

A Study to Identify the Demographics of Prisoners at Morena, Madhya Pradesh, India

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ABSTRACT

Crime has been an integral challenge faced by societies across the world, which disrupts peace, development and social harmony. The aim of the present study was to identify the demographic characteristics and their association with a type of crime among prisoners of the district prison of Morena, Madhya Pradesh, India. A total of 189 prisoners were present during the time of data collection; using total enumeration sampling, the researcher collected data after obtaining necessary permission from the concerned authorities. The results showed that majorly the prisoners were aged below 30, i.e., $n = 101$ (53.4%), $n = 106$ (56.1%) were married; the educational background showed $n = 59$ (31.2%) had completed 10th grade, $n = 120$ (63.5%) belonged to rural areas, $n = 128$ (67.7%) were living in a joint family, $n = 72$ (38.1%) of the inmates were engaged in agricultural work, $n = 69$ (36.5%) were having an income of 5000 to 15000, $n = 158$ (83.6%) of prisoners were having no previous history of imprisonment, further, the study showed that $n = 178$ (94.2%) had no history of physical disease, $n = 189$ (100%) did not have psychological disease/issue. Furthermore, the type of crime shows that $n = 76$ (40.21%) were involved in cases of murder or grievous hurt, $n = 71$ (37.56%) were charged under the other crimes which are further classified as $n = 42$ (59.15%) under NDPS Act, $n = 14$ (7.04%) under the Arms Act, $n = 5$ (5.63%) under Section 326 IPC, $n = 4$ (1.4%) under Section 151 IPC, $n = 28$ (14.81%) had committed crime against women, $n = 13$ (6.87%) had kidnapping/abduction and $n = 1$ (0.52%) had cybercrime cases. The association of type of crime with socio-demographic variables showed that there was a positive association with previous occupation $\chi^2 = 0.004^*$, monthly income $\chi^2 = 0.040^*$ and duration of previous imprisonment $\chi^2 = 0.041^*$ at less than 0.05 level. The study concludes that the study depicts the various characteristics leading to crimes. The researcher interprets the young generation as being exposed to unauthorized, easily available weapons leading to crimes. First-time law breakers needed some interventional psychological counseling and training of mind, body and spirit for an overall development. Further, there is a need for an environment conducive to the prisoners for their reform.

Keywords: Prisoners, Demographic characteristics, Type of crime, Prison.

INTRODUCTION

Globally, crime rates have shown fluctuations due to economic conditions, geopolitical unrest, and technological advancements.[1] According to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime 2023, homicide rates vary significantly, with the Americas and Africa reporting the highest incidences. Property crimes and cybercrimes are increasing worldwide, adding to the challenges faced by law enforcement agencies.[2] Crime refers to any act that violates legal norms, carries punishment, and may cause harm to individuals or society as a whole. The criminal justice system is responsible for enforcing these laws and maintaining public safety. Imprisonment is an act as a method of isolating offenders in a controlled setting where they are required to follow strict rules. Furthermore, crime is frequently seen as the result of cognitive processes, much like any physical action, with legal experts often discussing the psychological factors that contribute to criminal behavior.

In India, crime statistics recorded by the National Crime Records Bureau show a steady rise in offenses such as theft, robbery, homicide, and crimes against women. In 2022, India recorded over 4.3 million cognizable crimes under the Indian Penal Code and Special & Local Laws.[3] The states with higher urbanization and unemployment rates tend to show elevated crime rates.[4] Madhya Pradesh has consistently reported high incidences of crime, particularly crimes against women and property crimes. In 2022, the state recorded 302,906 total criminal cases, ranking among the top contributors to crime in the country.[3] Factors like poverty, lack of education, and unemployment contribute to these numbers.[4]

There are multiple reasons why people commit crimes, including economic deprivation, peer pressure, addiction, mental health issues, and a lack of social support.[5,6] Early exposure to violence, trauma, and negative influences during childhood are also significant factors.[7] Individuals are incarcerated as a form of punishment and

societal protection. Imprisonment serves to deter crime, rehabilitate offenders, and deliver justice to victims.[8] However, the effectiveness of prison as a correctional mechanism depends on the environment and rehabilitation programs provided.[9]

