

A Study on Criminal Behavior of Heroin Addicts: With reference to Matara District in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

As a developing country, Sri Lanka faces a large number of social disparities and presently they show an increasing trend. Among these social disparities, terrorism, crimes, motor accidents and narcotic drug use are predominant. Most researchers felt that the problem of drug abuse began increasingly in 1970s. According to *Gunatilake*, accurate estimation was impossible because no scientific survey had been carried out during this period. According to a survey done during the period of 1975-1981 there were only 3200 known dependents and they were mostly opium and cannabis users in this country. Heroin suddenly shot into prominence in the late seventies and in early eighties. There were hardly any heroin users in the 1980s. In 1981 the police were able to seize 0.277 kilogram of heroin. In many instances, the heroin was smuggled from India and Pakistan. In 2017, more than one thousand kilograms were seized from individuals and among them 4% were females. The use of heroin in the country increased rapidly and thousands of drug users had emerged by 2017. It was estimated that 10,432 males and 157 females were imprisoned for narcotic drug offences in 2017. There had been several studies made on narcotic drug use but the studies on heroin addicts and their criminal behavior remain minimal.

Therefore, this study was aimed at finding the characteristics of criminal behavior of heroin addicts and the types of crime that they commit and the reasons for commit these crimes and the techniques that they use to commit crime. Heroin has been adulterated and sold at illegal market with high prices. Consequently, heroin

addicts have to allocate a large sum of money from their income to buy their daily needs of heroin. In the absence of adequate sufficient money they are compelled to commit crime to find the required amount.

A probability sample of 92 heroin addicts was selected from 120 population of heroin addicts reported to the police stations in Matara district between 2016 and 2017 period. Data were collected from the sample of heroin addicts by administering an interviewer administered questionnaire and the case study techniques. The findings reveal that as the income of the heroin users increased their heroin consumption escalated. When the period of addiction was much longer the quantity of heroin consumed swelled up. The addicts were inclined to commit mostly property crimes when they did not have enough money to meet their requirements. They also had committed crime against persons mainly in the process of committing property crime and sexual offences.

Introduction

Sri Lanka has a long history of drug use, mainly of cannabis and opium use. Both compounds have also been used as pharmaceutical preparation in herbal medicine. At the end of the 1970s, there was a significant change in the pattern of drug use due to the socio-economic and political conditions that prevailed in Sri Lanka. Open economy and promotion of tourist industry invited many tourists from different parts of the world. Tourists who drifted towards beaches brought their supply of drugs mainly heroin from South-East Asia in late seventies. Studies point out that in countries where opium is cultivated either legally or illegally, the transition to heroin is easier (Pandey, 1998). This has been the case with Laos, Thailand, Myanmar, Afghanistan and Pakistan. In chiefly transit countries like Sri Lanka where opium use is tightly controlled by government agencies, heroin use has grown since 1980. In 1980s, heroin was used by a few Sri Lankans and tourists in Colombo and in a few tourist resorts. But presently heroin smoking has become quite common among the urban and sub-urban population in the country. The following Table 1. indicates the increase in number of prison inmates imprisoned after being convicted for the drug related crimes.

Table 1 - Direct Admission of Narcotic drug offenders 2010 – 2018

Year	Convicted Offenders	Narcotic Drug Offenders			
	Total	Male	Female	Total	%
2010	32,128	13,200	178	13,378	41.6
2011	27,018	10,416	152	10,568	39.1
2012	28,391	9,130	151	9,281	32.7
2013	30,760	10,238	210	10,448	34.0
2014	27,588	11,822	168	11,990	43.5
2015	24,086	10,993	178	11,171	46.4
2016	24,060	10,393	142	10,535	43.8
2017	22,833	10,432	157	10,589	46.4
2018	24,852	12,674	142	12,816	51.6

Source: Prison Statistics of Sri Lanka - Vol. 38, 2019

According to the Table 1 the number of narcotic offenders both male and female show a gradual increase. By 2018, the number of narcotic offenders consisted of 51.6 of total convicted offenders in prisons.

Among the narcotic drugs peddled presently in Sri Lanka, the of heroin bulks larger. Table 2 indicates the increase in prison inmates charged with heroin smuggling and use.

Table 2. Drug Offenders according to Type of Drugs, 2010 – 2018

Year	Heroin	%	Cannabis	%	Opium	%	Tablets	%	Other	%	Total
2010	7,893	59.0	5,458	40.8	27	2.0	-	0.0	-	0.0	13,378
2011	7,183	68.0	3,382	32.0	3	0.0	-	0.0	-	0.0	10,568
2012	6,057	65.3	3,210	34.6	5	1.0	5	0.1	4	0.0	9,281
2013	7,245	69.3	3,199	30.6	4	0.0	-	0.0	-	0.0	10,448
2014	8,112	67.7	3,866	32.2	-	0.0	1	0.0	11	0.1	11,990
2015	7,519	67.3	3,648	32.7	3	0.0	-	0.0	1	0.0	11,171
2016	7,783	73.9	2,739	26.0	6	0.1	4	0.0	3	0.0	10,535
2017	7,706	72.8	2,858	27.0	14	0.1	7	0.1	4	0.0	10,589
2018	10,412	81.2	2,387	18.6	7	0.1	5	0.0	5	0.0	12,816

Source: Source: Prison Statistics of Sri Lanka - Vol. 38, 2019

The Table 2 indicates the gradual increase in heroin offenders and the gradual decrease in cannabis offenders.

