THE HIDDEN CONSEQUENCES OF CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED MOTHERS: GROSS INFLUENCES UPON EDUCATION AND MENTAL HEALTH – A VOICE OF ATTENTION

Anum Khalid Mirza¹, Muhammad Bashir Khan² & Naveed Yousaf Sandhu³

ABSTRACT
In this article the reader’s will able to read opinion and context regarding children of female prisoners in the prison and outside the prison regarding education with or mental health, which taken as the hidden consequences of the circumstances. The emphasis lies into the fact that a voice of gross attention with loud should be given by the civil society and social activists. This study encompasses the key issues regarding the children within jail or outside the jail of incarcerated mothers; the survey has been made for these children for opinion and condition analysis for the impact upon their lives of incarcerated mothers. The situation of these children is the ignorance is the blessing. Our concerns are vital that this vice of attention should be taken by all and sundry.

Key Words: Imprisoned mothers, Innocent children, Education rights, Health facilities, Adiala jail

¹PhD Scholar, Department of Government and Public Policy, NDU, Islamabad, Pakistan.
²Associate Professor, Department of Government and Public Policy, NDU, Islamabad, Pakistan. Email: bashirkhan@ndu.edu.pk
³Assistant Professor, Department of Government and Public Policy, NDU, Islamabad, Pakistan.
BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Significantly, family members of incarcerated individuals are often referred to as “hidden victims” — victims of the criminal justice system who are neither acknowledged nor given a platform to be heard. These hidden victims receive little personal support and do not benefit from the systemic societal mechanisms generally available to direct crime victims, despite their prevalence and their similarities to direct crime victims. The situation demands a voice if gross attention is required due to the hidden consequences upon the children particularly upon their education and mental health perspectives.

It is true fact that majority of women sent to prison are mothers of small children and in most cases these children lived with their mothers prior to their incarceration. The incarcerated parents especially the mother has intense effects on the children and adolescents. The experience of ambiguous loss is quite confusing amongst the children. Factually, the mother incarceration has harmful effect on children socialization and personality. Children of criminal women are badly affected due to the environment of jail.

The socialization of children in jail environment or hostile environment of the without their mothers outside the jail. The socialization of children in jail environment or otherwise lead to imperfect personality of children which become a purpose of their absence from school and isolation from family members and friends.

Principally, Children whose parents, especially mothers are involved in the criminal justice system, in precise, face a host of challenges and difficulties: psychological strain, antisocial behaviour, suspension- strong causes of the bad mental health or having not opportunity to the school or expulsion from school, which leads to criminal activity. It is difficult to predict how a child will fare when a parent, especially the mothers is intermittently or continually incarcerated, and research findings on these children’s risk factors are mixed. However, my emphasis is upon the two fundamental factors education and mental health in the article. These have numerous hidden consequences, a few will be discussed.

Literature has frequently found an association between children’s low educational attainment and parental incarceration. But once again, the findings to date are confounding and indicate that most issues are negligent to our society, which should be taken into immediate consideration for the ambience of the social values and norms rather a concept of the social state. We are going discuss the issue of children of incarcerated mothers those are far behind any one can imagine. These children should be termed as the victim of innocence as these are not the criminals but treated as the criminals with their mothers and the children those are outside the jails at the hands of their relatives or community grossly. These gross consequences will be discussed especially the education and their health.

The need is to provide a clear picture of this dynamic. For example, one study found that parental incarceration was strongly associated are mixed. The externalizing behavioural
problems. The researcher failed to see a corresponding decrease in educational outcomes and other social attainment factors assumed this was due to the limited follow-up window of data. Interestingly, the researcher did acknowledge that some children were able to develop resilience and deal with their externalizing behaviour problems before suffering negative educational outcomes. But a separate study found that children of incarcerated parents are significantly more likely to be suspended and expelled from school. More research needs for the issue, which is deemed to be analyse.

Another alarming factor is the mental health status of these children, which is obvious in its context and situation. Research on depression and aggression among children of incarcerated parents has been mixed and highly differentiated by gender, age, race, and family situation. When the parents are incarcerated exhibited significant increases in depression, which is a significant cause to the mental disorders.

