PRISON REFORMS AND LEGAL SUPPORT AT A CORRECTIONAL FACILITY: A CASE ANALYSIS

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We present a case study which is an effort to explore the impact of implementation of developmental measures many of which are already suggested in various literature on prison and correctional facilities. Some of the prior studies have also shown that in some cases, such measures are not put to effective use due to lack of administrative leadership. The means when implemented with proper administration make significant difference. Thus, present study also effectively explores the impact on prisoners of some innovative developmental measures. Specifically, the case study is on a particular Jail which is located in a district of Uttar Pradesh.

Keywords: prison administration, development, legal support, conflict reduction, law and order

JEL codes: D74, H83, K4, P37

Introduction

The compendium of United Nations standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice lays down the practices and methods for the overall maintenance of law and order (United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime, 2006). It also lays down standards and norms

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for treatment of prisoners and presents the body of principles for the protection of all persons under any form of detention or imprisonment. Conflicts among inmates is also very common phenomenon and frequently creates problems for the administration and can also result in loss of life or injury. In modern legal systems, the purpose of detention is not restricted to punish individual offenders but to correct their deviant behavior and transform them into law-abiding members of society. If this is taken as the basic premise of detention then every effort leading to transformation of a detainee (prisoner) into a law abiding and productive member of society must be the part of a reformative strategy. This reformative stagey must result into fair treatment of prisoners that encourages them in inculcation and assimilation of the virtues of law-abiding responsible persons.

However, the ground realities are otherwise particularly in developing countries. In such countries, jail administration has not been given due consideration primarily due to lack of resources. India is a developing country and faces the same difficulty. The main "Difficulty is that jails are a State subject as we pointed out under the constitutional arrangement. All these States have enormous demand on the limited resources available with them. So, the subject of jails is not able to attract as much funding as it ought to." (Committee on Empowerment of Women, 2016-17, p.5) Owing to this, the administration of jail in states including Uttar Pradesh (a Federal State in India) is facing several problems. One of these problems pertains to high number of custodial rape. In a submission of Union Home Ministry (Govt. of India), the state of Uttar Pradesh reported 189 cases of custodial rape in 2014 and 91 in 2015. It was also found that in most other states the data is nil. (Committee on Empowerment of Women, 2016-17, p.23).

Administrative reforms in prisons-Reference to law and practice

In India prison/prisoners are dealt with under Entry 4 of the List II of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India. Thus, administration and management of prisons falls with legislative and executive domain of respective State/UTs governments. However, Union Home ministry provides regular guidance/advice and support to State/UTs on prison and prisoners.

Before Independence (of India) prison related matters were dealt with under The Prisons Act, 1894. After Independence, two more legislations *viz.*, The Transfer of Prisoners Act, 1950 and The Repatriation of Prisoners Act, 2003 were enacted and The Repatriation of Prisoners Rules, 2004 was formulated by the Union government. However, these enactments and regulations only deal with inter-state transfer of prisoners and repatriation of prisoners with other countries. In a recent effort, the Model Prison Manual 2016 has been formulated by the Union government to guide State/UTs in prison related affairs. Besides these enactments and the model prison manual, Home Ministry has been issuing advisories/guidelines on various issues pertaining to jail administration and management. These issues include—strengthening of security, ban on smoking, smuggling of drugs, use of mobile phones, overcrowding and its reduction of under sec. 436A of the Cr.P.C, appointment of non-official visitors, education programmes for prisoners, prosiners' sensitization on HIV/AIDS, Access of prisoners to Aadhar/NPR, Identification

of visitors-use of Aadhaar, jails visits for research purpose, relief to under-trial prisoners, Consular access to foreign nationals in prisons, custody or detention, etc. (Women Safety Division Prison Administration) The Union Home Minister emphasized the need of reforming prisoners so to make them good citizens. For this purpose, the minister further emphasized the need of an attitudinal change in Jail officials through training programmes/ workshops towards prisoners. (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2019)

The Supreme Court (SC) of India, from time to time, has also issued directions/ guidelines pertaining to-Facilities to the children and women prisoners (Supreme Court of India, Writ petition (C) NO. 559 OF 1994), Detention of mentally ill under-trial prisoners (Supreme Court India of India, Writ petition (CRL.) No(s), 296 OF 2005) and Installation of CCTV Cameras in all Indian prisons (Supreme Court directions for installation of CCTV cameras).