No single cause could be identified and pointed out as causative factors of heroin use in Sri Lanka. The socioeconomic causes are all interwoven with each other, and the interaction between drugs, individuals and their surroundings lie deep under these complex causes. The social control which was the hallmark of the past society is no longer present today as it was in the past. The social structure of the country was dramatically changed following the invasions of the Portuguese, the Dutch and finally the British. After the independence, the socio- economic structure has undergone several assaults with crumbling effects as a result of factors and forces within and those from outside. This resulted in near destruction of the old form of social control.

These adverse changes in the economy and in the social structure are considered to be the main predisposing factors of the present-day drug problem in Sri Lanka. These adverse changes precipitated migration of people from their native villages to urban areas where they had to live in shanties and other settlements. In early periods the youths who lived in the shanties where poverty was the predominant factor involved in the drug abuse. But at present, people of the other social strata are got caught up in this menace.

The stimulating factors are important next to predisposing factors of drug abuse in Sri Lankan society. The social change in the form of breakdown of traditional values without the substitution of new positive values stimulates drug culture. The traditional values in religious and educational institutions have considerably deteriorated in Sri Lanka. Some Children in Colombo have got into the habit of visiting the legally sanctioned night clubs, and Facebook clubs. The lack of care and concern for the young in our society has undoubtedly stimulated them towards drugs. The middle-east migration has contributed to certain extent to the development of drug culture in Sri Lanka. The use of heroin is quite common among children whose mothers settled overseas (Varatharajan, 2006).

The adolescents and young adults often feel hopelessness and helplessness and become desperate once they are spiritually uprooted and displaced from their socio-cultural surroundings and values. When all other alternative ways and means of improving themselves are exhausted, their desperation reaches peak. This can easily force these young people to take refuge on drugs. The peer group influence is another important factor in shaping the behavior of the adolescent. Lack of primary and secondary socialization can increase the importance of peer groups. In Sri Lanka, many children are left alone in their families and the children find the peer groups as the basis for their emotional and physical comfort. In many instances, almost all heroin addicts have received their heroin dose from a friend. When they get cigarettes from their peers, they are

also get introduced to alcohol, receive cannabis and heroin. The pleasant effect of the heroin as explained or described to them by the peer group is based on the honeymoon period. By the time the fresher becomes accustomed to the drug he has developed a rapid tolerance. He needs money to buy more drugs and now begins the second period of his life during which he is compelled to steal and involved into other criminal activities.

The relationship between heroin addiction and commission of crime is not very clear. Some researchers question whether the drug addicts who have never committed crimes before perpetrate crime after the addiction to obtain the money for heroin or criminal behavior precedes drug abuse. Otherwise both crime and drug abuse stem from the same factors like sociological, psychological and biological. This debate is still going on among the researchers and this question has not clearly been answered yet. However, researchers agree that the frequency and the seriousness of criminality increase when the addiction increases. Many researchers have examined the criminal implication of addiction as regards to heroin and James Inciardi had found that according to self-reports of 356 addicts in Miami in the U.S. had committed 118,334 offences over one-year period. Further a national program drug use forecasting had found in 1992 that 47 to 78 per cent of arrestees in 24 major U.S. cities had used drugs. Street crime are believed to have been significantly related to the drug abuse (Adler, et.al. 1995:325).

When drug crime relation is considered many heroin abusers unleash economic compulsive violence with a view to obtain money to pay the high cost of heroin and cocaine and these drugs are most likely to make addiction among their users. The economic compulsive violence includes shoplifting, robbery, prostitution and trafficking the very substance that the addict crave for. Another study on newly incarcerated drug users, had found that 72% of drug users had committed latest crime to obtain drug money (Walsh; Hemmens, 2011:481). In addition to the above crimes the organized criminal groups involved in growing, processing, transporting and selling of heroin commit crimes in order to maintain their drug business competitively among other organized groups as drug business is tremendously lucrative for them. The present study is aimed at finding the crimes committed by heroin users in Matara district in Sri Lanka.

Research Problem

In Sri Lanka, presently, a high price prevails for illegal drugs. In 2015, heroin was sold on streets with the content of 15.55% dye acetal morphine. Compared to the year 2014 the content of dye acetal morphine in heroin sold on the streets has declined up to 39%. On the other hand, the number of heroin addicts has increased with rise in price of heroin. The amount of heroin required for daily use has also gone up. As a result, individuals who are addicted to heroin have to allocate a higher amount of money to obtain heroin for their daily use. Therefore, heroin addicts who fail to find enough money for the heroin tend to commit crimes as a way of finding money. This situation has badly affected the law and order in the country. Further, heroin addiction has very badly impacted upon the physical and mental wellbeing of the users. This problem has also created many problems in the society.

In line with the above scenario, the research problem of this study has been developed to ascertain what types of crimes are committed by the heroin addicts and what techniques are used for committing crime?

Objectives of the Study

- To identify the reasons for the addiction for heroin.
- To identify the criminal behavior of heroin addicts and the types of crimes committed by them.
- To identify the causes for addicts to commit crimes.

Significance of the Study

Though there had been research conducted to examine the relationship of heroin addicts and their criminal behavior in some other areas of Sri Lanka, in southern province specially in Matara district no research has been done yet on similar topic. Therefore, this research will be significant for both academics and policy makers of criminal justice to work towards crime prevention. The research will generate new knowledge regarding heroin addicts, their criminal behavior and the techniques that they use to commit crime.