In India, punishments include imprisonment (simple or rigorous), fines, community service, and the death penalty for the most severe crimes.[10] The judiciary system follows principles of deterrence, retribution, prevention, and reformation. In this context, the investigator sought to examine the demographic characteristics of male inmates and analyze their association with the type of crime committed in the District Prison of Morena, Madhya Pradesh. The study aimed to identify whether factors such as age, marital status, education, nativity, type of family, previous occupation, monthly income, previous history of imprisonment, duration of previous imprisonment, history of any physical disease and history of psychological disease/issue have any significant relationship with the type of the crime.

The objectives of the study were to find the demographic characteristics of prisoners imprisoned at Morena, Madhya Pradesh, India and to find out the association between selected demographic characteristics and type of crime.

METHODOLOGY

Research design

Cross-sectional descriptive design was used

Research approach

Quantitative explorative approach

Population

Prisoners in Morena, Madhya Pradesh

Samples

Prisoners of the district prison of Morena

Sampling Method and Size

Using total enumeration sampling, the researcher found a total of 189 prisoners in the district prison of Morena, Madhya Pradesh, India.

Sampling criteria

The study included (a) prisoners of the district prison of Morena, Madhya Pradesh, (b) those willing to participate in the study, (c) those present at the time of data collection, (d) who could understand Hindi. Male inmates having speech and hearing impairment were excluded from the study.

Research Variable

Demographic characteristics, which include age, marital status, education, nativity, type of family, previous occupation, monthly income, previous history of imprisonment, duration of previous imprisonment, history of any physical disease, history of psychological disease/issue and type of crime.

Ethical Statement

Ethical Permission taken from Sharda School of Medical Science and Research (Ref. No. SU/SMS&R/76-A/2023/161, Dated: 08/08/2023)

RESULTS

The results were divided into 2 sections. They are Section A: the demographic characteristics of prisoners imprisoned at Morena, Madhya Pradesh, India and Section B: the association between demographic characteristics and type of crime. The details are herewith represented;

Table 1 Demographic characteristics and statistically significant association found between selected demographic variables among male inmates ($p > 0.05$). $N = 189$

In the present study, the majority of male inmates, $n = 101$ (53.4%), were below 30 years, while $n = 63$ (33.3%) were aged between 31 to 50 years. A smaller proportion, $n = 23$ (12.2%), were aged between 51 to 70 years, and only $n = 2$ (1.1%) were found to be above 70 years. There was no association found in relation to the type of crime at $\chi^2 = 0.071$, N/df (189/12, $p = 0.05$).

The majority, $n = 106$ (56.1%), were married, followed by $n = 75$ (39.7%) who were single. A smaller proportion, $n = 7$ (3.7%), had a deceased spouse, while $n = 1$ (0.5%) reported being in a live-in relationship. None of the participants were divorced or separated. There was no association found in relation to the type of crime at $\chi^2 = 0.563$, N/df (189/12, $p = 0.05$).

The educational background of the participants reveals that $n = 59$ (31.2%) had completed 10th grade, followed by $n = 43$ (22.8%) who had studied up to 5th grade, $n = 38$ (20.1%) were illiterate, while $n = 29$ (15.3%) had completed 12th grade. A smaller proportion, $n = 20$ (10.6%), were graduates or had higher education. There was no association found in relation to the type of crime at $\chi^2 = 0.676$, N/df (189/16, $p = 0.05$).

The majority, $n = 120$ (63.5%), belonged to rural areas, while $n = 59$ (31.2%) were from urban regions. A smaller proportion, $n = 10$ (5.3%), were from semi-urban areas. There was no association found in relation to the type of crime at $\chi^2 = 0.536$, N/df (189/8, $p = 0.05$). The majority, $n = 128$ (67.7%), were living in a joint family, and $n = 61$ (32.3%) were living in a nuclear family. There was no association found in relation to the type of crime at $\chi^2 = 0.288$, N/df (189/4, $p = 0.05$).