One of the biggest issues with prisons in India is of overcrowding of prisons with Under-trial prisoners (UTPs). In India, the UTPs: Convict ratio stands out to be 67:33 and world average stands out be only 31:69 which is much lower than that of in India. As per data of Prison Authorities as no 31st December 2017, the holding capacity of prisons in India is 3.78 lacks and the actual inmates are 4.19 lacks. Thus, prisons are overcrowded by 114% even some of the prisons are holding 150 % of their holding capacity. The situation is comfortable in Tamil Nadu, Telangana and West Bengal where holding rate is 66%, 76% and 66% respectively but the situation is pathetic in States having less number of prisons like Uttar Pradesh (182%), Uttar hand (159%), Chhattisgarh(157%) and Maharashtra (144%). (National Legal Service Authority)

One of the reasons of overcrowding is the unnecessary arrest by the police. In this context, the National Police Commission revealed in its one of the studies that 60% of all arrests were either unnecessary or unjustified and the resultant overcrowding accounts for 43.20% of the expenditure of jails. (Committee on Empowerment of Women, 2016-17, p.23)

Indeed, overcrowding of prisons create immense pressure on existing jail infrastructure that renders it impossible to ensure fair treatment of prisoners as required by law. "Overcrowding in jails result in denial of basic facilities to prisoners besides being instrumental in lack of sanitation, food and health care in jails. This gives rise to spread of diseases particularly skin infections, T.B. AIDS etc...one of the one of the key reasons for overcrowding is the growing number of under-trial prisoners in the country." (Recommendations of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Empowerment of Women)

All jail facilities suffer out of overcrowding of prisons, thus, at first stance sincere efforts should focus upon reducing overcrowding of prisons to ensure human treatment of inmates. In this context, Supreme Court of India (2016) directed NALSA to formulate guidelines in form of 'The Standard Operating Procedures for Under-Trial Review Committees (UTRCs)' to make them more meaningful and efficient in providing relief to UTRs and the consequent decongestion of prisons in India.

Effective monitoring is critical for proper functioning of prisons ensuring fair treatment of prisoners. Model Jail Manual, 2016 requires for each jail at district and sub-district

level a Board of Visitors consisting official and non-official members has been under to: examine cooked food; inspect barracks and wards; ascertain the conditions of health, cleanliness, discipline and security and unlawful detention; examine prison registers and records; attend representation and hear petitions by or on behalf of prisoners and suggest new avenues for improvement in correctional work. (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2016)

Though, Model Jail Manual was prepared and circulated by Union Home Minister to States/UTs for implementation in 2003 yet even after more than decade of its implementation no impact assessment got conducted by the Home ministry so far. (Committee on Empowerment of Women, 2016-17, p.30)

It is easy to infer even from a cursory overview of the Model Jail Manual of 2003 and its consequent revision in 2016, that comprehensive guidelines ranging from security, safety, education and vocational training, sports, recreation, etc., with the ultimate objective of reformation have been incorporated. Though the proclaimed objective is admirable yet an assessment of actual state of affairs reveals that there exists a great divide between the intent and the ground realties. The primary problem lies with non/partial/selective implementation of the Model Jail Manual by the States/ UTs owing to their financial and other infrastructural constraints including the perceptual ones.

The present case study is an effort to explore the impact of implementation of developmental measures many of which are already suggested in the Model Jail Manual but are not put to use effectively out of lack of will and commitment by political and administrative leadership. The means when implemented with strong will and commitment shown by an energetic motivated administrative head can create encouraging results. Thus, present study also effectively explores the impact on prisoners of some innovative developmental measures such as Yoga, meditation, music, etc. Specifically, the case study is on a particular Jail which is located in a district of Uttar Pradesh. The details about the district are presented in Appendix 1.