Methods

The study was carried out in Matara district in the southern province of Sri Lanka. Matara district is surrounded by the sea from the south and bounded on the north by Rathnapura district and on the west by Galle district on the east by Hambantota district. Matara district extends over 128.5 square kilo meters covering 1.96% of the country's land. The population of the district consist of 826000 with the division of 395628 males and 430372 females.

The sample of the study

For the purpose of capturing a well-rounded picture of the criminal behavior of heroin addicts a probability sample of 92 heroin addicts were selected from the 120 individuals reported to the police stations of Matara district

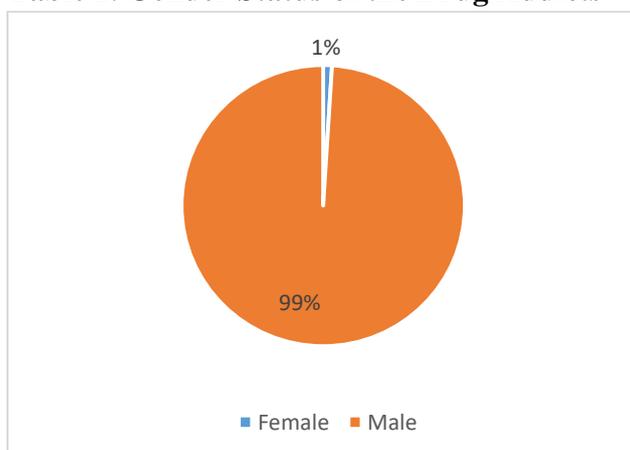
Data collection method:

The study was carried out with the aim of identifying the relationship among the heroin users and their criminal behavior. A sample of 92 drug addicts were interviewed using interview schedules and collect data from the drug addicts and their family members, various aspects of persuasion for the addiction of heroin and committing crime, the strategies used by drug addicts in committing crime and the reasons why drug addicts are compelled to commit crimes were solicited.

In this study both qualitative and quantitative data were collected regarding the criminal behavior of drug addicts. In analyzing data standard data analysis methods were utilized to achieve the objectives of the study.

Data analysis and findings

Table 1. Gender Status of the Drug Addicts



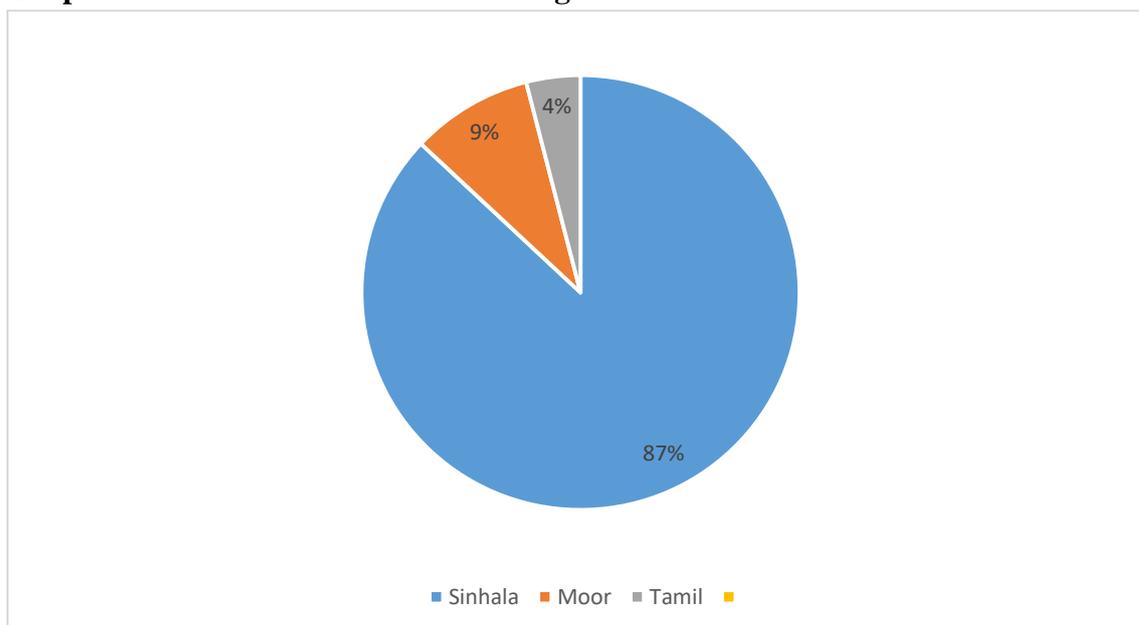
The present study was conducted on 92 individuals and of them one was a female and the rest comprised male drug addicts.

Table 3: Age Distribution of the Drug Addicts

Age Group	Frequency	%
Below 18 years	02	2.2
Between 19-25 years	24	26
Between 26-35	38	41.3
Between 36-50	22	24
Over 51years	06	6.5
	92	100

Source: Field Research 2017

The age groups of the drug addicts indicate that a large number of individuals addicted to heroin fall into the groups between 19 and 50 years of age. The highest category represents 26-35 age group consisting of 38 while the lowest category represents below 18-year-old individuals comprising two.

Graph 2: Racial Distribution of the Drug Addicts.

Source: Field Research – 2017

The Graph 2 indicates that all ethnic groups such as Sinhala, Moor and Tamil people have become addicted to heroin. The highest number (87%) represents Sinhala community while the lowest number (4%) depicts Tamil community.

