

Jail Reform: Study of District Jail Jowai in the State Meghalaya

Deimon I Lytan,

(Student, Department of Public Administration, The Assam Royal Global University,

Guwahati, Assam,India)

Abstract:

Prisoners are also citizens and part of the society. They are needed to be rehabilitated. The prison administration can play important role in changing the attitude, behavior and mindset of the prisoners. The different vocational, religious, skill development oriented activities can be organized in the prison to improve the social, economical and psychological state of the prisoners. The main objectives of the paper are: to study the functions and activities of the prison Administration, to study the welfare services are being provided to the prisoners, to study the rehabilitation measures adopted by the prison administration for the prisoners, and to suggest measures to improve the socio-economic and psychological conditional of the prisoners. A Sample of 112 respondents was taken and Purposive Sampling method was to collect data from the prison in District Jail, Jowai, Meghalaya, West Jaintia Hills District Meghalaya.

Keywords — Prisoners, Rehabilitation, video conferencing, recreational activities, District Jails.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Prisons Department of Meghalaya has a Directorate headed by the Director-General of Prisons who is assisted by the Assistant Inspector General of Prisons and Office Superintendent and other staff.

At present, there are 5 District Jails in Meghalaya located at Shillong, Tura, Jowai, Nongpoh, and Williamnagar. One new District Jail in West Khasi Hills District at Nongstoin is under construction.

The District Jails function under the supervision of jail Superintendents who are assisted by Jailors, Asst. Jailors, Head Warders, Warders, Havildars, Naiks, and other Jail staff to ensure proper and smooth functioning of the Jails. Organisation Office: Superintendent District Jail, Jowai, Meghalaya, West Jaintia Hills District

The Superintendent of Police is empowered to take all sorts of preventive measures if there is a breach of peace in the district. He is responsible for checking the incidence of crime in the district through: Effective patrolling and intelligence

collection by his fleet; Investigation of grave crimes which may lead to the breakdown of law and order, receiving and making special reports about these cases; and Administrative supervision over his subordinates to keep constant vigilance against trouble mongers and take preventive measures, as well as maintain up-to-date records of criminals in the district. These functions entail a number of subsidiary duties. The SP has to call for reports, supervise in person and visit crime scenes soon after their occurrence. This is a major traditional function and the victims involved in these crimes often go to the SP as aggrieved parties to appeal and report against crimes committed against them.

The functions of the SP further include various kinds of organizational and personnel responsibilities at the district level. He has to maintain an adequate supply of vehicles, arms, communications, equipment, and other accessories like uniforms, etc; in good shape. He evaluates the performance of his administrative subordinates and takes disciplinary actions as and when needed. He maintains financial propriety by observing the rules

and is expected to affect measures conducive to the internal economy for the organization.

Research Problem

The overcrowding of inmates in four out of five district jails was due to lodging the convicts and undertrials together and prolonged detention of people without trial, especially in Shillong and Jowai district jails.

Objectives of the research

The main objective is to ensure safe custody of the prisoners. It is also a constituent part of the law and order machinery and an essential ingredient of criminal justice.

1. To study the functions and activities of the prison Administration
2. To study the welfare services are being provided to the prisoners.
3. To study the rehabilitation measures adopted by the prison administration for the prisoners.
4. To suggest measures to improve the socio-economic and psychological conditional of the prisoners.

Review of Literature

The Review of Literature related to the Jail: Intensive Case Management as a Jail Diversion Program for People with a Serious Mental Illness by David Loveland and Michael Boyle reviews the research on intensive case management (ICM) programs as a jail diversion intervention for people with a serious mental illness (SMI). Jail Linkage Assertive Community Treatment Services for Individuals with Mental Illnesses by David L Roberts and Roy Clay: Persons with mental illnesses who are released from jail or prison are at high risk of psychiatric decompensation and re-arrest. The relationship-based care model appears to be an effective strategy for reducing criminal recidivism. Integrating Criminal Justice, Community Healthcare, and Support Services for Adults with Severe Mental Disorders by Robert L Weisman and J. Steven Lamberti describes the steps that Project Link has taken towards Integrating criminal justice, healthcare, and

community support services for individuals with severe mental disorders involved in the criminal justice system. The Mentally Ill in Jails and Prisons: Towards an Integrated Model of Prevention by J. Steven Lamberti and Robert L Weisman discuss the importance of service integration in preventing jail and hospital recidivism. Debating Outpatient

Commitment: Controversy, Trends, and Empirical Data by John Petrila and Randy Borum explores the debate regarding outpatient commitment, the current state of research on its effectiveness.

Research Methodology

Primary sources of data: Questionnaires, Observation, and Interview: In Primary sources. Data for the research is collected through structured, Secondary sources of data: website, journal, books were used and a Sample of 112 respondents was taken and used Purposive Sampling.

