METHODOLOGY

P. Ambika Devi “Impact of imprisonment on marital and familial relationships”
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CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Statement of the Problem

Imprisonment is a mode of punishing criminality in individual. However, when a married person is put behind bars, it creates a lot of problem. The individual is brought under regulated life. The persons intimate relationship with his/her spouse is disrupted. Further, the person’s family relationship is basically disturbed. These disruptions and consequent readjustments of relationships create serious problems to both the prisoner and his/her family. This study primarily attempts to portray the nature of disorganization / reorganization in the marital and familial relationships created by imprisonment and their consequences. The personal problems created to the prisoners as a result of the imprisonment and their methods of adaptation to them also have been analysed.

3.2 Objectives of the Study

The major objectives of the study are:

a) to analyse the socio-cultural antecedents of the criminals

b) to find out the nature and gravity of the impact of imprisonment on the prisoner as an individual
c) to analyse the impact of imprisonment on the marital relationships of
the prisoner
d) to assess the impact of imprisonment on the familial relationships of
the prisoner
e) to analyse the adaptation patterns of prisoners and their family to the
imprisonment

3.3 Hypotheses

Under the objectives the following hypotheses were formulated for testing:

a) Criminality of prisoners is not a behaviour inherited from the predecessors
b) Imprisonment creates a crisis situation to the individuals
c) The nature of crisis created to the individual’s life by imprisonment is associated with the socio-economic and cultural backgrounds of the individual
d) Imprisonment of married prisoners disorganizes / reorganizes their marital relationships
e) The disorganization / reorganisation in the marital relationships depends on the socio-cultural backgrounds of the sample
f) Imprisonment impairs the social, economic and psychological functions of the prisoners' family

g) The impairments of the familial functions depend on the socio-cultural background of the family

h) Imprisonment reduces the social status of prisoner’s family

i) Imprisonment necessitates serious readaptation in the function and forms of the prisoner’s family

j) The readaptation of the functions and forms of the family is associated with the socio-cultural backgrounds of the family

3.4 Definition of Major Concepts

a) Impact of Imprisonment:

Impact of imprisonment means the consequences of the detention. In this study the consequences of the detention on the individual, marital relationship and familial relationship are studied. Empirically the impact may be explained as the changes induced by imprisonment in the economic, social and emotional atmosphere of the family.

b) Marital Relationship

Relationship between husband and wife pertaining to conjugal life is termed as marital relationship.
c) Familial Relationships

The family is a group of persons united by the ties of marriage, blood or adoption; constituting a single household, interacting and intercommunicating with each other in their respective social role of husband and wife, mother and father, brother and sister creating a common culture and emotional environment. The network of relationships existing among these social roles are collectively considered as familial relationships.

d) Social Stigma

Stigma is a social attribute which is discrediting the required status for an individual or group – Stigma is a mark of disgrace or infamy.

3.5 Definition and Measurement of Variables

The background variables considered in the study are gender, age, religious affiliation, education, occupation and income of the family.

a) Gender

If the sex of a person has been biologically determined, the gender of a person has been culturally and socially constructed. There have been thus two sexes (male and female) and two genders
(masculine and feminine). Gender differentiation refers to the process in which biological differences between males and females are assigned social significance and are used as a means of social classification. In this study the gender difference is indicated by male and female.

b) Age

Age means the number of years the respondent has completed at the time of interview since birth. For analytical purposes the sample will be categorized into three age groups, the younger age group (below 30 years), middle age group (30-50 years) and old age group (50 and above).

c) Religious Affiliation

Religion is a system of beliefs and rituals, which binds people together into social groups. Religion is the human response to those things which concern us ultimately.

For analytical purposes the sample will be classified on the basis of religious affiliation into Hindu (Forward), Hindu (Backward), Muslims and Christians.
d) Educational Status

Education may be defined as the transmission of knowledge by either formal or informal methods to develop the faculties and power of a person by teaching or instruction or schooling. The act or process of imparting or acquiring general knowledge, developing the powers of reasoning and judgement and generally of preparing one self or others intellectually for mature life. Here, it refers to the number of years of formal schooling the respondents have had.