Table 3: Education level of the drug addicts

Education Level	Frequency	%
No schooling	04	4.3
Grade 1-5	08	8.7
Up to Grade 8	36	39
Up to Ordinary Level	42	46
Up to Advanced Level	02	02
Total	92	100

Source: Field research 2017

The study revealed that the low education standard was a main social fact or which influenced drug addicts to commit crime. As mentioned by Adler, one's education level affects his/her character formation and education creates certain behavioral control of an individual. It is obvious that there is some relationship between education and criminal activities. Table 3 shows that except for two persons the rest of the drug addicts have studied only up to grade 11 or below that. Four individuals (4.3%) have not experienced any schooling. According to the findings of the research, the low level of education among the drug addicts brought about lack of interest for employment and persuaded them to commit crime to find solutions for their personal or family problems.

Table 4: Marital Status of the Drug Addicts

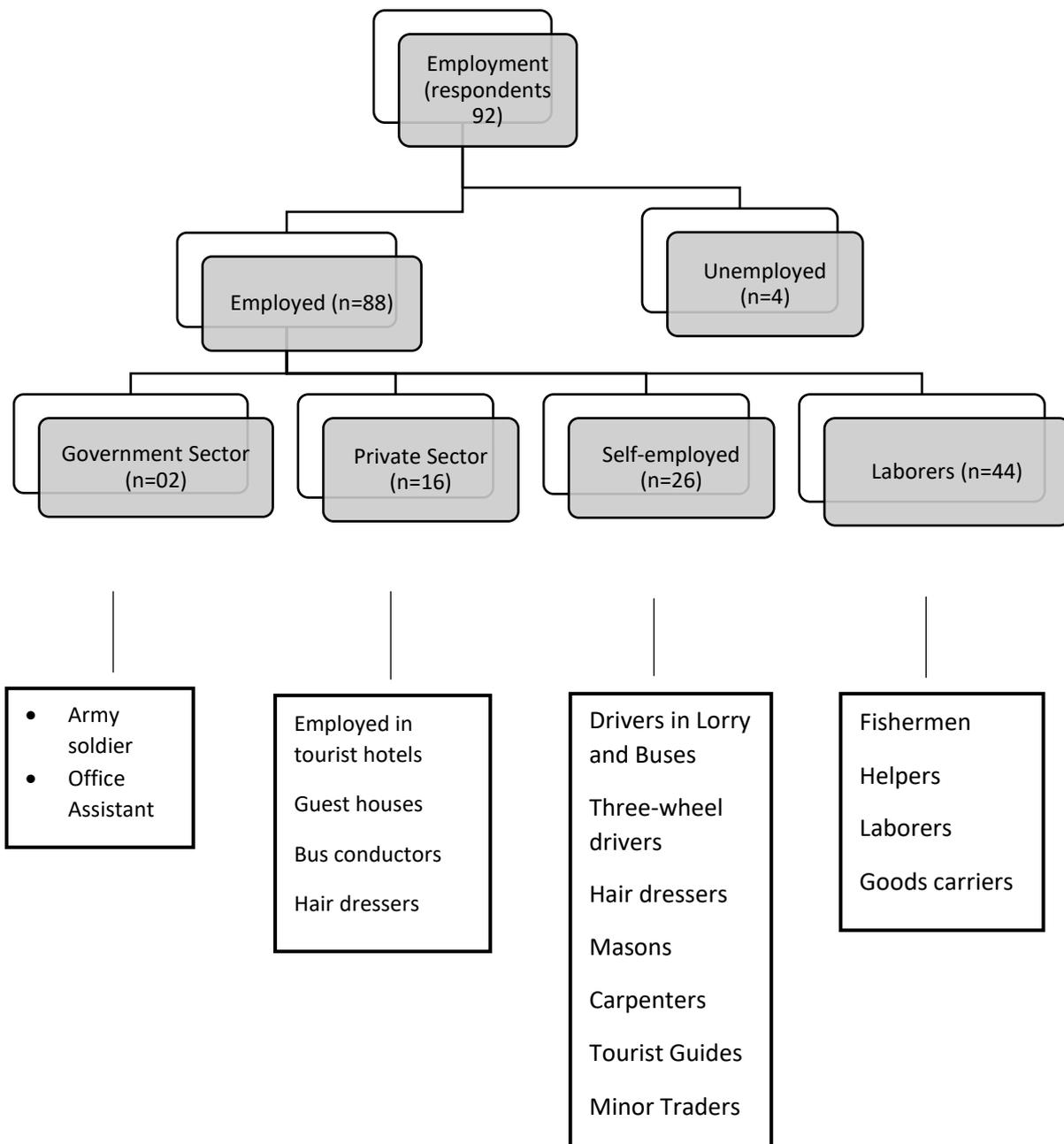
Marital Status	Frequency	%
Married	46	56.5
Unmarried	40	43.5
Widow	2	
Separated by law	04	
Total	92	100

Source: Field research 2017

According to the Table 4, 56.5% (n=46) of the drug addicts in the study sample were married while 43.5% (n=40) were unmarried. Although the rest had been married and the wives of two drug addicts had passed away while four of their wives had separated from their married husbands.

It is no secret that the low-income life style of drug addicts paves the way for property crime. Further, when drug addicts are reintegrated into the community after their first offence, they tend to commit crimes repeatedly. Many people are reluctant to accept the reentry of drug addicts into the society considering it as a destruction to the society.

