Socio – Demographic Profile of Criminals Who Committed Homicides: in Relation to Mahara Prison

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Introduction

Homicide which is belongs to a grave crime category can be identified as a common crime to any society. Homicide is the killing of one human being by another (Adler, Muller and Laufer, 1991). Homicide can be explained simply as 'the unlawful killing of a human being with malice aforethought' (Kornblum and Julian, 1974). Assassinate a person with purposively is a homicide (The encyclopedia Americana, 1959). According to the police records, In Sri Lanka, homicides have been recorded from different areas of the country. In 2017, homicide rate for Sri Lanka was 2.3 cases per 100,000 populations. It is fluctuated the number of recorded homicides cases with the time. Homicide is caused by mix of factors and socio - demographic structure can be a risk factor for homicide. According to these facts it is essential to identify the socio – demographic profile of homicide criminals.

Research problem of the study

What are the socio – demographic characteristics of criminals who committed homicides? Related to the above research problem, recognition of the socio – demographic profile of homicide criminals was the main aim of the study.

Methodology

Survey and case study were used as research methods. Mahara prison was selected for the study. The study was based on quantitative and qualitative data. It has employed both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected through structured questionnaire, structural and non- structural interviews and case studies. Secondary data were collected via books, magazine, newspapers and websites. Purposive sampling method was used to select the sample of 40 detainees who were convicted by the courts for homicide. Data was analysed by using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS).

Results and Discussion

This study found the living area, age structure, marital status, educational level and the family background of the criminals as follows.

The analysis found that the majority 35 (88%) of the criminals were from rural areas. 5 (12%) of the criminals were from urban areas.

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