Review of relevant literature

Yoga in Correctional Settings: A Randomized Controlled Study. The study revealed that in comparison to the control group, participants in the yoga group showed increased positive affect, impulse control and attention, and decreased negative affect and antisocial behavior. The results of the study show that yoga practice can play an important part in the rehabilitation of prison inmates. (Kerekes, 2017) (Padfield, Nicola, 2018) examined the effectiveness of monitoring mechanism for prisons in England and Wales and concluded that prison administration needs complex accountability framework and clear rules to enforce high standards and it argues that inspection and appraisal of prisons should be evaluated on the basis of the outcomes for prisoners and not for the management of prisons. A 'healthy prison model' with focus on— the safety of prisoners; their respectful treatment for their human dignity; engaging them into a beneficial activity and resettlement of the prisoners back to the community to prevent reoffending, has been advocated.

Dünkel & Morgenstern (2018) explore the effectiveness of national and international legal regime for prison monitoring and the impact of international law upon prisoners'

rights in Germany. The paper reflects how preventive detention law got redefined under European human rights law.

Simon, (2018) reveals the absence routine independent prison monitoring system in US which exclusively relies upon judicial decrees. It has resulted into undiscovered mass scale violations of human rights of prisoners. The author strongly highlighted the need for constitution of independent prison monitoring mechanism which may be either headed by a political representative or by an activist formerly incarcerated.

Tapio & Koskenniemi (2018) reveal in their study that prison laws in Nordic countries got human rights intensification towards explicit definition of prisoners' rights in parliamentary laws out of the compulsion of international monitoring agencies.

Caputo & others (2018), in their study, have uncovered the compulsive adaptation of Italian prison system towards more human rights centric treatment of prisoners triggered by international monitoring. However, it has only resulted into a superficial compliance to international obligations rather encouraging a human-rights-oriented approach in country towards improving the actual prison conditions and protecting prisoners' rights.

Antillano & others (2016), highlights the contradictory trend in Bolivia that a country having strong commitment to redistributive policies and welfare orientation does not necessarily commit to prison administration and human-right-centric treatment of prisoners. The author has revealed through analysis of ethnographic data that how prison's internal administration is captured by prisoners and loss of control of State over the prison. Inmates develop a system of informal norms which governs the internal order of the prison.

Another study conducted by Bilderbeck (2013) reveals that Yoga improves behavioural control and decreases psychological distress in a prison population. The study concluded that Yoga may prove effective in improving wellbeing and mental health of the prisoners. It becomes more crucial in prison environment where there exists a constantly high rate of psychological morbidity among the prisoners and the need for effective and economical intervention programmes. In this paper, we present a case study on the analysis and assessment of prison administration and their outcomes at a correctional facility in India

Case study

Banda Jail was set-up in 1860 during British occupation in India. Table 1 depicts key information on the jail including the number of detained inmates (900), detainment capacity (567), total barracks (24), detained female inmates (28) and female barrack capacity (30).

Table 1. Data on the Jail	
Total Barracks	24
Detainment Capacity	567
Detained Inmates	900
Female Barrack Capacity	30
Detained Female Inmates	28

It is observed (Figure 1) that there are variety of cases (murder, attempt to murder and others) registered on inmates.

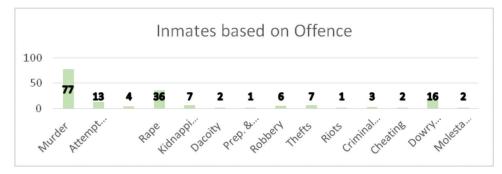


Figure 1. Case-wise distribution

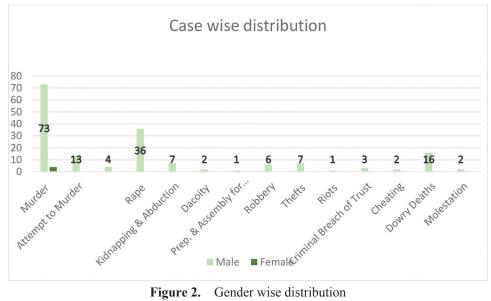


Figure 2. Gender wise distribution

The distribution of inmates in terms of age profile is also done (Figure 3). It is observed that majority of inmates (53%) are in the age-group of 18-30 years (Figure 3).

