

A Study on Recidivism and its Influence on Family and Society

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Abstract - This study's objective was to investigate the role that family dynamics have in the recidivism rate of criminals in Kerala. According to the findings of the study, the emotional and instrumental support that is necessary for ex-offenders' successful reintegration into society is sometimes replaced by discrimination. Furthermore, the study found that when ex-offenders are confronted with the inability to provide for their children, marital crisis, and other challenges that are unique to ex-convicts, depression sets in and drives their disposition toward criminal activities. Therefore, variables that occur inside families also contribute to Kerala's exceptionally high prevalence of recidivism. As a consequence of this, it has been suggested that the criminal justice system implement mechanisms to facilitate positive contacts between convicted individuals and their families. The goals of these mechanisms would be to strengthen family ties and to make it easier for families to receive assistance in a more timely manner.

Keywords - Recidivism, Influence, Family, Society.

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INTRODUCTION

Although the family unit is universally acknowledged as a cornerstone of any functional social order, its precise meaning can shift significantly over time and between cultural contexts. There is no uniformity to the ways in which societies prioritise families and the roles that these families play in society. The modern concept of the nuclear family, consisting of just one set of parents and their offspring, has generated a lot of controversy, but it is far from ubiquitous. While the nuclear family has always held sway in our culture, it is becoming common for nuclear families to give rise to joint families when adults move back live with their parents after marriage. In pre-industrial communities, a person's ties of kinship link them not only to the family into which they are born, but also to the family of reproduction they join by marriage, which typically includes the spouse's extended family.[1]

The nuclear family can grow by adding a new partner, sharing a home with another married couple and their offspring, or living with many generations of a single family who are all genetically related. This concept, known as the "extended family," is widespread across many different socioeconomic settings and is not limited to rural areas.[2]

Relationship between Family and Society

There is a close connection between families and societies; families are often cited as the fundamental building block of any given society, and societies themselves are made up of numerous families. When juggling work, school, and other responsibilities, families need to have certain qualities. All major decisions in a family must be made by the head of the household; he may seek advice from other family members when necessary, but ultimately, he is responsible for making these choices. People from many walks of life, cultures, beliefs, and social classes populate every given civilization. Some members of society hold minority occupations and make their homes in slums; thus, efforts are made to improve their lot in life.[3]

The institution of marriage, one of the earliest and most pervasive in human history, is widely acknowledged as the primary catalyst for the formation of stable, loving families. The majority of the population feels that social institutions are essential to individual flourishing and to maintaining social order. Here, the value assigned to those two organisations hinges heavily on the perspective of the observer. Marriage is not

merely a bond between two persons, but also between two families, and is legally recognised when it occurs between two sets of parents and their children. Individuals should make an effort to develop strong, and effective communication linkages with their family members to prevent the breakup of the family unit as a result of marital discord, which can occur for a variety of reasons. If different ideologies are at odds with one another, talking about marriage and families may be a wonderful way to start a conversation about the things people share and the problems that could tear them apart.[4]

Characteristics of the Family

We have summarised the family's traits as follows:

i. Universality

There is not a single civilization in the world that does not have some form of family structure, making the notion of family a worldwide phenomenon. The family unit is ubiquitous for good reason: it serves numerous purposes, both personal and societal, that are indispensable. As a result of their importance in a person's biological, economic, social, and psychological development, families are now considered a basic necessity for all humans.[5]

ii. Emotional Basis

Relationships within families are characterised by strong emotional ties, mutual care and protection, and a willingness to make personal sacrifices for the benefit of one another. Individuals can't survive without interacting with others in some capacity, whether it is with family, friends, coworkers, bosses, or even strangers in the street. A person's family members are a constant source of teaching, direction, and advice in navigating the challenges of life in the real world.

iii. Limited Size

While most families are confined to no more than two or three members, there is some variation in this. Typically, a family consists of a husband, wife, and their minor children. There may be one, two, or even more kids living at home at any given time. Since marriage is a notion that leads to the formation of new families, the nuclear family gradually replaces the traditional joint family structure when the male offspring of a household mature, marry, and start their own households. Members of many generations of a family (grandparents, parents, aunts, uncles, cousins, siblings) share living quarters. The traditional nuclear family is becoming less common in today's society.[6]

iv. Nuclear Position in Social Structure

The family unit is universally recognised as the most basic, fundamental, and essential of all social formations. The family is the fundamental building block of any society, and it occupies a central, or

nuclear, role in society. Every person, regardless of whether he lives in a far-flung rural community or a bustling metropolis, places a high value on his family as the fundamental social unit. Through his family, a person is introduced to the concept of brotherhood and learns to form lasting social bonds.

