



THE TRAJECTORY AND DIASPORA OF WOMEN IMPRISONMENT: AN ANALYSIS

 **A.K. M
Ismoddoha¹
Md. Bashir Uddin
Khan^{2*}**

¹MS Student, Marwala Bhashani Science and Technology University, Santosh, Bangladesh.

Email: swapnil.sufal@gmail.com Tel: (+88)01755279571

²PhD Candidate, School of Sociology and Political Science, Shanghai University, China; Assistant Professor, Marwala Bhashani Science and Technology University, Santosh, Bangladesh.

Email: mbashir2009@gmail.com Tel: (+86)19802130090



(+ Corresponding author)

ABSTRACT

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In Bangladesh, a very limited number of studies are prevalent to understand the condition of women prisoners. To know the real situation in this regard, we collected data by in-depth interviewing with 10 released women prisoners of two purposively selected jails (from Dhaka and Tangail district) from the two central districts of Bangladesh. For data collection and analysis for this study, we applied the qualitative method (case study). We analyzed the socio-economic factors behind their crime commission, their perception towards jail administration and the impact of their incarceration on their children. The findings revealed that lower socioeconomic condition can be a factor behind the women's criminal outbreak. Lack of accommodation, proper food, drugs, prison atmosphere, staff's behavior, and employment opportunities are the major problems faced by the prisoners in jails. Their perception regarding jail administration was considerably adverse. We also found that mothers' incarceration significantly influences their children regarding various short and long term exposure to behavioral problems. Moreover, children with incarcerated mothers are found to be more likely to suffer from mental health issues and deprived of the mainstream academic curriculum. Extensive separations from children have been shown to have an impact on incarcerated mothers as well. The legal rights and privileges for the women prisoners are in many cases absent in most of the cases analyzed here.

Contribution/Originality: This study contributes to the existing literature by minimizing the gap of scientific investigation regarding the effectiveness of prison system in Bangladesh in dealing with the inmates.

1. INTRODUCTION

Crimes are anti-social behavior mandated by the legal system. These are considered as committed when someone intentionally breaks the statutory law by crossing the limit of their legal boundaries (Brown *et al.*, 2010). The concept of crime is a complex one, which is viewed as a norm-breaking natural phenomenon of a given human society at all times and has encountered changes in accordance with the development of society (Schwartz and Vega, 2017). The number of crime-commission seems to be soared up in the contemporary world. The rate of females' involvement in crimes is also gradually rising around the world (Fiandaca, 2007; Pasko, 2013; Motz, 2014; Freiburger and Marcum, 2016; Naffine, 2016; Cunha, 2018). The ever increasing reporting of females in criminality may be the result of rapid socio-economic changes, industrialization, and urbanization. Because of their changing

role in the family, they are participating in different outside activities like their male counterparts. Therefore, women are now found to be present in criminal activities more frequently than they were found before. However, in 1975, Freda Adler and Rita James Simon's contribution has brought the issue of female criminality into the public domain (Bruinsma and Weisburd, 2014). Due to their comparatively greater involvement in crime, the rate of imprisonment for females is higher now. The fact is women in prison suffer from intersecting discrimination and are largely ignored in prison systems designed for men. The issue of women's incarceration and rights of their children came to the limelight from this issue. There is comparatively small number of researches about the issue in the world. In Bangladesh, prisons have been overlooked and ignored not only in the scholarly literature of the country but also in the policymakers' strategic formulation. Additionally, the prison condition for women, reasons for imprisonment, issues of their health, motherhood, reentry to the society, reintegration and all other associated issues are yet to be investigated on a massive scale.

To look into the historical agenda of women's incarceration in Bangladesh or in any other country, this is important to understand criminality as the outcome of their existing relationships with others in the wider socio-cultural, socio-legal and socio-economic contexts. While putting a man into the bar, the judges think about their parenting role on special occasions only, while this is the prime concern for a judge to decide about a woman's imprisonment. From scattered media reports and local NGO reports, it becomes clear that the condition is not better in Bangladesh. The reforms undergone in the developed countries were the reflections of multiple issues from inside (e.g., the context of motherhood) and outside (e.g., the scholarly movements for the right and justification of incarcerated women) of the prisons or jails. Bangladesh has a very different historical background which leaves space for further research.

