

Then, we assert that social elimination and isolation from normal social network as a result of stigmatization, imposed labels like “precedent” or “former inmate” and non-acceptance in normal groups leads the released prisoner to re-arrest and re-prison.

Method

The research method was survey, and the population consisted of male and female inmates in Central Prison of Mashhad in summer of 2008. Sample size amounted to 340 prisoners who had at least two records of former conviction and imprisonment. Probability for calculating sampling size was 99% and the precision, based on the total respondent's, was ± 0.76 record number of re-prison rate as dependent variable. Proportionate stratified (according to gender) and systematic sampling strategy was used by the list of male and female prisoners (prisoners list was not ordered by crime).

Labelling measure

The question was: "after you released from the prison for the first offender, how did you describe the reactions and relationships of the official authorities, family members, kin or people with you?" Twenty statements for description were offered and the answer as well as the score to each was: no (0), partly (1), yes (2) and sum of the total scores was used as the measure. Factor analysis for labelling items extracted four dimensions that are named as “visual feature labelling”, “job labelling”, “social labelling”, “and official labelling”.

Strain (structural) measure

This measure consisted of two subjective and objective categories. Subjective category consisted of four dimensions of strains by factor analysis that are named: “social satisfactions”, “sense of discrimination”, “disability of access to living aims”, “destination belief”. Objective category consisted of socio-economic statuses and kind of crime.

Rational choice measure

This measure consisted of two main dimensions: “motives”, “prediction of outcomes”.

Control measure

This measure consisted of three main dimensions: “dependencies to family and friends”, “commitment to society and religious values”, “believe in social norms and ethical values”.

Results and Discussion

All four theories factors are entered into the stepwise model of regression analysis to test the importance of prediction power. Results are shown in six step models in Table 1 that can be seen labelling is the most important theory of the four that explain best re-prison rate so that is responsible for about 15 percent of variances of dependent variable. Rational choice is the second which is responsible for 12 percent; Structural (socio-economic status) is the third with 7 percent; Structural (kind of crime) is the fourth with about 6 percent. But strain (subjective) as well as control theories has the least importance, about 1 percent to predict when these theories are controlled altogether. All the theories could explain about 43 percent variances of dependent variable.

Sociological analysis of re-prison rate with an emphasis on labelling theory

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Introduction

Sociologists maintain that criminal act is more a social than an individual phenomenon, because a criminal actor deviate norms that are important to society and so it is formally defined as crime. Therefore, prisoners are individuals who have deviated socially defined important norms and thus are punished by incarceration in prison. The lead author found that 32.6 percent of prisoners in Central Prison of Mashhad had former record of incarceration in prison i.e. prison re-entry (Behravan, 1991). It is reported that large numbers of inmates being released from U.S. prisons annually will be re-incarcerated within three years of release (Langan & Levin, 2002). Although imprisonment is the most important form of sanction and many factors inside or outside prison may have effected re-prison, results of some researches have shown that harsher prison treatment does not reduce former inmates' criminal activity (Drago, 2008). Recidivism studies have shown that 73% of those convicted at ages 10 to 16 (juvenile age range) were reconvicted at ages 17 to 24, in comparison with only 16% of those not convicted as juveniles (Farrington, 1992).

Recidivism studies have shown that reintegrating the offenders has been unsuccessful (Braithwaite, 1989). Some argue that severity, swiftness and certainty of sanctions deter offenders for future offence (Gibbs, 1975). In contrast, labelling theorists argue that formal sanction increases re-offending by promoting criminal self concept and disrupting personal relationships of the offender (Paternoster & Iovanni, 1989). So, Perpetration of crime poses two kinds of crimes: primary and secondary. Re-prison concept in this article, involves the secondary crimes of former prisoners who repeatedly (at least two times) acted as criminal and incarcerated. Labelling theory is applied to the secondary crimes that presumed others who have reacted to the offender's antisocial behaviour. Labelling theory essentially asks why some acts of people are labelled deviant while others are not (Akers, 2000). This theory asserts that it is social group reactions that serve to make certain behaviours deviant, regardless of the individual context in which they occur (Vold, Bernard, & Snipes, 1998). Some sociologists have asserted that it is the more powerful members of society who define the standards for labels that may be applied to the individuals who are less socially powerful (Schur, 1973).

Four main theories are used to explain deviance: strain theory, control theory, rational choice theory and labelling theory and we are about to evaluate the power of labelling theory over other theories to predict re-prison rate. Since prison population is usually being drawn from the less affluent members of society (Miller, 1958), it is supposed that the strain theory that stresses on the social structure and pressures does not explain re-prison rate. However, rational choice and control theories may have the power of predicting re-prison rate and therefore their effect is necessary to be controlled. According to rational choice theory, individuals are inclined naturally to disorder behaviour unless they are controlled (Reckless, 1973). Along with rational choice theorists, we can conclude that committing crime and recidivism is the result of cost and benefit calculation by offender. The reasoning that the criminal weighs the chances of getting caught, the severity of the expected penalty, the value to be gained by committing the act, and his or her immediate need for that value, determine commitment of crime.

