



**PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF PARENTAL IMPRISONMENT OVER THE LEFT
BEHIND CHILDREN: A CASE STUDY OF DIR LOWER**

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to assess the negative psychological impact of parental imprisonment on the children. The objective of the study was to find the psychological disorder of the left behind children which are the product of parental imprisonment. Lower Dir was the Universe of the study and primary data was collected from the respondents through interview schedule. Simple random sampling technique was used for the collection of data from the sample population. A total of two hundred and sixty respondents were the sample size which was drawn by the formula derived by Sekaran and Bougie method [1]. After the collection of data, the Univariate analysis was used to find out frequency and percentage and Bivariate analysis was applied for the association between independent and dependent variables. The finding of the study concluded that a significant association was found between parental imprisonment and hostile attitude of imprisoned children ($p=0.004$). Similarly, a significant association was enclosed between parental imprisonment and tension and depression of imprisoned children ($p=0.021$). Additionally, a significant association was found between parental imprisonment and social isolation of imprisoned children ($p=0.011$). Likewise, a significant association was enclosed between parental imprisonment and harsh realities of imprisoned children ($p=0.008$). The study concluded that child of the incarcerated parents is psychologically not in conformity with the existing social setting. It could recommend that preventive and rehabilitative measures and policies should be devised to avoid them from suffering.

Keywords: Imprisonment, Parents, Children, Psychological Impact and Social Isolation

1. INTRODUCTION

Prisons existed from ancient times and from long ago as a separate institution in Europe. It is still working for social control and reformation of the criminals in the whole world. Some historians, however, have been unwilling to accept that imprisonment was used in the medieval period. But there is now abundant confirmed evidence and this type of imprisonment increased greatly from thirteenth century [2]. The incapacitation and elements of prevention were physically powerful during the pre-Jackson period in Europe and America. The reason for all sentences and punishment, specifically, custody in houses of corrections was to discourage crime and punished the violator. The colonist's society largely relied on societal retribution as the basis for punishment and viewed that the punishment of death is essential for the protection of society itself. Deviance was the mistake of the criminal, not collapse the society or the community. In the late 1700s, the use of imprisonment was considered a more human form of a sentence than the previous physical punishments, but it was not essentially viewed as reformatory. The individual was considered as a sin and protection of society from its necessary. Although the goals of society were built and looked no dissimilar than other

residences, the prison, as it emerged in the early 1800s, was a type of punishment. Earlier societies had expelled violator to the jail (which was remote far away from the urban areas). At the least, society was protected if the criminal was away. However, the new penitentiary was also viewed by some as redemptive and capable of changing the individuals within the jail to become an improved person. Thus, the principal changed from deterrence to reformation of the individual [3].

Rothman [4] found in a study that the earlier Calvinist doctrine viewed that original sin should be replaced instead of reforming the individual criminal. Earlier than the 1800s, the punishment was purely associated with expiation (a religious term meaning personal redemption through suffering) common person believed that criminals cannot change through reformation. Once the option of individual modification was born, the idea of penitentiary developed as the site of reform." Hall [5] explained that the modification in punishing philosophy as unique to the U.S punishing philosophy, Europeans in later time looking for U.S models of punishment. Obedience, separation, and labor became the sacred belief around which officials managed the penal colony. Criminal were "men of

inactive habits, brutal propensities, and immoral passions,” who had to be trained and obedience as part of their reformation. By educating convicts these merits, penitentiary officials reinforced their value for all the humanity. The penitentiary would bring back the public to these “merits,” and “encourage a new value for order and authority”. There was a great hopefulness in the early 1800s that prison could change society [6].