v. Social Regulations

There are social rules and norms that one must follow when interacting with members of one's own family and maintaining those relationships. Respect and deference toward one's parents is a moral imperative. Through exposure to and practise of social norms and customs, family members are socialised into contributing members of society. Even in the context of one's interactions with one's spouse, one's children, and one's siblings, there are social and legal norms that must be observed. Family breakdown is possible when there are no rules to abide by.[7]

Marital Relationship and Recidivism

The marital partnership might sometimes bring forth unintended consequences. Ex-offenders who have stable marriages are more likely to successfully reintegrate into society, whereas those whose marriages are in disarray are more likely to relapse. Some cross-sectional studies have revealed that marriage and family do not increase the risk of crime among adults, despite claims that career criminals may give up crime after they get married or have children of their own. This suggests that disparities in propensity to commit crime remain stable over time and that life transitions do not considerably mitigate this tendency. Few longitudinal studies, however, have looked at adult life changes that might alter the path toward a life of crime. Childhood family experiences have been the focus of several longitudinal research in connection to adult criminal behaviours, but the effects of major life changes like marriage and parenting on criminal behaviour have received far less attention. Some studies suggest that criminal males are more likely to marry at a younger age, to wed women who are already pregnant, and to wed criminal females than their non-offending counterparts. Whereas some research suggests that criminals are no more likely to be married or in a significant relationship than the general population, others have found that they are more likely to divorce, separate, and not get along well with their spouse, as well as be involved in violent marital relationships. These findings suggested that marriage and family life may be no more than one more sign of social irresponsibility than job instability, criminal associations, or substance misuse.[8]

Social Support (familial) and Recidivism

A person's emotional and material needs can both be met by their own family and the larger

community through social assistance. Having a social network waiting for you when you get out is vital because it serves as a normative reference point. As a unit, they exhibit socially accepted values and conventions and serve as role models for their children. This kind of help can operate as a buffer against the strains associated with reentering society or a group after a period of isolation. Emotional support can help people reintegrate into society by giving them a safe space to talk about their struggles with someone who genuinely cares about them. Having a strong sense of family and emotional support may give a person direction in life. When an ex-offender is released from prison, they face a new set of challenges, including the difficulty of finding work and a place to live since they are under the constant watch of parole officers. This mental and material strain can be lessened with the help of social support from family, increasing the likelihood of a successful return.

However, giving ex-offenders with instrumental assistance entails offering them actual help in the form of housing, money, drug abuse treatment, transportation, and work opportunities. Individuals get the necessities of life until they are able to become self-sufficient, which is made possible with this assistance.[9]

LITERATURE REVIEW

Human behaviour gains its distinctive quality from this. It's reasonable to assume that recidivists' personalities diverge in certain ways from those of non-recidivists and typical people. To differentiate themselves from non-delinquent males, delinquent boys are more likely to be outgoing. And while the delinquents were less likely to have introverted tendencies than the non-delinquents, they were more likely to exhibit a combination of extrovert and introvert traits. Children who are more extroverted are more prone to become delinquents than those who are more introverted. Childhood extroversion is the strongest predictor of future criminal behaviour. support for the hypothesis that extraverts have a higher capacity for inhibition than introverts, and hence seek out arousal-inducing events in order to keep their arousal levels constant.[10]

The conventional definition of a family entails a number of roles and obligations, including providing love and affection, feeling safe, and having and raising children. Family responsibilities have traditionally included delegating responsibilities, ensuring social connection, providing physical care, distributing resources, sustaining morale and motivation, and interacting with the larger community and its institutions. Children who are solely related to one of the adults in the home are increasingly living in what are called "reconstituted families" (stepfamilies) as the divorce and remarriage rate rises. Families must frequently adjust their structure

and dynamics in response to shifts in the social environment. [11]

