

**Effects of Criminal Women's Sentence on their Children's
Socialization:
An Exploratory Study of Punjab – Pakistan**

*Dr. Muhammad Shabbir Ch,
Ambreen Rubab, Uzma Niaz &
Shazia Nasim*

Abstract

This paper inspects the effects of the sentenced criminal women upon the socialization of their children, in Pakistani context. The objectives of the study are to find out the socio-psychological and cultural effects of the jail environment on the children and behavior of sentenced women towards their children as well as analyze the facilities provided by the jail authorities for the socialization of the women. Quantitative variables and qualitative thematic variables caused by the opinions through open-ended questionnaire were collected and analyzed by applying statistical measures, e.g. Social Sciences Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), to reflect out the results. It was found that the sentence of women shatters the socialization process of their children which commonly leads them to criminality. The government should review the ongoing sentence policies for an improvement and betterment. For this purpose, the idea of socialization centers would be a healthy initiative.

Keywords: Sentenced women, thematic categories, socialization, precision

Introduction

Socialization is a process through which the biological man and woman are made social through socio-cultural influences around him/her. Socialization is a lifelong process through which group values are induced into a member individual from previous generations. Thus, socialization stands for a process through which the original nature of human being is fashioned into a social being. As the theories of values claim that socialization in the formative years of personality has lasting effect, the study in hand especially emphasizes the socialization of children in the family. In the present research, the socialization of children means how jail environment affects the personality of children and the effects of that set-up on the children's disposition.

Mother plays a significant role in the children's socialization process as she is the key administrator of the whole family. But in many societies including Pakistani society, women also commit crimes and make their future dark which

affects the whole, especially the children. Sentenced women from their own experiences may know the distressing trends in children, like, substance use, unhappiness, survival crime, school absentee, early loss of adult care, exploitation by others, and early child bearing.

Various women in jail missing before graduation had the first baby in their teenage and many of them are jobless. They may have skills and be dependent either on well-being, minimum wages employment, or illegal ways of money. Even compared with men in prison, they have high rates of serious drug addiction problems. If they have any mental health, they must be sent to the mental rehabilitation centers rather prisons. Parents who are in prison go through countless issues in sustaining healthy relations with babies. Families are more probable to be upset by women's confinement than by men's (Baugh 1985; Datesman and Cales 1983).

Indeed, offspring can be affected when a parent involves in unlawful behavior like doing white collar crimes and corruption, and when a case becomes intricate under law (e.g. pending court proceedings, arrest, and being under boundaries in the public). But it is debatably the influence of the parting instigated by sentence that is unsafe for children, because they involve in different criminal activities and adopt the felonious groups of their age.

Unduly enjoying their liberty, children become the secondary sufferers of crime, facing housing disturbances, education institute replacements, adoptive attention and spending time with unsuitable custodians. They may have viewed a shocking scene at their mother's detention and feel confusion, grief, loneliness, shame, isolation and abandonment, the teenagers of imprisoned moms also facing severe issues. A situation, in which mothers are, imprisoned with their babies experience a painful trauma which is transferred to offspring. The separation between mothers and babies may lead to emotional, psychological and physical issues for children. Mostly children of prisoner mothers live with relatives, mostly with maternal grandparents during their mothers' incarceration. Some, however, are positioned in non-relative foster homes. In some cases, siblings may be separated and are put in out-of-family placements (McGowan and Blumenthal, 1978).

A mother's sentence upsets the family already confronted by economics, insufficient homes facilities, insulting or manipulative partners, psychological disorder, material misuse and the bequests of the child. As the mother returns, children are forever changed knowing she could commit the crime and visit jail once again. A key impairment to the association of mother and child is that women's prisons are mostly placed in inaccessible regions where transport availability is little or non-available. Long distance and non-availability of

transport create difficulties for caregivers, many of them, do not have money to support regular visit. Furthermore, adoptive families are hesitant to carry children to meet their mothers due to destructive feelings.

Children, particularly those from poor and deprived backgrounds, are easy targets for protective violence, rape, and sexual abuse, and such actions damage their psycho-social identity. Even children placed in the custody of government/state institutions like orphan homes, sometimes deal with wrong treatment and manipulation. In some cases, children face cruel, inhuman or degrading conduct which was allowed by national laws on account of corporal punishments and the death consequence.

Methods and Procedures

– Respondents and Procedure

Respondents were selected as a sub-sample of 80 sentenced women drawn from a larger set of 253 women who were able to respond the researchers. Purposive sampling technique was applied to select women who have children. Five jails (Women Jail Multan, Central Jail Rawalpindi, District Jail Faisalabad, Central Jail Lahore, and Central Jail Gujranwala) in which the women are imprisoned were selected for the target population (Home Department Punjab).

