



www.arseam.com

AN OVERVIEW OF DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF PRISONERS IN INDIA

Dr. C. Paramasivan,
Assistant Professor of Commerce
Periyar E.V.R.College (Autonomous)
Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu

Abstract:

Prisons serve the public by keeping in safe custody those committed by the courts and treating them with humanity and helping them lead a useful life in society as law abiding citizens after their release from the prison. Prison in India is an age old concept. In the early periods, unused old forts were used as prison where the persons who acted against the government were lodged. Studying the demographic profile of prisoners is unique in nature and it involves social understanding of the prisoners in the jail. This paper makes an attempt to explore the demographic status of prisoners in the country.

KEY WORDS: Prison, prisoner, jail, convicts, under trial, detenu, borstal school

INTRODUCTION

The words 'Prison' and 'Goal' are derived from the Latin words which mean to "Seize" and "Cage" respectively. The oxford English Dictionary defines prison as, "A place properly arranged and equipped for the reception of persons who by legal process are committed to it for safe custody while awaiting trial or punishment". Prison is one of the complicated and pathetic places where the convict and the under trial persons are lodged because of their involvement in illegal or unlawful activities. It is the universal phenomenon which had an ancient history from the age old periods. System and treatment of prison and prisoners have been changing owing to growing evaluation of the human rights approach. In the early periods, prison was one of the places where the anti-social and anti-national persons were lodged, but now it has been changing, and even if the prisoners are convicts, they are treated as human beings and his/her rights are protected by law. That rehabilitation steps are being taken to create a new life after imprisonment is quite common all around the world. With this view, the present paper discusses the demographic profile of prisoners in Tamil Nadu.

PRISONS IN INDIA

During the period of the Sultanate, there were no regular prisons. Only old forts and castles were used as prisons. During the time of Emperor Akbar, there were two kinds of prisons, one for criminals who had committed serious offences and other for ordinary criminals. Important Nobles and Princes guilty of treason and rebellions were imprisoned in fortresses situated in different parts of the country. The provision for proper jail building in the whole of India was the contribution of the British Government. The native Governments did not maintain proper jail buildings. Lord Macaulay, a member of the Indian Law Commission initiated the prison reform in 1835 for the first time in India. Indian Prisons Act of 1894 regulated the prison system in the country. At that time there were 43 civil, 75 criminal and 68 mixed jails in India. These jails were run by District Magistrates.

TYPES OF PRISONS

The prison system as it operates today in our country is a legacy of the British Rule. It was the creation of the colonial rulers over our penal system with prime motive of making imprisonment “a terror to wrongdoers” (Raju.L.P 2014). In India, jail is the popular term which describes the prisons, which are categorized into the following types.

Central Jail

Central jail is one of the common and popular jails in the country which are run by the state government concerned. Prisoners sentenced to imprisonment for a long period (more than 2 years) are confined in the Central Jails, which have larger capacity in comparison to other jails.

District Jail

District jails serve as the main prisons in States/UT's where there are no Central Jails

Sub Jail

Sub jails are smaller institutions situated at sub-divisional level in the States

Borstal School

Borstal Schools are a type of youth detention centres and are used exclusively for the imprisonment of minors or juveniles.

Open Jail

Open jails are jails with minimum security. Prisoners with good behaviour satisfying certain norms prescribed in the prison rules are admitted in open prisons.

Special Jail

Special jails are jails with high security facilities that have specialized arrangements for keeping offenders and prisoners who are convicted of terrorism, insurgency and violent crimes.

Other Jails

Jails that do not fall into the categories discussed above, fall under the category of Other Jails. Three states - Goa, Karnataka & Maharashtra - have 1 jail each of the above categories in their jurisdiction.

Prison inmates lodged in Indian jails in relation to non - IPC crimes are classified as civil prisoners.

