



SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION, PROPERTY CRIME AND CHILD LABOUR: AN EMPIRICAL OBSERVATION IN BANKI BLOCK OF ORISSA, INDIA

Nirakar Pattanaik (PhD scholar Economics) Pacific university, Udaipur

Dr. Aditi Priya Singh Associate Professor ISBR, Bangalore

ABSTRACT Criminal activities are related with Poverty. If not the sole cause, yet there is high degree of correlation between poverty, socio economic condition and crime rate, particularly property crime. It is observed that the children working as child labour are mainly from poor socio economic background. A case study is taken to prove in a particular locality.

KEYWORDS :

"Bestow blessing on those little innocent lives bloomed on earth who have who have brought the message of joy from heavenly garden" - Rabindra Nath Tagore.

A comprehensive review of the *crime* literature indicates varying and often opposing hypotheses of relationships between *property crime* and socioeconomic conditions such as *poverty*, *business cycle* conditions, *demographics*, criminal justice system actions, and family structure. Employing measures of each of the hypothesized factors, time-series models for *robbery*, *burglary*, and vehicle *theft* are estimated from yearly and national Uniform Crime Report (UCR) data for the period 1959 through 1992 and are used to test these hypotheses' current empirical relevance. The empirical findings selectively confirm the importance of macroeconomic stability and *criminal justice system* actions in reducing property crime activity. In contrast, decreases in absolute poverty and general *income inequality* are associated with increased criminal activity; and age demographics and family/community structure apparently have little impact on any of the analyzed property-crime trends. A reduction in *inflation* apparently decreases property crimes. Factors that significantly affect child labor include: factors children's education, father's main employment status, mother's main employment status. There is a relation between the child labour and their socio economic conditions. The economic theory of crime is a micro theory which postulating that a welfare maximizing individual optimally allocates resources, links socio economic conditions to the individuals relative returns to legal and illegal activity. Sociological crime theories are more varied. Strain, ecology and opportunity theories relate adverse socio economic conditions affect a group's incentives and opportunities for criminal behavior. Social contact and learning theories link socioeconomic conditions to society's failure to control criminal tendencies and to the personal process by which an individual learns criminal behavior (Hirschi, 1981, Leonard 1987). These diverse theories provide varying links between socio economic conditions and property crime.

But there is almost 90% positive correlation between low socio economic conditions and Child labour. Several studies conducted by many non government organizations and international bodies, which justifies that basically the child labours are from the low socio economic backgrounds.

Despite its long history in criminology, research on the relationship between macroeconomic conditions and rates of common crime remains limited. That is in part because many analysts doubt that any systematic relationship exists and in part because of disagreement with regard to the validity of the indicators typically used to measure economic conditions. We argue in this article that good theoretical reasons exist to expect macroeconomic effects on crime rates, but many theories imply that collective perceptions of economic hardship should have effects on crime that are independent of those of more "objective" economic indicators. To evaluate this argument, we examine the relationships between the Index of Consumer Sentiment and regional robbery, burglary, larceny, and motor vehicle theft rates in the United States between 1970 and 2003, which was a period of large swings in both consumer sentiment and instrumental crime. Controlling for several factors thought to influence temporal variation in crime rates, we find that consumer sentiment had significant effects

on robbery and property crime rates over the period that were largely independent of the effects of unemployment and economic growth. We also find that consumer sentiment accounted for a sizable fraction of the crime decline during the 1990s and yields reasonably accurate predictions of changes in the four offenses in 2004 and in two of the four offenses in 2005. We conclude that the effects of collective economic perceptions should become an important focus of future research on crime trends.

The unemployment rate is by far the economic indicator of choice in research on the impact of economic conditions on crime rates. A generation of research on the impact of unemployment on crime has produced mixed results and has led some researchers to question the validity of the unemployment rate as an indicator of the full range of economic conditions that may influence crime rates (Arvanites and Defina, 2006). We agree with this view and propose in the current article that aggregate consumer sentiment should have an important effect on crime rates that is independent of other influences, including those of more "objective" macroeconomic indicators. We find support for this argument in an analysis of robbery and property crime rates in the United States between 1970 and 2003. We conclude that changing consumer attitudes help to explain temporal variation in crime rates, which include the dramatic decline during the 1990s, and should no longer be overlooked in research on economic conditions and crime.