AGE OF CONVICTS

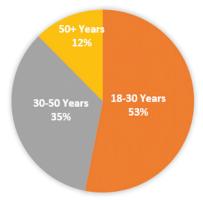


Figure 3. Age-wise distribution

Specific reform initiatives were undertaken by the administration with the objective of prevention of crime and treatment of prisoners in accordance with compendium of United Nations standards and norms. These initiatives were categorized in different areas ranging from skill development, physical fitness, yoga training, access to legal support, quicker justice, cleanliness drive and health management. In this section, we discuss such initiatives and programs and the impact these had on the system.

The first focus was towards training and skill development program was a rigorous one which required an in-depth study of the inmates' skills. Various skill development programs are important aspects of correctional facility reform. Inmates develop a right attitude towards work and dignity of labor. Physical and mental well-being of inmates are taken care by such measures. With the help of different voluntary organizations, the administration conducts yoga along with sports and cultural activities. Specific skill development and social reform programs are also carried out to engage the inmates and get them employable in the event of their release. The inmates who were willing to teach and had the capability to do so were tasked with specific teaching responsibilities. Books and other reading material were made available to all the inmates. The proposed teaching plans included computer literacy program, besides imparting skills in other semi-skilled sectors. These programs were additional to other skill based programs like dairy and horticulture management. The prisoners were compensated for their contribution. Skill development, physical fitness training programs are some of the other key initiatives that were implemented and the result thus obtained were highly encouraging.

Second, the organisation of Lok Adalats (local judicial body) and other grievance-redressal mechanisms, besides the release of many inmates in the wake of the covid-19 outbreak, has helped to address the issue of the burden of the overwhelmed premises. Similar steps, such as effective pre-detention trials and local laws and institutional mechanisms coupled with better sanitation and health facilities has a substantial impact on the overall well-being of the inmates. To achieve this objective, the administration conducts yoga, meditation, sports, and handicraft skilling programs through the intervention of Non-Government Organizations (NGOs).

Third, a total of 200 inmates were interested in sports and physical training programs and they were selected accordingly. Teams were formed from different barracks and various competitions were held. The winners of each competition were awarded by the District Level Officer (DLO). As a result, sports promotion program in the correctional facility has had the positive impact on the perceptions of inmates.

The administration launched certain initiatives for female inmate's welfare program, regular Yoga program, cultural and sports activities. The inmates participated in these events actively, which led to their engagement. The inmates who were skilled enough were also made leaders of their groups. Meditation programs, cultural programmers, hobby centers, sports activities were undertaken so that inmates can refrain from drug abuse or violence. A total of 70 inmates were found to be interested in vocal and instrumental music programs. According to the interest of the inmates, they are trained in classical and folk dance (local forms of dance).

As a fourth major initiative, inmates were imparted training on handicrafts, painting composition and exhibition. In 2019, various competitions of painting and wall murals, wall paintings and handicrafts were held and these were taken to be exhibited at the local district fair organized by the administration. Almost 50 inmates were interested in this. It was carried forward in two stages. In first stage, painting competitions were held in each barrack. In the second stage, various handicrafts were exhibited at the city center and were purchased by interested people. This accrued income to the inmates which was deposited in their respective accounts.

Fifth major initiative was yoga. Five days yoga camp was held on December 30 2018 where benefits of yoga were taught. A group of 600 inmates was selected for this program. It was done in two stages. In first stage, four inmates were trained from each barrack by the World Yoga Trust. In second stage, all the trained inmates trained the interested ones in their barracks.

This initiative resulted in the increased self-confidence and willingness to return in the social life. A yoga room was also established, so that they can meditate on regular basis (Raja Yoga meditation). A total of 300 inmates were selected and evaluated. The motive of this was to increases the psychological functioning, developing good conduct and to develop the feeling of sacrifice.

Sixth major drive was towards cleanliness. In order to maintain clean environment with the facility, the importance of cleanliness, hygiene and beautification were explained to the inmates. A total of 900 interested inmates were involved in the cleanliness drive. They were explained about harmful and communicable diseases which develop due to paucity of cleanliness. To embark a sense of ownership in inmates, all the inmates were divided into groups and cleanliness competition was held.

