

## **Is there a deterrent effect of pains of imprisonment? The impact of “social costs” of first incarceration on the hazard rate of recidivism**

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When committing first offences, adolescent men have no clear idea of “pains of imprisonment”. Juvenile male offenders sent to prison for the first time must learn how to arrange their everyday social interactions with inmates and prison staff. They have to deal with the process of finding their position within the inmate hierarchy and have to cope with severe restrictions of autonomy. Moreover, being incarcerated means that friendships and social interactions with persons outside are extremely restricted and sometimes grievously missed. Under the assumption that both social integration and autonomy are basic needs, negative experience with respect to both dimensions could be a deterrent effect of imprisonment in the future.

In this paper, social interactions with inmates, experienced deprivation of autonomy and deprivation of contact with persons outside are considered as determinants of recidivism. Starting from a rational choice perspective, it will be hypothesized that experiences made during first incarceration will influence the rate of delinquent behaviour in the future. Having been released from prison, these experiences now contribute to the evaluation of “social costs” which probably would have to be paid after re-arrest. Thereby, “pains of imprisonment” experienced for the first time could have a deterring effect and could discourage adolescent persons from recidivism.

Perhaps, inmates differ empirically in the intensity they suffer from unsatisfying social interactions and restrictions of autonomy (Sykes 1971: 63). For this reason, cluster analysis will be used in order to build a typology of inmates according to their experiences with social interactions and restrictions of autonomy. In a second step, cluster membership as well as the intensity in which persons suffer from deprivation of contact with persons outside will be used to predict rates of recidivism by using methods of event history analysis.

## Reference

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