This study intends to explore the less focused arena of women's experience in jails and their reintegration process to society. We applied the case study method for this study to understand the associated issues from a deeper perspective. This is an exploratory analysis where no previous hypothesis was used. Although, due to the inaccessibility, scattered nature of ex-inmates living places and disagreeing to answer the questions we had to confine it in small sample size, we have found some interesting findings from this study which are described in the subsequent part of this paper.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Women in Prison (Causes)

Previously women were considered as the associates of crimes, not as the actual perpetrators but afterward, it is revealed that due to the advancement of their active role in different sectors of the society, in many cases they are playing the main role in criminal incidents (Fiandaca, 2007). Sometimes female offenders are found as the key actors in trafficking or prostitution or illegal drug business. Fiandaca (2007) claimed that women's involvement in mafia activities in Italy is also prevalent as very active actors, not as merely the accomplice of the crimes. There are different types of crimes in the society (Tang and Khan, 2018) and women are found to be engaged as perpetrators in many of these offenses. The present rate of women imprisonment is 4.1% among the total 88,211 prisoners (including pre-trial detainees/remand prisoners) (World Prison Brief Institute for Crime & Justice Policy Research, 2019). In the following, Table 1 shows the total number of female prison population in Bangladesh, percentage of female prisoners based on total prison population of the country and the total number of female prisoners based on per 100, 000 of the national population of Bangladesh. The table indicates that the number of female prisoners in Bangladesh has a growing trend over the recent years Table 1.

Scholars found evidence that women having more violent exposure at their earlier stage can expose to violent activities in their later life (Motz, 2014). Women who commit crimes in most of the cases are likely to have broken families, uneven lifestyle and problems with their intimates. Although anybody can commit crimes, despite their gender identity, our society is not yet prepared to see women as perpetrators. Motz (2014) argued that although

males and females both come in the justice system in conflict with laws, women face a “double set of prejudice” for violating society’s so-called stereotyping of not maintaining the expectation of being good women. She also claims that the courts in many cases are more harsh in applying their discretion on women’s violence.

Table-1. Female prisoners of Bangladesh (per 100,000 of the national population).

Year	Number of Female Prison Population	Percentage of total prison population	Female prison population rate (per 100,000 of national population)
2003	1,910	2.8%	1.4
2006	2,222	3.4%	1.5
2010	2,324	3.4%	1.5
2014	2,211	3.4%	1.4
2019	3,627	4.1%	2.2

Source: World prison brief, institute for crime & justice policy research.

2.2. Psychology of Prisoners

The link between depression and violence should not be overlooked as many acts of violence, whether targeted against the self, others or children, are linked to severe depression. The strong connection between homicidal and suicidal urges is evident in extreme exposure to violence that has a close connection with depression. That is why, for proactive policing, the consideration of this factor is very important (Motz, 2014). Prisons or jails are not only those places where the inmates remain. This is rather the process of limiting their liberty in such a way that they cannot withdraw themselves from the situation. They might stay there even for the whole of their lives. This inability to withdraw them from the confined state or hostile condition created by their fellow inmates can make them depressed. This depression can lead them to self-harm tendencies like suicide (Tartaro and Lester, 2009). In contrast with those, mothers who are imprisoned for any offense generally have a strong emotional feeling for their kids and other family members. Along with this, due to the stigmatization and the “criminal status” because of their offense-history, they find themselves as “leftover” or “castaway”. In many cases, they lose their jobs or credibility in society. These complex issues make women prisoners /jail inmates depressed and violent afterward. That is why the psychology of imprisoned women is very important to issue to consider.

2.3. The Link between Parental Incarceration and Childhood Trauma

Parental incarceration put a negative impact on their children (Allard and Lu, 2006). This has different long and short term influences on their psychology and later life criminality (Felitti *et al.*, 1998). Sometimes, children also are victimized by their parents’ offenses as a result of the depressive exposure of their parents (Motz, 2014). Childhood trauma is considered as the combination of different factors among which the history of their family members’ incarceration is very vital (Chui, 2016; Altintas and Bilici, 2018; Caravaca-Sánchez *et al.*, 2019). Therefore, the incarcerated females are more likely to face more delinquent outcomes from their children or other family members.

