

A KIN SERVING A SENTENCE: AN EXPLORATION OF SOCIAL VICTIMIZATION OF FAMILY MEMBERS OF CONVICTS

Snigdha Sarkar & Arpita Mitra

Associate Professor, KIIT School of Law, Bhubaneswar, India

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ABSTRACT

Prisons are the correctional institutions which are basically exist to remedy or prevent the crime causation by confining the convict for a stipulated period of time. But family members of the convict are also the victim in the process. Prisoner's families in general are greatly affected by conviction of their family member. Prisoner's families are victimized indirectly by the convict because they have to face various negative challenging situations in their life after conviction of the close one. They are losing peace in their life. Starting from the phase of crime causation to confinement then conviction these primary kin are suffering a lot. During the whole process they are going through an unbearable pain to support convict and his or her needs as well as they have to maintain their day to day schedule. During this whole process they have to face social, psychological and emotional hardships. In each aspect harm inflicted by the family member who has committed a crime, on the primary kin is somehow ignored by the convict and society. The family members have to sacrifice their children's education, ancestor's property, past savings, in some cases even necessary wants of their life. We always think about the victim on whom the harm has been directly inflicted and completely ignore the harm inflicted on the kin of the convict. It not only makes them psychologically frail but also emotionally helpless and socially unwanted. Conviction is necessary to control crime in the society but is it desirable in the part of the state to neglect the negative effects of conviction on primary kin of convicts? The specific situation is even more critical when the convict is the sole bread earner of the family. This present study is concentrating upon social victimization of these families. Apathy of the society and neglect by the government for a harm they have not inflicted, the family members of the convict are in crisis. The present study is an endeavour to bring to light the helplessness of families of convicts in a prison in Bhubaneswar through a small sample survey.

KEYWORDS: *Families of Convicts, Social Transition, Secondary Victimization*