



Invisible Lives: Understanding the Status of Women Prisoners in India

Vahiba Nargese P.S.

Research Scholar, Centre for Women's Studies, Pondicherry University, vahibanargese@gmail.com

Sathya Narayanan S

Research Scholar, Centre for Women's Studies, Pondicherry University, Sathya004032000@gmail.com

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18953374>

ARTICLE DETAILS

Research Paper

Accepted: 26-02-2026

Published: 10-03-2026

Keywords:

*Women Prisoners,
Intersectionality,
Discrimination,*

ABSTRACT

The prisons are gendered spaces with an overrepresentation of masculinity, often overlooking the distinct needs of women in prison. Institutional Prison structures are rarely gender-sensitive, and women in prison are marginalised and prone to vulnerability. The increase in the rate of incarceration of women over the years raises the need to address the challenges confronted by women in Prison, where there is limited evidence in the Indian Context. The present study also explored how gender, class, and caste intersect in shaping the experiences of women prisoners, increasing their vulnerability within the prison system. Current frameworks for prison reforms, including policies and programmes, are reviewed, and the status of women prisoners in India is examined through an intersectional approach. Through reviewing existing literature from a feminist perspective, the findings revealed that gender, class and caste significantly influence the lives of women in prison. Women prisoners' lived experiences are often invisibilised, and gender-specific needs are frequently neglected. Discrimination and unequal access to resources within the prison system adversely affect the well-being of women prisoners. The question of health has been least addressed in most prisons that lack basic medical amenities. The evidence suggests that most incarcerated women are not provided with adequate menstrual management products, leading to period poverty.



The study revealed that a more nuanced understanding of lived experiences should be captured by integrating an intersectional perspective into prison policies. A few suggestions are provided for rehabilitation and reintegration, as well as for the personal and Vocational development of women prisoners that can help achieve Sustainable Development Goals.

Introduction

The concept of Penal Institutions has shifted from a place of punishment to a place of rehabilitation and reintegration. Contextualising gender in prison practices is significant to understand how the prison as an institution has been perceived in terms of gender. The history of incarceration is a history predominated by men (Boris et al., 2024). Prisons are sex-segregated and gendered spaces with an overrepresentation of masculinity, not acknowledged in scholarship, Practice and Policy (Maycock & Hunt, 2018). Despite national and regional differences, there are profound structural and operational similarities in the Prison system around the world, especially in the incarceration of women (Davis & Dent, 2001). Theories of female criminality consist of stigmatising attributes that view female criminals as having excessive male characteristics (Negi & Negi, 2017). These theories emphasize biological determinism and traditional gender roles, where loosening of these can make female-to-female criminals. These theories are extremely gendered as they arise from gendered assumptions and stereotypes of a typical 'woman' (Agarwal, 2022). For women, crime is more than a mere infringement of law; it is socially regarded as a violation of norms and values about female behaviour. Studies observed the gender distinctions in the reformatory practices in the prison institutions, where men are trained for an occupation that moulds them to be responsible citizens, and women's reformatories focused on domesticity and training in femininity to be a true woman (Rafter, 1985). The societal expectation of relating crime to men, with the notion that men are aggressive, while women are a category being overlooked.

Worldwide, there are around 11 million incarcerated populations. Penal Reform International (2024) points out that there are more than 74100 women and minor girls in correctional facilities internationally, both remandees and sentenced and convicted. The Council on Criminal Justice (2024) observed that the incidence of arrest of women was 41% higher in 2019 compared to 1980, and the rate of confinement was 12% higher in 2019 than in 2010. The number of women in prison is globally escalating much faster than men (Global Prison Trends, 2021). The proportion of women and girls in incarceration has risen globally by nearly 60% since 2000. The population of female prisoners in Asia has doubled since 2000



(Fair & Walmsley, 2022). This growth raises the significance of addressing the gender-responsive treatment of women prisoners (Global Prison Trends, 2021).

Indian Overview

While adjudicating a writ petition. (C). No. 406 of 2013, the Supreme Court of India held that, “There could be several factors that lead a prisoner to commit a crime, but nevertheless a prisoner is required to be treated as a human being entitled to all human rights, human dignity and human sympathy” (p. 3) regarding the custodial management of prisoners. In the Indian context, Prison establishments under the administrative framework of the Department of Prisons and Correctional Services emphasise the regimens of reintegration and rehabilitation into mainstream society as socially responsible citizens. Explicit efforts to bring in current organisational reformations in prisons began with establishing the Prison Discipline Committee in 1836 (Santhosh & Mathew, 2021). The Government of India Act (1935) transferred the subject of prisons from the central list to the control of the state under List II of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution (Prison Reforms-Centre State Division, n.d.). Prison administration is regulated by the respective state governments under the provisions of the Indian Prisons Act and the Prison Manuals formulated by each state.