BACKGROUND: The idea that crime rates rise and fall with changing economic conditions has a long pedigree in criminology. Early studies sought to connect crime rates to the changing prices of staple commodities such as wheat or rye (Cook and Zarkin, 1985: 118). More recent research has used the unemployment rate to measure economic performance or outcomes. A trail of mixed results and a lack of scholarly consensus brought the study of unemployment and crime to something of a stalemate by the 1980s (Chiricos, 1987), when interest in the topic was rejuvenated by the publication of Cantor and Land's (1985) time-series analysis of the effects of unemployment on U.S. crime rates. Cantor and Land (1985) maintained that the mixed and often null findings of prior research resulted from the failure to distinguish between so-called opportunity and motivation effects of unemployment on crime. The former, they argued, reduces crime when unemployment rates are high by reducing target attractiveness and by increasing guardianship (Cohen and Felson, 1979; Cohen, Felson, and Land, 1980). The latter effect, rooted in the more traditional sociological notions of legitimate and illegitimate opportunities, is reflected in increased crime when unemployment blocks access to legitimate income-producing opportunities (Cloward and Ohlin, 1960; Merton, 1938). The results of Cantor and Land's annual time-series analysis offered support for both effects (see, also, Cantor and Land, 2001: 334). Although Cantor and Land's (1985) paper injected new life into the study of unemployment and crime, it did not eliminate debate over the correct specification of the unemployment-crime relationship or the measurement of unemployment (see, e.g., Britt, 2001; Cantor and Land, 2001; Greenberg, 2001; Levitt, 2001; O'Brien, 2001; Paternoster and Bushway, 2001; see, also, Hale and Sabbagh, 1991; Kleck and Chiricos, 2002). Greenberg (2001) criticized the use of the official unemployment rate in studies of crime because it omits discouraged workers who have dropped out of the labor force, part-time workers who want full-time jobs, and full-time workers in low-

wage jobs. "To use the official unemployment statistics," he argues, "is therefore to risk serious systematic bias in the analysis" (Greenberg, 2001: 317). Beyond taking into account the duration of unemployment, however, Greenberg did not propose an alternative indicator with greater face validity to represent the range and diversity of economic conditions expected to influence crime rates. THE ROLE OF CONSUMER SENTIMENT 739 too narrow a measure of general economic conditions relevant to crime, the GSP is overly broad. Crime declines could result from a rising GSP for a variety of reasons, which include the possibility that incomes are rising, unemployment is falling, social or criminal justice spending is increasing, part-time workers are finding full-time jobs, or some combination of these and other changes. This problem is solvable in principle by examining the relationship between GSP and more specific economic measures and, in turn, their impact on crime rates. But a more fundamental problem limits the validity of both general and specific indicators of economic conditions used in prior studies of crime rates. No indicator measures the impact of unemployment, income, or other conditions on collective perceptions of economic hardship. Researchers surmise, for example, that rising unemployment poses financial and emotional "strain" and falling unemployment makes people feel better about their economic status and opportunities. Although intuitively appealing and sometimes informed by research evidence, such assumptions may be wide of the mark with respect to critical issues, such as the time lag between an increase in unemployment and generalized feelings of "hardship," or the relationship between current economic conditions and expectations for the future. Public expectations and attitudes often befuddle economists when they fail to conform to objective indicators of economic performance (Gross, 2006). The objective economic measures tell us about the behavior of the economy, but in the study of crime, we are interested in the behavior of people and how economic conditions influence criminal behavior. Rather than having to speculate about the subjective experience of objective economic conditions, it would be useful to have more direct data on collective economic perceptions that could be linked to crime rates. Fortunately, we do.

Case study and Empirical observation:

The study covered Banki block of cuttack district of Orissa. We took 300 house holds . The collection of data is basically on random sampling basis. We took 15 samples and covered 20 village and small cities. Normally the rate of property crime became less and negligible after 1991. There is a positive correlation between the social securities and govt. programs to generate employment (NAREGA) and other schemes like housing and medical facilities. The correlation is (+0.91) which indicates there is close link between poverty and crime. The socio economic condition has improved a lot within these years in India.

The condition of Child labour also improved a lot. The school drop out in general and the tribal children in particular join with their parents in agriculture work during on seasons. As the tribal residential schools developed in these areas with free and fair education, the young kids started learning in schools and stayed in hostels. These facilities almost eliminated the child labour from the scenario. On the other hand parents now better off so they want their kids to be learned and improve in their life.

The data collected from the reported area indicates that govt. programs and policies have impact on the socio economic conditions of people. The change in socio economic condition have impact on the social evils which can be property crime or child labour .

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