2.4. Post-Imprisonment Experience and Social Reintegration of Jail Inmates

After getting released from prison, women need to search for their way out from the stigmatization. They need to fight with all adversities evolved from the family, workplace, and society. They also face challenges to be flexible with their children again (Allard and Lu, 2006). The traumatic experience they face during their confinement or solitary confinements may cause suffering to them for the whole of their lives. These traumatic incidences sometimes may make them psychologically and physically unstable. Sometimes they can be involved in crimes again as they cannot cope with society well because of their labeling as “offenders”. Social Capital is a very vital resource for all members of any given society (Binik *et al.*, 2019). Lack of social capital in case of released jail inmates (due to

their labeling as “offenders”)may make them less capable to face social challenges.

2.5. Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to focus on the background of women prisoners and the condition of their children inside and outside of the prison. However, the specific objectives of this study are:

- To understand the socio-cultural, economic and other factors that have instigated the convicted female offenders to commit the offenses.
- To know the perception of convicted women prisoners towards jail administration and to reveal their imprisonment experience.
- To apprehend how far the rights of the children of incarcerated mothers are being ensured and how are they readjusting to the society after serving the sentence in jails.

3. METHOD

3.1. The Choice of Research Method

Released prisoners’ experience is seemingly an effective way to understand their feelings regarding their tenure passed in the correctional institutes. Very rationally many scholars posit that the selection of a research method should be guided by the topic, time and availability of financial resources (Gilbert, 2008). Considering the time, resource and research agenda, we adopted a qualitative approach for understanding this sophisticated issue. Thereby this study is based on an in-depth analysis of cases (females serving at the jail and released afterward). It is to be mentioned that the case studies may not necessarily be limited to a single source of evidence (Yin, 2014). Therefore, a qualitative approach which was supplemented by some instruments of quantitative research (a pre-set questionnaire) were also used here. This can be treated as a triangulation process but the only qualitative explanation is given here due to inadequate sample size for reaching a statistical inference by such a small sample size. There are some other rationalities of using a qualitative approach for this research. Kvale (2006) considered qualitative research as a building block of investigative study. A qualitative method, however, was chosen, because of its greater flexibility which facilitated us to be driven by the pathways of the cases. Abstractly, stepping forward and backward in collecting information was possible due to the adoption of qualitative approach. It helped us to interact with the subjects with manipulation of idea by triggering different relevant issues (Kvale, 2006). Interviews produced a bulk amount of materials, where a researcher explored ex-prisoners’ views, experiences, and knowledge in different areas of criminality. Kvale (2006) has the views that through interactions and conversations, we came to know about our respondents and collect information on the whole environment. The major shortcoming of qualitative method is it allows the researchers to use small sample size (Miles and Huberman, 2008) which in itself defeats the whole essence of generalizability. However, for the present research context, qualitative research approach could serve the purpose because we do not have much research on this area due to the inaccessibility and lack of empathetic respondents.

3.2. Collection of Earlier Research Data

Prior to going to the field, data were collected from different secondary sources, like, books, journals, newspapers, newsletters, websites, etc. Earlier data from the field were collected from several meetings with the officers involved in jail management. These prior analyses helped us to frame an initial guideline for the research. The officers and staff are in no way part of the actual research. Still, their knowledge and experience achieved by working in this field helped us in the research process.

3.3. Interviewing the Released Prisoners

Before conducting interviews, the researchers took necessary permission from the household head of women’s

family and also from an organization concerned with taking care of released women from the jails (Nari Mukti Songho). Ex female prisoners generally meet at the organization for discussing different personal issues. After getting permission, all the respondents were personally contacted and informed about the contents and purpose of the research. Only after getting their positive consent, interviews have been conducted. 10 respondents were interviewed face-to-face which enabled the researchers to apprehend the experiences of those ex jail inmates in a better way.

3.4. Getting the Respondents

It was extremely difficult to get adequate study materials in Bangladesh perspective regarding jail related issues. This is also very difficult to find out the respondents, as they are the residents from different areas. Some of them have also changed their contact numbers and addresses. Some of them have used erroneous and false addresses. However, to find out the residences of released women prisoners, the researchers took help from Tangail jail administration and they provided the addresses.

3.5. Sampling Method and Analysis

For the present study, non-probability purposive sampling was used. The transcribing process produced a bulk of raw interview data. These were carefully sorted out. Furthermore, special attention was given to released women prisoners' languages and the ability to express themselves. There were a lot of 'jargons'. Most ex-prisoners had demonstrated low level of expression and were giving answers on different phenomena. During the analysis, necessary care was taken to identify the defects and to collect information on a supplementary basis.

