

A Study on Social Adjustment Among Elderly Inmates Convicts Central Prisons of Tamil Nadu

¹S. Srinivasan, ²Dr. N. Rajavel,

¹Ph.D, Research Scholar, Department of Social Work, Khajamalai Campus, Bharathidasan University, Trichy

²Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work, Khajamalai Campus, Bharathidasan University, Trichy

KEYWORDS

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ABSTRACT

Tamil Nadu prisons house a growing number of aging inmates facing hardships in correctional facilities. Some cope with old bones suffering in cold winter sessions without mattresses, lack wheelchairs or walkers, and cannot afford portable oxygen or hearing aids. So many Elderly inmates very difficult to even dressing, going to the bathroom or bathing without assistance. The research reveals the plight of inmates who are incontinent, forgetful, suffering from chronic illnesses, severe ailments, and many who are dying while growing old behind bars.

Objective:

To study the socio-economic conditions of Elderly Inmates Convicts.

To assess Social Adjustment among Elderly Inmates Convicts.

Material and Method:

This study utilized both qualitative and quantitative methods to examine Social Adjustment among Elderly inmate's convicts in central prisons of Tamil Nadu. A descriptive research design was employed, and the sample was selected through purposive sampling. Five Central Prisons were chosen from a total sample size of 213, located in Tamil Nadu State, India: Cudalore, Madurai, Tirunelveli, Tiruchirappalli and Vellore.

Results:

The major findings of the research study include the following 47 percent of elderly inmates are in the age group 60-65 years, and 24 percent are between 66-70 years. 77.9 percent of elderly individuals are from rural areas. 46.5 percent have primary-level educational qualifications and have committed crimes for emotional reasons. 89.7 percent of the elderly inmates who committed crimes were married. 59 percent of respondents have a family income ranging from Rs.1000 to Rs. 5000, indicating vulnerable socio-economic conditions. 43 percent of elderly inmates are involved in farming, while 30 percent engage in labor work. 61 percent of respondents belong to nuclear families, and the complex connections between various individual and environmental factors contribute to mental illness in elder convicts. 86 percent of respondents have a Hindu religious background, with current research lacking and inadequate services for elderly prisoners suffering from mental illness. 66 percent of respondents committed murder, 18 percent sexual offenses, 8 percent attempted murder, 6 percent corruption cases & 2 percent kidnapping, and harboring offenders. 51 percent of respondents face a lifetime punishment. The research used a social adjustment scale for the aged to analyze aspects such as Family, Spouse, Interpersonal Relations, Health, and Finance.

Introduction

Crime happens everywhere and every day. In fact, the crime rate in India is inevitably increasing and continuously recorded by the National Crime Record Bureau every year. Some elderly inmates are suffering from a mental health issues and mental disorder, that is the reason they committed a crime. The research study mainly focuses on the relationship of social adjustment among elderly inmates in the Central Prisons of Tamil Nadu. This study mainly emphasizes reformation for elderly inmates such as moral, spiritual well-being, educational aspects and vocational training programs, sports and recreation activities, and behavior modification programs that may help them to be more well-adjusted and over all change elderly prisons inmates.

Review of Literature

Frank J. Porporino (2001): To examine the research study, the aging prisoners who were first imprisoned after they turned 50 is actually declining. There was minimum level study of the psychological impact of imprisonment on the elderly in particular, but there is no continuity in adjustment or coping for the elderly prisoners. The elderly people are also available that provide physical, occupational, respiratory therapy, wheelchairs, and assistance for prisoners with hearing and vision impairments. Reina Angela et al. (2015): According to him, prison activity programs help inmates adjust to life on the outside as well as to prison. As a result of the researcher's contribution to the elderly inmates waiting for release from jail and eager to explore the world after making the crime, many people realize they have made a mistake and regret it. Tara Livengood et al. (2009): As per the study discussed aging definition physical, emotional, social, and economic situations. Due to biological aging, there is a rapid decline in health in the case of incarceration. Mental illness often plays a vital role in this part of re-incarceration, and they find life outside of the institution difficult because of these issues.

