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PSYCHO-SOCIAL FACTORS INFLUENCING NOTORIOUS AND TRIVIAL CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR IN PERSONALS

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ABSTRACT:

Crime, a persistent problem, has been with us from the time immemorial. Social, planner and criminal justice system have seldom been able to control it effectively. Statistics both from developed and developing countries on crime or delinquency reveal an upward trend. Indian society has not been immune from this. It is rather a basic social problem which is seen in our community, religions, castes and classes. The present study was conducted on 200 male convicts 25-40 years age taken from Patna Jail, out of which 100 will be notorious criminals and 100 will be trivial criminal. Personal Data Schedule, Eysenck Personality Questionnaire, General Intelligence Test and materials used in this present work.

KEY WORDS: Psycho-social factors, Notorious Criminals, Common law, Mens & Actus reas

INTRODUCTION:

The term Crime comes from Latin word "Crimen" means accusation. It is a claim that someone is guilty of an offense. In the US system of law, there is a distinction between mens rea and actus reas. To be convicted of crime the State must prove both. It has the burden of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt. Mens rea deals with the state of mind. Actus reas stands for an act. In our system of law, one must have "intended" to commit a crime, and one must have committed some act to be found guilty of a crime. Normally, both must exist. Thus a person may intend to commit a crime (guilty thoughts) but may not do the act. This is not a crime. Social scientist are struggling to explore the socio-psychological antecedents of crime. Consequently several sociological, political, economical, cultural and psychological factors have been identified. It may be mentioned that crime is a complex phenomenon which involves not only sociological factors, rather its causes are deep rooted in our psycho. Therefore, it seems proper to identify psychological factors underlying crime.

Crime in a psychological sense may be considered to be a sensation-seeking behaviour. Most of the criminals commit crime just to boost themselves in society. This is also justified when adolescents and youths, coming from even upper strata involve in cognizable and non-cognizable offences. Some of the criminals in our society try to compensate their inferiority complex through anti-social acts. In this sense the violation of laws by such persons may be taken as a compensatory behaviour.

DEFINITION

"Crimes as a social injury are thus subjectives (expression of opinion) as well as relative (varying) in time and space." – D. R. Taft.

"Some acts or omissions in respect of which legal punishment may be inflicted in the person who is in default whether by acting or omitting to act." – Paripurna Nand Verma.

"An act that has been shown to be actually harmful to the society, or that is believed to be socially harmful by a group of people that has power to in force its beliefs and that places such act under the ban of positive penalties." - J. L. Gillin.

"In principle crimes are acts that the considered by those in authority to be sufficiently enemical to the general welfare as to warrant official interdiction and punishment." – Albert Morris.

These definitions highlight the ambiguity of crime and difficulties in deciding a constructive criminal policy on the basis of a psychologically acceptable definition of crime. Clarence Darrow thought of it as “an act forbidden by the law of the land, and one which is serious enough to warrant providing penalties for its commission. “Paramebe described it as an act. “forbidden and punished by law, which is always almost immoral according to prevailing ethical standard, which is usually harmful to society which is normally feasible to repress by panal measures, and whose repression is necessary a supposed to be necessary.” A very laboured effort, but it does reflect the basic difficulties in defining crime as a behavioural manifestation of hostility towards society. Parkins regarded crime as “any social harm defined and punishable by law.” while quinney though of it as a “legal category what is assigned to conduct by authorized agents of a politically organized society.”

OBJECTIVES :

The objective of this research project was to make psychological study to see which are as under :

1. To examine whether notorious and trivial criminal differ in terms of their personal characteristics and family background.
2. To ascertain whether notorious and trivial criminal differ in terms of their intelligence.
3. To assess whether notorious and trivial criminal differ in terms of their personality factors such as neuroticism, extraversion and psychoticism

METHOD OF STUDY:

The selection of a well defined and representative sample constitutes one of the basic duties of the researcher. Sample comprised 200 male Criminals drawn from Patna Jails . All types of criminals including under-trials, female criminals and Juvenile criminals remain in this jail for judicial processing of the cases and for conviction. It may be mentioned at this stage that most of the Central and District Jail are overcrowded. Sometimes, the strength of the inmates exceeds the capacities beyond the limit. At the time of data collection the median population of inmates of this jail had been found to be about 1800, this figure includes criminals under trails and Juvenile criminals. Keeping in view of objectives of the study only notorious (100) and trivial (100) criminals were included in the present study. Notorious criminals where those who committed murder, dacoity, attempt to murder, murder with dacoity, rape, and rape with murder. Similarly, Trivial criminals were those who committed petty crime such as burglary, cheating, theft and so on. Both the groups were matched in terms of their age between 25 to 40. Therefore the most important characteristics of a good research are sound methodology and procedure which will help the investigator to reach his target goal.