3.6. Ethical Consideration

The researchers informed the respondents about the details on the research purpose. The respondents were told that they had the freedom to withdraw at any time from answering the questions. In addition, a consent paper was given to all the participants prior to interviews. For the purpose of anonymity of the respondents, their names were not used anywhere. Instead, they were labeled as 'Respondent 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7,8,9 and 10. Thus, no privacy issues were interfered or exposed by the researchers in course of conducting this study.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The study has revealed some interesting findings of the respondents' experience of jail life. These findings can be divided into different issues for a quick appreciation and put forward as the following.

4.1. Social Background of Released Women Prisoners

The ages of interviewed ex-prisoners ranged from 20 to 38 years old. However, except four women, all of the respondents were living in jails with their children. Eight out of ten respondents had a broken relationship with their families because of their involvement in unethical jobs and substance abuse. The interviews reveal that most of the released women prisoners had broken families or had weak relationships with their families, relatives, and friends due to their involvement in criminal activities and other unethical jobs. Therefore, they have a lack of social and emotional supports, advice, and money to leave crimes. All the respondents had a low level of education [Figure 1](#).

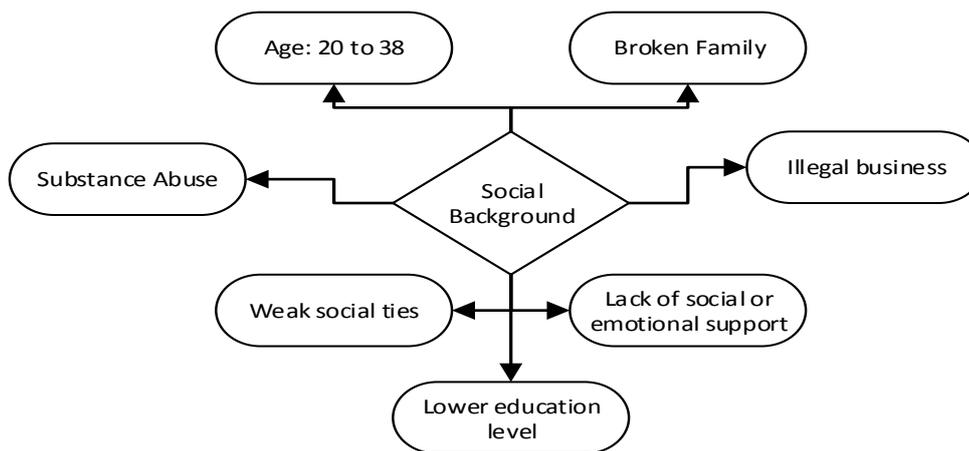


Figure-1. Social background of the respondents.

4.2. Nature of Offences Committed by the Respondents

Respondents described that they had a high tendency of abusing substances. Some of them were sex workers. We have revealed that most of the respondents were sentenced to prisons for the first time except one woman who experienced her second time imprisonment. Nine of them were imprisoned for the first time due to the accusation of human trafficking offenses and the remaining one was in prison for the drug-related offense. Nearly all interviewed ex jail inmates admitted that they had the habit of substance abuse. However, some of the issues which the researchers were trying to find out did not come directly from the respondents, but the researchers got the information with continuous effort Figure 2.



Figure-2. Nature of offenses the respondents were accused of.

4.3. Inside the Jails

4.3.1. Overcrowding

All the respondents admitted that overcrowding is a common phenomenon in Tangail jail And Dhaka central jail. According to them, very often inmates had to sleep by turns and sometimes some inmates were even unable to lie down due to space constraints. According to one of the respondents, *‘There was insufficient space to sleep and at most of the nights, we had to touch with each other while sleeping. It was like putting each one’s legs on the body of others. The place was too short even to move.’* It is to be mentioned that the jails are built during the colonial era considering the number of people at that time which are rarely capable to hold the people at the subsequent time (Bin Kashem, 1996; Senese and Kashem, 1997; Jaishankar, 2020).

