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## VOCATIONAL TRAINING TO PRISONERS IN TAMIL NADU

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### *Abstract*

Prison is one of the complicated and pathetic places where the convict and under trial persons are lodged owing to their involvement in illegal or unlawful activities. It is the universal phenomenon which had an ancient history from the age old periods. The system and treatment of prison and prisoners have been changing because of 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. Rehabilitation steps have been taken to create a new life after imprisonment is quite common in all around the world. This paper made an attempt to explore the performance of vocational training and prison industry in Tamil Nadu.

*Keywords: Prison, prisoner, jail, convicts, under trial, detune, 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". With this view, the present paper discusses the demographic profile of prisoners in Tamil Nadu. (Raju.L.P 2014) 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 the prime motive of making imprisonment "a terror to wrongdoers". In India, Jail is the popular term which describes the prisons,

which are categorized into the following types.

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 made an attempt to explore the demographic status of prisoners in the country.

## CONCEPT OF PRISONS

A prison also known as gaol or jail is a place in which people are physically confined and usually deprived of a range of personal freedoms.(wikiperdia.org)The Online Oxford English dictionary defines prison as, “A building to which people are legally committed as a punishment for a crime or while awaiting trial.” In our country “Prison” falls under state subject in List II of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India. The administration of Prisons falls in the hands of the state Governments, and is governed by the Prisons Act, 1894 and the Prison Manual of the respective State Governments. Thus, States have the primary responsibility and authority to change the current prison laws, rules and regulations.

Prisons are the public institutions and therefore they must perform the function assigned to them by law. The law declares simply and precisely that if individuals are convicted of crimes, they shall be placed on probation, fine, or undergo a sentence of imprisonment. Men are thus sent to a prison as punishment. Strictly speaking, the law sends them not to be reformed but primarily to be held in safe custody. Thus we can safely say that till the last century the idea has been to keep the prisoner in safe custody alone. The recent tendency now is, of course, that prison system is meant for reformation of the prisoners that they may return to society as useful members and this function of the prison is now termed as discipline. (B.S. Haikerwal)

## PRISONS IN TAMIL NADU

The Presidency Jail for women in Vellore, was the first prison constructed in Tamil Nadu during the year 1830 followed by Madras "Penitentiary" during the year 1837 and thereafter all other prisons were constructed one by one up to the year 1872. After Independence Central Prison, Puzhal was the only prison constructed during the year 1981 and some additional accommodation was made in other

Prisons. All the Prison buildings are more than 150 years old

**Table No 1**

### Prisons in India and Tamil Nadu

Category of Prisons	Number		Percentage to India
	India	Tamil Nadu	
Central Prisons	131	9	6.87
Special Prison for Women	19	3	15.78
Borstal School	20	12	60.00
Special Sub Jails (Men : 2 Women : 3)	37	5	13.51
District Jails	364	9	2.47
Sub Jails (Men : 87 Women : 8 )	758	95	12.53
Open Air Prison	54	3	5.56
Others	04	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>1387</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>9.80</b>

*Source: Tamil Nadu Prison Department*

Table No. 1 indicates that there are 9 central prisons, 3 special prisons for women, 12 borstal schools, 5 special sub jails, 9 district jails, 95 sub jails and 3 open air prisons in Tamil Nadu.

## VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN PRISON

**Mihika Basu (2013)** nearly two years after a report by Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) recommended effective vocational training programmes to improve employability of prisoners post release, the higher and technical education department has decided to extend its facilities to prisons in the state. A major finding of his study was that while 48 per cent of inmates had no job skills, almost 74 per cent of them expressed the need for jobs after release.

**Mission News wire (2012)** “Building the skills of India’s prison population is a key focus for reducing poverty and the potential for recidivism,” says Fr. Mark Hyde, Executive Director of Salesian Missions, the U.S. development arm of the Silesians of Don Bosco. “Providing educational opportunities while in prison helps youth learn the skills

necessary to have a productive life once they are released”.

**RAND Corporation report (2013)** Prison inmates who receive general education and vocational training are significantly less likely to return to prison after release and are more likely to find employment than peers who do not receive such opportunities, according to a new RAND Corporation report.

Researchers found that inmates who participate in correctional education programs have 43 percent lower odds of returning to prison than those who do not. The estimate is based on studies that carefully account for motivation and other differences between correctional education recipients and non-recipients. The findings also suggest that prison education programs are cost effective.

