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Title of the Thesis: - Crime and Women

A Sociological Study of Women Prisoners in Delhi

Abstract

Female criminality is indeed a serious social problem because of its impact on family, upbringing of children, and the overall fabric of society. The main purpose of this 'doctoral thesis' is to substantially bring out a critical and comprehensive exposition of the sociological study of the 'women prisoners with special reference to women and crime in Tihar central jail of Delhi' which represents people of vast cross section of society and is not bounded by confinement of a particular segment of society. Study is empirical in nature and based mainly on primary data. An attempt with manifold objectives was made to find out the factors which compelled women to do crime as a consequence of which they are in prison, their pains and problems faced due to imprisonment. Stratified sample of 125 out of 487 convicted and under trial inmates held for various offences in the women jail No. 6 including 28 case studies were studied. It was found women of all age groups were involved in crime; slum dwellers were more prone to crime. Women were involved in all types of crime. There was no correlation between religion and crime but as regard to the nature of crime religion had its impact, respondents arrested in dowry related offence were mostly Hindus. Those engaged in murder mainly pertained to homicide of husband or daughter-in-

law. The spouse killings were more in nuclear families. The study brings by and large illiteracy, poverty, economic hardships, patriarchal family structure, women's emancipation movement, stressful and strained relation of family plays an important role in pushing women towards crime.

Imprisonment imposed several restrictions which in turn affected their growth and development. In between tears and distress, uncertainty of punishment, incessant worries about the plight of their children and family left behind, rejected by the society, ignored by the relatives, the stigma she will now carry sap their energies and make them almost astringent.

Generally negative attitude was reported about crime, law and courts. Tihar prison administration following the recommendations of various committees, with the help of Non-governmental organization has come up with variety of methods on scientific lines to bring about reformation and gradual social reintegration of prisoners still there were the moments of anguish, visible shades of remorse, but never a trace of excitement, enthusiasm, expectation, that once was but never will be theirs again. At the time of release, their emotional, family, and economic situations are often worse than they were prior to imprisonment. The training and experience go waste in the lack of opportunities.

The saddest part of the whole process is that as majority of inmates are under trail the times, when the cases go on for years, these women tend to serve more punishment than her sentence. Sometimes they are proved innocent. This loss of years and the loss of self esteem and the brunt borne by their families cannot be assuaged in any way.

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