4.3.2. Foods and Supplies

There are provisions in the Jail Code (combination of jail related acts and rules) to provide the inmates with a proper diet. The interviewees, however, stated that the foods provided in the prison were available but substandard. In this study, no respondents expressed that they liked the foods provided in the prisons. They treated the food as 'very bad in taste'. They considered prison's food as an indirect, a cruel and an unusual punishment. They assumed that the prison administration probably used something (they thought it was an unknown medicine) in the food to reduce inmates' sexual desire. Since most of them worked as sex workers, after coming back from the jails they found their sexual desires as extremely low but they admitted that after ten to fifteen days, they regained their natural health condition. Most of the respondents commented like, *"the foods were full of bad smells; they mixed medicine into our food and most of the time we couldn't eat those"*. Respondents also complained about the means of preparing the foods. According to them, 'those are tasteless and poorly cooked'. The obvious impact of a carbohydrate-rich diet and inactivity for many women was their increased body weight. In this circumstance, the researches talked with the jailer (the officer responsible for the overall management) but the jailer denied this fact. The jailer said, *"it is a myth among the inmates, and it's fabricated information."* The respondents believe that there are some unholy practices between jail officials and some prison inmates. Some inmates can get more food if they can give bribes to the officials. Suppliers are alleged to supply poor quality food items to maximize their profits unduly. Furthermore, despite the imposed restriction on the supply of foods from outside, some persons enter into the jail with food by establishing a 'good relationship' with the officials and supply those to their respective relatives incarcerated in the jail. Taking advantage of this poor quality and less quantity food a false demand for outside food is created. These demands for getting food from outside, create some ill means for some corrupted officials to get illegal money from the kith and kin of the jail inmates **Figure 3**.

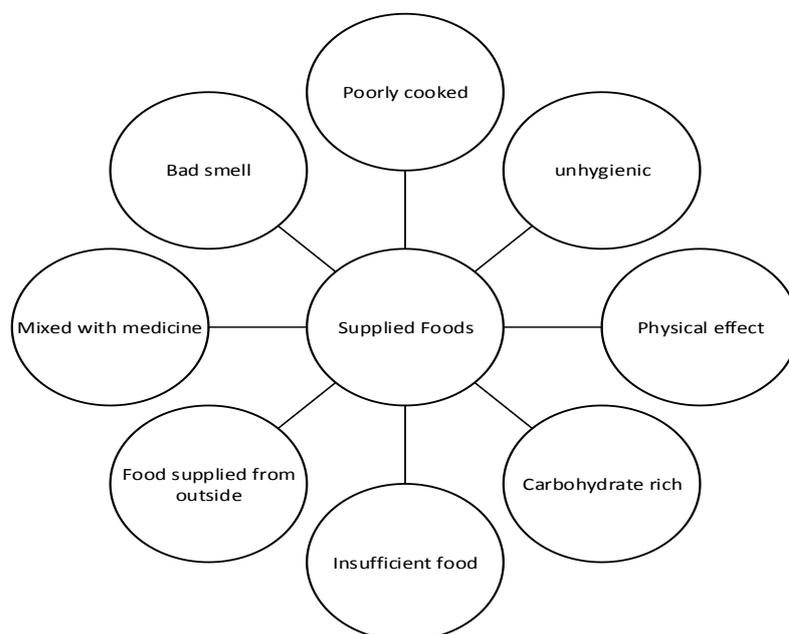


Figure-3. Quality of food supplied in jails.

4.3.3. Pure Water and Sanitation Arrangement

The arrangement for safe drinking water in jails is dubious and in all probability, ordinary supply water is used for drinking and reservoir-water for bathing. Furthermore, the sanitation system is rarely up to the mark. Besides this, the drainage system is not healthy. The number of toilets is very insufficient for the inmates in those jails. Evidence suggests that the living system of these jails are very poor (Khandaker *et al.*, 2019). This is also found that the condition of inmates in the jails is very fragile in terms of their physical and psychological wellbeing (Alemayehu *et al.*, 2019; Ross *et al.*, 2019).

4.3.4. Work Pressure

Interviewing with the released jail inmates revealed that during their imprisonment, they required to be engaged in different works, like washing clothes, sewing, cleaning floor, toilets, and water reservoir, helping to process curry, counting other inmates, helping the cook, etc. Most of the time, they were bound to do the work. If sometimes they felt sick, still they did not have enough opportunity to avoid the work. Most of the time, they were engaged in any of these activities and they never had any freedom to get rid of these assigned tasks.

4.3.5. Sleeping Disturbance

Sleeping disturbance has been found as a very common issue among the respondents. For some women, the stress of imprisonment and the noisy prison environment were very serious issues that hampered their ordinary sleeping behavior. For other women, this was related to their prior histories of drug-misuse where they used drugs as a means of having sound sleep. Lack of having such kinds of drugs caused serious disruption of their sleeping patterns.