**Paramasivan.C (2016)** Vocational training is one indispensable training to enlarge the self-employment activities of the unemployed or the underemployed, which make them as a viable manpower in the country. In the topical periods, skills and vocational training become budding aspects to promote employment opportunity to all. As such, providing vocational training to the prison inmates is one of the innovative schemes which make the prisoners as a valuable resource and also it helps to generate income for them to meet their dependents. Vocational training to the prisoners will make them as self-employee entrepreneurs after their imprisonment is over. Therefore vocational training to prison should be strengthened and various types of vocational training should be offered.

**The Hindu (2015)** in the article of Prisons in Tamil Nadu top in productivity, Productivity in Tamil Nadu prisons has topped the country with a total earning of Rs. 36.97 crore last year. With an inmate population of 15,784, the State has also topped in prisoner rehabilitation, thanks to a variety of educational/vocational

courses. In 2012, the State was placed fifth in gross earnings from products of inmates with revenue of Rs 11.56 crore.

Sold under the ‘Freedom Bazaar’ brand, Tamil Nadu prison products made many heads turn when they were displayed at the recently held Global Investors Meet in Chennai where multinational corporate companies showcased their might.

Going by data released by the National Crime Records Bureau, the Tamil Nadu government had spent Rs. 38.84 crore on prisoners lodged in 136 jails, including nine central prisons, across the State in 2014. This expense included food, clothing, education, vocational courses and welfare activities.

Kerala stood second in prison productivity with an inmate population of 7,078 and goods valued at Rs. 21.43 crore.

On the rehabilitation front, Tamil Nadu again topped with 961 prisoners being rehabilitated. “Sustained efforts are on to make sure that every inmate leaves the prison with employable skills which will help in merging with the mainstream workforce of the society. Last year 2,185 inmates went through Elementary Education, 1,201 Adult Education and 699 Higher Education programmes. About 300 underwent computer courses,” the official said.

As many as 4,951 prisoners who could not afford or engage legal counsel were provided free legal aid in association with the Tamil Nadu State Legal Services Authority.

The object of vocational training to the prisoners is reformation and rehabilitation and with this objective in mind training in various simple trades like plumbing, simple electrical wiring, painting including sign board writing, brick making is offered and prisoners are awarded with certificates by State Council Vocational Training to enable them to seek employment after their release.

**Table No. 2**  
**Details of Vocational Training**

1	Bread Making
2	Diploma and PG Diploma Spiritual Value Education
3	L.E.D Bulb Making
4	Candle Making
5	Four Wheeler and Two Wheeler Mechanism
6	Computer Hardware Course
7	Sanitary Napkin Manufacture
8	Music Class
9	Information & Communication Vocational Technology
10	Handmade paper & Products
11	Diploma in Housing Electrician
12	Herbal Training
13	Diploma in Garment Fashion Designing
14	Basic Tailoring
15	Assistant Cook
16	Basic Wood Work
17	Screen Painting
18	Music Class
19	Kunthakal Art
20	Phenyl Making
21	Cleaning Powder
22	Drawing Class
23	Candle Making
24	Tailoring course (Women )
25	Candle Products (Women )
26	Electrical&Wiring (Men)
27	Diploma in Four Wheeler Mechanism
28	Diploma in Catering Assistant
29	Block Printing
30	Sanitary Napkin
31	Computer Training
32	Beautician Course

33	Hand Embroidery
34	Tailoring And Embroidery
35	Mat Work and Woollen Work
36	Muffler Making
37	Computer Training
38	Baby Napkin and Baby Frock
39	Tailoring course
40	Beautician Course
41	Gem Cutting

*Source: Tamil Nadu Prison Department*

### **PRISONER'S EDUCATION**

Q Hayat (1983) numerous reports dating back to the end of the 19th century have pointed to the need for educational programs in prisons. However, the basic penal philosophy is one of deterrence and retribution. Prisoner education remains largely neglected. The prison education program includes both general education and vocational education. Further needs are proper supplying and staffing of libraries, improved vocational education, provision of television and radio facilities to inmates, and adequate funding.

The Hindu (2012) Community college education fosters hope among prisoners, ten convicts undergoing life sentence at the Special Prison for Women, Tiruchi, have recently completed a beautician course conducted by the Mahatma Gandhi Community College.

The year-long course was initiated by the community college in January 2011 and was taught by Latha Thiruvengadam, a beautician appointed by the Tamil Nadu Open University. The final exams, which were conducted over four weekends in February, tested candidates for theoretical as well as practical knowledge.