Significantly, numerous types of social exclusion such as withdrawal from substantial and social capital, stigma, political exclusion and deficient future possibilities are faced by the incarcerated women deficient future possibilities are faced by the incarcerated women and their children when they are released from jail. Nevertheless, Children living in prison almost always live in more restrictive conditions than they did outside, even though they are not themselves prisoners and should not be treated as such. The topic under discussion is a mixed of the primary and secondary research for the understanding of the all concerned to scan the vital issues of these children within the prison or outside the prison, which has its impact on their lives in a gross manner and we are not concerned or connected these children tomorrow or life influences. This has enough and large effects upon their personal lives in an unbearable manner, whether individually or collectively as a society. Their innocence are not being highlighted in the eyes of the government or the society. This negligence and ignorance has capital effects upon us. The article will serve the two aspects for its hidden consequences of lacking education and facing mental health problems.

Our observation that beyond any doubt that through the directly in the primary research and also validated in the secondary material of the designated children with their mothers or outside the mothers incarcerated expressed that most part, parental incarceration was not associated with a change in childhood aggression — but the findings were decidedly mixed. Twenty percent of sampled children did see an increase in aggression; boys who tended to be aggressive before a mother’s incarceration were most at risk for a trajectory of increased aggression. Interestingly, there were some decreases in aggression due to turn themselves into some work or criminal activity. No doubt, data or information collection has been a challenging factor due to restricted or the dislocated or depressed children, however, my efforts have been quite receptive and collected the purposeful information. The most common consequence of parental incarceration appears to fall under the umbrella of antisocial behaviour, which describes any number of behaviours that go
against social norms, including criminal acts and persistent dishonesty. One meta-analysis from the world perspectives it is analysed incarcerated parents found that antisocial behaviours were present more consistently than any other factors, including mental health issues. These disruptive, rebellious, disorderly and selfish behaviour has also shown in my primary research and survey examining the presence of multiple adverse childhood experiences a child may face, including incarceration.

This research is based upon the expiatory and description, which is not required to have data analysis and we will explain their responses in an expletory or descriptive manner.

The primary survey were conducted to get the information of the two main factors education and mental health of the Incarceration mothers and interviewed them, which are summarize as follows:

According to our survey, which conducted in Adiala Jail, narrated the real stories regarding the conditions of the child in the prison with their mothers. According to one of the mothers named Farah told that deprivation may not or cannot reduce, even I sent my daughter to her father outside, even a school is opened in the prison, “she said that birdcage is after all. Cage; which is needless to further explain. The environment is not suitable to the education of the children education; which surely an acute cause to different types of mental diseases, which predominant to the children. Another child Saima Ahmed explained little about school education and her anxiety; which seems to be aggravating into mental disorder and psychological aspects of life. According to one Wakif-e-Hal; one of the innocent victims, who is the son of Raheela, endorsed multiple disorders, which are comprised of Anxiety disorders, including panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, who used to be abused by every night.

The primary survey continued about the Children of Incarcerated mothers who used to live outside the jail, faced different which more psychological and deprivation of the education due to these factors. Most of the children replied that living with their father is to some extent it’s just satisfactory, however, few complained about their father, who forced them to work and earn money instead of sending them to school. They were asked about the behaviour of their school fellows, which also turned their heart into pieces; and they left schools. Another factor was asked and observed about their mental health; which was also not normal and inclination towards the unlawfulness activities. Actually, the society has the practice to balm or curse the victim of the innocence and they owe any inherent responsibility of this segment of the community. In our country, the role of the civil society seems to be quite limited and they are rather ignorant or working to the different issues and they have totally neglected this prime or needed issue of the children.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

A detailed interview were conducted both incarcerated mothers and the children outside the jail of these mothers. The methodology comprise of both qualitative and quantitative
aspects. This paper uses an exploratory and descriptive approach to understand the realities of the situation 13 mothers and 11 children living with them in the jail and 15 mothers children of the outside the jail. Total sample of 27 children, who used to live with their father or relatives about psychological disorders and education facilities or going to the school. A combination of qualitative methods in the form of semi-structured interviews and observations, and quantitative methods in the form of surveys were used. It is relevant to note that mothers and children were always interviewed in the presence of prison officials so they were unable to speak as openly as possible perhaps due to the fear of repercussions. Limitations are with the unnatural behaviour in the country. Such constraints construed in research paper are numerous with unforeseen circumstances. However, the research topic remained quite challenging and restricted to that level; two folds having children with the incarcerated mothers and children those are living outside without the incarcerated mothers for gross consequences of education and mental health despite many.

**FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

This research has been focused upon two folds of the consequences affecting upon the children lives; into two categories; firstly, those children who used to live with their mothers inside the jail and secondly, those are not with their incarcerated mothers and they are living outside. The results are surely different in its context and separately be taken. Thus, the incarceration of parent can result in the loss of educational opportunities another factor of the concentration.

**Children living with their incarcerated Mothers**

**Educational facilities Available for the Children with mothers in Jail**

There is a serious lack of education opportunities for children incarcerated in prisons in Adalia Jail, there is a religious teacher who comes in to teach. These are the theoretically true in the sense, however, they are the victims of the environment or justice and they are unable to get enough education rather being abused enormously by the elder prisoners or the officials of the prison. They consequences are great in all respects. The association off undeliberate relations put them multifarious evils and effects, which is again the forgotten children the status prevailed. These effects are great and consequences they receive are injurious to their mental health rather have an opportunity to be educated.

**Psycho-Social Developmental Issues**

According to several studies, a baby who grows up in a secure environment at an early age is more likely to develop into an emotionally capable adult. Whereas, a baby who does not receive this kind of security at an early age would tend to become anxious, depressive, thereby reducing their ability to deal with life’s ups and downs resultantly making them more vulnerable to substance abuse and criminality.
The Hidden Consequences of Children of Incarcerated

Gross Realities about Children Susceptibilities

The reality of being incarcerated in prison as a child is nothing but grey. Children in incarceration face tremendous risks that are uncalled for being a child. This is because he is an innocent victim of no fault. This is not to say when these children are inside the prison are in the state of children susceptibilities, which are beyond the imagination. This has been seen during the visit of Adalia Jail, we focused upon the educational and psychological issues with them, however, it was not possible for me to grasp in detail but the indications are seen with clear obvious behaviour and environmental analysis of their state of affairs.

The Children living outside not with incarcerated Mothers

Stressful Condition with full of Life Misery

The incarceration of a parent is a stressful event for families and children of incarcerated parents often experience multiple emotional and social difficulties, including exposure to the parent’s criminal activity, witnessing the parent’s arrest and court proceedings, separation from parents, loss of family income, housing instability, changes in caregiving, stressful visits with the incarcerated parent, and shame or stigma associated with a parent’s involvement in the criminal justice system. One potential impact of parental incarceration and the stressors associated with it is compromised emotional well-being of children. This secondary research data further authenticated when we visited of the 13 incarcerated mothers 31 children those are living with their relatives outside the prison, they expressed and scan with different sort of mental stress, which authenticated the visit of 13 families of incarcerated mothers especially the children. This was measured in the families of incarcerated mothers which are adolescent rather a symbol of acute depression and anxiety, which started from the arrest of their mother and they were less than 10 years old. One of the children endorsed that deprivation and negligence caused him in an acute stress and depression since then. He further expressed that he is with limited attention paid during the time of stress by the relatives, we observed that symptom of internalization, which reflected into self-injurious behaviour and suicide ideation. This situation was quite similar amongst 79% of the respondents. Certainly, the reaction of the society and their relatives is quite obvious, which turned them into hatred. Such behaviour put them a fit case for the development trajectories, which we marked rather 98% of the total population. Surely, these children showed during the survey that they are on the risk, which persistent and no interval seems to be there. This is the process of resilience; those have the potential to contribute positive functioning of the children of incarcerated mothers. Such implications are persistent due to problems of mental health to the development across the lifespan. Adolescence is characterized by significant changes in social, emotional, and cognitive capacities, and it is a particularly sensitive period for mental health concerns, with emotional problems often on setting during these years.