HYPOTHESIS:

In the present study, the following hypothesis has been formulated for providing proper direction to the research, for correct interpretation of collected facts and for empirical verification of research expectations.

1. That there would be significant difference between notorious and trivial criminals in terms of their intelligence.
2. That there would be significant difference between notorious and trivial criminals in respect to neuroticism.
3. That there would be significant difference between notorious and trivial criminals in respect to extraversion dimension of personality
4. That there would be significant difference between notorious and trivial criminals in respect to psychoticism.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

The collected data were scored and analysed statistically to test the different hypothesis of the study and the obtained results are presented and discussed.

First hypothesis of the study and obtained result that the notorious criminals group (X=56.89) has scored significantly higher on verbal intelligence test than the trivial criminals groups (X=52.48). The obtained t-value (t=4.64, df=198) is significant beyond .01 level of the confidence. This shows that Notorious criminals are more intelligent as compared to their trivial criminals counter parts.

Table 1.

Comparison of notorious and trivial criminals in terms of their mean scores on the Mohsin's General Intelligence Test.

Group	Mean	S. D.	t-value (df=198)	P-Value
Notorious criminals	56.89	7.52	4.64	.01
Trivial criminals	52.48	5.83		

On the basis of the result presented above, it is obvious that notorious criminals pass more intelligences than their trivial counterpart. It happens because major criminals may be influenced by different type of gang leaders and sophisticated criminals.

In the present context considering the finding of these studies in view, it was hypothesized that there would be significant difference between notorious and trivial criminals in respect of neuroticism. In order to test this hypothesis, the two group have been statistically compared and the finding have been presented in table 2

Table – 2

Comparison of notorious and trivial Criminals in terms of their Neuroticism scores

Group	Mean	S.D.	t-value (df=198)	P-Value
Notorious criminals	13.56	6.30	3.57	.01
Trivial criminals	10.62	5.25		

It is evident from table -2 that the notorious criminals ($X=13.58$) have scored significantly higher on the neuroticism scale than the trivial criminals ($X=10.62$). The comparison of the two groups has yielded a t-value of 3.57 which is significant beyond .01 level of confidence. This indicates that the notorious criminals have more neurotic than the trivial criminals.

Extraversion refers to outgoing tendency of the respondent's. Needless to mention, this variable has been widely used in sociological researchers in different context. It is often observed that extraverts are happy-go-lucky. They involves more in social activities. In the present context the impact of this personality variable on notorious and trivial criminals needs to be examined. It was hypothesized that there would be significant difference between notorious and trivial criminals in respect to extraversion dimension of personality. To verify this, the mean extraversion scores of the two groups have been compared. Table -3 presents summary of the finds.

Table – 3**Comparison of notorious and trivial Criminals in terms of their Extraversion scores.**

Group	Mean	S.D.	t – Value (df=198)	P-Value
Notorious Criminals	10.52	4.95	2.81	.01
Trivial Criminals	8.92	2.82		

The findings as presented in table-3 match without expectation. The notorious criminals ($X=10.52$) has scored greater than the trivial criminals ($X=8.92$). The comparison of the two groups has yielded a t -value of 2.81 which is significant beyond .01 level of confidence. This indicates that the notorious criminals show more trait or extraversion than the trivial criminals.

Psychoticism refers to a personality trait present in varying digress in all persons. If it is present in marked degree, it predisposes a person towards the development of psychiatric abnormality. To examine this hypothesis the data have been subjected to statistical analysis and the findings have been displayed in table -4

Table – 4**Comparison of notorious and trivial Criminals in terms of their Psychoticism Scores.**

Group	Mean	S.D.	t – Value (df=198)	P-Value
Notorious Criminals	11.40	5.42	4.79	.01
Trivial Criminals	7.95	4.81		

An inspection of table- 4 shows that the notorious criminals ($X=11.40$) has scored higher on the psychoticism scale than the trivial criminals ($X=7.95$). The obtained t -value ($t=4.79$, $df=198$) is significant beyond .01 level of confidence. This shows that the notorious criminals committing murder, dacoity, murder with dacoity, rape and rape with murder have more psychotic syndromes than those who committed petty offences such as theft, cheating, burglary etc. Thus the findings are in the expected direction and lend support the hypothesis formulated in this respect.