Table -1 Number of Jails in the Country

Sl. No	Type of Jail	Number of Jails	Percentage of Jails
1	Central Jail	131	9.44
2	District Jail	364	26.24
3	Sub-Jail	758	54.65
4	Women Jail	19	1.36
5	Borstal School	20	1.44
6	Open Jail	54	3.89
7	Special Jail	37	2.66
8	Others	04	0.28
	Total	1387	100

Sources: National Crime Records Bureau- Prison Statistics India-2014

Table no 1 indicates the number of jails in the country at the end of 2014. Jails in India are categorized into central jail, district jail, sub-jail, women jail, borstal school, open jail, special jail and others. There are 1387 jails in the country of which 131 are central jails (26.24%), 758 are sub-jails (54.65%), 19 are women jails (1.36%), 20 are borstal schools (1.44%), 54 are open

jails (3.89%) and 04 belong to others (0.28%) which do not come under the above categories. Goa, Karnataka and Maharashtra have other jails in their jurisdiction.

Table - 2 Capacity, Population and Occupancy Rate of Jail in the Country

Sl. No	Type of Jail	Capacity	Population of Inmates	Occupancy Rate
1	Central Jail	152312	184386	121.1
2	District Jail	135439	179695	132.7
3	Sub-Jail	45564	40775	89.5
4	Women Jail	4837	3001	62.0
5	Borstal School	2108	863	40.9
6	Open Jail	5070	3799	74.9
7	Special Jail	10766	5832	54.2
8	Others	465	185	39.8
	Total	356561	418536	117.4

Sources: National Crime Records Bureau- Prison Statistics India-2014

Table no 2 reveals the capacity, population and occupancy rate of jails in the country at the end of 2014. There are 8 categories of jails with the capacity of 3,56,561 in the country, but the population of inmates was recorded as 4,18,536 which shows the occupancy rate of 117.4 percent.

Occupancy rate is more in district jails (132.7%) and central jails (121.1%) and very less in other jails (39.8%) followed by borstal schools (40.9%).

Table no 3 explains the State/UT-wise distribution of different types of jails in the country. There are 1387 jails in the country of which 1360 are in various states and 27 in union territories.

Maharashtra has the highest number of jails (150) in the country followed by Tamil Nadu having 136, 123 in Madhya Pradesh, 119 in Rajasthan, 112 in Andhra Pradesh, and 102 in Karnataka.

Table - 3 State/ UT-wise Distribution of Different Types of Jails Rate in the Country

Paramasivan C/ An Overview of Demographic Profile of Prisoners in India

Sl. No	State/ UT	Central Jail	District Jail	Sub Jail	Women Jail	Borstal School	Open Jail	Special Jail	Others	Total
1	Andhra Pradesh	4	7	99	1	0	1	0	0	112
2	Arunachal Pradesh	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
3	Assam	6	22	1	0	0	1	1	0	31
4	Bihar	7	31	17	1	0	1	1	0	58
5	Chattisgarh	5	10	13	0	0	0	0	0	28
6	Goa	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	3
7	Gujarat	4	7	11	1	0	2	2	0	27
8	Haryana	3	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	19
9	Himachal Pradesh	2	2	8	0	1	1	0	0	14
10	Jammu & Kashmir	2	10	2	0	0	0	0	0	14
11	Jharkhand	5	17	4	0	1	1	0	0	28
12	Karnataka	8	19	70	0	1	1	2	1	102
13	Kerala	3	11	16	3	1	3	16	1	54
14	Madhya Pradesh	11	33	78	0	0	1	0	0	123
15	Maharashtra	9	27	100	1	1	10	1	1	150
16	Manipur	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	5
17	Meghalaya	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
18	Mizoram	1	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
19	Nagaland	1	3	7	0	0	0	0	0	11
20	Odisha	5	9	73	1	0	1	2	0	91
21	Punjab	8	6	9	1	1	1	0	0	26
22	Rajasthan	8	25	60	2	1	23	0	0	119
23	Sikkim	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
24	Tamil Nadu	9	9	96	3	12	3	4	0	136
25	Telangana	3	7	33	1	1	1	0	0	46
26	Tripura	1	2	10	0	0	0	0	0	13
27	Uttar Pradesh	5	56	3	1	0	0	2	0	67
28	Uttarakhand	1	7	2	0	0	1	0	0	11
29	West Bengal	6	12	33	2	0	2	3	0	58
	Total States	121	362	747	18	20	54	34	04	1360
30	A&N Islands	0	1	3	0	0	0	1	0	5

