CONCLUSION

P. Ambika Devi “Impact of imprisonment on marital and familial relationships”
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CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION

It is an accepted fact that imprisonment disturbs the familial and marital lives of married prisoner in addition to disrupting the personal life. These disruptions and consequent readjustments create serious problems to both the prisoner and his/her family. This study attempts to portray the nature of disorganizations in the personal, marital and familial lives created by imprisonment and their consequences.

Brief Methodology

Three hundred prisoners were interviewed from the Central Prisons in Thiruvananthapuram, Thrissur and Kannur. The samples (15% of the population) were selected by using random sampling method. The interview was conducted with the help of a structured interview schedule. The interviews enquired into, how far the personal, marital and familial lives of the respondents was disorganized due to their imprisonment. In order to get more information about the gravity of the impact, the researcher made friendly talks with the visitors particularly the spouses who come to visit them. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used in the analysis of the data.
The Main Objectives of the Study were:

(a) to analyse the socio-cultural antecedents of the criminal
(b) to find out the nature and gravity of impact of imprisonment on personal life of the prisoner
(c) to analyse the impact of the imprisonment on the marital relationship on the prisoner
(d) to assess the impact of the imprisonment on the familial relationship of the prisoner
(e) to analyse the adaptation patterns of the prisoner and the family to the imprisonment

On the basis of these objectives specific hypotheses were formulated.

In the following sections major observations and findings are summarized

1. Socio-Cultural Antecedents of the Criminal

In this study the data collected were analysed to find out the socio-cultural history of the prisoners. The analysis enquired into, who were mainly responsible for the bringing up of the respondents during their childhood days. It is found that 76.67 per cent of the respondents were brought up in normal family atmosphere (Table No.5.1). The rest (23.33 per
cent) were brought up by other relatives and single parents (either mother or father). So it is found that who up-bring a person in their early childhood has no influence in making them deviant.

Economic environment in which one had been brought up during his/her childhood tells upon their later behaviour. On the basis of this assumption this study enquired into the type of economic security the prisoners enjoyed in their childhood. 52% of the respondents faced economic problems very severely and 27 per cent faced moderately. The problem faced may have injected deviant tendencies in to them.

Regarding the areas of discrimination faced in the family, it relates to quality and quantity and time at which food served, cloths provided, time allowed for rest etc. It is to be doubted that the early experiences of discrimination would have influenced them to criminal activities.

It was found that 39 per cent of the prisoners have relatives who got life imprisonment. These respondents had been living with them. This would have played an important role in cultivating criminal tendencies in them.
It was seen that 91.33 per cent were maiden offenders. The rest (8.67 per cent) of the respondents have committed crimes for more than four times. It is found that habitual offenders are insignificant minority among the respondents.

When enquired about the nature of the crime committed by them, it is found that more than three-fourth of the convicts have been caught for heinous crimes of murder and drug trafficking. 7.67 per cent of them are caught for theft and 7.33 per cent are caught for cheating. On the whole we may conclude that the prisoners have dangerous criminal qualities.

On our analyses it was seen 45.67 percent were awarded lifetime imprisonment and the rest (54.33%), imprisonment for different terms. This implies that the formal control systems are actually doing yeoman efforts to protect the society from doing criminal tendencies by awarding punishment proportionate to the severity of the wrong doing.

When enquired about the adequacy of the punishments awarded, an overwhelming majority (83.67%) of them reacted that the punishments imposed on them is unduly harsh. The grievance they feel may harden their criminality.
The analyses in the chapter support the saying that criminality is not in-born but created.

2 Impact of Imprisonment on the Individual

The adverse impact of the prison environment on the inmates especially during the initial period of confinement is very severe. More than half of the prisoners (53%) stated that initiation into prison life caught hold of them in various difficult situations. The rest (47 percent) were not affected by the event. Lack of interest in food and unreasonable hostility to others were the symptoms they felt during the initial days of imprisonment.

The analysis of the data revealed that the initial problems are gender based. The problems is faced more by male members.

