Prison Reforms in Telangana

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Dignity and Diversity in Prison Spaces

- Incarceration in itself an indignity
- Everyday indignities in prison spaces

REFORMS

Prison reforms in Telangana state present a unique opportunity to understand a micro-level initiative

Some of the critical reforms in prison do not require legislative or large-scale macro policy interventions.

Instead, it demanded a micro-level restructuring of everyday practices of prison governance- cannot be merely a technocratic solution.

They are institutional solutions embedded in sensitive and contextualised interventions

PRIMARY QUESTIONS

1) How did the prison as an institution address the issue of dignity in a prison space?

2) What were the limitations of the reforms carried out in prisons of Telangana?

DIGNITY IN A PRISON CONTEXT

- An institutional acknowledgement of inmates' being human' with dignity- an internal, inalienable, and inviolable worth.
- An overt institutional recognition - incarceration or the state of being confined in prison is a punishment in itself.
- Human dignity needs to be preserved, and infringements equal to double punishment for the same offence.
- The dignity of the inmates is also upheld if an opportunity is provided for reformation and rehabilitation.

Physical and mental well being

- Mental and Emotional Health Issues
- Physical Health Problems
- Under nourishing food
- Recurring Deaths in Prison

Work and Wages

Hardly any opportunity for any productive wage work

Participation and Voice

·Absence of Grievance Redressal Mechanism

·Absence of Inmates Voice in Prison Governance

Infrastructure

- Dilapidated Buildings
- Bad Sanitations
- Dingy and congested Barracks

Unlawful Activities

·Reproduction of Criminal Hierarchy

·Socialisation in newer crimes

·Illegal Activities

·High Handedness of Prison Staff

Legal Aid

·Inability to Access Quality Legal Aid

Content of Change: Instilling a sense of being - dignity

- Aesthetically pleasant infrastructure
- Health: Physical and Emotional
- Capability Building: Education and Vocational training
- Loans and Livelihood Support
- Legal Aid Services

Intersection of Discipline, Reform and Welfare.

The concept and practice of time is officially determined and executed. The inmates lose the liberty to any private time.

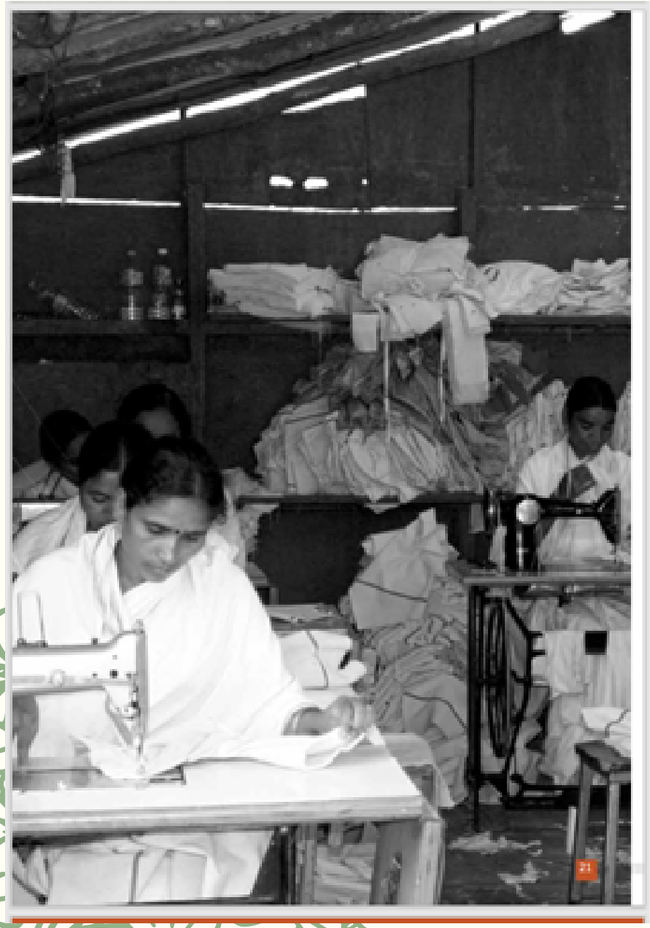
A strict timetable for the whole day involving physical exercises, capability enhancing interventions, leisure, sports and recreation

The utilization of time is decided by the rule book of the prison and often informally by the will and sanction of the prison officials.

Limitations: Inability to Engage with Diversity in Prison Spaces

Creating 'equal spaces' by ironing out differences

Each inmate had to carry these out irrespective of their pre-prison socio-economic profile or the nature of unlawful acts committed



Women in Prisons

Context and Consequences

Unequal in life, equal before law

Public vs private

Women as marginal earners

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Institutionalize incarceration and loss of liberty as the only punishment

Institutionalize restoration of dignity

SICA - Training, Refresher Courses

Partnerships

THANK YOU!