Data Analysis

TABLE I

Data showing responses of respondents

Age in years	No of Respondents	Percentage
18-22	76	67.87%
23-28	28	25%
29-35	3	2.67%
36-45	3	2.67%
46-55	2	1.79%
Gender	No of Respondents	Percentage
Male	53	47.32%
Female	59	52.68%
Occupation	No of Respondents	Percentage
Employed	13	11.61%

Unemployed	99	88.39%
No. of years in prison	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1-2	23	20.54%
2-4	12	10.71%
4-6	24	21.43%
More than 6 years	48	42.86%
Are prisons same as a police look up?	No of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	9	8.04%
No	54	48.21%
Maybe	49	43.75%
Are there different rules for different kindsof prisoners?	No of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	68	60.71%
No	7	6.25%
Maybe	37	33.04%
Are prisoners required to stay in their wards the whole day?	No of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	20	17.86%

No	59	52.68%
Maybe	33	29.46%
What are the different types of prisoners?	No of Respondents	Percentage
Convict Prisoners	3	2.68%
Under trial Prisoners	0	
Intemees/ Awaiting release	3	2.68%
Civil Prisoners	3	2.68%
All of the above	103	91.96%
Can prisoners follow their religious practiceswhile in prison?	No of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	72	64.28%
No	6	5.36%
Maybe	33	29.46%
Can prisoners seek treatment from other hospitals?	No of Respondents	Percentage

Yes	66	58.93%
No	7	6.25%
Maybe	39	34.82%
Do prisoners have rights and duties?	No of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	96	85.71%
No	16	14.29%
Do prisoners have educational facilities in the prison?	No of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	63	56.25%
No	49	43.75%
Do prisoners have facility of vocational education in the prison?	No of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	69	61.61%
No	43	38.39%
The seminar or talk is organised for the social well being of the Prisoner	No of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	94	83.93%
No	18	16.07%

Officials try to make prisoners responsive, creative and potential citizen	No of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	94	83.93%
No	18	16.07%
Vocational trainings have been provided in	No of Respondents	Percentage
Carpentry	9	8.04%
Fabric Painting	1	0.89%
Toy making	0	
Stitching	3	2.68%
All of Above	99	88.39%
Seminars are organized by the jail authorities to enlighten the prisoners about	No of Respondents	Percentage
Legal rights	61	54.46%
Health Sanitation	10	8.93%

HIV/AIDS	3	2.68%
Mental Health	38	33.93%
Steps are taken by the jail authorities to reduce violence in prison	No of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	105	93.75%
No	7	6.25%
How prisoners are rehabilitated ?	No of Respondents	Percentage
By providing educational facilities	53	47.32%
Vocational training	57	50.89%
Computer training	2	1.79%
Is the jail administration facing problem of overcrowding of Prisoners?	No of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	74	66.07%

No	38	33.93%
Is the jail administration facing problem of understaffing ?	No of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	64	57.14%
No	48	42.86%
Is the jail administration facing problem of underfunding ?	No of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	69	61.61%
No	43	38.39%
Is the phone facility for the prisoners available in the prison?	No of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	49	43.75%
No	63	56.25%
Is the video conferencing facility is available in the prison?	No of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	43	38.39%

No	69	61.61%
----	----	--------

47.32% of respondents are male and Age – 67.87% of respondents are of the age group 18-22 years, 25% of respondents are of the age group 23-28 years, 2.67% of respondents are of the age group 29-35 years, 2.67% of respondents are of the age group 36-45 years and 1.79% of respondents are of the age group 46-55 years. 52.68% of respondents are female. Occupation- 11.61% of respondents are employed and 88.39% of respondents are unemployed. 20.54% of respondents are responses to 1-2 years, 10.71% of respondents are responses to 2-4 years, 21.43% of respondents are responses to 4-6 years and 42.86% of respondents are responses to more than 6 years. % of respondents have responses yes towards this statement, 48.21% of respondents have responses no towards this statement and 43.75% of respondents have responses maybe towards this statement. 60.71% of respondents have responses yes towards this statement, 6.25% of respondents have responses no towards this statement and 33.04% of respondents have responses maybe towards this statement. 17.86% of respondents have responses yes towards this statement, 52.68% of respondents have responses no towards this statement and 29.46% of respondents have responses maybe towards this statement. 2.68% of respondents are responses to the first statement, there are no responses to the second statement, 2.68% of respondents are responses to the third statement, 2.68% of respondents are responses to the fourth statement and 91.96% of respondents are responses to the fifth statement. 64.28% of respondents have responses yes towards this statement, 5.36% of respondents have responses no towards this statement and 29.46% of respondents have responses maybe towards this statement. 58.93% of respondents have responses yes towards this statement, 6.25% of respondents have responses no towards this statement and 34.82% of respondents have responses maybe towards this statement. 85.71% of respondents have responses yes towards this statement and 14.29% of respondents have