4.3.6. Relationships with Custodial Staff

From a number of factors that determined how well women coped with the prison environment one very important factor was the nature of inmates' relationships with the custodial staff. Some women reported that interaction with certain members of the custodial staff had a positive impact on their well-being in prison. This is something can be treated as the reward for "good behavior". Officers generally allow those inmates to discuss different issues on a regular basis.

4.3.7. Health Care Facilities

This study on released prisoners explored that the prison had contributed much to solve most of their health-related problems. *Respondent 4 articulated; "Oh!, they have done almost everything for my treatment. Costs for urine and blood tests, for instance, were paid by the jail authority"*. However, the study has revealed that such positive issues of jail officials helped the inmates to adjust themselves in the newer environment of prison. The study also revealed that the prisons have strict rules and regulations which each member is required to obey. They need to demonstrate acceptable behaviors and refrain from crimes or drug abuse. However, concern about the health of jail inmates is very common in most of the countries. As the inmates are very much close to each other, they have a high propensity to be suffered from infectious diseases (Baillargeon *et al.*, 2000). Some protocols for understanding these issues are in progress (Trotter *et al.*, 2018).

4.3.8 Difficulties to Meet with Children

The study revealed that there was no special arrangement for children to visit their mothers in jails. Three respondents out of ten told, *"Here in jail, we didn't have any special room for visiting children and even we could not touch and hug our children and it gave us much mental pain"*. The children of incarcerated mothers were getting the same visiting facilities as other visitors, and inside the prison, the small children were living with their mothers in a very congested place. But they witnessed that mothers with children always enjoy better facilities which are applicable to their children. However, parents' incarceration in many cases are liable for childhood trauma which can lead them to a crime-prone lifestyle in their later life (Chui, 2016; Altintas and Bilici, 2018; Caravaca-Sánchez *et al.*, 2019).

4.3.9. The Jail Environment

While the impact of imprisonment was asked to the respondents, almost all the respondents were agreed that the prison environment was not congenial to promote a healthy environment. They complained that the environment in jail was dirty with unhygienic sharing of facilities. They mentioned that the facilities hindered them

from maintaining even the self-care. While the women were highly critical of others who did not maintain personal hygiene, they also acknowledged that it could be a struggle to keep the environment up to the mark. Some women complained that their period of being in prison unnecessarily limited their access to their personal hygiene products. An acute problem according to them arose when they encountered limited access to bathing or showering facilities. Women reported that the facilities that were available were often dirty. Women were also critical of the fact that they were not allowed the materials to clean the facilities which they required to use. There were some recognitions among the respondents that these were related to their security issues. However, they felt disempowered because of their relying on other designated inmates to carry out cleaning tasks, whose standards were not similar to their own. These kinds of frustration were very negative sometimes. Studies have established that the jail environment itself is very suicidal for incorporating various pains of losing control from the freedom and most of the inmates' known arena (Tartaro and Lester, 2009). The combined effect put a harmful impact on their psychology also. Studies also indicate that female prison inmates often go through severe traumatic experiences inside the prison as a consequence of the adversity they face there (Wolff et al., 2009; Wolff et al., 2018) Figure 4.

