

An Analysis of Women Prisoner's Health, Food and Hygiene Rights in District Jail Timergara

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Abstract

This study investigates the circumstances of female prisoners in District Jail Timergara, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, with a specific focus on their health, diet, and hygiene. Female inmates encounter distinct obstacles, such as insufficient healthcare, inadequate nourishment, and subpar hygiene facilities, which significantly affect their physical and mental health as well as their reintegration into society. The study utilizes a mixed-methods methodology, incorporating surveys and interviews with incarcerated individuals, recently released women, prison personnel, social welfare officials, and women's rights advocates. The purpose of the research is to emphasize the inequalities in the delivery of necessary services and provide practical suggestions for enhancing the living conditions and overall well-being of female prisoners. This study adds to the wider discussion on prison reform and women's rights by pushing for policies that prioritize the dignity and human rights of women who are detained.

Keywords: Woman Prisoner, Woman Rights, Food, Hygiene, Health

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1. Background

Because of their particular needs and vulnerabilities, women's conditions in jails around the world have drawn a great deal of attention (Hiremath R., 2005). Women in jail frequently experience issues with food, hygiene, and health in many nations, including Pakistan. These issues can have a significant negative influence on their general well-being and chances of rehabilitation. Because they are primarily responsible for caring for their children while incarcerated, women experience higher levels of stress in prison than do male inmates (Joycelyn, 1998). It is imperative to tackle these obstacles in order to guarantee the preservation of women inmates' human rights and their treatment with honor and decency during their confinement. When incarcerated, they frequently endure cruel and humiliating treatment. Pregnant detainees are not only vulnerable to exploitation but also endure physical and psychological mistreatment at the hands of correctional staff. They frequently endure cruel treatment and receive neither particular attention nor medical care (Ali, 2011). Many of the women who become prisoners are uneducated and unaware of the workings of

the criminal justice system in general, as well as the specific legal rights guaranteed to them by the Pakistani Constitution and applicable national and local laws. (PCSW, 2015). There are 23 jails in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, however there isn't one just for women. In Pakistan's various jails and cells, there are about 2,000 women serving prison sentences (Akhtar, 2017).

Medical care proper diet, sanitation, and hygiene are although fundamental human rights and are essential for good health, they are regularly violated. Women incarcerated have unique medical needs, such as treatment for substance misuse, mental health treatments, and reproductive health services. For their general well-being, chronic illness management, and health maintenance, proper diet and cleanliness are crucial. According to research, women who are jailed are more prone than their non-incarcerated counterparts to experience infectious diseases, chronic illnesses, and mental health disorders (Fazel & Baillargeon, 2011). Both sanitation and food frequently lack the essential nutritional value, which can cause a variety of health problems in prisoners (Herbert, Plugge, Foster, & Doll, 2012).

In addition, here in Pakistan, the situation is being intensified by numerous causes like, diversity in food and its quality, lack of trained healthcare officials, and inadequate medical facilities (Saeed, 2018). According to Wan (2019), women prisoners in Pakistan have amplified challenges correlated to nutrition, hygiene, and overall well-being, as supported by Qureshi (2020) and Van Hout & Mhlanga-Gunda (2018) as well.

Numerous researches have highlighted the prevailing abuse and limited accessibility of essential services for imprisoned women in Pakistan, in spite of the existence of legislative provisions aimed at protecting their welfare (Saeed, 2018; Awan, 2019). Inadequacies have a negative impact on women's health and wellbeing in addition to violating their rights (Herbert et al., 2012; Qureshi, 2020). Because of the insufficient supply of personal care items, healthy food, and medical care, the jail administration is currently dealing with a significant problem that requires their attention. This study aims to assess the rights of female inmates at District Jail Timergara, with a focus on their access to healthcare, cleanliness, and proper nutrition. Additionally, it aims to identify any noticeable discrepancies and propose workable solutions. In order to discover any underlying vulnerabilities and highlight areas that need immediate repair, this research analyzes the present state of these services in depth. Human rights organizations and policymakers may use the study's findings to better understand the plight of female inmates and create policies that will help them. The findings also add significantly to the long-running

discussions in Pakistan over jail reform and the equality of women. The text emphasizes the significance of upholding the rights and dignity of female convicts and calls for the adoption of gender-sensitive policies and practices.

2. Health Rights of Women Prisoners

The current study discusses Health Rights of Women Prisoners. Inmates who are women have complicated healthcare requirements that include treatments for their mental, reproductive, and physical health. Women inmates are more likely to face health issues than non-incarcerated women, according to the available research. According to Fazel and Baillargeon (2011), compared to the general population, women prisoners are more likely to suffer from infectious diseases, chronic illnesses, and mental health issues. Due to a lack of qualified medical staff and adequate medical facilities, there are gaps in the healthcare services offered by Pakistani prisons (Saeed, 2018). Avoiding women's health rights in prisons can have serious repercussions, including hindering their rehabilitation and growing the risk of disease and death among this already vulnerable population.

