

Increase of Recidivism in Sri Lanka: A Critical Analysis

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Sri Lanka has undergone many faces of change, conflicts, ethnic riots and civil wars, which have created many environmental and structural problems in post independent environment. In post war environment, criminality has become a crucial issues. Consequently strategies have been searched to curb the crimes trends. One of the primitive methods of punishments believes in the fact that if severe punishments were inflicted on the offender would deter from repeating that crime. Those who commit a crime, it is assumed that derive a mental satisfaction in the act. For the neutralizing this preference of the mind, punishment inflicts equal manner of suffering and no longer attractive for offender to carry out such committal of crimes.

In some point, classical approach was important in justice policy during the 19th century, but it became of less interest to criminologists at the end of the 19th century due to Rehabilitation approach. Even if all state still practice the punishment to control the crime rates. Sri Lankan government similarly used the severe punitive methods but convicted and recidivist offenders have regularly boosted. The average of convicted prisoners per year was 30,000 during 2009 to 2013 and 50% first offender 28.6% reconvicted and 21.2% recidivists. Hence, this study mainly focused why reconvicted and recidivists increased while exist severe punishments in the country? Thus main objective was to explore causes.

The methodology used in this research is heavily drawn from criminological approaches to research, and theoretically driven by the deterrence theory. The study mainly based on official crimes statistics and primary data collected through the Interviews, case studies and case history form prisoners. The study shows that Less certainty and severity of punishment, no social and legal recognition established after punishment, Rejection of community, less opportunity for employment, labeling as criminals, corrupt politics, minor offenders socializes to be criminals and delay of trial have been long term caused for increasing reconvicted and recidivist offenders in contemporary. Accordingly, the study proposes to overcome those factors to reduce reconvicted and recidivist offenders' trends and curb the crimes trends.

Key words: *Crimes, Offenders, Punishment, Recidivists, Reconvicted prisoners*