The formation of the All India Jail Committee (1919-1920) initiated the shift of the prison system from deterrence to reformation. The committee identified reformation and rehabilitation as objectives of the prison administration. Jail Reform Committee constituted in 1946 recommended modern prison construction as well as separate jails for child offenders, Habitual offenders, women offenders and differently abled offenders. Post-independence era prison reforms were followed by the recommendations of multiple committees, consisting the Pakhwasa Committee (1949) and the All India Jail Manuals Committee (1957-1959). The Towards Equality report (1974) was crucial in revealing the status of women in prison. The Mulla Committee (1983) emphasised post-rehabilitation and probation as essential aspects of the prison system. R.K. Kapoor committee (1986) assessed the context of prison safety and suggested improvement measures. The Justice Krishna Iyer Committee was appointed to study the concerns and challenges confronted by female prisoners. The committee points out several recommendations for the better treatment of women in prison, such as women prisoners should be clearly aware of their legal rights, searches of women prisoners by female staff, and medical checkups for convicted women and under-trial women should be done regularly.

The Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D) framed the prison manual under the direction of the Supreme Court in 1996 to bring uniformity in prison administration. A Model Prison



Manual was prepared in 2003, emphasising issues relating to prison reforms in India and disseminated to all State Governments for direction. With the passage of time and several instructions from the Supreme Court, a committee was constituted in 2014 to revise the Model Prison Manual prepared in 2003. A draft Model Prison manual was developed in 2016, which aimed to revamp the existing biases and to integrate inclusivity that promotes a better administration of prisons and to uphold the dignity of prisoners. Apart from all these reformatory measures that have been recommended, there is a lack of enforcement and awareness that leads to inhumane conditions within the penal institution.

Theoretical Overview

Early theories of female criminality mainly focused on the theory that women commit offences because they fail to be “true Women”. The literature evidence suggests that Prison histories mainly emphasise male prisoners. Rafter (1985) explained the historical differences in the development of male and female correctional facilities and the transformation of correctional institutions from an institution of punishment to reformation. The author articulated the discrimination of women prisoners based on their race, class and gender, as well as highlighted how prison is being constructed as a gendered space. Klien (1995) explored the works concerned with the aetiology of female crime and delinquency by reviewing the theories proposed by philosophers. The author pointed out that, emphasising morality, women were categorised as good women and bad women—theorists such as Davis (1961), Pollack (1950), and Freud (1933) propose that the reason for women's criminal behaviour is biological determinism as well as an attempt away from femininity into masculinity. The intersectional approach is frequently ignored when considering women prisoners. Morris (1987) suggested revamping and reconsidering traditional criminological theories for understanding female criminality. Proctor (2004), through a feminist lens, advocate a new approach to theorising women and crime by employing three different theories. To revitalise the field of criminology, there is a need for feminist scholars to explore the intersection of class, caste and gender to understand the gender-based behaviour of criminality. The Constitution of India indicates the prison administration as a state subject, while criminal legislation falls within the concurrent list and social planning is on the union list, highlighting a juridical separation that affects recognition, management and prevention of crime that is directed to structural inadequacy (Sohoni, 1975).

Intersectionality in the penal institutions has been frequently overlooked, where Mazumdar (2022) points out the paucity of discussions on how gender, location, and time overlap in generating various power relations. With different essays, authors illuminate the narratives of women inmates and the experiences



of being left out and abandoned. Recommendations for overcoming trauma and initiating personal and professional development to prevent recidivism are inscribed.

