

Determinants of crime: A case study for Kalutara prison

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Increasing crime rate is a big challenge and a major barrier for the development of a country. It causes an increase in various kinds of social, economic and cultural problems. In Sri Lanka, a considerable number was convicted and sent to prison in the last decade. However, the crime rate does not seem to be decreasing. In such a situation it is necessary and important to find out possible influential factors that may have contributed to committing a grave crime. The main objective of the study is to identify the possible influential demographic and socioeconomic factors of grave crime relative to minor crime.

Primary data used for this study was collected through a questionnaire. Two hundred and forty six prisoners from Kalutara prison were selected using a stratified random sample method based on their gender. A binary logistic regression model was used to identify the determinants while using dependent variable as “grave crimes” and “minor offenses”.

Study found that prisoners’ mothers’ education, usage of drugs and mode of the relationship with the parents are the most significant factors. Also, most of the criminals in Kalutara prison (80%) were engaged in serious. House breaking & theft is the most frequent grave criminal activity in Sri Lanka, and Colombo ranked one in reporting the gravest personal crimes.