Two-thirds to three-quarters of all juvenile offences were perpetrated by young people who belonged to organisations like gangs, suggesting that juvenile delinquency is predominantly a group phenomena, as determined by the United Nations. Juvenile group criminality in the Russian Federation is greater than that of adult criminals. Juvenile peer groups are distinctive in many ways, including their hierarchical structure, high levels of social cohesiveness, and a code of behaviour based on a shared rejection of the values and experiences of adults, all of which contribute to the inclination of juveniles to engage in criminal activity while belonging to groups. Juvenile delinquents are often members of organisations or subcultures (subcultures of violence) that promote physical force as a suitable, if not preferred, way of resolving interpersonal disagreements. [12]

There is no escaping the reality that crime is an ever-present part of modern life. Adolescents are increasingly engaging in criminal activity. There has been a surge in juvenile criminality, and this trend is mirrored by an increase in the number of juvenile offenders sent to prison. Evidence suggests an unacceptably high recidivism rate among formerly jailed young people. It is inevitable that after serving their sentences, young people who have been incarcerated will be released from correctional facilities and readmitted to regular society. The purpose of this research is to analyse how juvenile offenders respond to and benefit from the existing approaches to rehabilitation.[13]

METHODOLOGY

To start analysing my data, I used bivariate linear regression to see whether there was any correlation between criminal behaviour and family dynamics. Then, I used the same bivariate linear regressions to another type of recidivism data: repeat offenders. For the sake of this analysis, recidivism is defined as any subsequent arrest, whereas chronic recidivism is labelled "serial recidivism" if it is more than the average arrest record for the sample, i.e. anything above or equal to 5 arrests. The inclusion of a habitual recidivism output variable was crucial for strengthening the model's robustness since it allowed for the correction of any measurement mistakes in subsequent arrests. Because there are many potential causes of arrest, a person's mere second or third detention should not label them as a repeat offender. The habitual recidivism variable accounted for these variations and better distinguished the demographics of repeat offenders and nonrepeat offenders. Many of the items pertaining to relationships attempted to gauge similar and potentially contradictory sentiments; hence, the family indices were

disaggregated across the various bivariate analyses to prevent collinearity. Following is a listing of the two bivariate equations.

$$\text{recidivism}_i = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{familyfactors}_i + u_i$$

$$\text{serialrecidivism}_i = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{familyfactors}_i + u_i$$

Even while the associations between family and recidivism can be better understood through these basic regression studies, other exogenous factors play a far more significant part in this process. Since race, wealth, education level, and criminal history have all been shown to be significant predictors of recidivism, I used many types of multivariate linear regressions to investigate the predictive power of these family indices. Recidivism can be better understood in light of the familial ties that are accounted for in these regressions. In order to do these studies, the following equations must be used.

$$\text{recidivism}_i = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{familyfactors}_i + \beta_2 \text{income}_i + \beta_3 \text{race}_i + \beta_4 \text{familycriminalhistory}_i + \beta_5 \text{familyeducation}_i + u_i$$

$$\text{serialrecidivism}_i = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{familyfactors}_i + \beta_2 \text{income}_i + \beta_3 \text{race}_i + \beta_4 \text{familycriminalhistory}_i + \beta_5 \text{familyeducation}_i + u_i$$

RESULT

The following section summarises the findings from the various regression analyses conducted on the various parent-child connection measures.

Recidivism Percentages

As was said before, recidivism is quantified by the offender's subsequent arrests, convictions, and incarcerations. In this investigation, we focused exclusively on new arrests as an indicator of recidivism. The 1997 National Longitudinal Study of Youth also examined imprisonment rates, but because of the small sample size, the results may not be representative of the population as a whole. However, of those included in this more select group, 25.4% were now behind bars. The results showed that 13.6 percent of the total population had served time in prison many times. Overall, 67% of people in the sample ended up being repeat offenders according to their arrest records.

It appears that a high percentage of the population has recidivated at least once, with an even bigger proportion of those polled having done so many times. The average percentage of respondents who have committed recidivism once across all demographic breakdowns is about 20%, whereas the average percentage who have committed recidivism numerous times is around 44.2%. Overall, recidivism rates were highest (100%) among blacks, followed by (100%) hispanics (70%) and (64.3%) whites. It is clear that one-time recidivism isn't the only problem; persistent recidivism is, too, and not just for one group but for people of all stripes.