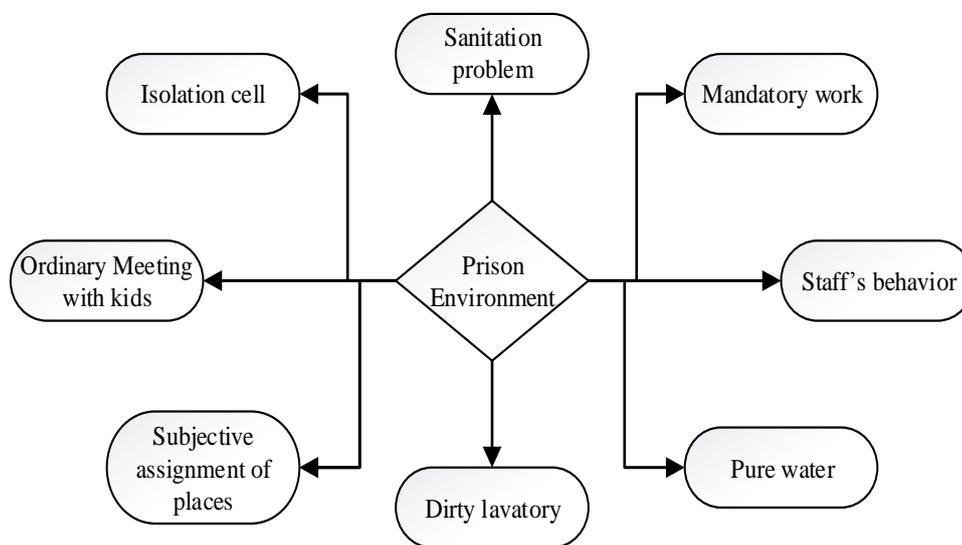


Figure-4. Obstacles in prison.

4.3.10. Lack of Educational Facilities for Children

The released women prisoners mentioned that there were no special academic or vocational educational facilities for children inside the prisons. According to the jailer, the jail administration provides the only religion based and mass education program which the state has provided for prison inmates.

4.4. Condition of Released Prisoners in Prison

Hereinafter, we would present various barriers that released prisoners experienced after getting released from jails. During the interview, they not only shared their problems of being in jails but also shared their miseries while they came out of the captive system and tried to rehabilitate them in the family and the society as well.

4.4.1. The Impact of the Lifestyle of Prison on Societal Reintegration

The study found that ex-prisoners and former drug addicts have moved to their own life model, which is slightly unique from ordinary people in society. The interviewed ex-prisoners passed a part of their lives in prisons where they were highly interdependent with each other and, were abided by the environment in which they lived. In their post-imprisonment lives, ex-prisoners have seen moving through their own distinct lifestyle. While released, they carried various stressors and events that prevented them to adapt to their new environment. Stressors and negative events that they faced afterward were related to accommodations, financial constraints,

unemployment, stigmatization, lack of identities, the collapse of their social networks, guilty minds, and health-related problems.

In addition, this is also true that to embrace their new lifestyle, they had developed coping capacities by changing behaviors in order to suit a new environment. However, in the process of adjustments and coping, prisoners had established social relationships with each other by forming strong solidarity and social attachment among themselves. The study revealed that they had established a mutual assistance system for sharing their feelings.

4.4.2. Broken Family/ Declining Kinship

Crimes carry negative connotations and include non-approved acts by society. Some interviewed ex-prisoners have described that; they had weak or broken relationships with their families as Respondent 6 mentioned, “My family members did not want to see me”. This study, however, had discovered that isolating a family member because of her or his criminal or unaccepted behavior is prevalent in society.

4.4.3. Difficulties in Adapting with New Role

Ex-prisoners have described how hard it was, to change the life of criminality to new life free of crimes, drugs, sex works, etc. They pointed out that in new life, they were readjusting all of their habits in their families and trying to retain a very ordinary lifestyle. They are trying to find out a new meaning of life through the accepted means of the society like helping their children, living with little money, staying away from crimes, etc.

4.4.4. Stigmatization

The study revealed that released prisoners face discrimination from other people in society. The denial, mistrust, and ascribing a question mark on them by other people are very common. The majority of the respondents pointed out that, “People and particularly jail super, jailer, police, social service officers and other officials working in different organizations do not trust us when we proclaimed that we are no longer criminals”. It’s a kind of labeling by the society which can be virulent for their effort to be a good social being.

4.4.5. Effects on Children

The effects of parental incarceration on children do not end up with a parent’s discharge from prison. Almost all the parents who are discharged from prisons intend to reunite with their minor children but often face difficulties in doing so. Reentry can be even more daunting for women with children than that for men. Women are more likely to deal with the psychological effects of past trauma and abuse. At the same time, reunification with children is a more important part of the reentry for women. Prisoners’ reentry also can be challenging and stressful for children. Children grow, change and often form relationships with new parental figures during a parent’s incarceration. This is really a challenge to regain that position for the released women prisoners [Figure 5](#).