In addition to the above there were other related programs conducted which ran in tandem with the above programs. Two other programs undertaken are regular grass cutting of the park and trees plantation in premises. Inmates volunteered for this role and were actively engaged and appropriately rewarded.

Various competitions were held which helped to keep the female inmates engaged. All the female inmates were selected for this program. They were provided with training in tailoring, embroidery and weaving. The motive of these kind of vocational skill training in above mentioned arenas is, women can live with dignity can earn themselves. They can be financially stable and updated about their rights. The vocational skill training included sewing, embroidery, weaving and handicraft works. The Secretary of District Legal Services Authority trained and enlightened the life of female inmates by making them aware of their legal rights. In the purview of female upliftment program, the inmates were provided with the training to stitch clothes. The administration attempted to market the products made in the Jail. These were advertised through various channels viz government notification, newspaper advertisement etc., to make the people aware of such reformatory measures. This resulted in a very positive response from the district.

There is a farm within main jail campus. The administration divided whole land into four parts according to situation. For each part, a specific inmate was designated as the manager.

This was done by voluntary contribution as some inmates are interested in farming work. The administration promoted organic farming with the help of District horticultural Officer and others. Prisoners consumed products grown in it. All these activities were initiated in the sequence. The administration officials met with the family members of inmates who had come to meet their imprisoned relatives and listened to their issues and concerns, so that a solution could be found to resolve those issues. It resulted in development of confidence in inmates that the administration supports them and their concerns and issues are being heard. For under taking this step, a group of 900 inmates were identified. In first phase of the project, the issues raised by the inmates was registered and issues pertaining to correctional facility level, were resolved then and there and for other issues, concerned departments were informed and directed for suitable solutions. In next phase, issues of the family members, who had come to visit their relatives in correctional facility, were registered and these issues were also resolved by the Jail administration.

The administration attempted to understand fundamental concern of inmates as far as legal and constitutional rights are concerned and it was observed that inmates were impacted by the lack of knowledge and resources regarding their legal rights. To cater to the situation, Legal Aid Cell was set up in Correctional facility for providing legal assistance to inmates, which is chaired by Secretary of District Legal Services Authority on frequent and regular basis. Senior advocates were also nominated for issue addressal on fast track route. This helped inmates to get their voice heard and a sense of confidence was embarked in them that a competent management is with them to get their tangled situations sorted out. The motive of this initiative was to provide legal assistance to inmates so that they can have proper and relevant legal understanding of their case and also, they can try to ably prosecute their petty cases on their own. For undertaking this pilot project, 600 inmates were targeted and as an outcome of this step, 267 applications for legal assistance was received, 226 inmates were provided with the legal help and a total of 151 inmates were released from correctional facility. 34 inmates were discharged by the Lok Adalat (local judicial body) and 08 nos. of cases pending in session courts were dismissed, due to which 06 inmates were acquitted

Discussion

It is evident from the case analysis that the purpose of imprisonment is not to further punish but to have a correctional impact on the inmates. The same has been reflected in several studies that Yoga has positive effect on prison inmates' emotional well-being (Bilderbeck & others, 2013), a significant decrease of antisocial behavior (Bonta & Andrews, 2007), improvements in attention and impulse (Morgan & others 2000)

It is reflected in the present case study that yoga and meditation has played an effective role in reformation in inmates. This practice resulted in the increased self-confidence among the inmates to be a law abiding citizen. Inmates also reported reduced insomnia and less stress (Bilderbeck & others, 2015). It crucial to note that study supports that poor sleep quality has been found to relate to higher levels of aggressiveness and hostility in prison inmate populations. (Vogler & others, 2014) Therefore, it is to suggest here that yogic

practices should not be seen as merely from religious and cultural perspectives but should be seen as secular and scientific techniques. Thus, this Indian experience can be replicated in correction facilities in other districts in India and other nations as well.

Another, reflection of the case study is that of social association among the inmates through interaction with District Magistrate who listened to inmates and their visiting members of family. It helped in inculcating a sense of confidence between the inmates and the Authorities. Such a felling of social association among the inmates reinforces their integration with society and its values and norms and inculcates within them a socially and legally compliant behavior after release which is the ultimate purpose of correction houses.