Parental imprisonment is referring to the confinement of parents in the jail, while it also affects negatively their Children. When parents are incarcerated in the jail their children become marginalized socially, economically and psychologically. Their Children are deprived of the proper socialization, care, and basic needs. They are stigmatized in the society and victim of different types of psychological stress, but the law and policies have ignored them. The consequences are faced by the children for those crimes committed by their parents, and children indirectly tolerate more severe punishment in every dimension of life. Imprisonment affects many individual than those in a correctional facility. As the quantity of imprisoned keeps on increasing, the effects of imprisonment have become more prominent in the society.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Bureau of Justice statistics, 1.5 million children managed parental imprisonment consistently [7]. Parental imprisonment has been often connected with different short and long-term hazard elements for children, including an expanding risk of imprisonment [8]. Healy et. al.,[9] found in their study that parental imprisonment is a stronger element for a scope of aggressive results for children, containing introverted conduct, guilty, emotional wellbeing issues, drugs misuse, school disappointment, and unemployment. Parental imprisonment may bring about these results through a few procedures: the injury of the parent, child separation, children being made mindful of their parents’ guiltiness, family poverty brought by the imprisonment, disgrace, and anxieties included with the imprisoned of parents. Children might be more influenced by parental imprisonment if their mother is imprisoned. Individuals become more habitual with the process of imprisonment for more time, frames if the individuals are detained in prison. Children might be protected from negative impacts of parental imprisonment by having stable caregiving plans, by their families getting social and financial support, and by living in a place with more thoughtful open behavior toward wrongdoing and discipline. Programs that

may prevent unfavorable results in the children of prisoners in a corporate procurement of money related help, social support, child rearing projects and alternative types of regulation, for example, group administration and day fines. Large-scale research is expected to push learning about the impacts of parental imprisonment for children.

2.1 PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECT OF THE CHILDREN

The psychological well-being of increasing number of children is affected by the absence of parents due to imprisonment. Preliminary in childhood, the effects of parental imprisonment on children are observable. As the children go into adolescents, the coping patterns become even more obvious. Several researchers have recognized many environmental risk factors that raise the occurrence of psychopathology in children. Such kinds of risk factor tending to be lifelong [10]. Philbrick [11] identified that about 30 percent of prisoners' children deal with psychological problems during early childhood and adolescence as compared to 10 percent of the overall public. However, no evidence was referred to support this case. We assess proof of the association between parental incarceration and children's psychological issues. By study, the children of imprisoned parents showed

greater levels of depression and uneasiness than their associate [12]. In a different study, social scientist presumed that there might be a relationship between maternal imprisonment and young ladies' impression of themselves [13]. Although social scientists were not ready to categorically develop a solid relationship between the variables, this examination might clarify the commonness of other psychological issues among children of imprisoned parents, which might relate to the child's sentiment of blame or disgrace. Children whose parents carry out the wrongdoings of theft, prostitution or offering medication will be more probably see their parents' criminal activities as methods of trying to support the family. Hence, these children will be probably feeling of blame and obligation regarding their imprisoned parents' activities. Left untreated, these sentiments might lead to long-term psychological health issues for these children [14].

Those children, whose parents are imprisoned, adopt external behaviors such as hostility, rebelliousness, and insolence as well as internal behaviors such as anxiety and depression. Isolation, fear, deterioration, shame, excessive weeping, and sorrow are some well-known reactions of those children. They also face some difficulties and problems in school from

friends and teachers. It is noted that the emotional wellness, anxiety, irritation, and antagonism toward caregivers are more prominent in children whose parents are imprisoned. The behaviors and adjustment problems of these children are not strange because most children seemed to do comparatively well. According to critics, the separation of children from the imprisoned parent does not become visible to the greatest predictor of disturbing behavior. He concluded that the adjustment of these children in society is very difficult because of the pressure of the surroundings on them and their caregivers [15].

Although the absence of parents from home for any reason is shocking for children, removal of parents due to parental imprisonment may have predominantly undesirable effects [16]. Kampfner [17] compared the children of imprisoned mothers to other children whose mothers were missing from the home not due to imprisonment was found that the children of imprisoned parents suffered extra negative psychosocial symptoms. It is found that 75% of the children suffered from sleeping and concentrating problem. Further separation may also result if the children witness his or her mother imprisoned. Such kind of condition is likely to occur for one in every five children in imprisoned mothers. In count to the trauma

of separation due to imprisonment, developmental psychology has established that the act of separating a child, especially children, from his or her parents may affect in a disorganized attachment that revealed as social and emotional difficulties in life [18]. According to Miller (2006) [19], the effects of separation maybe not good for children of imprisoned parents because children dealing with the loss of parents. The author argued that death is a natural phenomenon and final separation, whereas imprisonment is uncertain; children do not recognize how to handle the nonexistence of their parents that are still alive.

3. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study was to find out the negative effects of parental imprisonment which lead to psychological disorder and social isolation in children. Keeping in view nature of the study, quantitative approach to research was adopted for this study. The universe of the study was District Dir (Lower) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Our targets were those households' family members whose parents were imprisoned. Primary data was collected through interview schedule from 260 respondents which were the sample size of the study, drawn with the help of Sekaran and Bougie (2016)[20]. For the collection of data simple random sampling technique was used which was further

distributed through proportion allocation method among different strata. The primary data were analyzed through SPSS where chi-square test was applied to find out the association between dependent and independent variable.

4. ETHICAL STATEMENT

Research ethics are the guideline for conducting research studies ethically. Therefore, research ethics were observed during conducting and reporting of the study. As the problem of the study dealt with children whose parents were in prison, so informed consent was taken from the research participants and the confidentiality

of data and their anonymity were ensured. All the ethical issues in relation to research participants, society and the field of research were addressed.

5. UNIVARIATE ANALYSIS

Association between the dependent variable and independent variable was found out through cross-tabulation. The results of all the statements of the variable with suitable explanation and presentation are given below.

5.1 FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION AND PROPORTION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECT OF CHILDREN

Statement	Yes	No	Undecided	Total
Children of the imprisoned parents having hostile attitude towards people	131(50.4%)	64(24.6%)	65(25.0%)	100(260)
Children of the imprisoned parents show greater level of depression	122(46.9%)	80(30.8%)	58(22.3%)	100(260)
Have you observed that children of the imprisoned parents as victim of social isolation	189(72.7%)	55(21.3%)	16(6.2%)	100(260)
Children of the imprisoned parents are passive in family matters	131(50.4%)	93(35.8%)	36(13.5%)	100(260)

Philbrick [21] study concluded that about 30 percent of prisoners' children deal with psychological problems during early childhood and adolescence. He also assesses proof of the association between parental imprisonment and children emotion wellness issues. Different studies show that the children of imprisoned parents showed greater levels of depression and uneasiness than their peer group. Those children, whose parents were imprisoned, adopt external behaviors such as hostility, disobedience, and insolence as well as internal behaviors such as anxiety and

depression. Isolation, fear, deterioration, shame, excessive weeping, and sorrow are some well-known reactions of those children whose parent are imprisoned. They also face some difficulties and problems in school from friends and teachers. Emotional wellness, anxiety, irritation, and antagonism toward caregivers were more prominent in younger children whose parents are imprisoned [22].

The table used to evaluate the psychological problem of the respondents numerically. Majority 131 out of 260 which are 50.4% of the total respondents were of

the view that children with imprisoned parents having hostile and antagonist attitude toward other people. While 64 out of 260 which is 24.6% had of the view that children with imprisoned parents did not show the hostile attitude toward other people. Furthermore, 65 out of 260 which is 25% remain undecided their answer. In addition, 122 out of 260 which are 46.9% had of the view that in the absence of parents their children show a greater level of anxiety and depression. While 80 out of 260 did not agree with the statement and 58 out of 260 which is 22.3 % remain undecided. Although the absence of parents from home for any reason is shocking for children. Furthermore, 198 out of 260 which are 72.7% of the respondents believed that those children whose parents committed crimes and remained in imprisonment are the victim of social isolation. Due to social stigma, people do not want to interact with such kind of children and they become socially marginalized from society. While 55 out of

260 which are 21.2% of the respondent had of the view that children of imprisoned parents are not the victim of social isolation and 16 out of 260 of the respondent did not agree with the mentioned statement. Similarly, 131 out of 260 which are 50.4% of the respondents revealed that children of imprisoned parents are impassive in the family matter. Such kind of children did not take interest in family affairs. While 93 out of 260 which are 35.5% had of the view that children of the imprisoned parents take interest in family matters and 36 out of 260 remain undecided not expressed their views.

6. BIVARIAATE ANALYSIS

Association between the dependent variable and independent variable was found out through cross-tabulation. The results of all the statements of the variable with suitable explanation and presentation are given below.

