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Special Issue on Criminal Justice Social Work in India
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The Status and Scope of Professional Social Work in Indian Correctional Setting

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Abstract
This paper attempts to explain the two main aspects of social work in the Indian prison context: the first and foremost being the current status and scope of professional social work in Indian prisons; the second, to review the reports of various committees and prison manuals that emphasised the need for, and the role of, professional social workers in prisons, and to describe the role of the social workers as per the Model Prison Manual and to explain the inevitability of their greater participation in correctional institutions of India.

Keywords: Corrections, Correctional Administration, Correctional Institutions, Correctional Social Work, Model Prison Manual, Prisons, Status, Scope.

Introduction

The role of Social work in prisons is inevitable. Social workers aid correctional institutions in the process of correcting prisoners' behaviour. As mentioned by Devasia and Devasia (1990), social work holds great promise of becoming a useful service for correctional institutions. However, in India, the practice of social work within correctional institutions requires an urgent review. Indian prisons earlier focused exclusively on punishment and are in the process of being converted into correctional institutions with the purpose of reformation and rehabilitation. However, the concept of corrections has gained momentum throughout the last two decades. Prisons in India genuinely started its focus on the concept "corrections", a task for which personnel are prepared and trained through regional and state-level institutions. Over the years, prison reviews, reports and the relevant penological literature emphasised the need to convert prisons into correctional institutions by employing adequate, competent and qualified correctional staff. Presently, the transformation of prisons into correctional institutions is in its infancy stage.

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Objectives of this Review

The prisons in India, and the criminal justice system at large, are a legacy of the British. The Indian Criminal Justice System from time to time amends the procedures and policies on a case-to-case an event-to-event basis. A complete review and suitability analysis is needed in the criminal justice system, more generally, as well as for the prisons, more particularly. This article attempts to review, understand and explain the status and role of social work in Indian prisons with the following objectives:

1. To analyze the current status of professional social work in India and in correctional settings
2. To assess and review the reports of various committees and prison manuals of India that emphasize the need and role of professional social workers in prisons and to explain in detail the inevitable role of the social worker in prisons as per the Model Prison Manual for the Superintendence and Management of Prisons in India (Model Prison Manual 2016) (Bureau of Police Research and Development, 2016).

I. Objective One: Social Work in Indian Correctional Setting

Social work in India gained its momentum only during and after 1900. All over the world, social work has reached a significant milestone as it commemorates over a century of professional practice which targeted individual and societal transformation (Popple & Leighninger, 2008). Social work in India has emerged as one of the most demanding professions in India. The concept of professional social work was established in India with the introduction of a course in social work by an American Missionary Sir Clifford Manshardt who became the Founder Director of the first school of social work, known as Tata Institute of Social Sciences [TISS] (2000). This first course on social work was a short-term social service training course organised by the Social Service League, Bombay (Now Mumbai), which ultimately gave birth to the professional social work discipline in India. In fact, the term 'professional social work' emerged to describe the work of individuals who had completed this short-term social service training course. Those who completed the course were employed in a variety of fields such as psychiatric and medical hospitals, industries, as well as human resource development and other related fields like schools and prisons (TISS, 2007-2008).

Earlier in India, social work was primarily understood as a charitable non-paid occupation conducted by individuals or organisations that were driven by humanitarian and religious values, and to that extent were considered as a subsidiary or voluntary activity (TISS, 2007-2008). The professional and systematic approach to social work was developed with the support of the Tata Institute in the early-1930s, through an institution called the "Neighbourhood House". The Neighbourhood House was used by a young American missionary, Dr Clifford Manshardt, to provide a host of non-religious activities to at-risk persons located in a low socioeconomic area called Nagpada (TISS, 2007-2008).

Manshardt recognised the need for professional social workers, so he developed a six-week course to train young people to become social workers. In tandem with this, Manshardt with assistance from the Tata Trust began a school for social work. In 1940, the Neighborhood House institution became the Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work which was later renamed as the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS, 2007-2008).