31	Chandigarh	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
32	D&N Haveli	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
33	Daman & Diu	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
34	Delhi	8	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	10
35	Lakshdweep	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	4
36	Puducherry	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	4
	Total UTs	10	2	11	1	0	0	3	0	27
	All India Total	131	364	758	19	20	54	37	04	1387

Sources: National Crime Records Bureau- Prison Statistics India-2014

Among the Union Territories, Delhi records the highest (10) number of jails followed by Andaman & Nicobar Islands (5).

Table - 4 Category-wise Distribution of Jail Inmates in Different Jails in the Country

Sl. No	Type of Jail	Convicts	%Share	Under-trials	%Share	Detenues	%share	Others	%Share	Total
1	Central Jail	85348	46.3	95519	51.8	2760	1.5	759	0.4	184386
2	District Jail	36144	20.1	143138	79.7	331	0.2	82	0.0	179695
3	Sub-Jail	3203	7.9	37507	92.0	22	0.1	43	0.1	40775
4	Women Jail	1302	43.4	1646	54.8	52	1.7	1	0.0	3001
5	Borstal school	104	12.1	723	83.8	19	2.2	17	2.0	869
6	Open Jail	3786	99.7	13	0.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	3799
7	Special Jail	1553	26.6	4225	72.4	53	0.9	1	0.0	5832
8	Others	77	41.6	108	58.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	185
	Total	131517	31.4	282879	67.6	3237	0.8	903	0.2	418536

Sources: National Crime Records Bureau- Prison Statistics India-2014

Table no 4 shows the category wise distribution of jail inmates in different jails in the country at the end of 2014.

On the whole, there are 418536 inmates in the jails of whom 131517 are convicts (31.4%), 282876 inmates are under trials (67.6%), 3237 inmates are detenues (0.8%) and 903 inmates belong to other category (0.2%).

Table -5 Category-wise Distribution of Female Inmates in Different Jails in the Country

Sl. No	Type of Jail	Total	Female	Percentage
1	Central Jail	184386	5766	3.13
2	District Jail	179695	7530	4.19
3	Sub-Jail	40775	1090	2.67
4	Women Jail	3001	3001	100
5	Borstal school	869	9	1.06
6	Open Jail	3799	101	2.66
7	Special Jail	5832	181	3.10
8	Others	185	0	-
	Total	418536	17681	4.22

Sources: National Crime Records Bureau- Prison Statistics India-2014

Table no 5 explains the women inmates in different jails in the country at the end of 2014.

There are 17681 women inmates in different jails in the country which shows that 4.22 percent of the total inmates are women. No women inmates are in other category of jail and more number of women inmates (7530) are in district jails followed by central jails (5766), and sub jails (1090)

Table - 6 Distribution of Different types of Inmates by Age-Group in the Country

Sl. No	Category	16 -18 Years	%Share	19-30 Years	%Share	30 –50 Years	%Share	50Years & above	%Share	Total
INDIANS										
1	Convicts	0	0.0	39452	30.6	66556	51.6	23014	17.8	129022
2	Under trials	6	0.0	133581	47.8	115637	41.4	30079	10.8	279303
3	Detenues	0	0.0	1803	56.2	1295	40.4	109	3.4	3207