6.1 ASSOCIATION BETWEEN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS AND PARENTAL IMPRISONMENT

Statement	Parental Imprisonment				Statistic
	Yes	No	Undecided	Total	
Children of imprisoned parents having hostile attitude toward people	Yes	76(25.8)	47(18.1)	17(6.5)	131(50.4) (p=0.004) (χ ² =15.133)
	No	45(17.3)	11(4.2)	8(3.1)	
	Undecided	51(19.6)	12(4.6)	2(0.8)	
	Total	163(62.7)	70(26.9)	27(10.4)	
Children of imprisoned parents show greater level of depression	Yes	117(45.0)	51(19.6)	19(9.3)	187(71.9) (p=0.021) (χ ² =11.546)
	No	28(10.8)	12(4.6)	1(0.4)	
	Undecided	18(6.9)	7(2.7)	7(2.7)	
	Total	163(62.7)	70(26.9)	27(10.4)	
Have you observed that children of imprisoned parents are as victim of social isolation	Yes	127(48.8)	39(15.0)	23(8.8)	189(72.7) (p=0.011) (χ ² =12.956)
	No	32(12.2)	21(8.1)	2(0.8)	
	Undecided	4(1.5)	10(3.8)	2(0.8)	
	Total	163(62.7)	70(26.9)	27(10.4)	
Children of imprisoned parents are passive in family matters	Yes	83(31.9)	34(13.1)	14(5.4)	131(50.4) (p=0.060) (χ ² =9.0372)
	No	56(21.5)	30(11.5)	7(2.7)	
	Undecided	24(9.2)	6(2.3)	6(2.3)	
	Total	163(62.7)	70(26.9)	27(10.4)	

The effect of parental imprisonment on children has severe as compared to the death of a close relative. This includes anti-social behavior, psychological stress, social and economic problem. It creates stress, economic deprivation, lack of emotional support on other members of their family. The imprisonment of parents sometimes affects the education of their children as either get low grades or left school. They become vulnerable to criminal activities due to lack of supervision except these they are also pronged to drug addiction.

A significant ($p=0.004$) association was found between parental imprisonment and children of imprisoned parents having the hostile attitude toward people. It is concluded from the result that due to the absence of proper supervision of the parents, the children are not regularly attaining schools and hence children of imprisoned parents show hostile attitude. Clarke-Stewart et. al., [23] was found that those children, whose parents are imprisoned, adopt external behaviors such as hostility, rebelliousness, and insolence as well as internal behaviors such as isolation, fear, deterioration; shame, excessive weeping, and sorrow are some well-known reactions of those children whose parents are imprisoned.

Furthermore, a significant ($p=0.021$) association was found between parental

imprisonment and children of imprisoned parents shows a greater level of depression. It is further explained that the children of imprisoned parents become the prey of depression. Such kinds of children are also facing difficulties in their routine life as well. Clarke-Stewart et. al., [24] supported the result of the statement that children with imprisoned parents show emotional wellness, anxiety, irritation, and antagonism toward caregivers and other people as well. Moreover, a significant ($p=0.011$) association was found between parental imprisonment and children of imprisoned parents are the victim of social isolation. It is further explained that such kind of children are ignoring the people due to which children of imprisoned parents cannot adjust in society and remained socially isolated. There is also a chance for such kind of children to involve in anti-social activities. Healy et. al., [25] found in his study that parental imprisonment is a stronger element for a scope of aggressive results for children, containing introverted conduct, guilty, emotional well-being issues, drug misuse, school disappointment, unemployment and social isolation. In addition to above, a non-significant ($p=0.060$) association was disclosed between parental imprisonment and children of imprisoned parents are passive in family matters. It is concluded from the

result that children of imprisoned parents doing nothing in their daily life. Hence, they are mostly remained passive in the family matter as well as in the society. Healy [26] found that Imprisonment can also affect children's housing and look after arrangement, education, used of illegal chemical and lead to the risk of future criminal behavior. Each year, more children experience parental incarceration than parental separation.

7. CONCLUSION

It has been induced from the inference that parental imprisonment is danger for the child personality in the long run. The love and affection which a child gets from his family cannot be matched with any other institution. Parental imprisonment effect on the psychological aspect of children in different forms. Children of imprisoned parents hostile attitude toward other people showed the greater level of tension and depression, remained socially isolated and passive in the family matter. Furthermore, Children' of imprisoned parents are deprived from domestic supports, ignored while they should be rehabilitated, deprived of proper socialization, indulged in crimes, became hostile and drug addicted, victim of emotional stress, nervousness and sadness, unethical gossiping and joined bad company due to lack of parental checks, and were deprived of physical comforts and

facilities. The Guardian, who took the responsibilities of the children in the absence of their parents should keep an eye on the activities of children, socialize the children in a proper manner and provide emotional and psychological support to the children.

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