The arrest rate of women has been increasing in recent years, raising the discourse on women and criminality. Historically, there is a dearth of discourse on women prisoners in public as well as private academia, and their needs and rights are neglected even in feminist discussions (Pena & Bustela, 2024). Criminality among women is recognized as a deviation from femininity against the docile values assigned by society to women. Female inmates faced various challenges inside prisons in India, encompassing safety, shelter, access to legal rights, physical, mental, economic and social well-being (Banerjee, 2024). Amitav Roy Committee stated that “Women incarceration suffer the brunt of imprisonment far worse than their male counterparts, especially about access to basic facilities ranging from medical care and medical staff, legal aid and counsel to paid labour and recreational facilities” (Khan, 2023, Para. 2). Women’s experiences of the criminal justice system, including prison, are diverse and situated so the regimes under which they are held must respond to specific needs. The stigmatising and overlooking of women’s challenges within the jurisdiction arises from patriarchal influence that has moulded the system (Khan,2023). The Penal institutions have traditionally been designed for men; the policies and provisions have been pointed towards the needs of men, while female prisoners’ distinct needs have been disregarded. The increase in the rate of incarceration of women over the years raises the need to address the challenges confronted by women in Prison, where there is limited evidence in the Indian Context. The present study aimed to understand the intersectional aspects of how gender, class, and caste shape the experiences of women prisoners, as well as to recognise the challenges faced by female prisoners.

Methodology

This paper is based on a review of the existing literature. In India, the prison and correctional system have always been kept hidden from the eyes of society, and the necessity to know further also remains passive with the conception that prisoners are culprits who need to be kept away from the centre. When looking deeper into women prisoners, they have been marginalised further. To understand the scenario, a narrative review as a methodology has been adopted. Various types of secondary data, including reports from the government, are reviewed. The findings of projects from various states have been reviewed. Books, journal articles, websites and newspaper articles are reviewed to understand the experiences of female prisoners and the challenges and issues they faced. A critical approach is being adopted throughout the study to identify the influence of gender, caste and class in women prisoners in India.



Results and Discussion

Triple Incarceration

The Model Prison Manual (2016) mandated that each state should have at least one jail for women. To the contrary, as of December 31st 2022 (PSI, 2022), there are only 16 states that have separate prisons for women, with 17.8 % and the remaining 82.2 % of women prisoners are incarcerated in separate enclosures within the central, state and district jails. Prisons as an institution are designed by men for men (Millar, 2018). Structural discrimination, along with gender discrimination, often ignores the intersection of gender, caste and class, which in turn leads to additional deprivation of the status of women prisoners.

The types of offences exhibited by women arise from the imposition of cultural expectations on women. The context of *Sreerangagayee vs unknown*, 1972, and *Maragatham vs State of Madras* reveals that poverty is a factor in committing an offence. The findings of the State Women's Commission of Orissa noted that the majority of women offenders convicted for homicide faced challenges in their family environment, leading to rejection, cruelty and humiliation from their in-laws and husband. PSI (2022) report pointed out that the majority of women prisoners are from poor socio-economic backgrounds. The responsibilities and gender roles assigned by society to women nurture feminine values when failing to achieve, directing women to commit offences. This can be found from the nature of the offences. The study of Ahuja (1970) and Rani (1983) observed that domestic factors, such as Dowry harassment, contributed substantially to women committing offences. The findings of Kethineni (2001) have also found that family-related conflicts (marital conflicts, extramarital affairs, Sexual behaviour of a relative and dowry harassment) were the Primary causes, and Property-related crimes between family members are secondary causes of homicidal activity. A study of conditions of women prisoners & their children in Eastern UP jails (Parveen, 2008) found that among the respondents, 70.61% are first-time offenders. While 26.73% of the respondents come to jail occasionally, only 2.65% are habitual criminals. It depicts that habituality in committing offences is sporadic among women in incarceration. The social situations and other allied circumstances are being reinforced and valued by the social norms that lead women to commit offences, which society considers moral turpitude. The dearth of nationalised data on the types of offences committed by women makes it harder to determine the overall factors that make women commit offences. The majority of women in prison belong to economically disadvantaged backgrounds. There are around 65 women in Indian Prisons in detention due to non-payment of the fine amount after completion of their sentence (PSI, 2022). They may spend their lives in prison due to a lack of legal representation, inability to afford bail, and lack of legal literacy. Penal Reform International (n.d) and



Ashly (2021) reported similar findings that women in incarceration are often also linked to poverty and unable to pay fines or to afford bail. It is often mentioned in studies that the majority of incarcerated women belong to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, or religious minorities (Bhosle, 2009).