3. Food and Nutrition

Health and well-being rely on receiving adequate nourishment from food. Research consistently shows that the food provided in prisons does not meet the nutritional standards for a balanced and healthy diet, leading to various health issues among incarcerated women. According to a comprehensive analysis by Herbert, Plugge, Foster, and Doll (201,), which identified prevalent dietary deficiencies in prison populations worldwide, the situation in Pakistani jails is equally severe. There are reports of insufficient food, low quality, and lack of variety in the diet (Awan, 2019). The inadequate nutrition not only impacts the physical well-being of female prisoners but also exacerbates existing illnesses, creating a continuous cycle of poor health and suffering.

4. Hygiene and Sanitation

The health and self-esteem of prisoners are greatly impacted by the unhygienic conditions in prisons. The hygienic needs of female prisoners are unique and include the need for a sufficient supply of sanitary facilities and supplies. Van Hout and Mhlanga-Gunda (2018) draw attention to the fact that women are disproportionately affected by poor sanitation and a dearth of hygiene supplies, which raises the risk of infections and other health problems. The living circumstances of female detainees in Pakistani correctional establishments are made worse by overcrowding and

poor sanitation facilities. In addition to other abuses of their fundamental rights, female prisoners may experience difficulties because they may not have access to period pads or other essential hygienic items.

5. Legal and Policy Framework

All prisoners in Pakistan are promised adequate medical care, food, and hygienic conditions by the Pakistan Prisons Rules of 1978, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa prisons rules 2018 statutes that complies with many international human rights treaties. The efficient application and enforcement of these legal protections face a number of obstacles. The ineffective use of monitoring techniques and the absence of accountability procedures frequently result in violations of prisoners' rights. In order to solve these issues and protect the rights of female prisoners, structural modifications are necessary. (Awan 2019).

6. Perspectives on Women's Prison Conditions

A comprehensive picture of the present situation can only be achieved by hearing from a wide range of people, such as those in positions of authority, those working in social welfare, women out on bond, and women behind bars. Research indicates that these individuals' viewpoints may provide insight on service delivery disparities and areas in need of improvement. Gaining insight into the experiences of jailed women and the problems faced by prison authorities in offering proper treatment is crucial for developing therapies that have an impact. Saeed (2018) stresses the need of involving stakeholders in order to develop practical solutions and guarantee improvements that last. There are serious problems with the availability of healthcare, food, and restrooms for female inmates, according to recent research, especially in Pakistan's prison system. In addition to negatively impacting their physical and emotional health, the flagrant disrespect for these basic rights degrades the dignity of women confined. To fill this need, this study analyzes the present situation at District Jail Timergara in great detail. In order to improve the quality of life and safeguard their human rights, it is necessary to identify the barriers that prohibit female inmates from obtaining sufficient medical care, food, and cleanliness. Concrete suggestions should then be made to address these issues.

7. Research Design

This research study employs a mixed-methods approach to investigate the conditions experienced by female prisoners at District Jail Timergara. The study aims to get comprehensive perspectives by utilizing a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, including surveys and

interviews. This encompasses the perspectives of incarcerated women, persons who are on bail or have been released, prison officials, social welfare representatives, and campaigners for women's rights. The research encompasses a heterogeneous cohort of persons, comprising incarcerated women, females on bail or who have been released, prison authorities, social welfare representatives, and women's rights activists engaged in prison reform. The researchers employed purposive sampling to specifically choose individuals who held pertinent insights pertaining to the research issues. A group of 25 incarcerated women and 20 women who were either on bail or had been released from District Jail Timergara were deliberately selected to participate in the study based on their accessibility and willingness to participate. Interviews conducted with a deliberate selection of 10 persons from each category: Jail Officials, Social Welfare Representatives, and Women's Rights Activists. Questionnaires are sent to jailed women and women who are on bail or have been released to gather quantitative data on their perceptions and experiences regarding healthcare, food, and hygiene conditions in the correctional facility. The surveys are meticulously designed to elicit responses using a Likert scale, along with additional open-ended questions to collect qualitative insights. researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with jail authorities, social welfare representatives, and women's rights activists to obtain a thorough understanding of the systemic factors that influence the circumstances of female inmates. Interviews are recorded with the informed consent of the participants and subsequently transcribed for the purpose of analysis.

The statistical program is utilized to assess the numerical data acquired from questionnaires. This study generates descriptive statistics, including frequencies, means, and standard deviations. This study provides a thorough perspective on how the respondents see the subject matter and allows for comparisons to be drawn among different groups. Qualitative data analysis entails doing a thematic analysis of interview data to identify recurring patterns, topics, and categories related to healthcare, food, and sanitary conditions specifically at District Jail Timergara. Themes are identified by coding and supported by direct quotations from the interview transcripts. This methodology provides a comprehensive framework for analyzing the conditions of incarcerated women in District Jail Timergara. The research utilized both quantitative and qualitative approaches to get comprehensive and nuanced data. The objective of this study is to acquire a sample of participants that accurately represents the population and employ rigorous techniques

for gathering and examining data. Its objective is to offer practical and useful insights that can be implemented to enhance the health, diet, and sanitary conditions for women prisoners in the jail.