Family is considered to be one of the significance variables in the process of socialization. Family transmits the qualities which are needed for better adjustment in society. In order to examine the extent of difference between the respondents of Nuclear and Joint family in respect of their magnitude of crime, chi-square was used. The statistical findings have been summarized in table -5

Table – 5**Comparison of notorious and trivial Criminals in terms of their Nature of Family**

Group	Nuclear	Joint	χ^2 (df=1)	<u>P-Value</u>
Notorious Criminals	59	41	11.56	.01
Trivial Criminals	35	65		

It is apparent from table-5 that majority of the major criminals are from the Nuclear family (59%). The percentages of notorious criminals from joint family are 41%. On the other hand trivial criminals from Nuclear. Family is 35%. While joint are 65%. The chi-square value of 11.56 is also significant beyond .01 level of the chance. It indicates that notorious and trivial criminals differ significantly with respect to their nature of the family.

The marital status of the adult persons appears to have considerable significance in relation to crime. Keeping all these in view data were subjected in three category, (namely, unmarried, married, and widower) for measuring the magnitude of crime chi-square was run. The findings have been summarized in table - 6.

Table – 6**Comparison of notorious and trivial Criminals in terms of their marital status**

Group	Unmarried	Married	Widower	χ^2 (dt=2)	<u>P-Value</u>
Notorious Criminals	50	20	30	13.92	.01
Trivial Criminals	31	44	25		

It is evident from table 4.6 that unmarried subjects committed notorious criminals more (50%) than their married (20%) and widower (30%) counterparts while in terms of trivial criminals married subjects were higher in ranking than their unmarried and widower counter parts. Their percentages were 44, 31, and 25 respectively. The obtained chi-square value 13.92 is also significant beyond .01 level of the confidence. The obtained result also with the line of Sutherland and creasy (1970) who observed that the crime rate is lowest in the married male than unmarried and widowers.

Crime and delinquency often are attributed to “poor education” or “failure of the school”, just as they have attributed to “bad homes” and “poor family training”. On the basic of very inadequate and unreliable statistics, which do not include while collar crimes, it appears that crime decreases with the amount of formal education. Keeping this in view in present work data were arranged in three standards of educational level and it was expected that as the educational levels increase in adult persons

the crime rate will be decrease. For the fulfillment of this hypothesis chi-square was run and findings have been summarized in table-7.

Table -7

Comparison of notorious and trivial Criminals in terms of their Levels of Education

Group	Upto	Graduate	Post	x ² (dt=2)	P-Value
	Matric		Graduate		
Notorious Criminals	20	50	30	24.54	.01
Trivial Criminals	31	17	52		

The findings presented in table -7 would show that 50% of the notorious criminals were graduate, while only 17% of trivial criminals were graduate, 30% of notorious criminals were post graduate, while the percentage of trivial criminals were 52. Similarly 20% of notorious criminals were up to matric, while 31% were trivial criminals. The obtained chi-square value of 24.54 is also significant beyond chance, indicating that notorious and trivial criminals differ statistically in respect of their levels of education.

The data as presented in table-7 are more or less match with our common observation in society. Due to unemployment and faculty educational system specially in Bihar the graduate youths indulge themselves more in major offences like train dacoity, murder, rape, etc. The present finding also support the findings of Frum (1958), Barnes (1960) Brownell (1960) who observed that crime rate varies with educational status and that poor education is responsible for failure to supply moral and democratic ideals.

It is a common observation that drug users generally come into conflict with the law. It is often observed that some of the drug users are ready to do anything to get money in order to procure the drug of their choice. They have also observed the linkage between drug use and criminal propensity. Keeping this in view, drug abuse and intoxication among notorious and trivial criminals have been looked into table -8 present the statistical result.

Table - 8

Comparison of notorious and trivial Criminals in terms of their Drug Abuse and Intoxication

Group	Single	Multiple	Non	X ² (dt=2)	P-Value
	Drug Users	Drug Users	Users		
Notorious Criminals	28	62	10	14.00	.01
Trivial Criminals	51	36	13		

It is evident from table - 8 that majority of the notorious criminals are used to multiple drugs and intoxication (62%). The percentage of non-users of drugs and intoxication among notorious criminals are not sizeable (10%).

In passing attention may be turned to the number of criminals. To a limited extent, this would show whether a given case of crime was spontaneous or pre-mediated relevant statistics.