When looked at separately, being of a minority race significantly raised the odds of recidivism by around 6 percent, and 5 percent for repeat offenders. Although race did have a role in decreasing recidivism when other factors were considered, this was never the case in multivariate regression analyses. Seventy percent of the black individuals, 64 percent of the white individuals, and 70 percent of the Hispanic individuals in this sample were re-arrested. To a large extent, being a member of a minority group in this sample did not affect one's likelihood of repeat offences, since the recidivism rates were similar across racial groups. When looking at recidivism and serial recidivism separately, female gender was consistently found to be protective across all utilised regression methods, reducing risk by about 24% and 14%, respectively. Though this is a sizable number, it is likely the effect of having so few females in the sample.

Since the populations' incomes varied widely, from zero to two hundred and forty-six thousand and seventy-four dollars, the log of income was employed in the regression analysis to correct for the effects of extreme values. Income was consistently significant in lowering recidivism and serial recidivism by about .03 to almost .04 percentage points throughout both the bivariate regression for income and when adjusting for income in the various multivariate regressions. In other words, a reduction in both recidivism and repeated recidivism of nearly .04 percentage points is to be expected for every 1% rise in an individual's income. To some, these percentages may appear modest; yet, they represent a substantial decrease when compared to the baseline of 67% of recidivating persons.

In all the bivariate and multivariate regressions, having a family member who is or has been jailed significantly increased the risk of recidivism and repeated recidivism by about 20%. It's hardly unexpected; having a loved one in prison has a multiplicity of negative effects, including on family life and relationships. As a parent's incarceration might force them to leave the house, it can have devastating effects on the family dynamic. The inability to work while behind bars also has a negative impact on a person's ability to provide for their family. In addition, sending a person who may be a role model to prison can influence how kids feel about crime and its repercussions later in life.

When looked at separately, the recidivism rate and the rate of repeated recidivism are both shown to decrease by 2.8% and 1.9% for every additional point in parental education. This makes sense, as parents with higher levels of education are more likely to push their children to excel academically, which in turn reduces the youth crime rate. Further, compared to parents with lower levels of education, those with greater levels of education tend to earn more money and are therefore better equipped to care for their children, which may in turn reduce the

likelihood of their children engaging in criminal behaviour.

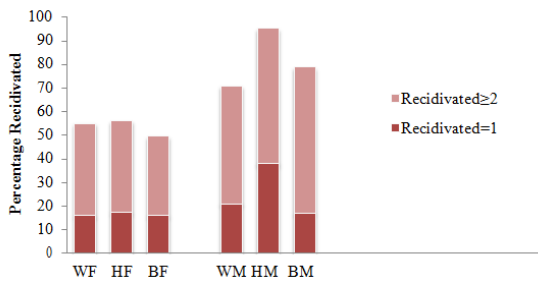


Figure 1: The racial and gender disparities in recidivism (re-arrest) rates

Table 1: The impact of socioeconomic status, educational attainment, and previous offender contact on recidivism and serial recidivism was analysed using ordinary least squares bivariate regressions

	Recidivism	Serial Recidivism
Gender	.203*** (.021)	.133*** (.012)
Race(minority)	.059*** (.020)	.047*** (.018)
Gross Household Income(log)	-.038*** (.010)	-.033*** (.009)
Family Criminal History	.158*** (.035)	.159*** (.032)
Family Education	-.028*** (.008)	-.019** (.007)

Family Interaction

No significant relationship was found between time spent with family and either recidivism or serial recidivism, both when considered independently and after controlling for exogenous factors. While it's true that spending time with loved ones can do wonders for building relationships and instilling a sense of what's important in life, the measurements used in this index were limited and may not have accurately reflected the strength of families' bonds. Only the frequency with which a family shared a meal, worked together on household tasks, and had fun as a unit was considered for the index. It's possible that the makeup variable is weak because family composition was ignored, despite the fact that it may have influenced family interaction.

Table 2: Recidivism and recidivism were analysed using ordinary least squares regression, using race, wealth, education, and family history of crime as confounders

	Recidivism		Serial Recidivism		Recidivism	Serial Recidivism
	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Family Interactive Index	-.024 (.032)	-.015 (.048)	-.002 (.003)	-.002 (.005)	-.002 (.003)	-.001 (.003)
Race(minority)	-	-	-	-	.004 (.035)	-.023 (.034)
Gross Household Income(log)	-	-	-	-	-.042*** (.015)	-.046*** (.014)
Gender	-	-	-	-	-.207*** (.034)	-.139*** (.033)
Family Criminal History	-	-	-	-	.135** (.052)	.125** (.051)
Family Education	-	-	-	-	-.024** (.012)	-.006 (.011)