The higher educated are lesser affected by the initial problems. Table No. 6.1.2 shows the result, is in fact, contrary to the expectations and more probing is required to explain it logically. The illiterates feel prison a safer place than the open world. 40.30 per cent of the illiterates expressed the view that imprisonment prevents them from doing further crimes. The other background variables are not associated with the problems faced.
It is found that 86.33 per cent of the respondents believe that their esteem is considerably reduced because of their imprisonment. It indicates that the impact of imprisonment on the social status of the individual is very harsh.

There is a gradual reduction in the feeling of erosion of esteem as the age increases. It is natural that the youngsters will be feeling the loss more, because they have to face the problem escalated by imprisonment for a longer period. The higher income category feels the status loss greater. It decreases with decrease in income status.

Erosion of esteem is also associated with occupational status. The business persons and white collar employees feel the loss of esteem very much. Business persons and white collar employees are enjoying greater status and esteem in any society than the manual labourers and those who have no specific occupations do.

Except very few (3) all prisoners admitted that the food supplied, facilities provided for cleaning and resting are far better than those enjoyed in their free life.
The general complaint projected by prisoners was that their supper is served very early by 5 o’clock in the evening. Even though majority of them felt the problem of sleeping close to strangers initially, once they are prisonised the aspiration for an exclusive territory is vanished.

The analysis tends to the conclusion that the prisoners, personal up-keeping is not much affected by their imprisonment. Gender, age status and educational status are associated with the dependent variable (satisfaction in the personal up-keeping). The other variables (income, occupation and religion) show no association with the response.

Table No.6.3.1 shows that male prisoners are more satisfied with the facilities provided for their personal up-keeping. 70.04 per cent of the male respondents expressed their satisfaction regarding their personal up-keeping whereas in the case of females 52.17 per cent feel that the facilities are completely unsatisfactory for their personal needs.

Age and the feeling are found to be associated with each other (Table No.6.3.2). It is interesting to note that the youngsters are more satisfied with provisions for their personal up-keeping. Old age group (above
60 years) responded that there are total disruptions in their personal welfare. The older persons might have been leading a more structured and arranged life when they were brought to book. May be the reason is that they feel more disruptions in their personal life.

Educational status and satisfaction in the personal up keeping are associated (Table No.6.3.3.). 70% of the higher educated respondents expressed that their personal up keeping is totally disturbed due to imprisonment. This may be due to the fact that the higher educated aspires for more personal conveniences wherever they live. So, they are much frustrated by the comforts provided for the prisoner.

It is found in the study that the relationship between the prisoners and warders are very cordial. The prisoner’s needs and demands are met by the warder. The jail authorities are treating the prisoners without giving any room for complaint from the detained - the analysis reveals.

However, 50.67 per cent of the inmates had bitter experiences of sharing the physical and social space with unrefined inmates due to authorities compulsion. The rest of the prisoners (49.33 per cent), however, had not experienced any such chaotic condition.
Prisoners are getting much leisure time. The study reveals that 52.33 per cent of them are utilizing their leisure time on meaningful activities. 47.67 per cent of them spend their time remaining idle. It is seen that the females are more feeling the problem of excess leisure time. So they simply engage in small talks and other time passing activities.

The result shows that age is a determinant of spending pattern of leisure time. The youngsters are more unmindful of spending their leisure time valuably. Therefore, imprisonment may create laziness in the youngsters.

Unconstructive way of spending leisure time decreases with increase in the educational status. It is interesting to note that reading habit is more prominent among secondary educated group (57.89%). Other background variables, namely, income, occupation and religion showed no association with the habit.

An imprisoned person in a social reject – the result reveals. 32 per cent of the prisoners are social rejects of their close relatives. Another 23 per cent are unwelcome members of their wider family.
Regarding the reactions of the neighbours towards the imprisoned, it was revealed that 16 per cent are rejects from their neighbours. However 54 per cent perceives sympathy on the part of their neighbours on their misfortune.

The prisoners are still optimistic to repair their ruptured family relationships. The major portion (82.67%) of the prisoners is eagerly waiting for rejoining with their family. Only a small portion has detached themselves totally from their family.

Impact On Marital Life

Imprisonment separates the spouses and the marital relationship is dislocated. None of the directly and indirectly affected parties to the marital bond aspires for such separation.