responses no towards this statement. 56.25% of respondents have responses yes towards this statement and 43.75% of respondents have responses no towards this statement. 61.61% of respondents have responses yes towards this statement and 38.39% of respondents have responses no towards this statement. 83.93% of respondents have responses yes towards this statement and 16.07% of respondents have responses no towards this statement. 83.93% of respondents have responses yes towards this statement and 16.07% of respondents have responses no towards this statement. % of respondents are responses to the first statement, 0.89% of respondents are responses to the second statement, there are no responses to the third statement, 2.68% of respondents are responses to the fourth statement and 88.39% of respondents are responses to the fifth statement. 54.46% of respondents are responses to the first statement, 8.93% of respondents are responses to the second statement, 2.68% of respondents are responses to the third statement and 33.93% of respondents are responses to the fourth statement. 93.75% of respondents have responses yes towards this statement and 6.25% of respondents have responses no towards this statement. 47.32% of respondents are responses to the first statement, 50.89% of respondents are responses to the second statement and 1.79% of respondents are responses to the third statement. 66.07% of respondents have responses yes towards this statement and 33.93% of respondents have responses no towards this statement. 57.14% of respondents have responses yes towards this statement and 42.86% of respondents have responses no towards this statement. 61.61% of respondents have responses yes towards this statement and 38.39% of respondents have responses no towards this statement. 43.75% of respondents have responses yes towards this statement and 56.25% of respondents have responses no towards this statement. 38.39% of respondents have responses yes towards this statement and 61.61% of respondents have responses no towards this statement.

Suggestions

1. To provide for reformation and post-release rehabilitation of prisoners for ensuring their reintegration with the society by involving them in various vocational, spiritual, recreational, educational activities and counseling
2. To improve the inmates self – esteem and strengthen their desire to improve.
3. To look after the welfare of the prisoners in the jail.
4. To produce the prisoners to the court on the remand dates refers to a date when the defendant is to return to court to surrender and begin serving a jail.
5. Overcrowding should be reduced by opening more jails to improve the health conditions and personal hygiene of the inmates.
6. Compensation should be provided to the needy, poor, destitute, and old–age prisoners.
7. Active involvement of NGOs, CSOs, and other organizations working towards the betterment of the prison system and prisoners is required.
8. Meghalaya has five district jails – in Shillong, Williamnagar, Jowai, Tura, and Nongpoh. They can accommodate 595 male and 55 female inmates.
9. Similarly, to ease the overcrowding at Jowai and Tura jails, the DGP had in 2014 the proposed construction of new district jails at Khliehriat, East Jaintia Hills, and Ampati in South West Garo Hills but the government is yet to accord approval to the proposals.
10. The CAG has recommended bringing about reforms in the prisons and ensuring that prisoners are provided with the basic minimum amenities to live with dignity.
11. It also asserted that literacy programs should be encouraged and correctional services should be put in place to ensure that the prisoners start a new life after services out their sentence.

II. CONCLUSIONS

The reformation of prisoners during their jail term to enable them to live as law-abiding citizens after release from jail and during incarceration is also an

integral part of its functioning. The Prisons Department also deals with the organization and recruitment of Prison personnel, training of various categories of Officers and staff, the implementation of programs and services for the training of prisoners, their treatment, concessions, and facilities to prisoners, petitions, and appeals received from prisoners, remission, etc.

REFERENCES

1. David Loveland and Michael Boyle: Intensive Case Management as a Jail Diversion Program for People with a Serious Mental Illness, Publishes: May 2007.
2. Daniel William Chandler and Gary Spicer: Integrated Treatment for Jail Recidivists with Co – occurring Psychiatric and Substance Use Disorders, Publishes: September 2006.
3. David Lovell and Gregory Theurer: Recidivism of Offenders with Mental Illness Released from Prison to an Intensive Community Treatment Program, Publishes: August 2008
4. David L Roberts and Roy Clay: Jail Linkage Assertive Community Treatment Services for Individuals with Mental Illnesses, Publishes: February 2004.
5. Manuel Sarria and Gustavo Rey: A Relationship – Based Care Model for Jail Diversion, Publishes: July 2009.
6. Robert L Weisman and J. Steven Lamberti: Integrating Criminal Justice, Community Healthcare, and Support Services for Adults with Severe Mental Disorders, Publishes: February 2004.
7. John Petrila and Randy Borum: Debating Outpatient Commitment: Controversy, Trends and Empirical Data, Publishes: January 2003.
8. J. Steven Lamberti and Robert L Weisman: The Mentally Ill in Jails and Prisons: Towards an Integrated Model of Prevention, Publishes: February 2001.