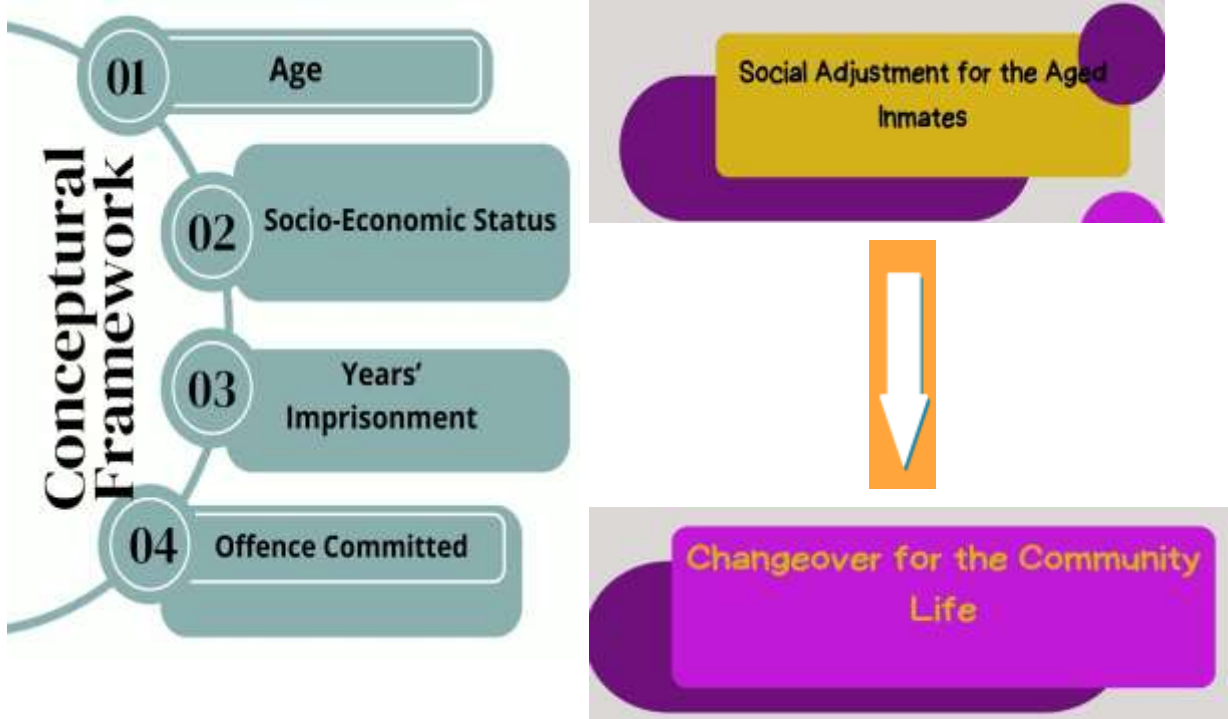
Zdravko Grujić et al. (2021): Major findings of the study basic rights and duties of convicted elderly prisoners and fundamental rights determine the position of prisoners in penitentiary institutions. Rajendrakumar et al. (2013): The presented research study was mainly focused on elderly inmates' life that has its own challenges for adjustment problems to overcome as the individual continues to experience the aging progress. Washburne, John N. et al. (1935): His research study argues that socialness is a elderly inmates they have experience in the people. Their sympathy and non-negative response to elderly inmates. Behavioral stability in social situations, self-control to sacrifice immediate or easily attained satisfaction for a more difficult or remote situation, and satisfaction of elderly inmates. Janet I. Warren et al. (2004): His review included anxiety and personality disorders, physical assaults, and incarceration for a violent crime for elderly inmates. Ronald H. (2019): In his major finding of the study family, physical health conditions, criminal activities, and strategies for coping with prison life. Incarceration of elderly people in later life was often their family conflict, depression, anxiety, stress, suicidal thoughts, and fear of dying in prison life behind the bar.