Discrimination within the Prison System

A higher prevalence of caste-based discrimination occurs frequently in prisons by jail authorities and inmates. The constitution of India, which guarantees equality and stands against discrimination, violates the basic principles in its prison manuals. The archaic and antiquated prison manuals often impose caste-based discrimination and prejudices within the institution. For years, it has been followed by the state prison manuals in the legislation governing prison administration. With the writ petition of Sukanya Shantha, the Supreme Court of India has directed all states and Union Territories to revise their prison manuals (Sen, 2024). The Prisons in India (2024) report highlighted various provisions related to caste-based discrimination in the state prisons manuals. The hierarchical structure present within the prison system continues to reinforce biases that society has endeavoured to eliminate for decades. Sen (2024) has portrayed how an individual belonging to the Scheduled caste has been kept separate from people belonging to the upper caste. The overlapping expressions of caste, class, gender and other individual characteristics intersect in shaping the experiences in prisons.

Carceral patriarchy within the prison system often leads to neglect of the distinct needs of incarcerated women. Discrimination, stereotype, stigmatisation or prejudice pointed towards incarcerated women is a continuation of the patriarchal culture found outside the prison community (Nnam et. al, 2025). Patriarchy and power dynamics within the prison system overlap with each other, leading to discrimination, as well as disregarding basic amenities and infrastructure for women in incarceration. The gender bias in the prison system commences with incarcerating women in male prisons, continues with overcrowding, a lack of hygiene and nutrition, prejudices and overall deterioration of women in incarceration. Women in incarceration face higher stigma than men. Dastely and Agozino (2019) have pointed out that women suffer more in prison than men. Even prison authorities treat female prisoners terribly. Physical Assault occurred within the Byculla jail in 2017, taking the life of a prisoner. Witness had verified that “she was brutally assaulted in her barrack, stripped, and a baton shoved into her private parts” (Saigal, 2019). Violence, abuse, and sexual assault are serious problems within detention facilities for prisoners of both genders and all ages (Parveen, 2008). Overcrowding in prison made female prisoners’ living conditions poorer. The report by the Ministry of Women and Child Development (2018) states that overcrowding in the prisons and limited numbers of toilets, bathrooms and other essential



prerequisites for sanitation and hygiene pose a challenge to leading a healthy life in the prison environment. Data from Prison Statistics of India (2022) shows that the occupancy rate in women's jails is lower than in general prisons, which is higher than 100% where women are struggling to cope with their lives in prison. The factor that women are confined in separate enclosures inside a general prison makes women prone to sexual violence, encompassing demanding sexual favours by the authority as well as inmates. Aziz (2024) points out the conversation of the Founder of the anti-trafficking charity, Impact and Dialogue Foundation, that female prisoners were regularly supplied to powerful inmates in the prison. The findings of the National Commission of Women (2018) also pointed out that there is a prevalence of sexual victimisation in the state-wide prison systems. Wolff et. al (2006) also raised the concern that women are at a higher risk of sexual victimisation inside the prisons. The imposition of gender roles and prejudices on women leads to gendered experiences that affect incarcerated women in disproportionate ways, constituting challenges for female inmates, raising the specific needs of prisoners with children, pregnant, lactating, menstruating and post- menopausal women.

Neglected Health Concerns

As per Prison Statistics of India, NCRB for the year 2022, 51.5% of female prisoners are in the age group of 30-50 years and 28% are in the age group of 18-30 years encompassing reproductive age groups recognised with the fulfilment of sexual and reproductive rights, nevertheless substantially these rights are denied to the women in incarceration. The international treaties and conventions that enshrined the right of women in incarceration have been kept aside, and carceral gender distinctions have been practised throughout the states. Health cards are not properly maintained, as well as a shortage of medical staff, especially gynaecologists, nurses, psychologists/psychiatrists, indicating female prisoners' overall health services, comprising nutrition, mental health, are overlooked. The Prison Statistics of India (2022) reports that the majority of the inmates suffer from trauma and mental discomfort, implying a need for proper counselling and treatment. Menstrual Health as a significant aspect of Sexual and Reproductive health is neglected, implying that period poverty is high among female prisoners (National Commission of Women, 2018; Dath, 2023; Gupta & Sivakami, 2024). Health as a determinant of a dignified life, Indian prisons fail to provide essential medical facilities to their inmates.