Mental Health as a Salient Issue
Two strongest inferences are existed here those are the sense of achievement, criminality and poverty or acute loss of mother and child relationship development process. During the survey of these children, it was strongly revealed that Mental health problems in adolescence are a particularly salient issue for children of incarcerated parents because mental health problems might contribute to adolescents’ problem behaviour and intergenerational patterns of low achievement, criminality, and poverty. Although strong parent-child relationships have been investigated as a protective factor for younger children of incarcerated mothers. These results are quite obvious in research and reality and we can conclude the discussion with this point that health is predominantly a salient issue or the consequence to these children, which is needed to consider appropriately, otherwise the development or turn the criminal into reality one cannot stop and these children are proving as a nursery to it.

**Mother-child Bond and Contact in Incarcerated**

Naturally, parent is a strong support in the child’s life, the interruption of the child-parent relationship will surely lead to or exacerbate many of the issues or risk factors already discussed. Equally, in some cases a child might benefit from the removal of a father or mother who presented problems for the child. A significant attempt to facilitate contact between the incarcerated parent and child should consider the quality of the relationship the child had with the parent before incarceration. Visits while the parent is in the facility seem to do little to build a relationship if there was not one prior to incarceration.

**Cumulative Gross Consequences**

Surely, Mother incarceration has harmful effect on children socialization and personality. In Adyala jail there is no suitable program held for the psycho-social development of children. No-trained staff found in any jail to take care of these children. Generally, children are living under very difficult situation facing deprivations. Imprisoned women are mostly depicted as imperfect, incompetent mothers who are incapable to deliver effectively for the essentials of their children. Children of imprisoned women greatly disturbed by the emotional behaviour of their mother. These children experience depression, anger, substance abuse from the jail environment which also affect their socialization. When the incarcerated women and their children are released from jail they face various forms of social exclusion including deprivation of social and biological needs, loss of material and social capital, imprisonment disgrace, political exclusion, skimpy future possibilities and administrative invisibility.

Factually, the women’s crime not only destroy the life of women but also have dangerous consequences for the life of their children. These children are to be stigmatized as child of criminal mother that render them to acquire their position as a respectable citizen in society. The children who suffered outside the prison as given in recommendation, which needs an immediate attention to all concerned, otherwise my survey has also concluded with this fact.
CONCLUSION AND POLICY OPTIONS

This study examined the emotional, psychological, and behavioural characteristics of the children with incarcerated parents to provide a better understanding of the family dynamics of children of incarcerated parents from a human service perspective. They are taken as the gross consequences in the education and their state of affairs amongst their classmates and the teachers. Although they are exposed to multiple risk factors, little attention has been given to this issue, yet it has affected many generations of people. Programs that address relationships between incarcerated parents and their children can increase a better understanding of the emotional, psychological, and behavioural issues and lessen the shame and stigma of being a child with an incarcerated parent. There should be more research upon the issue for the attention of all corners and a voice attention to all and sundry.

Most of children of incarcerated mothers face profound adversity — as do other children facing many of the same risk factors the children experienced prior to parental incarceration. However, the research shows that some children develop bounciness despite the risks if they have a strong social support system. Through incarcerated mothers can play an important positive role in a child’s sphere of support? In some circumstances, however, continued contact may have little value and even be detrimental to the child. Continued research will help policymakers and corrections practitioners better understand these complex and competing issues and make critical policy and program decisions to help children have positive life outcomes and avoid the criminal justice system.

Certainly, the research shows that, in general, children whose parents are incarcerated are at higher risk for increased disruptive behaviours and psychological problems, such as depression. Whether this interprets into decreased educational attainment, involvement with the criminal justice system, and other negative outcomes seems to depend on the child’s resilience and his or her social support network.

This is quite important to note that teacher’s role to these incarcerated mothers or parents and the behaviour of teachers must be positive for their mental and educational development. Knowing that parental incarceration is relatively common, especially among vulnerable children who often experience other challenges that can impair their well-being, may help alleviate some of the stigma that children of incarcerated parents’ encounter.