Lynne Goodstein et al. (1989): This research attempts on both external and internal prison environments to adjustment and cope up with co-inmates' adjustment problems. Charles J. Hobson et al. (1998): Major finding of the research study financial issues, economic issues, and

family-related issues social adjustment and financial adjustment and stressfulness regardless of gender age and income level of the elderly prison inmates. Daryl R. et al. (2009): Study focuses on analyzing the adjustment of the prison, a multidimensional construct, and multifaceted adjustment process. The concept of adjustment as multidimensional such as socio, economic, cultural, political aspects of the research study. Yu-Shu Chen et al. (2013): According to the study, social support from family members affects the adjustment to prison life statistically significantly. The major outcome of the research study highly related to institutional misconduct, illness, depression, lower levels of institutional misconduct some of the committed to drug offenses and committed violent offenses.

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework



Above figure 1 indicating the conceptual framework social adjustment among elderly inmates convicts central prisons of Tamil Nadu the factors were analysis age, socio economic status, years' imprisonment and offence committed for the elderly inmates when there was adolescent period the made and committed emotional crime.

Objective:

- To study the socio-economic conditions of Elderly Inmates Convicts.
- To assess Social Adjustment among Elderly Inmates Convicts.

Methodology

The research will deploy a mixed-methods approach, combining interviews and analysis of relevant records to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. A purposeful sampling method will be utilized to ensure the inclusion of a representative sample of elderly inmates within the state's correctional facilities. As the study unfolds, it is anticipated that the findings will not only add to the academic discourse but also provide actionable recommendations for policymakers, healthcare professionals and prison administrators to better address the mental health needs of

incarcerated elders in Tamil Nadu. Totally 213 elderly inmates interview and conducted various central prisons of Tamil Naud Cuddalore, Trichy, Madurai, Vellore, Tirunelveli.

Tools & Techniques

Socio-economic self-prepared questionnaire and Social Adjustment Scale for the Aged. The rapid advancement in science and technology has enabled man to seek new patterns to satisfy his needs and with his own **determination** he tries to solve out his problems. A person reacts differently situations. The different responses, behavior, and expressions of a person toward a situation are called adjustment.

Results and Discussion

The study was conducted with a sample of 213 selected prisons. The socio-demographic factors considered for the study include age, marital status, place of living, education, age of offense, punishment time, and etc. The results of the obtained data's socio-demographic features, as well as numerous statistical tests used to determine differences between groups and associations among variables, are discussed in this chapter. After a rigorous investigation of the collected data, the following conclusions were reached.

Table 1
Distribution of the Respondents by their Age

| <i>Sl.No</i> | <i>Age</i> | <i>No. of Respondents (n:213)</i> | <i>Percentage</i> |
|--------------|------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 60 to 65 | 101 | 47.4 |
| 2 | 66 to 70 | 50 | 23.5 |
| 3 | 71 to 75 | 37 | 17.4 |
| 4 | 76 to 80 | 15 | 7.0 |
| 5 | 81 to 85 | 7 | 3.3 |
| 6 | 86 to 90 | 3 | 1.4 |

The major findings of the research study include the following: 47.4 percent of elderly inmates are in the age group 60-65 years, and 23.5 percent are between 66-70 years. Seventy-seven point nine percent of elderly individuals are from rural areas. Forty-six point five percent have primary-level educational qualifications and have committed crimes for emotional reasons. Eighty-nine point seven percent of the elderly inmates who committed crimes were married. Fifty-nine percent of respondents have a family income ranging from Rs.1000 to Rs. 5000, indicating vulnerable socio-economic conditions. Forty-three percent of elderly inmates are involved in farming, while 30 percent engage in labor work. Sixty-one percent of respondents belong to nuclear families, and the complex connections between various individual and environmental factors contribute to mental illness in elder convicts. Eighty-six percent of respondents have a Hindu religious background, with current research lacking and inadequate services for elderly prisoners suffering from mental illness. Sixty-six percent of respondents committed murder, 18 percent committed sexual offenses, 8 percent attempted murder, 6 percent involved in corruption cases, 2 percent in kidnapping, and harboring offenders. Fifty-one percent of respondents face a lifetime punishment. The research used a social adjustment scale for the

aged to analyze aspects such as five dimensions: Family, Spouse, Interpersonal Relations, Health, and Finance.