If one of the spouses is imprisoned, the spouse outside is practically but indirectly punished for the crime for which he or she owes no responsibility. Such a separation due to justice administration by imprisonment destroys the marital relationship. The study concludes that the impact of imprisonment on marital relationship is very severe. The
distribution of the prisoners based on gender showed that only 23 female prisoners are there in the sample (7.67%) and the rest are males. So wives of 92.33 per cent of the respondents are sufferers of involuntary separation from their husbands due to the uncontrollable life of the latter. Because of the economic and social over burden and solitude imposed on them, they behave in irrational manner. According to this study the wives of 9 per cent of the respondents deserted them mainly because of the separation.

91.67 per cent of the respondents revealed that they are more worried about their spouses after the commencement of the jail terms. Only a minority, (8.33 per cent), do not experience any change in their concern. This reveals that imprisonment increases their regard for their life partner. It is found that the separation and solitude created by the prison increases the value of the partnership.

Male prisoners are more worried about their spouses than their female counter parts. Only 5.05 per cent of the male respondents stated that their concern about their spouses did not change after imprisonment. But at the same time 47.83 per cent do not feel any change in their concern.
The concern of the prisoner for his/her spouse is associated with the age status. Worries about the spouse are more among the middle age group. 93 per cent of the respondents of the middle age group are very much worried about their spouses after their imprisonment. 72.73 per cent of the old age group (above 60) are also worried more about their spouses after the imprisonment.

Educational level of the respondents and their concern for their spouse is also associated. The Primary and the Secondary educated have very deep commitment to their spouse.

Income status and change in the concern for their spouse is also associated. Economic insecurity is one of the major reason that creates anxiety in them. 90.86 per cent of the lower income group and 95.28 per cent of the middle income group have became very much concerned about their spouse. The higher income group is lesser worried about their spouses.

The other background variables namely, religion, occupation are not significantly associated with the change in the concern.
Sexual life of the inmates are totally disturbed due to the imprisonment. 37.33 per cent of the respondents revealed that their urge for physical interaction increased due to their imprisonment and the rest revealed that they do not feel any change in their urge for conjugal company due to their physical separation. Perverted sex behaviour and increased violence among the prisoners are the results of this forced separation.

Gender is a determinant of the urge for physical interaction, with their spouse. 34.30 per cent of the males stated that their urge for physical interaction with their spouse increased. At the same time 73.91 per cent of the females stated that their urge for physical interaction increased considerably due to the forced separation. This may be due to the fact that females are more in need of the physical company and interaction of their husband. So it is a fact that females are the worst sufferers among prisoners in this regard.

Religious affiliation of the prisoners and their change in the urge for interaction with spouse is associated. Christians expressed increased concern and urge for the company of their spouse.
Coming to income status and the urge it was found that they are associated. The change in the urge is highest among the lower income group (43.43%) and least among the middle income group (28.90).

The other independent variables namely, age, education and occupation are found to have no relationship with the urge.

Even though there are restrictions for the meetings of their spouses according to the prison rule, the jail authorities give maximum opportunities for the spouses to visit their beloved ones. The analysis reveals that only meagre portion of the respondents is getting the warmth of the marital relationships through visits of their spouses. Only 5.67 per cent of the respondents are visited by their spouses weekly and 8.33 per cent monthly. Only 47.33 per cent have the opportunity to meet their spouses.

It is common during the meetings that the prisoners and their spouses exchange displeasures. The wife visiting the prisoner usually curse her destiny to live in the manner in which she is. The prisoner also express his/her grief through emotionally charged words that are capable of attracting sympathy of the visiting spouse. All the respondents (142 respondents) who are visited by their spouses informed that consoling words are exchanged
during the time of departure. They also expressed that they are very much aspiring for a hug or a touch of their spouses to console them but they have to uphold the sanctity of the jail rules.

The normal practice is that visitors are given 15-30 minutes to verbally interact with the prisoner. The prisoner will be separated from the visitors by a window fitted with wire mesh. The meetings will be in front of an officer of the prison. Regarding the adequacy of meeting time, 32% of the respondents feel that the time is insufficient. Even though the atmosphere in the prison is inhospitable they want to be in the presence of the spouse for more time. The researcher noticed that, the spouses remain in the jail premises even after the visit is over. The inhospitable place is a centre of attraction for them for their loved one is there on the other side of the big wall. Only 15.33 per cent of the respondents feel that there is no point in prolonging the meetings. The reason may be that because they are permitted to meet only in the presence of an officer and not permitted to meet inside a room or so. It does not give an opportunity for more intimate body contacts. This may be the reason why 15.33 per cent of the prisoners feel that the duration of time for visits (15 to 30 minutes) is enough. Further, they may not be able to see the separated spouse at the hands reach but on the other side of the wall.
This study analysed the interest of the prisoners for having privacy during the visits of their spouses. The overall reaction was that it is not welcome by the prisoners. They may be fearing that this may let loose sexual anarchy in the prison.