8. Medical Services

1. The majority of inmates (10 out of 25) indicated that medical exams are conducted promptly in prison, whereas a greater proportion of individuals released on bond (10 out of 20) expressed uncertainty regarding this matter.
2. Regarding the provision of adequate medical care, an equal number of respondents in jail and those released on bail reported obtaining appropriate medical assistance.
3. Only a small percentage of participants indicated that full prenatal care for pregnant incarcerated women was available, with a higher percentage among participants who were released on bond.
4. The COVID-19 measures varied considerably between the two groups. All individuals in jail reported undergoing COVID-19 testing and a majority of them were vaccinated. On the other hand, respondents who were released on bail had lower rates of testing and vaccination.

Psychological well-being services

5. None of the incarcerated individuals reported having a session with a psychiatrist, while majority individuals who were released on bail had such sessions.
6. Similarly, none of the incarcerated individuals reported receiving a visit from a medical specialist for a check-up, but all those who were released on bail got such visits.

Available amenities and provisions

7. Only a minority of inmates surveyed in prison indicated the presence of recreational or rehabilitative amenities, but a greater majority of individuals released on bail reported having the opportunity to use such facilities by their owns after release.
8. Responses regarding food and water providing, meal providing, food quality, and facility of supplemental food for lactating and pregnant prisoners differed between the two groups.
9. Both groups reported inadequate hygiene-related facilities and services, including a lack of menstrual hygiene products and bathing and washing facilities. Respondents in jail expressed slightly higher unhappiness compared to the other group.

9. Conclusion

The convicts' conditions are abysmal, with women's conditions being particularly deplorable. All rights and privileges are solely expressed through spoken or written words, and acknowledging this reality might be challenging. The presence of excessive numbers of inmates, unsanitary conditions, and overcrowding in correctional facilities have a detrimental effect on the emotional and psychological welfare of female prisoners. Most of the incarcerated women are young, marginalized, lacking in literacy, and come from low-income households. A significant number of incarcerated individuals experience a range of health disorders that are exacerbated by inadequate sanitation practices, substandard nutrition, and restricted availability of essential healthcare services. Enhancing the living conditions and healthcare services within correctional facilities will have a positive impact on the health of incarcerated women. The insufficient infrastructure and shortage of mental health practitioners can worsen pre-existing psychiatric disorders, while the unhygienic living circumstances have a detrimental effect on the physical health of female prisoners.

10. Recommendations

The research findings emphasized the importance of having a consistent presence of mental health specialists in prisons, providing mental health training to prison workers, and raising public awareness about mental health issues. The purpose of these measures is to offer female convicts the essential psychological and emotional assistance.

1. It is vital that the medical diagnostic and care facility for prisoners is available and overseen by a highly valued physician. The admin must ensure a continuous availability of psychologists to provide therapy and counseling to women who have been victims of sexual assault and domestic violence.
2. Gender-sensitive, mental health care is important to include as a fundamental part of the services offered to women prisoners.
3. The program must aim to improve prisoners understanding of human relationships, enabling them to build connections with others. It should also facilitate family communication, allowing prisoners to maintain and strengthen their relationships with loved ones.
4. The program must provide cure for mental illnesses, ensuring that prisoners receive the necessary care and support for their mental health conditions.

5. It is advised to construct dedicated facilities for women and renovate the existing cells to enhance the standard of living circumstances.
6. Each imprisoned individual is entitled to get a nutritious diet, suitable clothing, and essential facilities, such as a bathroom, a toilet, and the means to maintain personal and environmental hygiene. Any modifications to jail procedures should be implemented in order to eliminate minor annoyances.
7. The jail administration must check the the quality of the food by conducting inspections in accordance with the pre-determined guidelines.
8. Prisons should provide humanitarian and rational living environment. These can be obtained by charities from individuals, NGOs, or government financing.
9. Prison authorities should provide the women prisoners with necessary commodities such as soap, hair oil, sanitary facilities, mirrors, and maintain hygienic environment in compliance with prison regulations.
10. Women who are in the process of awaiting trial shall be provided with suitable clothing, an ample amount of soap to uphold hygiene.
11. Although the Prisons Rules of KPK 2018 have been put into effect to provide convicts with equitable living conditions and essential amenities, there is still scope for enhancing access to healthcare facilities.
12. The KPK Prisons Rules 2018 should be revised to provide gender-specific and customized healthcare treatments to meet the unique needs of each gender.

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