Chart 01, Employment Status of Drug Offenders



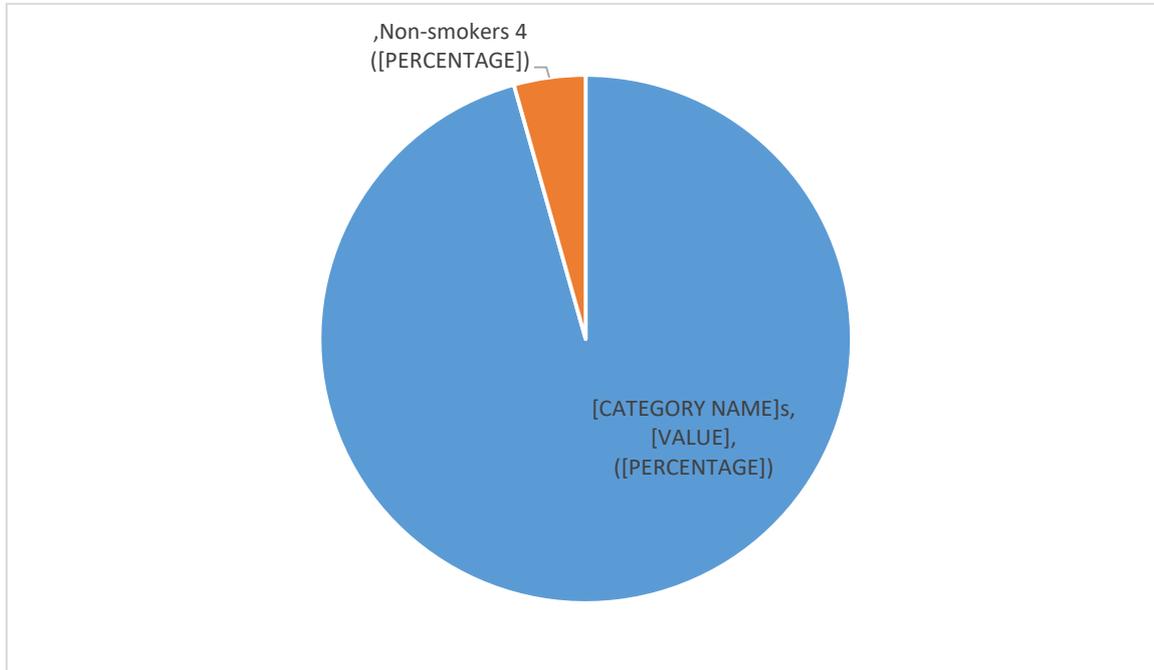
Source: Field Research - 2017

Occupation is mainly an affecting factor to someone taking drugs or continue to take drugs. If someone has received higher education he would find a socially accepted well paid job. An individual’s occupation often indicates his/her social class and drug addiction may depend on his/her social class. According to the present study 88 drug addicts had been employed while 4 drug addicts were not employed before they were convicted for drug addiction. Of those who were employed, two had worked in the government sector as an army soldier and an office assistant. 16 had worked in private sector tourist hotels, guest houses, saloons and as bus conductors. 26 drug addicts had found self-employments as drivers, masons, carpenters, tourist guides and minor traders. The rest 44 had worked as laborers. The finding of the research shows that the low educated have taken to heroin.

Habit of smoking

As indicated in graph 3, of 92 heroin addicts 88 used cigars, cigarettes, or tobacco. But 4 persons stated that they did not smoke but they injected heroin.

Graph 3: Smoking habit of the heroin addicts

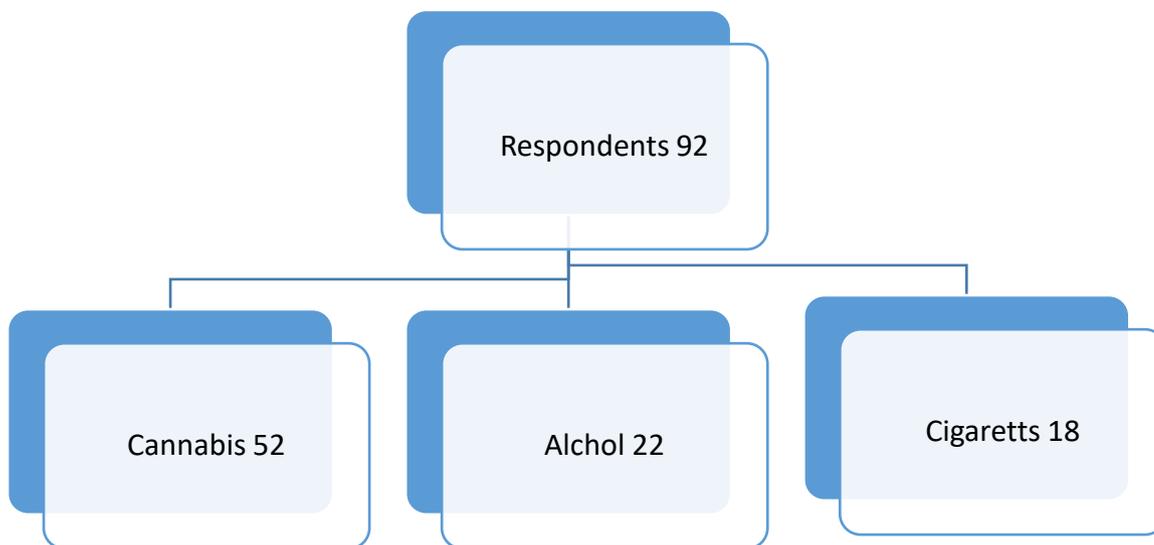


Source: Field Research 2017

It is commonly believed that those who are addicted to heroin are also addicted to smoking. Therefore, it can be inferred that drug addicts are often addicted smokers.