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i. The Current Status of Social Work in India

Social work currently encompasses activities that aim to improve social conditions, alleviate human distress and resolve social problems. Social workers help people to enhance their competence and functioning, assist people to access social supports and resources, assist in the creation of humane and responsive social services, and expand the structures of society that provide opportunities for all citizens (Dubois & Miley, 1999).

Historically, social workers have used a combination of research and practice strategies to advocate for improved social conditions for at-risk populations, such as the poor, immigrants, political refugees, child abuse victims, and criminal offenders (Day, Nakata, & Howells, 2008; Maschi, Bradley, & Ward, 2009). Social work research and evaluation continues to evolve as a mechanism that gathers data that can be used to enhance well-being and to create socially just outcomes (Wronka, 2008)

ii. Prison Administration in India: Past and Present Scenario

To understand the status of social work in prisons, it is important to learn about the background of Indian prisons.

Prison administration in India can be traced back to the Vedic period, which was nearly 1000 years earlier than the age of Manu (Singh, 1979, p.17). The Dharma Sutras and the Dharma Shastras (the earliest of which is that of Manu), reveal a fully-fledged and well-developed judiciary in those days (Singh, 1979, p.18). When the Mughals captured India, they introduced another source of law, and as a result, the law's character has remained essentially Quranic since then (Singh, 1979, p. 22). The ancient literature did not, however, have any accounts in relation to prison reform.

According to Muslim jurisprudence, crimes can be divided into three categories: offences against God; offences against the state; and offences against private property (Singh, 1979, p. 22). There were four forms of punishment: the hadd; tazir; qisas; as well as the tashhir and hazat (lockup) (Singh, 1979, p. 22). The hadd, qisas, tashhir and hazat were not reformative, but Tazir was used to reform offenders. Tazir was utilised through four different methods, which included a public reprimand (Taqabi-9).

Later, the East India Company was authorised by the British Parliament in 1784 to reform the administration of justice (Singh, 1979, p. 23). The focus of the East India Company was to establish their trade (Singh, 1979, p. 23). Therefore, some attempts were made to introduce reformation in the administration of justice. After the intervention of the Britishers in prison reforms, there were eight different categories of prisons in India (Singh, 1979, p. 24). The most common and standard jail institutions are the Central Jails, District Jails and Sub Jails (Singh, 1979, p. 24). The other types of jail establishments are Women Jails, Borstal Schools, Open Jails and Special Jails. The prison institutions are managed by three categories of personnel staff: jail cadre staff; correctional staff; and the medical staff. The number of inmates per official is an indicator of how well inmates are looked after in the prisons.

Prisons in India and their administration bodies are state subjects covered by Item 4 under the State List in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India (Constitution of India (4) VII Schedule). The State governments are exclusively responsible for the management and administration of prisons. Prison administration is controlled by The Prisons Act India (1894) and the prison manuals developed by the respective state governments. However, nearly all prison manuals were developed almost a century ago

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and is of urgent need of updating. Currently, the States have the primary role, responsibility, and authority to change their current prison rules, manuals and regulations. However, although the Central Government does not have the authority to change the prison manuals, the Central Government does partner with the States to provide assistance to improve prison conditions through infrastructure and the modernisation of prison administration.

In India, there has recently been an increase in the number of prisons and prisoners. There has also been an increase in correctional staff acknowledgement and understanding of the role that professional social workers can play in prisons in India. According to the National Crime Records Bureau (2016b), there are 1,401 jails in India. During the past decade (2005-2015 as Prison Statistics is available only during this period), there has been an alarming rise in the number of prisons more generally in India although the rise in women prisons, in particular, has been less dramatic. Table 1 provides an overview of this increase in the number of prisons in India in the last decade from 2005-2015. The purpose of creating this table is to show that the need for social work intervention is due in part to the rise in the number of prisons and prisoner populations.