Children in the Prison Premises

The government of India has initiated various policies and guidelines to guarantee the protection and welfare of children in prison. The 2006 Supreme Court judgment in the Upadhy Vs State of Andhra Pradesh directed the prison administration to make proper arrangements for the growth and well-being of



children. Facilities for biological, psychological, and educational growth for children are lacking in most prisons (BPR & D report 2009; Prayas, 2018). Mothers in prison often struggle for food for their children. Very few prisons offer schooling facilities, and dropout rates in schooling are also high among the children within the prison (National Commission for Women, 2018). The children confine their childhood in prison, and the stigma of confinement often leads to ostracising children in the mainstream of society. Systemic neglect violates the fundamental human rights of children. Epstein (2014) articulates that even courts do not attempt to protect children's rights in prisons. The experiences of incarcerated women cannot be generalised, but systemic oversight is prevalent throughout the world.

Gender Segregation in Reintegration

Gender distinction is prevalent throughout the prison system. Discriminatory Practices in the Wage system are prevalent in Prisons. Some Prisons lack vocational/skill training programmes; moreover, the prisons that provide vocational training are limited to traditional training such as knitting, sari drapping, mushroom cultivation, etc., perpetuating stereotypical occupations (National Commission on Women, 2018). The prison system fails to achieve its core purpose, rehabilitation and reintegration. Women in incarceration face more stigmatising attitudes in society. Entrenched female purity in society often excludes women from leading a dignified life. The study by Santhosh and Mathew (2021) on the social integration of formerly incarcerated individuals was limited to men as their respondents, as they could not locate the released women prisoners. Understanding the lives of post-release prisoners becomes impossible as their existence is invisibilized in society. The exclusion negatively affects their lives (Patel, 2016). Post-release prisoners often face challenges in reintegrating into society. Particularly, incarcerated women repeatedly encounter difficulties in securing resources and shelter during the parole period, leading to a return to jail. This accentuates the need for targeted support to reintegrate into the community (Sudhi, 2020). The stigma and attitude towards women offenders post-release hinder their social reintegration into society. The existence of gender bias makes post-release women unable to find resources and employment. Prison Reform Trust (2020) reports reveal that post-release women prisoners are nearly three times less likely to be secure employment than men. The conception of committing offences as drifting feminine values results in exclusion from society, spending an entire lifetime to be categorised as “offenders” and ostracised from mainstream society.

Conclusion and Recommendation

In recent decades, the population of incarcerated women has risen at an unprecedented rate. The needs and concerns of women in incarceration differ from those of men in incarceration. The earlier concept of



women committing offences was considered to be masculine, aligning with the conception that crime is associated with masculine traits, and women tend to be soft and nurturing. Deviating from their gender role is treated as appearing to be the opposite gender, where the theories of criminality for years have associated men with crime. Women in incarceration demand distinct social, vocational, psychological, and legal services that differ from those of men. Incarcerated women in India suffer a range of hurdles that violate their fundamental rights enshrined in international and national treaties. From the denial of basic amenities to systemic oversight and abuse, women inmates face inhuman conditions in Indian jails. By addressing the institutional injustice, there is a need to confront the gender inequalities faced by female prisoners. The intersection of caste, class, gender and other individual characteristics shapes the experiences of incarcerated women in prison, which is being indirectly approved by the prison structure. The literature on the prison system has overlooked the gender inequalities prevalent in penal institutions. Appropriate gender-specific requirements should be taken into account to reduce the risk of reoffending as well, and an intersectional, integrated approach should be adopted for a better understanding of the influence of caste, class, and caste intersecting each other in shaping the experiences of female prisoners. Women's healthcare should be addressed, encompassing overall components of health defined by the World Health Organisation. There should be development of guidelines, policies, and programs prior to and throughout that address the distinct needs of women in incarceration and to reintegrate them into society. Further studies with primary data, as a methodology to study how gender is perceived in prison, should be carried out. There should be an independent mechanism to conduct research on prison institutions. Various guidelines and reports on the status of prisoners are based on the information provided by the authorities, where the question of validity and reliability arises, as there is a chance of bias. The prison system should be restructured to improve the existing status of female prisoners as well as to ensure their dignity and uphold their rights, and to provide rehabilitation and reintegration into society, which is the sole aim of the prison system in India.

References

- Agarwal. U. (2022, June 26). Indian prisons need gender sensitive reform as women inmates face double marginalisation. *First Post*. <https://www.firstpost.com/opinion/indian-prisons-need-gender-sensitive-reform-as-women-inmates-face-double-marginalisation-10837981.html>
- Ahuja, R. (1970). Female murders in India: A sociological study. *The Indian Journal of Social Work*, 31 (3) 271-284.