"The most important single factor which can facilitate his reintegration with the society and prevent his relapse into the crime after release is the economic rehabilitation." (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2010) Though the study recognize the role of vocational training of women inmates to ensure their employability and economic independence in post release period yet, it under-explored the significance of education and training of inmates as a reformative tool which helps reducing rate of reoffending and helps inmates in integration with society after their release. It is reflected in several studies that employability after release reduces the chances of reoffending by between 30-50% among the inmates after release. (Quoted in Padfield, Nicola, 2018)

The continued detention of UTPs for want of legal aid is a severe violation of human rights of prisoners. The present study revealed that legal aid to UTPs can reduce overcrowding of prisons though establishment of, Legal Aid Cell in correctional facilities. It becomes more critical given the low legal awareness among the majority of the prisoners owing to their weak socio-economic profile.

Indeed, the setting up of prison shops outside prison has been accorded as one of the best prison practices. (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2010) Though the same has been explored in the Banda district as well yet its utility has been explored only on festive days rather as a continuous practice as a developmental measure. Further, the present study also reinforces the role of role of music and other cultural activities towards social cohesion among the inmates.

The study has also adopted sports and games as a developmental measure. Studies have found associations between physical activity and reduced levels of stress. (Norris & others, 1992) This is helpful in reducing aggression in inmates. Obviously, present study reflects the overall impact of yoga in helping inmates on a developmental path.

The United Nations Human Rights Commission has presented certain principles to protect the rights of detainees that include humane treatment to the convicted and avoidance of discriminatory practices against them. We find that the initiatives like grievance-redressal mechanisms, besides the release of many inmates in the wake of the covid-19 outbreak, have helped address the issue of the burdened of the overwhelmed premises. Similar steps such as effective pre-detention trials and local laws and institutional initiatives, complemented by better sanitation and health facilities had a substantial impact on the overall well-being of the inmates. Jails are globally accepted corrective institutions in the modern scenario of law and order. Therefore, it is crucial that the issues pertaining to the inmates' welfare be taken into consideration and addressed.

Conclusions

We find that the initiatives at this facility under case study have attempted to align with the compendium of United Nations standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice. The compendium lays down the practices and methods for the overall maintenance of law and order. (United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime, 2006) It also lays down standards and norms for treatment of prisoners and presents the body of principles for the protection of all persons under any form of detention or imprisonment. Such initiatives and practices can work towards treatment of prisoners and thus contribute positively towards prevention in crime and criminal justice. The correctional facility got the honor of the best prison of the Uttar Pradesh state and in 2019 the prison official was awarded for effective work towards correctional facility reform program. Productive use of time brought happiness and wellness in the prison and made all happy and healthy. This resulted in our prison getting the award for being number one in the state of Uttar Pradesh among 72 prisons of the state. The initiatives were appreciated and result of all these steps towards upliftment of life quality of inmates were applauded by the Inspector General – correctional facility and corrective services, Uttar Pradesh (India). The correctional facility has been effective in terms of development and welfare of inmates and making them more aligned to adoption in society after their release. Also, various steps have been taken by the district administration to bring the overload of prisoners under control. It is observed that the leadership comes from the district administration and the current District Magistrate, who is a key instrument in steering the project and making it possible to transform the correctional facility. This can also be replicable to other correctional facilities to replicate this model and to contribute towards a better society.

Appendix

Banda is eastern most of the districts of Bundelkhand in India, among 71 districts of Uttar Pradesh state in northern India. The city is the district and commissionaire headquarters of Chitrakut Dham Mandal Banda. The district is surrounded by districts Fatehpur, Hamirpur, Mahoba and Chitrakut. It is located 192 km North towards state capital Lucknow (District profile, Banda 2020). Hindi is the local language here but people also speak Urdu and Bundeli. It is divided into eight blocks, 470 panchayats and 693 revenue villages. It occupies an area of 4460 Sq.Km. The total population of Banda district is 17,99,410 according to census 2011. Males are 9,65,876 and females are 8,33,534. It is the 53rd largest district in the state by population but 68th largest district in the State by area (District profile, Banda 2020).

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