Participants prior to imprisonment, $n = 72$ (38.1%) of the inmates were engaged in agricultural work, while $n = 48$ (25.4%) were employed in the private sector. $n = 39$ (20.6%) were unemployed, $n = 27$ (14.3%) were self-employed, and $n = 3$ (1.6%) were government employees. There was a positive association found in relation to the type of crime at $\chi^2 = 0.004^*$, N/df (189/16, $p = 0.05$). Participants monthly income, majority of $n = 69$ (36.5%) were, having income of 5000-15000, $n = 50$ (26.5%) had income below 5000, $n = 39$ (20.6%) had no income, $n = 22$ (11.6%) were having income 15000 to 30000 and $n = 9$ (4.8%) were having income above 30000. There was a positive association found in relation to the type of crime at $\chi^2 = 0.040^*$, N/df (189/16, $p = 0.05$).

Participants previous history of imprisonment, the majority, $n = 158$ (83.6%), had no previous history of imprisonment, and $n = 31$ (16.4%) had a previous history of imprisonment. There was no association found in relation to the type of crime at $\chi^2 = 0.784$, N/df (189/4, $p = 0.05$). Regarding the participants' duration of previous imprisonment, the majority, $n = 155$ (82.0%) were having no duration of previous imprisonment, $n = 23$ (12.2%) were having

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of prisoners in district prison of Morena, Madhya Pradesh, India

Demographics		Frequency	Percent	df	Chi-square
Age in years	Below 30	101	53.4	12	0.071
	31–50	63	33.3		
	51–70	23	12.2		
	Above 70	2	1.1		
Marital status	Single	75	39.7	12	0.563
	Married	106	56.1		
	Divorced	0	0		
	Separated	0	0		
	Spouse deceased	7	3.7		
Education	Live-in-relationship	1	0.5	16	0.676
	Illiterate	38	20.1		
	5 th passed	43	22.8		
	10 th passed	59	31.2		
	12 th passed	29	15.3		
Nativity	Graduate and above	20	10.6	8	0.536
	Urban	59	31.2		
	Semi-urban	10	5.3		
Type of family	Rural	120	63.49	4	0.288
	Nuclear	61	32.3		
	Joint	128	67.7		
Previous occupation	Unemployed	39	20.6	16	0.004**
	Government employee	3	1.6		
	Agriculture	72	38.1		
	Self employed	27	14.3		
	Private employed	48	25.4		
Monthly income	No Income	39	20.6	16	0.040*
	Income below 5000	50	26.5		
	Income 5000 – 15000	69	36.5		
	Income 15000 – 30000	22	11.6		
	Above 30000	9	4.8		
Previous history of imprisonment	Yes	31	16.4	4	0.784
	No	158	83.6		
Duration of previous imprisonment	No duration	155	82.0	16	0.041*
	Less than 1 year	23	12.2		
	1 to 3 years	3	1.6		
	3 to 5 years	4	2.1		
	Above 5 years	4	2.1		
History of any physical disease	Yes	11	5.8	4	0.416
	No	178	94.2		
History of psychological disease Issue	Yes	0	0	1	0.01
	No	189	100		

Type of crime	Property crime	0	0
	Cyber crime	1	0.52
	Crime against women	28	14.81
	Crime against children	0	0
	Murder or grievous hurt	76	40.21
	Kidnapping/abduction	13	6.87
	Other (total)	71	37.56
	NDPS Act	42	59.15
	Arms Act (25/27)	14	1.97
	326 Act	05	7.04
	151 Act	04	5.63
	Firing Air (308)	01	1.40
	Fire in prison (41/42)	01	1.40
	188 IPC	01	1.40
	SC/ST Act	03	4.22

previous imprisonment duration of less than 1 year, $n = 3$ (1.6%) were imprisoned for 1 to 3 years, $n = 4$ (2.1%) served between 3 to 5 years, and $n = 4$ (2.1%) had been imprisoned for more than 5 years. There was a positive association found in relation to the type of crime at $\chi^2 = 0.041^*$, N/df (189/16, $p = 0.005$).