Drugs used prior to the addiction of heroin

It was revealed from the study that grown accustomed addicts had not taken to heroin all of a sudden. All the drug addicts had become to take some sort of drugs before they addicted to heroin. Chart 2 indicates the type of drugs they were addicted prior to the addiction of heroin.

Chart 2 – Type of drugs addicted prior to the addiction of heroin

Source: Field Research 2017

There were 52 who had taken to cannabis before they got addicted to heroin. Although cannabis is less strong than heroin it has an addictive effect. Those who are addicted to cannabis indicate an impact at brain and central nervous system. Therefore, those who are addicted to cannabis keep on taking it and eventually they are compelled to seek stronger drugs such as heroin. Similarly, individuals who were addicted alcohol to become adapted to heroin looking for more pleasure. Those who were addicted to smoking had also shown addictive impact of nicotine contained in cigarettes. Correspondently, it can be concluded that those who were addicted to heroin had some prior experience in taking substances or alcohol consequently such experience must have compelled them to take stronger drugs such as heroin.

Daily use of heroin

All the respondents who participated in the present study had taken heroin by inhaling a smoke of heroin which was known as Chinese method. However, different addicts took heroin once or several times a day. Table 5 shows how many times a person has taken heroin.

Table 5: Frequency of heroin use among drug addicts

Daily frequency of heroin use	Once a day	Twice a day	Thrice a day	Four times or more	Total
Number of persons	12 (13%)	16 (17.5%)	24 (26%)	40 (43.5%)	92 100%

Source: Field Research - 2017

According to the Table 5, 40 (43.5%) heroin addicts have taken heroin four times or even more per day. Only 12 (13%) individuals have taken heroin once a day while the rest of the drug addicts have taken heroin two times to three times per day. Those who takes heroin once a day had taken it in the evening after work to get rid of their weariness and also with the hope of enjoying vigorous sexual act. Those who take heroin two times a day had taken them in the morning before their work and in the evening after the work to maintain their normal life. Drug addicts who said that they took heroin three times or four times a day had used it in the morning between 6.30-7.30 a.m., in the midday from 12.30 to 2.30 p.m., and in the evening between 5.30 to 7.30 as required.

Monthly Income of Drug Addicts

The frequency of heroin uses among addicts depended on the income that they received. Those who had less income had taken heroin lesser number of time whereas those who have adequate money had consumed it a greater number of times. In the event of the poor receiving more money they made for taking heroin several times a day.

Table 6: Monthly Income of Drug Addicts

Income level (SKR)	No income	Less than 20,000	20,001-30,000	30,001-40,000	40,001-50,000	50,001-60,000	Over 60,000	Total
Number of addicts	04	04	12	16	26	22	08	92

Source: Field Research - 2017

Table 6 shows the income levels of the respondents. Accordingly, it can be observed that people (n=4; 4.3%) who had no money at all have also taken to heroin. Correspondently, they seem to have acquired money either legally or illegally to buy daily consumption of heroin. Moreover, 8.7% (n=8) of the people in the sample had monthly income of over Rs. 60,000 and obviously they had more opportunities to take heroin several times a day.

Types of Crimes Committed by the Heroin Addicts

The Table 7 indicates the types of crimes and the number of crimes that the heroin addicts have committed. Accordingly, they have committed 41 crimes against human body which include 22 minor injuries, 13 grievous hurts, 4 rapes and 2 homicides. Of the crimes committed by the drug addicts, 125 were crimes against property and this number is than the crimes against human body.

Table 7: The Nature of crimes committed by the drug addicts

Type of Crime against Human Body	Frequency	Type of Crime against Property	Frequency
Homicide	02	Burglary	44
Rape	04	Robbery	11
Grievous Hurt	13	Theft of Property	68
Minor Injuries	22	Cheating/Beach of Trust	02
Total	41	Total	125

Source: Field Research – 2017

According to the Table 7, heroin addicts have committed 68 property theft, 44 burglaries, 11 robberies and 2 cases of breach of trust or cheating with the intention of finding money for heroin consumption.

Ethnicity of heroin addicts who committed crimes

According to the population census of 2012 in Sri Lanka, Matara district consists of 767580 (94.29%) Sinhalese, the Tamils 20899 (2.57%) and the Muslims 25254 (3.10%). The Table 8 shows the number of crimes committed by each ethnic group.

Table 8: Ethnicity of heroin addicts who committed crimes

Ethnicity	Theft	Burglary	Robbery	Cheating	Homicide	Minor Injuries	Grievous hurt	Rape	Total
Sinhala	62	42	11	02	02	20	11	04	154
Muslim	05	-	-	-	-	01	02	-	08
Tamil	01	02	-	-	-	01	-	-	04
Total	68	44	11	02	02	22	13	04	166

Source: Field Research – 2017

As the Table 8 indicates during the years of 2016 to 2018 the sample population that is 92 heroin addicts have committed 166 crimes including both crimes against human body and crimes against property. Of them, Sinhalese have committed 154 (92.8%) crimes which consist of all the crimes taken into study while Muslims have committed 08 (4.8%) crimes including 05 thefts, 01 minor injury and 02 grievous hurt. The Tamil heroin addicts have committed 04 (2.4%) crimes comprising of 01 theft, 02 burglaries and 01 minor injury. The data reveal that the majority of the Sinhalese are addicted to heroin more than the other ethnic groups and they have contributed to the majority of crimes (92.8%) committed by the heroin addicts.