- Ashly, J. (2021, July 7). Treated worse than animals': Black women in pretrial detention. AlJazeera. <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2021/7/7/treated-worse-than-animals-black-women-in-us-pretrial-detention>
- Aziz, S. (2024). The staff get hush money: the hidden scandal of rape in Indian prisons. The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2024/feb/23/rape-sexual-abuse-women-babies-indian-prisons-west-bengal>
- <https://cdn.penalreform.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Global-prison-trends-2021.pdf>
- Banarjee, S. (2024). The Tormenting Plight of Women Inmates in India: An In-depth Study. *JETIR*, 11(2), 376-385. [JETIR2402456.pdf](https://www.jetir.org/papers/JETIR2402456.pdf)
- Bhosle, S. R. (2009). *Women in Prison: A Study of Women Prisoners in India*. APH Publishing Corporation.
- Boris, E., Chaudhuri, N. & M. L. Miller, V. (2024). Engendering carcerality: An introduction. *Gender & History*, 36(3) 807-823. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/1468-0424.12822>
- Datt, K. B. (2023, March 8). Prisons fare poorly in menstrual hygiene. The New Indian Express. <https://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2023/Mar/08/prisons-fare-poorly-in-menstrual-hygiene-2554184.html>
- Dastile, N. P. & Agozine, B. (2019). Decolonising incarcerated women identities: looking through prison abolition. *S. Afr. Crime Q.*, 68 (1), 21-32, 10.17159/2431-3108/2019/v0n68a5622
- Davis, A., & Dent, G. (2001). Prison as a Border: A Conversation on Gender, Globalisation, and Punishment. *Signs*, 26(4), 1235–1241. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3175363>
- Epstein, R. (2014). Mothers in prison: The sentencing of mothers and the rights of the child. The Howard League for Penal Reform https://howardleague.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/HLWP_3_2014.pdf
- Gupta, H, & Sivakami, M. (2024, May 28). Menstrual hygiene in Indian prisons: Explained The Hindu. <https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/menstrual-hygiene-in-indian-prisons-explained/article68222812.ece>
- Fair, H., & Walmsley, R. (2022). *World Female Imprisonment List (5th edition)*. <https://core.ac.uk/download/565364702.pdf>
- Kethineni, S. (2001). Female homicide offenders in India. *International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice*, 25(1), 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01924036.2001.9678661>



- Khan, S. (2023). Rights of Women Prisoners in India: Nexus Between the Pervasive Impact of Patriarchy and the Problem of Women Prisoners. *International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews*, 4(7), 1191-1197. <https://doi.org/10.55248/gengpi.4.723.48950>
- Klein, D. (1973). The Etiology of Female Crime: A Review of the Literature. *Issues in Criminology*, 8(2), 3–30. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42909683>
- Maycock, M. (Ed.), & Hunt, K. (2018). *New Perspectives on Prison Masculinities*. (Palgrave Studies in Prisons and Penology). Springer . <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-65654-0>
- Mazumdar, S.C. (2022). [A Review of the Book, Women Incarcerated: Narratives from India. Hyderabad by Mahuya Bandhopadhyay & Rimple Mehta (Eds.) Orient Blackswan. https://orientblackswan.com/media/9789354421884_251023.pdf
- Millar, C. (2018, February 5). Our system appears to have been designed centuries ago by men, for men. The British Psychological Society. <https://www.bps.org.uk/psychologist/our-system-appears-have-been-designed-centuries-ago-men-men>
- Ministry of Home Affairs. (2009). Bureau of Police Research & Development
- Morris, A. (1987). *Women, Crime and Criminal Justice*. Newyork. Basil Blackwell.
- National Commission for Women. (2018). A Report on Improving the Condition of Women Inmates In Prisons. <https://ruralindiaonline.org/en/library/resource/a-report-on-improving-the-condition-of-women-inmates-in-prisons/>
- Nnam, M. U., Arua, M. C., Dastile, N. P., Arua, C. C., & Eni, O. (2025). ‘Nowhere is safe for us’: An analysis of gender discrimination against female inmates in a male correctional institution. *International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice*, 81, 100745. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijlcj.2025.100745>
- Negi, D. V., & Negi, M. (2017). Theories Of Female Criminality: *A Socio-Legal Analysis*. 6(10).
- Patel, A. (2016). Women in Prisons- A study in Odisha, *Odisha Review*, 33- 41. <https://magazines.odisha.gov.in/Orissareview/2016/Feb-Mar/engpdf/34-42.pdf>
- Parveen, S. (2012). *A Study of the Condition of Women Prisoners & Their Children in Eastern U.P.Jails*. New Delhi. National Commission of Women.
- Pena, A. B., & Bustelo, M. (2024). Gender Equality Policies 'Confined: Adopted Frames in the Prison System in Spain, Social Politics. *International Studies in Gender, State & Society*, 31(4), 657–680, <https://doi.org/10.1093/sp/jxae018>
- Penal Reform International. (n.d). About Us. Penal Reform. Retrieved on July 13, 2025. <https://www.penalreform.org/about-us/>



