

A Sociological Study on the Impact on the Social Welfare Process of Family Victims of Secondary Crime Affected by Drug Trafficking in Puttalam District (Based on Pallama Ruwaneliya Village)

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1. Introduction

According to Sri Lanka's National Dangerous Drugs Control Board (NDDCB), the total number of drug arrests in 2023 was over 80,000 which was a high growth compared to 2022 (Mahir, 2023). Morbidity and mortality from drug use have increased globally. According to the World Drug Report (2017), more than 30 million people worldwide suffer from substance use disorders. 0.6% of the global adult population is highly vulnerable to substance use disorders. Opioid drugs are the most harmful in the world, responsible for 70% of adverse health effects (Mahir, 2020). Drug trafficking, which is rapidly expanding throughout Sri Lanka has a high impact on family lives. Prohibited illegal drugs are sold using secret tactics. Due to this condition, relationship within the family unit including wife-husband and children-parents are affected, and drug trafficking has a direct impact on the formation of open and closed personality traits. Today, various measures are being implemented by the government to raid the drug trafficking that has spread throughout Sri Lanka. The background for this research has been created how drug trafficking and distribution, which is widely identified in Puttalam district in North-West province of Sri Lanka, affects the related family members. The main objective of this study is to investigate the impact of drug trafficking on the socialization process of family secondary crime victims. Summatically, to study of the breakdown of family ties due to the ongoing process of drug trafficking and to study of the psychological distress of family members due to drug addiction.

2. Materials and Methods

This research was based on qualitative and quantitative research approach, using both primary and secondary data sources. Structured interviews and questionnaire method were used to collect of primary data. Purposive sampling has been used as the study sample. Accordingly, a group of eighty people were selected. There, representing the forty families of Ruwaneliya village in Pallama area of Puttalam district, an adult over fifty years of age and a youth between eighteen and thirty seven years of age were selected from each family. Ten people from ten randomly selected families were selected for structured interviews. Collected data was analyzed using Microsoft excel and SPSS software. Functional approach was used as the theoretical source for the research. Research studies, books, journals were used as secondary data sources.

3. Results and Discussion

According to field details, Drug Trafficking has spread throughout the Puttalam district and the production of alcohol and distribution of drugs can be identified among the families of Pallama-Ruwaneliya village. Drugs such as alcohol, ganja, drugs, babul, ice are widely distributed in the village. Drug use has also become popular among school-age children from the age of thirteen. Secondary victims include the head of the family who uses alcohol, as well as the wife and children of the family. That is, drug production and distribution has become more prevalent through them. In some cases, the wife indirectly intervenes in the production of alcohol, and its sale is also done by the wife. In such cases, children of the school age suffer severe hardships

and are also subjected to social marginalization. When the father of the family is more involved in drug use, it has a direct effect on the children.

The research will focus on how such exposure influences the emotional, psychological, and social well-being of family members, particularly children, and how it may alter their interactions with society, including trust, social relationships, and future behavior patterns. Additionally, the research will focus on the psychological distress experienced by family members, particularly the mental & physical challenges faced by those affected by a loved one's drug addiction. This includes exploring feelings of anxiety, depression, shame, and helplessness, as well as the long-term effects on family dynamics and individual well-being.

Family background related to drug trafficking has a strong impact on children's social cognitive development process. Children living in this kind of social framework adapt to the closed socialization process, and in some cases tend to the open socialization process. Persecution and neglect from the society can identify a nature of children hating the society. Family-based drug trafficking also serves as the initial stage for children to turn to illicit activities such as alcohol use and distribution, and then the use of weapons. The attitudes, thoughts and wishes of the children including the wife living in this victimized family framework mostly show a sense of uneasiness towards the society. It can be identified through the following note.

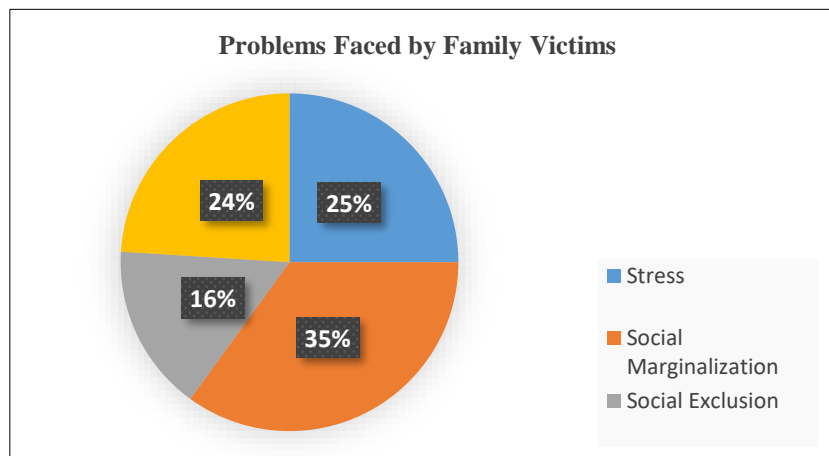


Figure 1: Field study data - Problems faced by victimized families

In some cases, the long-term occurrence of alcohol and drug trafficking has some effect on the mental functioning of the children of those families. As a result, weak personality traits, weak socialization traits are formed. Information about it can be identified through the following table.

Table 1: Field Study Data – Defective Personality Traits/ Antisocial Traits Faced by Family Victims and Factors Contributing Thereto

Weak personality traits/ antisocial traits	Reasons for it
Fear of facing society	Husband or father drinking alcohol
Inability to make a proper decision in a problem	Distribution and sale of alcohol
Looking excessively embarrassed at a problem	Harassment by drunken husband/ father

In contrast to the weak social support, in some cases, after bearing the pressure and then putting the pressure on the opposite of that pressure, it can be recognized at a rare level in the society. These secondary victims are associated with situations in which individuals are created with strong personality traits that are better understood by society, compared to weak personality traits. As a result of bearing too much social pressure, it can be identified as a new trend among children and wives in these family environments that the mental strength needed to cope well with it is created. It can be seen that some people who adapt to drug trafficking from time to

time continue this drug trafficking as a result of focusing on their economic status rather than their social status in order to survive in the society. Although it has some impact on the individual social welfare process, the attention related to it has been limited. Open economic policy can also be identified as one of the turning points in the process.

4. Conclusion

Due to the various effects of drug trafficking on the individual's life, how the secondary victims are affected can be studied physically through two main parts., the wife and children of the family are severely psychologically affected. Due to the weak personality traits that affect the individual's psyche, a group of people who lack self-awareness and cannot make proper decisions are created. Individuals' socialization processes are positively and negatively influenced by drug trafficking. While the positive impact is very limited, the negative impact shows rapid growth. This shows a direct impact on matters such as the future hopes and interests of the secondary victims. Thus the legal aspect should be enforced and the broad change in social awareness should be created.

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6. Keywords

Drug trafficking, Family members, Illicit activities ,Socialization process

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