4	Others	13	4.8	118	43.5	128	47.2	12	4.4	271
	Total	19	0.0	174954	42.5	183616	44.6	53214	12.9	411803
FOREIGNERS										
5	Convicts	0	0.0	967	38.8	1357	54.4	171	6.9	2495
6	Under trials	0	0.0	1734	48.5	1506	42.1	336	9.4	3576
7	Detenuess	0	0.0	10	33.3	17	56.7	3	10.0	30
8	others	0	0.0	343	54.3	228	36.1	61	9.7	632
	Total	0	0.0	3054	45.4	3108	46.2	571	8.5	6733
	Total (All India + Foreigners)	19	0.0	178008	42.5	186724	44.6	53785	12.9	418536

Sources: National Crime Records Bureau- Prison Statistics India-2014

Table no 6 indicates the distribution of different types of inmates according to age-group in the country. There are 418536 inmates in different categories of jails in the country of whom 19 inmates are in the age group of 16-18 years, 178008 inmates belong to the age group of 19-30 years (42.5%), 186724 belong to the age group of 30-50 years (44.6%) and 53785 are in the age group of 50 years and above (12.9%). Majority (44.6%) of the jail inmates belong to the age group of 30-50 years.

FINDINGS

1. Jail administration in India is one of the organized networks with 1387 jails under different categories.
2. Higher occupancy rate (117.4%) leads to increase the administrative expenditure of the state government as well as law and order problems in the jails.
3. Establishment of jails may depend on population density, political system of the state and socio-cultural behavior of the people. Maharashtra consists of 150 jails followed by Tamil Nadu with 136 jails.
4. Under trials are the majority of inmates of all the categories of jails except open jail in the country. Therefore there should be a speedy mechanism to complete the pending cases against the under trials which helps to reduce the burden of the jail administration.
5. Women inmate in jail is one of the significant impacts of social issues. In India women inmates in jails are very less (4.22%).

6. A maximum of jail inmates belong to the age group of 19-50 years. Therefore, there should be counseling and care taking for this age group to avoid the criminal and anti government activities.

SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

Prisoners is one segment of the population who are treated as a special category under the custody of court of law for involvement in illegal or against the government. In India, prison is an age old concept from ancient periods, but in British period it was regularized and a model prison was constructed and special Act was enacted to systemize the prison administration in India. After independence, prison Act and administration were amended according to the needs and demands of human rights activities. Various committees have been formed to transform the prison administration to strengthen the prisons in the country. Jail or prison is the place of not only convicted persons but also for those who are under trials or remanded or agitators against the ruling government. Because of this, majority of our freedom fighters were lodged in prisons by the British government. Even now our political leaders are lodged in jail for their agitation in opposition to government. Therefore, the mindset about the prisons has changed and the society is ready to accept the prisoners as equal citizens of the country. With this view, now prison has become a rehabilitation and vocational training centre in the country. Many prisons like Tikar, and Puzal are modernized with all fundamental amenities which help to recuperate the prisoners in prison.

Though India has 1387 prisoners in diverse categories, average occupancy rate (117.4 %), should be reduced. It can be possible only in three ways; increase the number of prisons, improve fast track judicial mechanism and encourage the culture among the people to shun the crime and law and order problems in the country. The third point will be a sustainable alternative to reduce the occupancy rate in prison in the country. Majority of the (67.6%) jails inmates are under trials; therefore there should be a fast track judgment to reduce the number of under trials which also helps to reduce the occupancy rate. Average women inmates in jail in the country are very less (4.22%) which is the result of the fact that the country maintains its assessment in good approach.

Hence, this is the need of an hour to streamline the prison as a place for promoting cultured people through various rehabilitation measures and make them as well being persons in the society. Demographic status of prison inmates in prison should be properly monitored and their human rights should be ensured a proper manner. Prison inmates are also a very good manpower if we utilize them in proper ways. This study makes an attempt to understand the demographic profile of the pensioners in the country with respect to category wise prisoners, occupancy rate, women prison inmates etc.

REFERENCE

1. Jonnakelley, "When the Gates Shut" p. 7 | 2
2. The oxford English Dictionary, Vol – VIII, P.1385.
3. Raju.L.P, Historical Evolution of Prison System in India, Indian Journal of Applied Research, Volume : 4 | Issue : 5 | May 2014