

HUMAN RIGHTS LEARNING AMONG WOMEN INMATES

Pardeep Kumar

Ph.D. Research Scholar,

Department of Public Administration

Desh Bhagat University, Mandi Gobindgarh, Punjab

Email: pardeepjeond@gmail.com

Abstract:

Increasing rate of female incarceration is a big problem and all around the world, facilities being providing to the females in prison has been poorly adapted. Through this paper, researcher has tried to analyze the importance of human rights learning in women prisoners' lives and to explore the problems being faced by female prisoners. This paper has concluded that 'Human Rights Learning Peer Training' programmes can enable them to contribute in the correction of prison-world.

Keywords: Female Incarceration, Human Rights Learning, female prisoners

Introduction

The growing prison population is a global problem, but a growing rate of female incarceration is the bigger one. The reformatory penal policies visualize to ensure the laws, standards and norms to provide the framework for addressing many Problems women prisoners are facing worldwide. Basically, the prisons around the world are a male-model and the facilities or conditions have been poorly adapted for women; their needs are totally different from men, and sometimes they face the worst kind of problems inside prison. They are more likely to suffer from mental and emotional problems; sometimes, they are socially exorcized by their kens or relatives outside; they are particularly vulnerable to sexual and physical abuse; sometimes they might give birth to their children while in prison.

Presently, these concerns are attracting the attention of those who advocate the human rights of women prisoners. These intellectuals think that female captives can overcome their vulnerabilities and insecurities to some extent if they are well acquainted with their inalienable entitlements (human rights).

Objectives of the study:

- To analyze the importance of human rights learning in women prisoners' lives.
- To explore the problems and atrocities faced by the female inmates.
- To establish the significance of peer-education in human rights learning.

DATA COLLECTION :

The study is non-empirical / semi-empirical in nature, therefore, the secondary sources are employed to collect information and construct the theoretical framework of the study.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:

Rights, according to the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, are the political, social and other advantages to which one has a just claim, morally or legally. Laski says that rights are those conditions of social life

without which no man can seek, in general, to be himself at his best. Generally speaking, right is that reasonable claim which is recognized by the society and enforced by the state.

The legal basis of the modern concept of human rights is the slogan, "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity", of the French Revolution. Almost all the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are enshrined in the constitutions of all democratic states.

Despite the advancements in civilization and the frequent pleas by the Amnesty International, human rights violations are taking place everywhere in the world. Women are subjected to various harassments in almost all the countries, especially the women- prisoners all over the world are subjected to mental torture, sexual abuse, lack of appropriate medical care, loss of children, social exorcism and breakdown of families.

Hence, the reformers in the field of 'prisons' are increasingly turning to international human laws, standards and norms to provide the framework for addressing many of the problems faced by female inmates.

Prison systems everywhere are primarily designed and run by men for the imprisonment of men. Women are a small minority of the prison community worldwide. Thus, they find themselves confined in the under conditions and facilities that are poorly adapted for them; they find themselves held in the conditions that are more compatible for their male counterparts and less compatible for them. They have specific health needs for gynecological and obstetric care; sometimes, they give birth to their children while in prison. Often, they are more vulnerable to sexual and physical abuse; sometimes, they fall victim to these abuses after coming to the prison. They are more prone to the mental and emotional problems.

Although, women remain a small percentage of the total number in prison, but their numbers are growing. The total world prison population is around 9.25 million. Many penal reformers estimate that over half-a-million females are captivated inside penal institutions around the world. The fact that the percentage of women in prison is much smaller than that of men— makes them more vulnerable to various problems. They can improve their situation and over come the rampant problems only with the help of internationally recognized human rights.

The controversial case (October — 2011) of Soni Son (A 35 year old tribal woman/ teacher / Dantewada/ Chattisgarh I India/ Maoist Movement), who is captivated inside the Raipur Jail from last one year, appropriately exhibits the violation of human rights in prison. She was brutally tortured and sexually harassed by some people: she expressed and exposed her plights through a letter to her Advocate at Supreme Court. This infamous case depicts the worst kind of atrocities a woman can ever meet in police custody; Sony(as a teacher and human rights activist) was fully aware of her human- rights. Her torture was an evil act of stigmatizing an individual's human dignity. Hence, she accepted the challenge of the evil —doers and raised her voice against sexual and physical assault she faced inside Dantewada Police custody. Perhaps there are so many women prisoners who have suffered more tortures and sexual assaults than Soni, but even never discussed them with anyone merely because of shame.

Consequently, it can be said that the human dignity (or feminine chastity) of women is always at stake inside prison (esp. in India). In the context of female existence, prison is a complex phenomenon. The immediate help and support is hardly possible, if anything unpleasant occurs to them. Thus, it can be said that only human rights learning can enable them to resist the anticipated tortures and empower them to raise their voice against unpleasant gestures, vulgar remarks or sexual exploitation.

The NGOs, Social Activists, Governments of the states and United Nations can play a key role in their human rights learning through the formulation of some new policies and training programmes. These programmes can motivate the female prisoners to accept their social responsibility and play a leading role in the peer-training. These 'Human Rights Learning Peer Training' programmes can enable them to contribute in the correction of prison-world. Help of the volunteer women prisoners can be taken to actualize this constructive and huge task of global significance. Peer-training can be appropriate kind of solution to the rampant problems of woman prisoners. In this way, they can improve not only their own conditions, but also the behaviour of their male counterparts, prison personnel and other concerned people.

References:

1. Barnes, Harry Elmer, and Negley K. Teeters. *New Horizons in Criminology*, 3rd ed. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1959.
2. Bedi, Kiran. *It's Always Possible: Transforming One of the Largest Prisons in the World*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1998.
3. Bureau of Democracy. "Human Rights and Labour, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2006." U.S. Department of State. Accessed July 15, 2016. <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78717.htm>.
4. Donohue, John D. *Prisons for Profit: Public Justice, Private Interests*. Washington, D.C.: Economic Policy Institute, 1988.
5. Gramlich, John. "States seek alternative to more prisons." Stateline.org. Last modified June 18, 2007. <http://www.stateline.org/live/details/story?contentId=217204>.
6. Liptak, Adam. "Prisons often shackle pregnant inmates in labor." *New York Times* 2 (2006).
7. Paterson, Alexander. *Paterson on Prisons*. Edited by S. K. Ruck. Frederick Muller, 1951.
8. Sykes, Gresham M. *The Society of Captives: A Study of a Maximum Security Prison*. 2007. Retrieved from <http://press.princeton.edu/chapters/i8390.pdf>.
9. Tkachuk, Brian, and Roy Walmsley. "World Prison Population: Facts, Trends and Solutions." Heuni -
Entry Page. Last modified 2006.
<http://www.heuni.fi/material/attachments/heuni/papers/6KsVgBnCB/HP.pdf>.