Techniques used for committing burglary

Heroin addicts in this study have committed 44 burglaries during the two year period of time of the study. They have used different techniques to commit burglary as shows in Table 9.

Table 9: Techniques used in burglary

Techniques	Frequency
Entering house removing the tiles of the roof	11
Entering house breaking a window	17
Entering house breaking front door	03
Entering house breaking another door	12
Entering house breaking a wall	01
Total	44

Source: Field Research – 2017

The present study reveals that the heroin addicts have committed a number of burglaries by breaking windows and rear doors or removing tiles of the roof.

Techniques used in burglary

In the study sample, only 11 burglaries had been committed by the heroin addicts during the time period taken into consideration in the present study but different techniques had been used to grab the valuable items of the victims. Table 10 shows the techniques used in the making of robberies.

Table 10: Techniques used in robbery

Techniques Used	Frequency
Grabbing necklace while riding on motorbikes with helmet	05
Grabbing necklace and running of the women walking along the roads	03
Taking off money by force while pointing a knife at the victims.	01
Grabbing gold ornaments by threatening with a knife.	02
Total	11

Source: Field Research – 2017

The most popular method used by the addicts was grabbing golden necklaces while riding on motor bikes and the second common technique was grabbing gold chains from women walking on the roads by threatening them. The least method used is robbing threatening the victims.

Theft of Property

In the present study heroin addicts have committed the highest number of crimes $n=68$ as regards theft of property. Table 11 shows the different techniques used by heroin addicts to carry out thefts.

Table 11: Techniques used in committing theft of property

Technique	Frequency
Pick pocketing	04
Theft of motor bikes	07
Stealing iron from worksites	23
Stealing vehicle parts	10
Entering and stealing open houses	02
Stealing property from tourists	14
Stealing property from lands	08
Total	68

Source: Field Research – 2017

Among the theft of property, the highest number of incidents ($n=23$) were the stealing of iron from worksites. Out of these incidents 20 have been committed at southern high way work sites and new railway construction work site in Matara. The least reported technique of theft of property was by stealing from open houses and there have been two such cases.

Cheating

According to the present study carried out during the period 2016 and 2017 in Matara district it was found that two cheating offences had been committed by the heroin addicts and their technique used in cheating has been indicated in Table 12.

Table 12: Techniques used in Cheating

Technique	Frequency
Cheating money by appearing as an employee	02
Total	02

Source: Field Research – 2017

Two heroin addicts have committed two cheating offences during the study period of the present study. Their addiction has compelled them to take money while working as employees in private business institutions.

Homicides

Homicide is considered to be the most grievous crime against the humans. In the sample of the present study two incidents of homicide had occurred during the period of 2016 and 2017. Table 13 shows the techniques used for committing homicides.

Table 13: Techniques used in Homicides

Technique	Frequency
Assaulting the head with a blunt weapon	01
Stabbing	01
Total	02

Source: Field Research – 2017

The above Table indicates two homicides committed by the heroin addicts with the intention of finding money to buy heroin and they have killed their kindred at these incidents. One has killed his wife attacking her head with a mammoth while asking money whereas the other has killed his close relative stabbing him with a view to take money from him.

Rape

The heroin addicts were involved in four cases of rape within the period of 2016 to 2017. Table 14 indicates the methods or techniques that they used in achieving their targets.

Table 14 Techniques used for committing Rape

Technique	Frequency
Threaten with killing	01
By force in the absence of householders	01
At a lonely area by the threat of killing	01
Cheating by giving toffee and chocolates	01
Total	04

Source: Field Research – 2017

According to the Table 14 one drug addict had raped seventy years old his mother threatening to kill her and another had raped a girl in the absence of her household members. One drug addict has raped a woman at an isolated area threatening to kill her. There is another incidence of rape of which the rapist had cheated on a young girl giving her toffee and chocolates to achieve his target.

This study aims at elucidating criminal behavior of drug addicts encompassing both property and violent crimes. As violent crimes are concerned drug addicts have committed 13 grievous hurts against human body during the study period. Table 15 indicates techniques and number of grievous hurts committed as violent crimes.

Table 15 Techniques used for committing grievous hurt

Technique	Frequency
Assaulting with clubs	05
Assaulting with hands and legs	03
Breaking a tooth	01
Stabbing	04
Total	13

Source: Field Research – 2017

According to the Table 15, the drug addicts have used different methods to commit grievous hurt. In most occasions they have used clubs and knives and occasionally they have caused grievous hurt by assaulting with their hands and legs.

Table 16 Techniques used for inflicting minor injuries

Technique	Frequency
Stabbing	10
Injuring with sharp cutting instrument	03
Assaulting with hands and legs	09
Total	22

Source: Field Research – 2017

In Sri Lankan society people often use knives to injure others when they quarrel. The drug addicts in the sample have used a knife as a weapon when they fought with others and stabbed them in most occasions as indicated in Table 16. In the absence of weapons drug addicts have injured their victims by assaulting them with their hands and legs.

Conclusions

This study was aimed at conducting research on the criminal behavior of drug addicts in Matara district. Accordingly, data were gathered and analyzed in line with the objectives of the study. The following conclusions were drawn from the study.