On the basis of educational attainment the respondents are classified into four groups, namely, illiterate, primary educated, secondary educated and higher educated.

e) Occupational Status

Occupation refers to a set of activities, which get centered on an economic role and usually associated with earning a living. An occupation has been a social role which is determined by the general decision of labour within a society. As a specialisation of an individual’s function in society it has been an important factor defining a person’s prestige, class, position and style of life.
For analytical purposes the sample will be classified on the basis of their occupational status into manual labourers, those who engaged in agriculture and fisheries, business people, white collar employee and unemployed.

**f) Income Status**

Income is the return that come in periodically from property, business, labour etc.

The sample will be categorized into three groups according to their monthly family income. The groups will be low-income group (income below Rs.2500), middle-income group (Rs.2500 to Rs.5000) and higher income group (Rs.5000 and above).

**3.6 Dependent variables**

Conceptually speaking the dependent variables are the consequences brought about in the prisoner’s life patterns, marital relationships and familial relationships. Empirically the variables are measured in terms of;

1. Disorganisation / reorganisation of individual’s life patterns
2. Disorganization / reorganisation of familial relationship and
3. Disorganization / reorganisation of marital relationships
1. Disorganisation / Reorganisation of Individual’s Life Patterns

The indices selected for assessing the disorganisation / reorganisation of individual’s life patterns are:

a. changed food habit
b. difficulties in sharing space with strangers
c. idleness felt
d. adjusting with constraints in movement
e. unwanted anxiety experienced
f. loss of appetite
g. illtemperment
h. depression
i. sleeplessness in nights

2. Disorganization / Reorganisation of Familial Relationship

The disorganization / reorganisation of the familial relationships is assessed in terms of

a. debt incurred
b. alienation Properties (both movable and immovable)
c. taking up job afresh by the members of the family
d. shouldering the responsibility of the household affairs by other members
e. de-schooling of children
f. in security feeling of family members especially of children
g. desertion of the prisoner by children

3. Disorganization / Reorganisation of Marital Relationship

Disorganization / reorganisation in the marital relationship was assessed in terms of:

1. Increased concern about problems of spouse
2. Frustration experienced by spouse as a result of the lack of:
   a) physical interaction
   b) fulfilled sexual urge
   c) companionship
   d) emotional need satisfaction
   e) support for decision making
   f) support during infirmity
3. Doubting the morality of spouse
4. Desertion of the prisoner by spouse
Sources of Data

The source of primary data was interview of prisoners from the various Central Prisons in the State of Kerala.

Secondary data were collected from published materials and knowledgeable persons in the area of research.

3.7 Population

The population of the study is constituted by prisoners who have been undergoing imprisonment for more than six months in the various central prisons of the State of Kerala and who had occasions to stay with their family on parole or who are well informed about the happenings in their families and original places of residence. The category of prisoners are confined in central prisons in Thiruvananthapuram, Thrissur and Kannur. The prisoners of these prisons constitute the population of the study. According to the prison records the strength of this category of prisoners in the prisons as on 30/05/98 is as shown in Table No. 3.7
3.8 The Sample and Sample Selection

On the basis of consultations with experts in sampling the sample size was fixed as 15% of the population which come to 300 prisoners (Table 3.7). From each prison samples were selected proportionate to the strength of the prisoners there (15% each). The samples were selected by lottery method of selection.

The Sociological Profile of the Sample

3.8.1 Sex Composition of the Sample

The males constitute 92.33% of the sample where as females constitute only 7.66 % of it.
3.8.1 Sex Composition of the Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>92.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.8.2 Age composition of the Sample

On the basis of age the sample is divided into three categories – age below 30 years, 30 to 60 years and 60 years and above. The lower group (below 30) constitutes 10.67% of the sample. The middle-aged group constitutes of 85.67% of the sample and the upper age group constitutes 3.66%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age (in years)</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below 30</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>10.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 – 60</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>85.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 and above</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.8.3 Religious Composition of the Sample

On the basis of the religious affiliation of the respondents the sample was divided into Hindu (Forward), Hindu (Backward), Muslims and
Christians. The strengths of the respective groups are showing in Table No.3.8.3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hindu (Forward)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>9.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu (Backward)</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>47.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>28.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>15.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.8.4 Educational Background the Sample