Participants' history of any physical disease, the majority $n = 178$ (94.2%) had no history of any physical disease, and $n = 11$ (5.8%) had having history of physical disease. There was no association found in relation to the type of crime at $\chi^2 = 0.416$, N/df (189/4, $p = 0.005$). Participants' history of psychological disease/issue, majority $n = 189$ (100%), had no history of any psychological disease/issue, and none of the inmates had having history of psychological disease/issue. There was no association found in relation to the type of crime at $\chi^2 = 0.01$, N/df (189/1, $p = 0.005$). Participants type of crime, majority $n = 76$ (40.21%) were involved in cases of murder or grievous hurt, $n = 71$ (37.56%) were charged under the other crimes ($n = 42$ (59.15%) under NDPS Act, $n = 14$ (7.04%) under the Arms Act, $n = 5$ (5.63%) under Section 326 IPC, $n = 4$ (1.4%) under Section 151 IPC), $n = 28$ (14.81%) had committed crime against women, $n = 13$ (6.87%) had kidnapping/abduction and $n = 1$ (0.52%) had cybercrime case against them.

DISCUSSION

The present study assessed the demographic characteristics and their association with the type of crime among male inmates at the District Prison of Morena, Madhya Pradesh. The findings revealed that most inmates were young adults below 30 years of age, highlighting a significant prevalence of criminal behavior in early adulthood. Similar findings have been observed in studies by Farrington (2003), indicating that youth are more prone to engaging in criminal activities due to impulsivity, peer influence, and socio-economic challenges.

No significant association was found between age, marital status, education, nativity, type of family, history of any physical disease, history of psychological disease and the type of crime, suggesting that these demographic factors alone do not determine criminal tendencies. However, previous occupation, monthly income, and duration of previous imprisonment showed significant associations.

This suggests that financial instability and previous exposure to prison environments might influence the nature of crimes committed.

Occupational background, especially unemployment and engagement in agricultural labor, were notably associated with certain types of crimes, possibly reflecting the financial pressures and socio-economic hardships faced by these individuals. Additionally, low income and lack of psychological support may increase vulnerability to criminal activities. The findings support the need for holistic rehabilitation strategies focusing not only on punitive measures but also on employment opportunities, mental health care, and vocational training for inmates to reduce recidivism.

Nursing Implications

In correctional settings, nursing professionals have a pivotal responsibility in delivering comprehensive health care by addressing both the physical and mental health needs of inmates. Regular health assessments, early identification of psychological concerns, and timely counseling or referrals are essential components of care. Mental health screening should be integrated into routine evaluations to ensure early intervention for stress, anxiety, or substance dependency. Additionally, conducting health education sessions on topics such as substance abuse prevention, stress management, and effective coping strategies can foster healthier behavioral patterns among inmates.

Active involvement in the development of rehabilitation and vocational training programs contributes to building inmates' self-reliance and reduces the likelihood of recidivism. Participation in structured transition programs can further assist inmates in preparing for life after incarceration, ensuring continuity of healthcare services and strengthening community and family support systems for successful reintegration.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that demographic characteristics alone do not predict the type of crime committed by male inmates. Instead, factors like previous occupation, income level, previous imprisonment

duration, and psychological health issues have a stronger influence. The findings emphasize the need for comprehensive prison management strategies that integrate mental health services, vocational training, and rehabilitation support to reduce crime and promote societal safety.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Future studies should be conducted in various regions to broaden the applicability of findings while placing greater focus on exploring psychological and social factors influencing criminal behavior.
- Regular mental health screening, along with structured vocational training and employment support programs inside prisons, are essential to enhance rehabilitation and reduce repeat offenses.
- Strengthening after-care and reintegration services, combined with active collaboration between correctional authorities and healthcare professionals, can help address inmates' holistic needs and support their successful return to society.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Nil

SOURCE OF FUNDING

Nil

ETHICAL AND LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT

The responsibility statement from the authors clearly stating that all the ethical and legal responsibilities will be borne by the authors themselves and the journal and editors will not be responsible for any untoward consequences arise from the study.

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