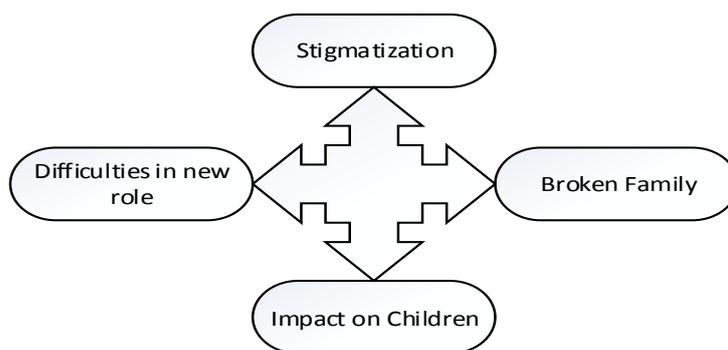


Figure-5. Post-release condition of prisoners.

5. DISCUSSION

In this study, we tried to explore the causes behind women's incarceration and their social reintegration process. Most of the women included here were sex workers and they came from marginalized families. They were alleged to be involved in drug-related offenses and trafficking in person. We found poverty as a very common factor among the study sample. Poor socioeconomic status may have a vital influence on their criminal involvement. Despite women's comparatively less presence in the jails, the government has adopted insufficient policy on their social reintegration process after serving the tenure in correctional institutes. The time which they served in the jails was also very punitive to them. Fooding, sanitation, health-care and other facilities could rarely meet their demand inside the jails. Moreover, we detected overcrowding as a serious problem there which may violate their rights of enjoying proper treatment while under imprisonment. They did not have enough access to the academic or vocational training facilities in jails. Most of the women had kids but they were not satisfied with the facilities provided with their children from the prison. They did not get mosquito net and sanitary napkin in the jails which were seemingly very important for ensuring their health safety.

This study reflects that imprisonment has an adverse impact on the personal and social lives of the inmates. The stringent rules of the jails put a restriction on individual freedom and squeeze liberty. Abusing drugs and alcohol consumption inside the jail is not permitted. Thus, imprisonment directly affects the physical and mental health of women prisoners. Though the respondents did not report or describe any serious mental disorder, they were suffering from depression and mental trauma (these were not measured using any comprehensive index or scale here). Almost all the respondents who were interviewed were young and middle-aged women. There was no prevalence of HIV/AIDS among women prisoners. The day to day medical expenses is generally met by prison authorities.

Most of the women prisoners were married and had their children. However, they were not happy with the facility that was provided by the prison authority to their children. It was revealed that imprisonment has badly affected their relationship with their family members and children. The majority of the women prisoners have rated the hygiene of prisons as poor. The prisons have recreation facilities for women prisoners like watching TV, playing games, etc. For rigorous imprisonment, very less employment opportunity is available in the jails, like sweeping and cleaning the jail complex for the convicted prisoners.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the present study for the improvement of the prison management of Bangladesh, the following measures can be taken.

- Arranging psychological counseling for prison inmates with the help of professionals on a regular basis.
- Arranging proper childcare system for the mothers having their kids with them inside the prison.
- Making proper provisions for a family meeting and communicating with family members over the phone.
- Maintaining proper hygiene with the participation of prison inmates.
- Promoting family and society based correctional system under the control of probation officers instead of incarcerating them inside the jails.
- Providing with support service after the inmates' release from the jails.
- Providing or allowing the female inmates to buy/use Sanitary napkins and mosquito nets.

7. CONCLUSION

Bangladesh is one of the densely populated countries of the world. Almost half of its population is women (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) Statistics

Sweden and UN Women, 2019). The women offenders are increasing in prison with an increasing number of population. The jails of Bangladesh are associated with various problems. This research only focused on the issues which were concerned with the lifestyle of the inmates. This study finds a lot of issues on the causes of women's incarceration, their prison life, and their social and familial reintegration afterward. It has revealed the issues in a very perfunctory way. This study only included the released inmates of two jails of Bangladesh which can influence the generalizability of the study. More data are important to portray the actual scenario of jail management of Bangladesh (Camp, 1999). A deeper understanding of this field is required in subsequent times. However, the overall management, digital identification, electronic monitoring, and proper policies to determine whether putting the women in the bars can be replaced by the community based correctional system can be studied in the next phases. Further researches can replicate this study to understand different issues associated with jail inmates on a large scale. Some other phenomena using different psychological aspects can also be measured to know about the vulnerability of women to the most serious consequences of imprisonment. After considering all the facts described above, the study findings dictate to conclude that the overall jail management of Bangladesh should undergo a massive change to cope with the changing patterns of gender-specific criminality with the advancement of time. "One size fits all" system needs to be revised according to the development of philosophy, science, and technology on a regular basis to face the challenges of the future efficiently.

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