000$, $P > .05$), socioeconomic status was significant at $B=1.0000$, $P < .00001$, and moderation effect was ($B=.0000$, $P < .05$).

Table 4: Conditional effects of the focal predictor at various levels of moderation.

Neighbourhood Disorder	Socioeconomic Status	Tendency to commit Crime
-5.4026	-17.4185	51.2471
.0000	.0000	68.6655
5.4026	17.4185	86.0840

Furthermore, Table 4 shows the conditional effects predictor at the various levels of moderation. At the lowest level of neighbourhood disorder (-5.4026) and lowest level of socioeconomic status (-17.4185) the effect on the

tendency to commit crime was 51.2471 least, at an average level of neighbourhood disorder (.0000) and average level of Socioeconomic disorder (.0000), the effect on tendency to commit crime was average 68.6655, and at highest level of neighbourhood disorder (5.4026) and highest-level of socioeconomic status (17.4185) the effect on tendency to commit crime was highest (86.0840), both this effect was negative.

Discussion

The study examined the moderating role of socioeconomic status in the relationship existing between neighbourhood disorder and the tendency to commit crime among undergraduates. Hypothesis one was not confirmed. However, earlier studies found similar results to the present study. For instance, Thompson et al (2020) reported a positive relationship between neighbourhood disorder and the tendency to commit a crime. This position was confirmed by other scholars (Ricard et al 2024; Freeland 2023; Dustman et al 2023). However, the present result finding may find an explanation in the theory of rational choice. According to rational choice theory crime is assumed to be a product of rational thinking. Therefore, it assumes that individuals consider every aspect of their criminal act before embarking on one. This is referred to as logical thinking since each person is seen as possessing a capacity to pre-examine each crime before deciding to carry out the act. Furthermore, this logical reasoning may draw inspiration from self-interest. This implies that all crimes are embarked on personal interests which may be seen as selfish (Pro-self). This self-interest leads to personal benefit. Thus, the individual targets to fulfil personal lacks or needs. Understandably, the individual may not execute a crime without full information about the crime. Such information may include possible benefits, losses, timing for execution what the crime will tend to provide in the criminal's personal world. In the present context, a neighbourhood which is disordered may breed the propensity to engage in crime if the individual is able to consider all areas that are necessary losses and profits associated with the specific crime. In a nutshell, as the neighbourhood increases in the degree of disorder, there is a high tendency for crime to rise.

On the contrary, hypothesis two was confirmed. Socioeconomic status positively and significantly predicted the tendency to commit crime among undergraduates. Earlier studies laid support for the present findings. For instance, Courson and Nettle (2021) reported a positive and significant association between socioeconomic status and the tendency to commit crime. Participants in the present study reported high socioeconomic well-being and it became worrisome that statistics tilted them toward crime. The explanation may be on the basis that they reported living conditions as students and not the parental home living conditions. As such they experience high health, hygiene, ICT access, transportation, educational levels, and social interactions. These findings may be explained in the theory of rational choice. According to the rational choice theory, individuals are motivated to engage in criminal behaviours if they experience a lack which is a result of becoming aware of their deplorable economic state. These thoughts are enabled through rational thinking. As a result, they become aware of the status gap between the rich and the poor. Such knowledge leads the way to selfish thinking that motivates them to at pro-self in order to close the gap created by social and economic deprivation created by disparity in economic standards. When these thoughts are activated, the individual may perceive success in the activities of crime and may likely move ahead with the thoughts.

Similarly, hypothesis three revealed a positive moderation effect of socioeconomic status in the relationship existing between neighbourhood disorder and the tendency to commit crime among undergraduates. Empirical support for this outcome is quite scanty. However, theoretical evidence holds that moderation may be expected on the basis of possible indicators of criminal behaviour. Accordingly, the theory of rational choice holds that criminal behaviours are products of one's own thinking. The thinking may be focused on how the state of the society is in terms of how peaceful, or risky it is to exist in the environment. Also, how psychologically calm one may experience in the environment where one lives. Similarly, the extent of economic resources one perceives that may be available to him/her in relation to the gap perceived among the diverse social classes. If

the perceived economic/social class differences are high, the individual may be tempted to become selfish or pro-self and may possibly consider crime as a coping strategy in order to acquire economic resources that will enable him/her to satisfy those economic needs. Specifically, the present result revealed that socioeconomic status weakens the existing relationship between neighbourhood disorder and the tendency to commit crime. Furthermore, this weakness is maximum at the point when the neighbourhood disorder is at its highest level of 5.4026 and socioeconomic status is highest at 17.4185. At both levels, the combined effect was at a maximum of 86.0840 (Tendency to commit crime).

Finally, neighbourhood disorder has been shown to have a positive effect on the tendency to commit crimes among undergraduates. Thus, indicating that as long as the neighbourhood is disordered, one expects individuals to experience a tendency to engage in crime. Similarly, high disparity in socioeconomic status has revealed high significant tendency to commit crime among undergraduates. Thus, as undergraduates experience gross economic and social lacks their tendency to engage in crime may rise accordingly. Overall, with increased positive values of neighbourhood disorder and the highest level of socioeconomic status, evidence suggests that crime tendency may weaken. It was recommended that the government should be more active in enforcing laws that will safely guide the society, promulgate economic laws that will boost the economy and provide gainful employment and, enforce all economic and social laws of the society to punish defaulters and send warning to future defaulters. The implications of the present study are that: neighbourhood disorder is a positive predictor of the tendency to commit crime among undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, socioeconomic status is a positive and significant predictor tendency to commit a crime similarly socioeconomic status is a positive and significant moderator of the relationship existing neighbourhood disorder and tendency to commit crime among undergraduates.

Conclusion

It was concluded that crime is an integral part of any society. Governments worldwide spend enormous amounts of time and money on how to curb crime. The levels of neighbourhood disorder and socioeconomic status remain the main crust of determinants of tendency to commit among undergraduates in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Those two concepts rest the hope for a less crime-prone society.

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