- Prayas. (2018). Children of Women Prisoners: The Invisible Trial. Tata Institute of Social Sciences. https://tiss.ac.in/uploads/files/Children_of_Women_Prisoners_-_The_Invisible_Trial.pdf
- Prison Reform Trust. (2020). Working it Out: Improving employment opportunities for women with criminal convictions. https://prisonreformtrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/old_files/Documents/Women/workingitout220120_final.pdf
- Prison Reforms- Centre State Division. (n.d). Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India. <https://www.mha.gov.in/MHA1/PrisonReforms/home.html>
- Prison Statistics India. (2022). National Crime Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs. <https://www.ncrb.gov.in/uploads/nationalcrimerecordsbureau/custom/psiyearchive2022/1701613297PSI2022ason01122023.pdf>
- Proctor, J. (2004). Understanding the Range of Female Criminality: A Prison-Based Test of Three Traditional Theories. *Women's Studies Quarterly*, 32(3/4), 61–85. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40004580>
- Rafter, N. H. (1985). Gender, Prisons, and Prison History. *Social Science History*, 9(3), 233–247. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1170945>
- Rani, B.M. (1983). Homicides by females. *Indian Journal of Criminology*, 11 (1),8-17.
- Ricciardelli, R. (2025). Gender. In: Federal Canadian Correctional Officer Training. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-83483-7_6
- Steffensmeier, D., & Allan, E. (1996). Gender and Crime: Toward a Gendered Theory of Female Offending. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 22, 459–487. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2083439>
- Santhosh, R., & Mathew, E. (2021). Social Reintegration of Released Prisoners: An Empirical Analysis from Two Indian States. *International Annals of Criminology*, 59(2), 200–222. doi:10.1017/cri.2021.18
- Saigal, S. (2019, January 9). Shette murder accused hurled abuses at other inmates: witness. The Hindu. <https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/mumbai/shette-murder-accused-hurled-abuses-at-other-inmates-witness/article25935516.ece>
- Sen, J. (2024, October 4). Why The Wire's Sukanya Shantha Filed a Petition Against Caste-Based Practices in India's Prisons. The Wire. <https://thewire.in/law/full-text-why-a-journalist-filed-a-petition-against-caste-based-practices-in-indias-prisons>
- Supreme Court Of India. (2024). Prisons In India: Mapping Prison Manuals and Measures for Reformation and Decongestion.



<https://cdnbbsr.s3waas.gov.in/s3ec0490f1f4972d133619a60c30f3559e/uploads/2024/11/2024110677.pdf>

- Sohoni, N. K. (1975). Women Prisoners in India. *International Social Work*, 18(4), 33-42. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002087287501800406> (Original work published 1975)
- Sudhi, K. S. (2020, April 5). No Home for Women Prisoners. *The Hindu*. <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/no-home-for-women-prisoners/article31264508.ece>
- Thailand Institute of Justice. (2021, May). Global Prison Trends. Khan, K. (2023, September 6). Denied basic facilities, women prisoners impacted far worse than men: SC panel on prison reforms. *Indian Express*. <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/denied-basic-facilities-women-prisoners-impacted-worse-men-sc-panel-prison-reforms-8925934/>
- Wolff, N., Blitz, C. L., Shi, J., Bachman, R., & Siegel, J. A. (2006). Sexual violence inside prisons: rates of victimization. *Journal of urban health: bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine*, 83(5), 835–848. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11524-006-9065-2>
- Women’s Justice: By the numbers. (2024). Counciloncj. <https://counciloncj.org/womens-justice-by-the-numbers/>.
- W.P. C No. 406 of 2013, Supreme Court of India, Order, inhumane prison conditions, 2013 | *Criminal Legal News*. <https://www.criminallegalnews.org/news/publications/wp-c-no-406-2013-supreme-court-india-order-inhumane-prison-conditions-2013/>