The largest and effective is the strength of the mother child relationship. For example, if the mother or parent lived with the child, provided social and financial support, and developed a strong parent-child bond, the long-term negative effects of parental incarceration may be mitigated if the child receives support throughout the incarceration period and is afforded opportunities to maintain contact with the parent. Correctional facilities can support the relationship by providing the child with easy access to and visitation with the parent a child mother friendly environment. It’s again a challenging factor as the majority of incarcerated mothers are not well educated and come from the poor
segment of the society, which is a challenging factor. However, its gross consequence are there to consider the government or the social activists or the society in general.

**Recommendations**

**Prison Human Resource Capacity Development of staff and General Public plus organizations working for welfare and Awareness**

Factually, the prison staff needs an immediate training session which cover international best practices and requirements for mothers and children inside education and mental health purposes as their duty. Moreover, a campaign should be followed both the prison general public including organizations working for the welfare.

**Government should Consider**

The government should consider and take action to expedite the nomination of teachers in all women prison facilities. Budgetary provisions must be made for provision of provisions must be made for provision of education kits for children (school bags, books, uniforms) so as to try and match a school environment inside prisons.

**NGOs and Government Should Take Part**

The children who are living outside without their take care of them and some monitoring system should be framed to coordinate and help them to educate and take care about their mental health through the appointment of psychologists and medical doctors to look after them. This can be done through NGOs and Government. As strategy and action should be formulated to take care as social and government responsibility. This is not to leave them on the misery of the society as a whole. This has put them wimps of the time and circumstances.

**Responsibility of the Social Welfare Department**

Welfare workers from the social welfare department should make visits to review the cases of children and their mothers and should act as family liaison officers where required so as to help develop a plan for post release and rehabilitation and reintegration.

**Experimentation Program**

Experimentation Programme for mothers should be developed where they are placed under house arrest instead of important for these children confinement.

**Education should be taken as a basic Right of incarcerated Children**

The rights of any child or mother or any citizen of Pakistan cannot be jeopardised even he or she convicted or in the prison; Education as growth and development is vehemently is the responsibility of the government in all comparison and estimation, however, the social activists can take part in the education process of these children. There should be a joint effort to stop these children to spoil.

**Awareness Programmes are Essential for Educators and Teachers; Two Steps**

First, it may be useful to increase awareness among teachers and administrators about the prevalence of parental incarceration. They should also know that many children who
experience parental incarceration also experience additional adversities in childhood, such as family instability, parental substance abuse, and violence. Second, it may be useful to increase awareness about the specific needs and challenges of children of incarcerated parents. As noted above, these children often experience a (conscious or unconscious) social stigma from their teachers and classmates that stems directly from their parents’ incarceration.

**Role of the School Administration to Reduce the Stigma; Education and Mental Health**

Educational institutions can help in reducing this stigma. Children of incarcerated parents may also have other specific needs that schools can address. Schools may consider providing resources to children of incarcerated parents, such as developmentally appropriate books and pamphlets about parental incarceration. Teachers and librarians can encourage all students to read these books (as opposed to only children who have an incarcerated parent), which would help children of incarcerated parents but also foster awareness of this experience among their classmates (without singling out individual children). Children of incarcerated parents may also need emotional support and counselling in school. In addition to collaborating with mental health professionals, such as psychologists and guidance counsellors, classroom teachers can help children work through their feelings about parental incarceration and/or connect these students to additional supports.

**Gross Attention Required**

It is matter of gross attention that sending a woman who is being accompanied with her young child to a jail, concerned authorities should ensure that whether jail has basic minimum facilities of health, recreation, accommodation and nutrition to care child and mother, despite have consideration of these children in terms of education and mental health. In case, such facilities are not available in the jail, concrete efforts to avail such facilities should be made by jail authorities. The children must be separated from such a state of living, which is harmful for development of children. Prison administration has to be made more sensitive and responsive to the problems of the children of women prisoners. The jails should be provided sufficient resources to ensure that care, nourishment, protection, welfare and development, providing educational services and responding environment of young children living with their mothers in jails. Another area of an acute concern is that the children living outside of incarcerated mothers also need gross plus immediate actions regarding their education and mental health, which is due to the society, we are living; this has to be done through intensive care programme from the welfare department and the justice system, if we want to reduce the chances of the criminality from these children. This has been showed from the behaviour of these children while the survey was being conducted. Moreover, I observed that hearted behaviour whatsoever.
References