Figure 2 . Type of Offenses

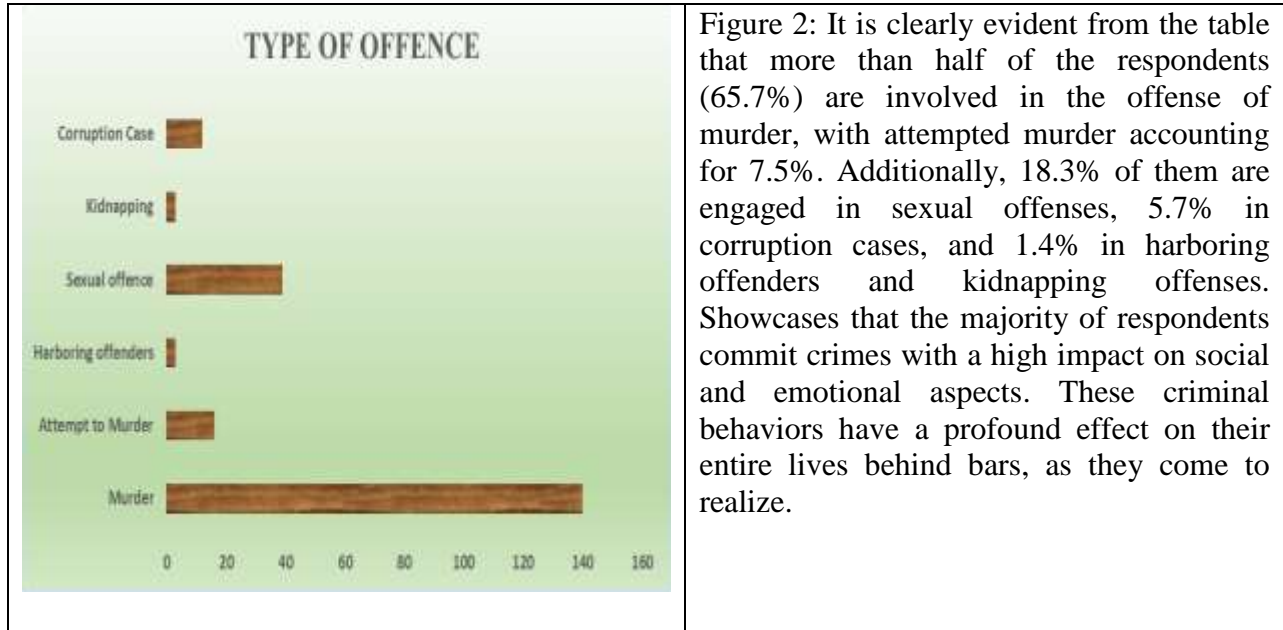


Figure 3. Type of Punishment

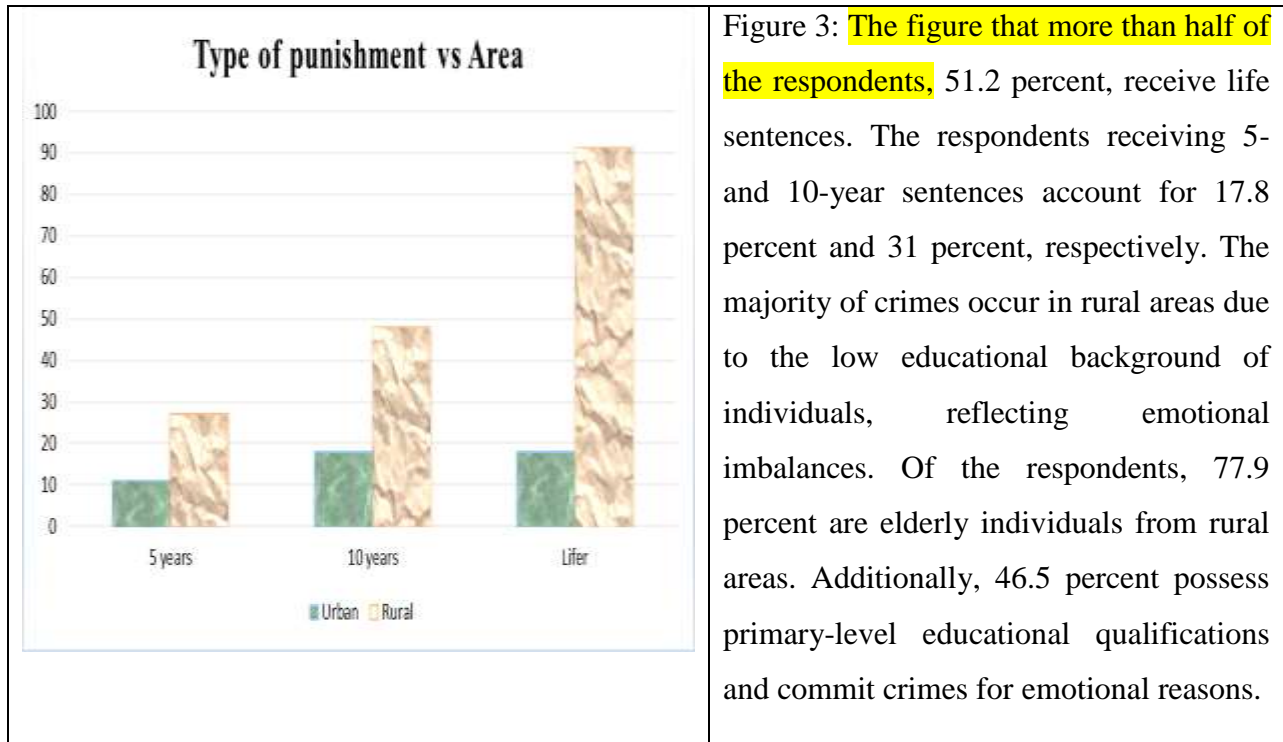


Table 2
Social Adjustment Scale for the Aged
SINGLE QUESTION ANALYSIS

| S.No | Dimension of SASA | No. of Respondents (n:213) | Percentage |
|-------------|--------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| 1 | Family | | |
| | Strongly Agree | 76 | 35.7 |
| | Agree | 99 | 46.5 |
| | Uncertain | 33 | 15.5 |
| | Disagree | 3 | 1.4 |
| | Strongly Disagree | 2 | .9 |
| 2 | Spouse | | |
| | Strongly Agree | 24 | 11.3 |
| | Agree | 36 | 16.9 |
| | Uncertain | 38 | 17.8 |
| | Disagree | 19 | 8.9 |
| | Strongly Disagree | 96 | 45.1 |
| 3 | Interpersonal relations | | |
| | Strongly Agree | | |
| | Agree | 16 | 7.5 |
| | Uncertain | 135 | 63.4 |
| | Disagree | 56 | 26.3 |
| | Strongly Disagree | 3 | 1.4 |
| | | 3 | 1.4 |
| 4 | Health | | |
| | Strongly Agree | 42 | 19.7 |
| | Agree | 116 | 54.5 |
| | Uncertain | 41 | 19.2 |
| | Disagree | 7 | 3.3 |
| | Strongly Disagree | 7 | 3.3 |

| | | | |
|----------|-------------------|----|------|
| 5 | Finance | | |
| | Strongly Agree | 26 | 12.2 |
| | Agree | 97 | 45.5 |
| | Uncertain | 78 | 36.6 |
| | Disagree | 8 | 3.8 |
| | Strongly Disagree | 4 | 1.9 |