As the age groups are concerned of the sample of this study, the highest number of drug addicts (n=38) represent the 26-35 age group and the second highest number comprise (n=24) drug addicts belong to the age group 19-25 years. Further, 22 drug addicts were in the 36-50 age group while 6 drug addicts were over 51 years or above. There were only two individuals under the 18 years of age. The data suggest that almost all heroin addicts were in their prime age of their social life addicted to heroin which led them to commit crime and thereby creating a problem in the society at large. The study revealed that 43.5% of the drug addicts were unmarried and they had taken to drugs at the time of getting married.

Another interest of the study was the way heroin addicts became disposed to the addiction. All the heroin addicts in the sample (n=92; 100%) stated that they had taken to drugs through their close friends. But 13 of them said that they were unaware of the first occasion receiving heroin by mixing together it with cigarettes or tobacco through their friends.

It was revealed that the quantity and frequency of heroin use had risen with the increase of their income. Further during the extension of the addiction time period they needed more heroin and this compelled them to commit crime to find required money for heroin. There were 22 individuals who had used drugs over period of five years and they said that giving up of heroin was not an easy task. In some occasions drug traffickers had helped them to continue their consumption habit by offering them heroin free of charge as a

way of keeping them in their business. Even at the prison they were able to use heroin with the connivance of some prison officers. Some addicts had used normal drugs or pills at the time of scarcity of heroin.

As the educational levels of heroin addicts are concerned the positive relationship between the addiction of heroin and commission of crime is uncovered. Accordingly, the lower the standard of education of the heroin addicts is the higher the addiction for heroin is. Conversely, when education level increased heroin addiction seems to be on the decrease.

The present study revealed that the median value of daily heroin taken by an addict was three packets and the market price of a packet was Rs. 1000.00. and correspondently an addict requires Rs. 3000.00 daily, Rs. 276,000.00 monthly and 3,312,000.00 per annum. Further it revealed that there was a correlation between the change in household expenses and drug use. The expenses on heroin made negative effects on the daily expenditure of a household. Consequently, increase in debt and tendency to make illegal money have resulted.

This study was conducted during 2016-2017 in Matara district regarding the criminal behavior of heroin addicts and the crimes perpetrated by heroin addicts against human body and property crime were examined. All the sample population had committed collectively 125 crimes against property comprising 68 theft properties, 44 burglaries, 11 robberies and 02 cheatings. Heroin addicts have committed 41 crimes against human body consisting of 2 murders, 13 grievous hurts, 4 rapes and 22 minor injuries. This study revealed heroin addicts committed more property crimes than the crimes against human body. The reason of committing more property crimes was that they needed enough money to buy their daily quantity of heroin in regular basis.

In the study the attention was paid to the strategies used by the heroin addicts to commit crime. Accordingly, for committing burglary, heroin addicts had entered the houses by removing tiles of the roof, breaking windows, front doors, other doors or walls. In order to commit theft of property drug addicts had quite often entered the houses by breaking windows. Similarly, this strategy has been used 17 times in committing burglaries.

As robbery was concerned the heroin addicts riding on motor-bikes while covering their face had snatched golden chains from women walking on roads. The same technique had been used in five robberies and it was the commonly used method for robbing. In addition, to commit robberies, the heroin addicts used the methods such as suddenly jumping at women and grabbing their golden chains and ornaments, at times robbing money with death threat pointing a knife at the victims were also used.

The theft of property includes pick-pocketing, stealing motor bikes and iron from worksites, stealing motor spare parts and properties from tourists while hanging around in tourist areas, stealing property from open houses and lands in the absence of their lawful owners. The most common method for committing theft of property was the stealing iron from worksites for 23 occasions. Two heroin addicts had been involved in two incidents of cheating by obtaining money from customers appearing as shop assistants.

As homicide is concerned the addicts had committed two of its kind in Matara district during the period of 2016 and 2017. In one incident a drug addict had hit the victim on the head with a blunt weapon and in another incident, person had been killed by stabbing. In five occasions the addicts have caused grievous hurt by hitting with clubs. In addition, assaulting with hands and legs, and stabbing were used for causing grievous bodily harm.

Drug addicts have inflicted minor injuries more than other types of harm upon the victims. The techniques that they had used for causing minor injuries were assaulting with hands and legs or making injuries with a knife. The most common method for making minor injuries was assaulting with a knife which had occurred in ten occasions.

When the criminal behavior of heroin addicts is considered they have committed property crimes mostly with the intention of finding required money to buy heroin. Similarly, they have committed crimes against human body with a view to facilitating property crime or obtaining valuables from the victims. Further, sudden provocation and mental aberration had driven them to commit crimes against human body.

In the event of rape, they had committed the offences after taking heroin with the aberrant mental conditions. It is believed that the sexual feelings are stimulated by heroin and thereby leading the addicts to commit rapes. Grievous hurts and minor injuries had committed at the event they try to escape after committing property crimes with suddenly emerged provocative conditions.

The present study reveals that heroin addicts in the sample have committed a number of minor thefts to robberies and minor injuries to homicides and grievous hurt. Further, study has uncovered that there is a close relationship between heroin addiction and crime. The businessmen involved in heroin trafficking have employed these drug addicts in their illegal businesses and drug addicts have served them in order to find heroin that they need for their daily use. There exists a nexus between underworld criminal gangs and narcotic business. However, it was revealed that in some occasions there had not been any relationship between drug trafficking and crime except the fact that drug trafficking itself is a crime.

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