– Instruments, and Data Collection

The structured 1-hr interview, “A Mother’s Story,” contained 13 parts having the mother’s socio-cultural context, family traditions, their ways of life, and folk beliefs, along with other measures that examined the mother’s level of criminality, criminal-related attitudes and behaviors and criminal involvement. Open-ended questions were developed for use with study participants who spoke either English or ¹Urdu or ²Punjabi.

– Open-Ended Questions

Thirty-seven open-ended questions were presented to each respondent to get their responses stating their experiences of the effects of their criminality upon the socialization of their children. These questions asked about their views and experiences about the relationship between them and their children’s socialization process. For the convenience of the respondents, questionnaire was translated in to Urdu and Punjabi languages. Responses from the Urdu and Punjabi speaking participants were re translated into English. The thematic analysis of the text was made in English for all the stories of mothers.

– Quantitative Analysis and Qualitative Text Analysis

¹ National Language of Pakistan

² Provincial Language in Pakistan

First, the researcher used Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to analyze quantitative data, and conducted the qualitative thematic text analysis, using a four-step methodology that generated the qualitative thematic categories. The four steps are (a) identifying excluded words, (b) creating aliases, (c) generating automatic categories, and (d) iterative analyses to attain an optimal solution.

Results and Discussion

– *Participants Characteristics*

Table 1(attached at the end) presents the background characteristics of the 80 participantsentenced women from whom, the researcher obtained qualitative responses. These women ranged in age from 17 to 50, with a mean age of 28.41 years. Also, these women represented the entire range of the women sentenced in the jails of Pakistan. As the tradition-oriented country, the people of Pakistan wed their daughters as they reach puberty. Most of the sentenced women in Pakistan have committed crimes in their marriage matter. Out of the 80 participants, most of them were married (42.50%), and then widows (32.50%), and the remaining were divorced (25.00%). As their educational status is concerned, most (86.30%) were illiterate which shows that crime rate is higher in illiterate women, i.e. education is inversely proportionate to the crime rate. Regarding the crime they have committed, most were identified as killers (52.50%) either advisedly or unadvisedly, i.e. in a murder case. Next to murder, most of them were involved in drug trafficking (41.30%), while the remaining were found in other crimes such as adultery. Most of the respondents were Punjabi Speaking and in good health. It was observed that maximum women were under trial (46.30%) which highlights the slow judicial process in Pakistan and, 38.80% out of the remaining have more than seven years of sentenceleft before the day of the interview.

– *Effects upon the Socialization of the Children of Sentenced Women*

Table 2 (attached at the end) highlights the sentenced life of the women upon their children. Among all of the respondents, (83 % as compared to 16 % which was not agreed) were of the view that the jail (prison) environment had affected the socialization process of their children. These women were also worried about their children's future. While collecting the data, it was observed that the women who responded that the jail (prison) environment has no impact upon the socialization of their childrenwere not mentally prepared. Children of the sentenced women were found deprived of their wishes because 50.00% of the women respond that they couldn't fulfill their children's wishes and 37.50% said that they fulfilled their children's fundamental wishes to some extent. Regarding

the effects of their imprisonment upon their children's attitude, 86.30% of the respondent women said that their children's attitude adversely affected by their imprisonment. 58.80% of the respondent women were of the view that their imprisonment had negative / destructive effects upon their children's personality, and they were going to be mad or become psycho patients. Their children's socialization deficiencies, 66.30% of the participating women were of the view that their children's socialization was not affected by their imprisonment, and the issue of poor socialization was only because that maximum sentenced women were illiterate. 13.80% of the total said that there were some psychological problems in their children due to lack of proper socialization, and 15.00% were worried about their children's future life. 77.50% respondents didn't want to hand over their children to their relatives for better socialization because they showed lack of trust in their relatives in this regard.

Conclusion and Suggestions

After statistical analysis of the collected data for the study in hand, it was concluded that the children of the sentenced women were deprived of the proper socialization process which shoddily shattered their personality growth and visionary development of life. In Pakistani jails (prisons), there is no system for such children's socialization and education. As a result, they constitute their character and attitude by themselves and make their vision about how to lead life. Commonly, this thing further leads most of them to delinquency as they grew in the shelter of criminals. In a nutshell, it is not wrong to say that the imprisonment of the women is also an imprisonment for the emotions, wishes, personality development, character formation, attitude building, and life learning of their children. They become psychological patients who ultimately lead them to criminality.