Above the table, clearly indicate that the Social Adjustment Scale for aged people comprises five dimensions: family, spouse, interpersonal relations, health, and finance. In the family dimension, 47 percent strongly agree, and 37 percent strongly agree, reflecting a highly positive response from elderly inmates. At the spouse level in the family situation, the majority of respondents (45 percent) strongly disagree, while 18 percent are uncertain, as showcased in the table above. Regarding interpersonal relationships, 63 percent of elderly inmates totally agree, showcasing a positive response. In terms of health, 54 percent of the elderly respondents agree, and 20 percent strongly agree. As for finance, 45 percent agree, and 37 percent are uncertain among elderly inmates.

Discussion

The research findings reveal significant insights into the demographic, socio-economic, and psychological aspects of elderly inmates.

Demographic and Socio-Economic Characteristics

Nearly half (47.4%) of elderly inmates fall within the age group of 60–65 years, while 23.5% are between 66–70 years. A significant majority (77.9%) of elderly inmates hail from rural areas, highlighting the prevalence of criminal activities among elderly individuals in rural settings. Education levels remain low, with 46.5% of respondents having only primary-level qualifications. Many committed crimes due to emotional distress. The majority (89.7%) of elderly inmates were married at the time of the offense. Socio-economic vulnerability is evident, as 59% of respondents reported a family income between Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 5,000. Occupationally, 43% of elderly inmates were engaged in farming, while 30% worked as laborers. Family structure plays a role, with 61% belonging to nuclear families, contributing to psychological and emotional distress.

Criminal Behavior and Sentencing Patterns

The research found that 66% of respondents committed murder, while 18% were involved in sexual offenses. Additionally, 8% attempted murder, 6% engaged in corruption-related offenses, and 2% were involved in kidnapping or harboring offenders. More than half (51.2%) of the elderly inmates were sentenced to life imprisonment. Additionally, 31% received a 10-year sentence, while 17.8% were sentenced to 5 years. The prevalence of crimes among rural elderly individuals is linked to low educational background and emotional instability, leading to violent offenses.

Social and Psychological Adjustments

The study employed the Social Adjustment Scale for the Aged, analyzing five dimensions: Family, Spouse, Interpersonal Relations, Health, and Finance. The findings include:

Family Adjustment: A strong positive response was recorded, with 47% of respondents strongly agreeing and 37% agreeing to the importance of family support. **Spousal Adjustment:** Responses were mixed; 45% strongly disagreed, while 18% remained uncertain regarding spousal relationships. **Interpersonal Relationships:** A significant 63% of respondents strongly agreed, indicating positive interactions with fellow inmates. **Health Condition:** 54% agreed, and 20% strongly agreed, suggesting a fair level of satisfaction with health-related aspects. **Financial Stability:** Financial uncertainty was prevalent, with 45% agreeing to financial difficulties and 37% expressing uncertainty about their financial well-being.

Conclusion:

Elderly inmates constitute a special population within the incarcerated offender demographic. They face numerous high risks for medical complications, depression, anxiety, stress, and loneliness, leading to various psychological issues. The elderly inmates encounter many challenges in correctional settings, both in terms of their physical health and mental well-being, which significantly impact their attitudes and behaviors. Upon release, they confront numerous difficulties while attempting to reintegrate into society. Elderly individuals must readjust to a less structured environment and often struggle to cope with family members, spouses, interpersonal relations, health, and finances, thereby avoiding and creating substantial stigma for these elderly inmates. Overcoming mental health issues becomes an arduous task for them, as they grapple with the challenges they face. The study mainly emphasizes the various problems faced by elderly inmates. This study focuses on the economic condition, educational background, and emotional distress of elderly inmates in relation to criminal behavior. The research findings provide psychological rehabilitation services for elderly inmates and examine how older adults are affected by mental health problems. This study aims to address the strong policy in prison administration, mental health services, and socio-economic assistance to improve the well-being of elderly inmates.

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