Table – 9

Comparison of notorious and trivial Criminals in terms of Number of Criminals in Crime

Group	Single	2-5	6 and Above	X ² (df=2)	P-value
Notorious Criminals	45	38	17	11.48	.01
trivial Criminals	37	58	05		

It is evident from table-9 that the majority of the notorious criminals committed crime alone. Likewise, majority of the trivial criminals involved 2 to 5 persons in committing crime. Persons involving more than six in both the case are not sizeable. The obtained chi-square value of 11.48% is also significant beyond chance. It shows that notorious and trivial criminals differ statistically in terms of number of criminals involving in crime.

The data as presented in table-9 are more or less match with our common observation in society. It may be reiterated that the notorious criminals mainly consist of persons committing murder, dacoity, rape, murder with dacoity, murder with rape and so on. It is often observed that rape and in most of the cases murders are committed by the single criminal. So far as dacoity with murder is concerned, criminals require small or large group depending upon the time and place of crime as well as victim status. In sharp contrast, trivial criminals involving in burglary, theft, cheating and so on may take others help for successful operation of the cases.

Most of the crimes are 'dust behavior' of an criminal and victim. It may be the result of a number of motives. Sherry (1968) has found monetary consideration as the main motive behind most murders. In a study on prisoners convicted of murder and petty crimes, Singh (1980) has explored the circumstances relating to murder and found old family enmity, family quarrels over the division of property and dispute on the agricultural land as the main issues behind murder. Rajan and Krishna (1980) have reported that an overwhelming majority of homicides in Delhi during 1970-79 has taken place during night hours and behind most occurrences, property and sex have been at the root keeping these studies in view, the variable of motives behind crime has been looked into table-10 presents the relevant data.

Table – 10

Comparison of notorious and trivial Criminals in terms of their Motives of Crime

Group	Econo. mic gain	Property dispute	Enmity	Sexual causes	Sudden provo- cation	X ² (df=4)	P-Value
Notorious criminals	40	25	9	6	20	4.42	.01
Trivial criminals	51	16	8	9	16		

It is evident from table-10 that two groups of criminals differ a wide apart in their motives behind crime. The obtained chi-square value is significant beyond chance. ($X^2= 4.42$ $df=4$, $P .01$). It is also evident that about 40% of the notorious criminals committed crime with a motive to earn money. Similarly the economic gain has been found to be as the main motive behind crime in case of trivial criminals. Among specific reasons one-fifth of trivial crimes take place due to unspecified reasons. However the possibility cannot be ruled out that these motives may vary from place to place as well as from culture to culture.

Nature of crime and weapons used in committing a crime seem to be unimportant factor from a psycho-social angle. In ancient time most of the criminals used lathi, pharsa garasa and some sharp edged weapons for committing notorious and trivial criminal. Poisoning was also popular in case of murder, general enmity, domestic quarrel and property dispute. It may be mentioned that the mode of crime varies from place to place and person to person. For example stabbing may be more popular in one place, but not in another places. Similarly shooting, beating and others may be more popular in some of the places. To ascertain whether notorious and trivial criminals differ in terms of their mode of crime, data have been presented in table-11.

Table – 11

Comparison of notorious and trivial Criminals in terms of their Weapons Used

Group	Weapons		X^2 ($df=1$)	P.Value
	Used	Not used		
Notorious Criminals	90	10	54.96	.01
Trivial Criminals	40	60		

It is evident from table -11 that majority of the notorious criminals 90% have used weapons and majority of the trivial criminals (60%) have not used weapons in committing crimes. The statistical analysis has also shows that the two groups of criminals differ significantly in terms of their mode of crime ($X^2 = 54.96$, $df=1$, $P .01$). The observation made so far is neither surprising nor revealing. It presents more of less the general trends of data. In most the notorious criminals victims participate and interact with criminals. In a few cases victims are unaware of the severity of crime.

CONCLUSION:

Thus, it can be concluded that notorious and trivial criminals differ significantly in terms of antecedents of crime. Most of the notorious criminals are came from nuclear family, having unmarried status, better levels of education. They are multiple drug users and they committed crime alone with the help of one or more weapon with a motive to have economic gain. Most of the trivial criminals came from joint family, having married status, poor levels of education, single drug users and they committed crime by involving a small group consisting of two-five persons, used not any weapon and had economic gain as the main motive behind crime. The notorious criminals have more intelligent than trivial criminals. The notorious criminals have more neuroticism, Psychoticism and extraversion trait of personality than the trivial criminals. Thus, further studies are needed to ascertain other socio-psychological characteristics of the two groups. Some multidimensional tests of personality. Personal and social factors would prove a better device for preparing a sociological profile of notorious and trivial criminals. However, the present endeavour is a modest but systematic attempt in this area. It would prove a guideline for future research to be conducted in this area from the socio-psychological angle.

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