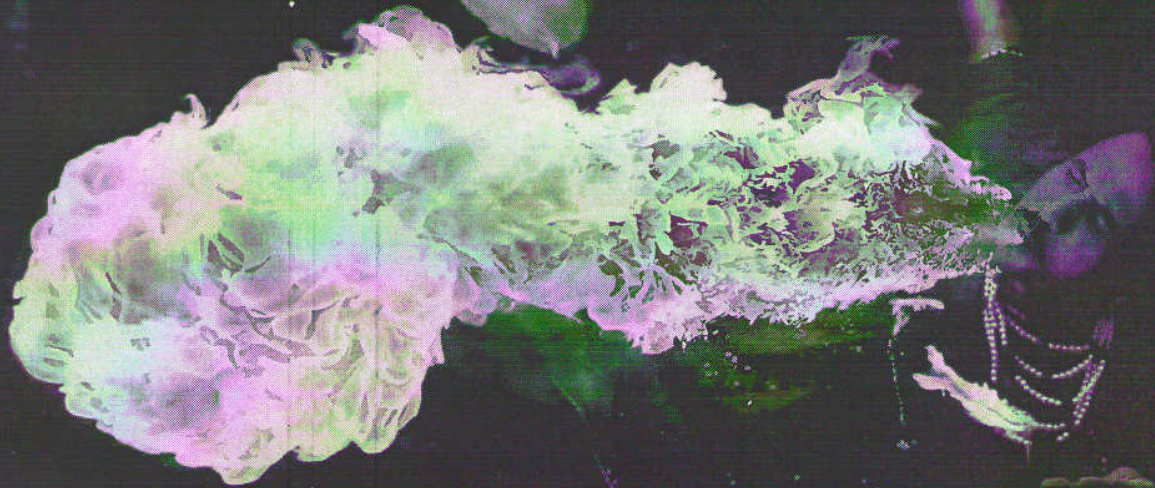


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CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS



Floral garland from the "Jagat Mahatya" dress, Jaipur
Photo: Ujjwal Singh, Jaipur

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| | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|---|-----------|------------|------------|
| | | 6 | 6 | 75 | | | | |
| control | social Participation | 0.72 8 | 0.27 4 | 7.06 3 | 1 | 0.0 08 | 0.191 | 1.265 |
| labelling | visual Labelling | 0.08 8 | 0.03 5 | 6.14 4 | 1 | 0.0 13 | 0.018 | 0.157 |
| strain(structural) | Drug crimes | - 0.54 7 | 0.23 5 | 5.39 9 | 1 | 0.0 2 | - 1.008 | - 0.086 |
| control | Moral beliefs | - 0.05 8 | 0.02 8 | 4.25 9 | 1 | 0.0 39 | - 0.113 | - 0.003 |
| strain(structural) | Gender(male) | 0.56 3 | 0.28 5 | 3.89 6 | 1 | 0.0 48 | 0.004 | 1.122 |

Link function: Logit

Conclusion

We can conclude that re-prison rate is not absolutely affected by only one set of factors but many factors are responsible in which labelling, motives, structural situations and beliefs could have some effects partially. But it seems that structural as well as control versus rational and labelling factors are of less importance that can be analyzed by the similarity of prisoners' socio-economic situations in these respects. Low level of affluence and prestige and weak moral bonds can lead people to commit crime which ensue negative attitudes and avoidance by people in the community as well as family and friends of which criminal labelling is a result. Also, lower class people have more unsatisfied needs than upper class that make committing crime more beneficial.

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Table1 - Theoretical predictors of re-prison rate(dependent variable) (ordered by The importance of prediction effect)

| Entering by the significant order of theoretical predictors in the Model | Cumulative effects* | Individual prediction effect* | Model No. |
|--|---------------------|-------------------------------|-----------|
| labelling | .149 | 0.149 | 1 |
| strain(subjective) | .167 | 0.018 | 2 |
| rational choice | .290 | 0.123 | 3 |
| control | .301 | 0.011 | 4 |
| Structural (socio-economic status) | .375 | 0.074 | 5 |
| Structural (kind of crime) | .434 | 0.059 | 6 |

* Pseudo R-Square Nagelkerke

To analyze the details of predictor factors according to the theories PLUM - Ordinal Regression model for the step six is shown in table 2. This model indicates that 32 percent of dependent variable variances are explained by the factors. Factors that had not significant effect were omitted. Factors are ordered by the effect size importance and the results are as follow: Physiological motives (rational choice) had the most significant effect (17.475 wald); other factors which respectively could predict re-prison rate included: age(structural); crime against life (structural);formal labelling; social participation(control); labelling visual; drug crimes (structural); moral beliefs(control) and gender (male)(structural).

Table 2-predictors of re-prison rate (based of different theories) Pseudo R-Square Nagelkerke =.32

| Theories | Predictors Ordered by effect size of Wald | Estimate | Std. Error | Wald | df | Sig | 95% Confidence Interval | |
|--|---|----------|------------|--------|----|------|-------------------------|-------|
| Level of dependent variable (prison records) | 2 records | 1.319 | .868 | 2.305 | 1 | .129 | -3.84 | 3.021 |
| | 3-4 records | 3.002 | .882 | 11.579 | 1 | .001 | 1.273 | 4.731 |
| | 5-6 records | 4.123 | .895 | 21.215 | 1 | .000 | 2.368 | 5.877 |
| rational choice | Motives physiological | 0.259 | 0.062 | 17.475 | 1 | 0 | 0.137 | 0.38 |
| strain(structural) | age | 0.046 | 0.011 | 16.306 | 1 | 0 | 0.024 | 0.068 |
| strain(structural) | Crime against life | 1.975 | 0.512 | 14.901 | 1 | 0 | 2.978 | 0.972 |
| labelling | formal Labelling | 0.16 | 0.04 | 12.8 | 1 | 0 | 0.075 | 0.257 |