- There should be proper socialization process and arrangements for the children of sentenced women in Jail and separate 'socialization centers' should be established, either within the boundary wall of the prison or elsewhere.
- The government should develop a proper strategy for the interaction of sentenced women and their children residing in 'socialization centers' to the satisfaction of mother and child's emotions and sentiments.
- Proper socio-cultural facilities must be provided at these centers, e.g. recreational, educational, emotional, and others which are fundamental for smooth sailing of life.

- The government should review the policies and strategies in this regard and should allocate sufficient funds to polish the future of the children of sentenced women.

References

- Anthony, E.J., & Cohler, B.J. (1987). *"The invulnerable child."*, New York: Guildford Press.
- Clark, J. (1995). *"The impact of the prison environment on mothers"*. Prison Journal, 75: 306-329. Lancers Press.
- Dryfoos, J.G. (1994). *"Full-service Schools: A revolution in health and social services for children, youth, and families."* Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.
- Fagan, P. (1995). *"The real root causes of violent crime: The Breakdown of Marriage, Family, and Community."* American Societies Press, 54-97. USA.
- Felner, R.D., Aber, M.S., Primavera, L., & Cauce, A.M. (1985). *"Adaptation and vulnerability in high-risk adolescents: An examination of environmental mediators."* American Journal of Community Psychology, 13(4), 365-379. USA.
- Hagan. (1992). *"Power-control Theory; explaining female deviance."* Cambridge University Press. London. 60-73.
- John, H. (2004). *"The next generation: children of prisoners."* University of North Carolina--Chapel Hill University of Toronto, Norway.
- Julee N. (1999). *"Mothers in Jail."* Social Justice, Cambridge University Press. 55-9027: 150-157.
- Maniyar M. (2004). *"Women criminals & their life style"*. New Dehli, Rakesh Goel Publishers, India.
- McLaughlin, M.W., Irby, M.A., & Langman, J. (1994). *"Urban sanctuaries: neighborhood organizations in the lives and futures of inner-city youth."* Social Justice 27: 168-175. : San Francisco, Jossey-Bass Press:

R.M. (1983). *“Family life and school achievement: Why Poor Black Children Succeed or Fail.”* University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Williams, Katherine S. (2001). *“Women: psychological trauma, social support, and coping behavior.”* Criminology: Women & Therapy. The American Journal of Drugs. Oxford University Press, New York. 21: 141-155.

Women’s Prison Association. (1995). *“Breaking the cycle of despair: children of incarcerated mothers.”* New York City.

Annexures-1

Table 1: Background Characteristics of the Sample of Participants

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Age (Years)			
	17 – 20	5	6.30
	21 – 30	35	43.80
	31 – 40	29	36.30
	41 – 50	11	13.80
Qualification of the Participants			
	Illiterate	69	86.30
	Literate	11	13.80
Marital Status			
	Married	34	42.50
	Divorced	20	25.00
	Widow	26	32.50

Type of Crime Committed			
	Murder	42	52.50
	Drugs Trafficking	33	41.30
	Adultery	4	5.00
	Any Other	1	1.30
Imprisonment (Years)			
	Under Trial	37	46.30
	1 - 4	6	7.50
	5 - 6	6	7.50
	7 <	31	38.80

Table 2: Effects upon the Socialization of the Children of Sentenced Women

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Jail Environment has Affected their Children			
	Yes	67	83.80
	No	13	16.30
To Much Extent their Children are Affected			
	To Great Extent	39	48.80
	To Some Extent	28	35.00
	Not At All	13	16.20
Satisfaction of their Children's Wishes			
	Nothing	40	50.00
	Try To Provide	30	37.50
	Feeling Depressed	6	7.50
	They Have No	4	5.00

	Demand		
Children's Personality Affected by their Attitude			
	Yes	69	86.30
	No	11	13.80
To Much Extent their Attitude has Affected their Children's Personality			
	To Great Extent	47	58.80
	To Some Extent	22	27.50
	Not At All	11	13.80
Children's Socialization Deficiencies			
	Nothing	53	66.30
	Psychological Adjustment	11	13.80
	Less Confident	4	5.00
	Fear About Their Future	12	15.00
Relatives are Suitable for their Children's Better Socialization			
	Yes	18	22.50
	No	62	77.50

About the Authors

Muhammad Shabbir Ch is PhD in Sociology and serving as Assistant Professor of Sociology at the Department of Sociology, GC University Faisalabad. He can be reached at drmsabbir@gcuf.edu.pk

Ambreen Rubabis PhD scholar of Sociology. She can be reached at aroma_naqvi@yahoo.com

Uzma Niaz is Visiting Faculty member at the Department of Sociology, GC University Faisalabad. She can be reached at uzmaniaz360@gmail.com

Shazia Nasim is a Psychologist at SFARI- Pakistan. She can be reached at sadianaseem4@gmail.com