Influential Role Models

The bivariate regressions for both sexes show that having a supportive father has a significant impact (at the 5% and 1% significance levels) on decreasing recidivism and serial recidivism; a one point rise in the index, lowering recidivism between around 2-4%. Having a father figure in one's life is associated with a 2.8% lower risk of recidivism and a 2.3% lower risk of repeated recidivism after adjusting for other explanatory variables (at the 1% and 5% significance levels, respectively). The bivariate regressions showed that having a strong mother figure as a role model significantly reduced recidivism (1.7% at the 5% significance level) for men but had no influence on serial recidivism or recidivism overall for females. When compared to not having a mother figure in one's life, recidivism is reduced by 1.8% (at the 10% significance level) and the likelihood of serial recidivism is decreased by 1.9% (at the 5% significance level) when having a mother figure in one's life as a role model is taken into account.

Table 3: Using ordinary least squares regression, we studied parental role modeling's influence on recidivism and serial recidivism.

	Recidivism		Serial Recidivism		Recidivism	Serial Recidivism
	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Positive Role Model Influence						
Positive Mother Figure	-.017**	.011	-.013	-.005	-.018*	-.019**
	(.009)	(.016)	(.009)	(.013)	(.009)	(.009)
Positive Father Figure	-.029***	-.038**	-.024**	-.032**	-.028***	-.023**
	(.091)	(.019)	(.009)	(.015)	(.010)	(.009)
Race(minority)	-	-	-	.016	.008	
				(.026)	(.026)	
Gross Household Income(log)	-	-	-	-.031***	-.037***	
				(.012)	(.011)	
Gender	-	-	-	-.233***	-.139***	
				(.026)	(.026)	
Family Criminal History	-	-	-	.179***	.153***	
				(.042)	(.009)	
Family Education	-	-	-	-.017**	-.009	
				(.124)	(.009)	

	Recidivism		Serial Recidivism		Recidivism	Serial Recidivism
	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Supportive Family Environment Index						
Supportive Mother Figure	.0171**	.011	-.024***	-.0135	-.016**	-.022***
	(.009)	(.016)	(.008)	(.011)	(.008)	(.008)
Supportive Father Figure	-.029***	-.037**	-.023***	-.027**	-.021***	-.023***
	(.091)	(.019)	(.008)	(.011)	(.008)	(.008)
Race(minority)	-	-	-	.010	.007	
				(.027)	(.026)	
Gross Household Income(log)	-	-	-	-.025**	-.036***	
				(.012)	(.011)	
Gender	-	-	-	-.238***	-.143***	
				(.026)	(.026)	
Family Criminal History	-	-	-	.179***	.149***	
				(.042)	(.041)	
Family Education	-	-	-	-.018**	-.007	
				(.123)	(.122)	

Supportive Parents

The bivariate and multivariate regressions demonstrate a significant link (at the 1% and 5% significant levels), between nurturing mother and father figures for both recidivism and serial recidivism, ranging from a 2% to almost 4% decrease, similar to the role model impact effect. However, when evaluating the impacts of the supporting mother and father figures between genders, it indicates that having a supportive mother figure had no influence on lowering recidivism or serial recidivism for females, but did for men. Having a stable parental figure in one's life makes the world a better place for one's children, and it may also play a significant part in decreasing the likelihood that an individual will be re-arrested after being released from prison for the first time. For a breakdown of the regression findings for the nurturing parent indicators, see table 4.4.

Table 4:After correcting for race, income, education, and family history of crime, an ordinary least squares regression model indicated that supportive parental figures reduce recidivism and repeated recidivism

CONCLUSION

A person's decision to engage in criminal activity as an adult may be predicted in large part by their upbringing and the experiences they had with their own family. A similar role model impact is seen in families, which may show members, especially youngsters, how to live a law-abiding existence by their own examples. Although adverse early life experiences are a predictor of a life of crime, they are buffered by the positive outcomes of marriage, motherhood, and family social support, all of which have been shown to be potent factors in redirecting formerly incarcerated individuals toward more lawful pursuits. Having supportive loved ones on the outside might help former inmates weather the inevitable storms of reintegration. The importance of family in determining a person's propensity to reoffend highlights the relevance of social connections and the necessity of including them into post-incarceration activities. Increasing recidivism can be mitigated if correctional institutions and prisons provide post-release programmes targeted at strengthening relationships and social links.

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