On the basis of the educational status the sample was divided into illiterates (who did not acquire any formal education). The illiterate respondents constitute 22.33% of the sample. Those who acquired primary level education constitute 61.67% of the sample. The secondary and higher educated respondents constitute 12.67% and 3.33% respectively of the sample.
Table No. 3.8.4
Educational Background of the Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>22.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>61.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>12.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.8.5 Occupational Background of the Sample

Manual labourers dominate the sample (69%). Respondents who engaged in agriculture and fisheries constitute 11.33% of the sample. The percentages of the business people and white-collar employees in the sample are 12% and 3.67% respectively. The unemployed respondents constitute only 4% of the sample.

Table No. 3.8.5
Occupational Status of the Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manual Labourers</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>69.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture and Fisheries</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>11.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>12.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White collar employment</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.8.6 Income Background of the Sample

On the basis of the income status the respondents were divide into 3 categories, namely, lower income group (Below Rs.2500 per month), middle-income group (Rs.2500 - 5000) and higher income group (Rs.5000 and above). The lower income group constitute 58.33% of the sample where as the middle income group constitute 35.33% of it. 6.33% of the sample belong to the upper income category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monthly Income (In Rs.)</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below Rs.2500</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>58.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rs.2500 – 5000</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>35.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rs.5000 and above</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.9 Tools of Data Collection

The main tool used for data collection was a structured interview questionnaire. For the construction of the instrument extensive survey of literature was conducted. In order to get familiarity with the prison setting the researcher first visited the Central Prison, Kannur and met the authorities as well as prisoners. With the experience acquired from this visit, researcher was equipped for conducting a pilot study.
During the pilot study conducted in the three prisons the family members of the prisoners who came to visit their relatives were also interacted with in additions to the interaction with few prisoners of each of the jails. The information gathered from them was helpful to refine the questionnaire. The final version of the questionnaire is given in Appendix II.

The interview questionnaire was developed in such a way that it enquired into the impact of imprisonment on the marital and familial relationship of the prisoners. The impact on the individual was also investigated by the questionnaire. The tool was pre-tested, at the three Central Prisons with 10 samples each from the prisons. On the basis of the pre-test, necessary modifications were made in the instrument. The information gathered from jail authorities, helped the researcher to have a clear picture about the prison and prison administration.

In addition of interviewing prisoners supplementary data were collected from informal interviews of many of the family members who came to visit their relatives in the prisons. They include, parents, spouse, children, brothers and sisters etc of the prisoners. Information were poured in from them. Jail authorities also gave a clear idea about the prison life.
3.10 The Research Setting

A detailed account of the Research Setting is given in Chapter 4.

3.11 Interviewing the Prisoners

The prisoners were interviewed in the prisons in which they were put. The interviews were conducted in the presence of a jail officer. The jail authorities were very helpful in making necessary arrangements for the interviews. It took almost six months to complete the interviews. It made the researcher to establish good and friendly rapport with all the jail authorities.

During the interview the researcher had ample opportunities to get insight into the circumstances in which crimes were committed. Many of them were circumstantial and not pre-planned. The convicts of such cases were found to repent about the whole events. It is also found that the trauma experienced by the convicts is also felt by their family members, in equal or more great manner.

3.12 Data Verification and Analyses

The data were thoroughly scrutinised. Necessary editing and coding were done and they were fed into computer.
Analysis of data was carried out to test the hypothesis formulated. Frequency and two-way tables were generated. Gender, age status, religious affiliation, educational status, occupational status and income status were the major parameters used for the analyses of data.

Association between the variables stated in the various hypotheses were tested using Chi-Square Test of independence and for comparisons percentages were used. The levels of significance for the acceptance of the association were 0.05 and 0.01.

Analyses in which association between variables revealed are thoroughly discussed in the report. Wherever the results are in the other way round, such elaborate discussion with tables are not made. However, such results are mentioned in the respective contexts.

The researcher also conducted five case analyses. Typical case of the prisoner community were identified from the different jails with the permission of the jail authorities and depths interviews were conducted with the identified persons. The case analyses are given in Chapter 9.
Results of the study are interpreted and their practical implications are explained. Suggestions for improving the effectiveness of this correctional system are given in the report.