When analysed the influence of gender on the aspirations for privacy during spouse's visits, 20.58 per cent of the males aspire for privacy whereas only 4.35 per cent of the females aspire for it. Female prisoners are more cautious against such an unwelcome practice. They may be afraid that privacy may initiate sex related behaviour and the females will have to face the adverse consequences.

Another variable, which is associated with the aspiration, is income status. It is observed that middle income group (23.58%) aspire more for privacy than the other income group. No other background variables show any association with the aspiration.

The normal heterosexual life is not possible until parole is permitted. Most of the European countries permit regular conjugal visits to the prisoners by their spouses. It is presumed to reduce the negative effect of imprisonment on the prisoner. However, in our country parole is the only
remedy to satisfy their normal sexual urge. In this study an enquiry was made to find out the way in which the prisoners manage their sexual urge. 61.33% of them revealed that they controlled their urge. Only 2 out the 300 respondents revealed that they have some other methods of sex, which are have not revealed. Many of them may be practicing self sex or homo sex. The jail officials point out that homo sexuality is very common in our jails.

On the perception of the prisoners on the sex ethic of their spouses, 80 per cent of them have no negative opinion on the morality of their spouses. But, 12.67 per cent are very much sure about the deterioration of the moral standard of their spouse.

The study analysed the aspiration of the prisoners for the presence of their spouse especially during sickness. 56.67 per cent of the respondents aspire for the presence of their spouses during sickness. By and large, they aspire for the consoling touch of their spouse during their illness. But the better half is away.

In married life, spouses make decisions jointly and reduce their tension by doing so. The prisoner being in prison may not be required to make much of decisions. However, when enquired about their aspiration for
spouse's support for decision-making, it was found 33.33 per cent of the prisoners have extreme aspiration for the advice of their spouse in this matter. In this matter the background variable age, is found to have influence on the aspiration. The middle age group is more aspiring for the advice than the other groups are. Youths may be feeling that they can manage anything by their own, and older age group might be upholding the philosophical view that those, which are impossible to happen, need not be aspired for.

The findings on the impact of imprisonment on marital relationships show that it creates untold miseries to the parties of the bond.

3 Impact on Family Life

The study shows that 92 per cent of the respondents are key earning members of their family. It is revealed further from the analysis that 59.67 per cent of the respondents are very much worried about the financial problems faced by the family. This indicates that financial problems let loose by the confinement of the prisoners are many.

Further analysis revealed that while 64 per cent of male prisoners are seriously anxious about the economic miseries that are posed
against their family due to their imprisonment. The anxiety is not so serious among the females.

The gravity of the anxiety of the different age groups is different - the study indicates. It is found that the middle age group is more disturbed. Among the younger age group also the worries are fairly high. Among the older age group 45.45 per cent stated that their families do not face any financial crisis due their imprisonment.

Among the different income groups the middle-income category is more worried about the financial problems faced by their families as a sequel to their imprisonment.

Other background variables are not associated with the index of the impact on the family.

Another index selected for assessing the impact on the family was the shift in the key-earning member role. 47% of the spouses of the prisoners had to take over the earning members role.
Another consequence of the imprisonment on the family is that other members are forced to take up vocation which they like it or not to offset the income loss. Our analysis shows that majority of the prisoners' spouses are forced to work inorder to substitute the income loss of their family. A small portion of the prisoners substitute their income loss by sending their sons to work. Two prisoners very painfully admitted that they were forced to sent their daughters for work to support the family which they do not like in any way.

Another interesting finding is that 49.66 per cent of the prisoners revealed that they are ashamed of sending their spouses or children to work who were not working, to substitute their income loss. So, they resort to selling out land, ornaments and such other movable and immovable properties to withstand the financial crisis. The analysis indicates that the imprisonment crushed the family in many ways including role shifting. School going children were to take up daily wage jobs and keep themselves away from education, housewives were become domestic servants- to mention few cases.