The beautician course covered a variety of treatments like threading, waxing, facials, and scalp massages, acupressure head massages to relieve headaches, hair colouring, manicure, pedicure, hair dressing, and preparation of

herbal hair oils and complete bridal make-up. “During their practical exams, the candidates were allowed to use other inmates as their models, so that even they had a chance to experience such things.” After their release, the students will have to work at some parlour to gain practical experience before starting off on their own, she added. “Once they begin their own parlours, these women can make up to Rs.15,000 in the initial stages.” The course is one among the various vocational courses being taught by the Mahatma Gandhi Community College. 10 life sentence convicts at Special Prison for Women complete beautician course. Conducted in collaboration with local community colleges and the Indian Centre for Research and Development of Community Education (ICRDCE), the courses and training programmes are available across nine central prisons in the state.

Speaking about the courses offered to prison inmates, Father Xavier Alphonse S.J., Director, ICRDCE said, “In January 2010, we registered around 261 inmates from Central Prisons in Puzhal, Vellore, Cuddalore, Palayamkottai, Salem, Madurai, Coimbatore and Tiruchi. The first batch under this set up is being trained to become DTP operators, beauticians, and computer operators, catering assistants, four wheeler mechanics, electricians and plumbers.”

Besides these vocational training courses, the community college also trains inmates who have studied up to class VIII to take the SSLC and Plus Two examinations. The training programmes impart training in life-coping skills and work skills, besides including an internship, preparation of resumes, applying for jobs and grooming for interviews.

**Table No. 3**  
**Prisoner's Education and Vocational training through N.G.Os' Participation**

<b>No. of prisoners studying as on 31.08.2008</b>	
... in the Prison School	127
... in Adult Education Programme	728
... Under graduate course	156
... Post graduate course	22
... M.Phil., /MCA course	7
... Computer course	72
... in Vocational training	2217
<b>No. of Prisoners trained (2006 - 2007)</b>	
Cup and Plate	60
Tailoring	105
Readymade Garments	20
Bakery	12
Computer training (31.03.2008)	2280

*Source: Tamil Nadu Prison Department*

Table No. 3 explains the prisoner's education and vocation training through N.G.O's participation. There are 2217 prisoners who studied vocational training course as on 31.08.2008. During the year 2006-2007, 60 prisoners were trained in cup and plate making, 105 in tailoring, 20 in readymade garments, 12 in bakery industry and 2280 were trained in computer training.

**Table No. 4**  
**The Non-Governmental Organizations are running industries in prisons**

<b>No. of Prisoners trained (2012-13)</b>		
<b>No.</b>	<b>Trade</b>	<b>No. of prisoner Studying</b>
1	Basic Sewing Operator	20
2	Bed Side Assistant	57
3	Basic House Wiring	20
4	Security General Guard	40
5	Assistant Manson	38
6	Weaver Looms	50
7	Hand tufted carpet Manufacturing (Handloom)	10

8	Computer Fundamental	117
9	Handmade Paper	28
10	Tailor	60
11	Painter Assistant	39
12	Basic of Beauty and Hair Dressing	46
13	Assistant Cook	74
14	Assistant Plumber	20
15	Basic Wood Work	16
16	Basic Electrical Training	20
17	Hospitality Assistant	20
18	Basic Cultivation of Cereal Crops	20
19	Garment Packer	20
20	Spoken English and Communication Skill	40
21	Attendant - Ethnic Indian Sweets, Snacks & Food	20
22	House hold help Kitchen	20
23	Bulp Beater	40
24	Agitator -Pulp QC	40
25	Packer	40
26	Manufacturing of Envelopes	40
27	Paper Cutter	40
28	Dosa Maker	20
29	Idly Sambar Maker	19
30	Helper	18
<b>Total</b>		<b>1052</b>

Source: Tamil Nadu Prison Department

## CONCLUSION

Vocational training is provided to enhance the skills in a particular field which helps one become an independent worker or gain self-employment to generate income by the person. Vocational training may be of different categories for different aspects depending on the nature of work and capacity of the trainee. In Tamil Nadu, almost all the central jails are giving vocational training to their inmates particularly to the men convicts Weaving, Tailoring, handle making, bricks making, carpentering,

sanitary napkin making, computer training are the major vocational training in the central Jails in Tamil Nadu. Providing vocational training to the prison inmates helps to divert their concentration into the productivity and income generation aspects which help their family members also. This kind of vocational training should be given to all the prison inmates their basic knowledge and skill should be identified based on which vocational training should be given with the help of NGO's Academic institutions, training centre and voluntary trainer. Providing vocational training is not only giving training but also it is one of the best ways of rehabilitation measures to the prisoners.

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