As a result of imprisonment of the earning member, many of the households have to incur debt. The social stigma and rejection created many problems for securing loans. It is also found that highest portion of the loans
incurred was for financing legal procedures to defend the victims. The narrations given by the respondents to secure the loan were touching. All these were after effect of the imprisonment.

Creation of intimate social relationship and emotional satisfaction derived out of it makes the family a unique social institution. But because of the forced separation due to imprisonment these characters are lost in a prisoner's family.

The emotional tension experienced by a prisoner is very severe. 89.17 per cent of the respondents have become more concerned about their children. The study revealed that the prisoners are under tremendous tension created by their separation from the children.

Gender based analysis revealed that the male prisoners are more concerned about their children. The female prisoners feel that they are unable to provide their children with the necessaries for their survival. Mother's (wife of prisoner) care and love will be slackened as she has to play the bread winning role of the imprisoned father – the mothers interviewed outside the prisons (spouses of prisoners) expressed their confusing conditions.
When data was analysed to find out the relationship between age status and their concern about children, it was found that middle age group is more concerned about their children. The young age group also comes very closer to the former. Children of the middle age group may be requiring more care and attention as they may be in their youth. The elderly (above 60) would have grown up children who are self sufficient.

It was found that the middle income group is more concerned about their children than the higher income group is. The low income group comes in between the two in this matter.

Regarding the relationship between education and the concern, contrary to our expectation, the higher educated shows lower concern than the illiterate and primary educated respondents do. It is to be presumed that the higher educated group shows the maturity to accept things in their reality. They may be thinking that their increased concern does not give anything good to their children.

Prisoners are also worried about the un-discharged duties to the children.
The males are having more worries about their unfulfilled duties to the children. The females may be having grown up children who are capable of looking after themselves.

The remorse on account of the unfulfilled duties is more for the middle-aged prisoners. This might be due to the fact that their children are in a stage of life, which requires utmost care and attention from parents, especially father.

Among the different educational groups, the illiterates worry more about the un-discharged duties to their children.

The acceptance of the imprisoned parents by their children was analysed by studying the frequency of jail visits of the children, emotional outbursts during the visit and gifts brought to the parent.

The major chunk of the prisoners sorrowfully informed that their children never visit them (63.33%). This indicates that the children of the prisoners are very indifferent to their imprisoned parents.
18% of the children who visit their parents become very emotional when they see their parents behind the bars. Their sorrow will burst into tears and try to hold their parents who are seen through the window fitted with wire mesh. However, another four per cent keep a blank face during such visits.

Among the children who visit their parents in jail 12.67 per cent simply pay visits. Another 6.67% present eatables like candies, biscuits, fruits etc to their parents. On the whole it is to be concluded that there exists an emotional vacuum between the prisoners and their children, created due to the imprisonment.

Children of imprisonment parents are dishonoured in different ways in the wider society. If they are school children they have to face many types of insults from their peers. 13% of the respondents of the study have children, who are dropouts of school as a result of the imprisonment. Even one single dropout is to be considered as a serious impact of imprisonment on the children.

Children raised by solo parents are likely to develop behavioural problems due to lack of proper guidance and feeling of insecurity. The society
contemptuously look upon them. Such experiences of social stigma and feeling of personal insecurity might generate hatred towards every one else, complicating the behaviour pattern of the children.

Children of 10% of the prisoners have become deviant as a consequence of their imprisonment. They involve in criminal activities like theft, house breaking, pick pocketing and show suicidal tendencies and also alcohol and drug.

**In Brief:**

The results prove the major hypotheses formulated. In the case of relationship between the background variables and the independent variables in certain cases, lack of expected association is got.

The results of the study underline the importance of reviewing the system of criminal justice and making appropriate changes in it according to the personal and social needs. Civility should be the bed rock of administration of criminal justice.

The case analyses carried out corroborate the results of the statistical study. The pain created by the dislocation of married and familial
relationships by imprisonment is clearly revealed in the analyses. The analyses also, highlight the role played by the socio-cultural background in the inculcation of criminal behaviour in individuals.