Table 1. The Increase in Jails in India in the last decade 2005-2015

	Central Jails	**District Jails**	**Sub Jails**	**Women Jails**	**Open Jails**	**Borstal Schools**	**Special Jails**	**Other Jails**	**Total**
2005	109	284	849	014	027	**NA***	**NA***	**045**	**1,328**
2006	111	293	852	015	027	NA*	NA*	038	**1,336**
2007	113	309	769	016	028	NA*	NA*	041	**1,276**
2008	114	313	830	018	032	NA*	NA*	049	**1356**
2009	119	321	832	018	032	NA*	NA*	052	**1374**
2010	123	322	836	018	044	021	026	03	**1393**
2011	123	333	809	019	044	021	030	03	**1382**
2012	127	340	806	020	046	021	031	03	**1394**
2013	130	346	780	019	053	021	038	04	**1391**
2014	131	364	758	019	054	020	037	04	**1387**
2015	134	379	741	018	063	020	048	03	**1401**

Source: National Crime Records Bureau (2016b)
NA*: Data not available.

Table 1 show that Jails in India have been on the rise from 2005 to 2015. Central Prisons are prisons where the Lifers, Long Term Prisoners and the Death Sentenced Prisoners are housed along with under trial prison inmates (i.e. those waiting for their trial to be completed). District Prisons are where short-term convicted prisoners are lodged along with the undertrial population and it is also used as a transit prison during transfers and court procedures.

As seen above, there is an increase of Central Jails from 109 to 134, which is a 19 per cent increase in a decade. District Jails increased from 284 to 379, which is a 25 per cent increase. There has been a decrease, however, of sub-jails from 849 to 741 because sub-jails have been classified or upgraded into special sub-jails or district jails. Even the number of women prisons has increased from 14 to 18, giving rise to four prisons exclusively for

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women apart from the enclosures in the Central Prisons all over the country wherever there are no exclusive women prisons. Open Jails are where the inmates who have had a record of good conduct would be transferred to enjoy greater freedom and is considered as part of the process of re-socialisation. Prisoners are relatively free from tight security compared to other closed jails like Central and District Jails. From the table, it is obvious that these types of Open Jails have increased from 27 to 63, and that this clearly indicates that Indian penal system is moving towards adopting the rehabilitation and correctional concepts more strongly.

Table 2. The Increase in the Prisoner Population in India in the last decade 2005-2015

	Convicts		Under trial		Detenues		Others		Total		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	Total
2005	105,029	3,543	228,006	9,070	2,459	83	8,888	1,290	344,382	13,986	358,369
2006	112,771	3,904	235,789	9,455	2,179	96	7,875	1202	358,614	14,657	373,271
2007	116,057	4,058	239,714	11,013	4,417	270	807	60	360,995	15,401	376,396
2008	118,914	4,393	246,526	11,402	2,886	92	498	42	368,824	15,929	384,753
2009	119,353	4,588	239,517	10,687	2,131	101	562	30	361,563	15,406	376,600
2010	121,157	4,632	229,846	10,252	2,219	106	739	47	353,961	15,037	368,998
2011	123,633	4,959	230,266	10,934	2,363	87	640	44	356,902	16,024	372,926
2012	122,776	5,013	243,055	11,802	1,832	90	521	46	368,184	16,951	385,135
2013	124,263	5,345	265,815	12,688	3,015	98	711	57	393,804	18,188	411,992
2014	126,114	5,403	270,783	12,096	3,156	81	802	101	400,855	17,681	418,536
2015	128,428	5,740	270,160	11,916	2,490	72	711	106	401,789	17,834	419,623

M: Male, F: Female /

Source: Prison Statistics India (2015)

From Table 2, it is evident that the male prison population has increased from 344,382 to 401,789, while the female prison population increased from 13,986 to 17,834 in the last decade. Thus, the Indian male prison population has risen by 17 percent while the female population increased by 28 percent. In the last decade, the total prison population has increased from 358,369 to 419,623, which is an overall increase of 15 percent.

In 1952, specialised training was introduced for individuals that worked in a correctional setting. The specialised training was developed in conjunction with the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, and two experts from the United Nations. The specialised training programme was offered by the Tata Institute to prison officers employed by the various state governments (TISS, 2007-2008). Studies have

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shown that prison officers that specialised in criminology and correctional administration were more effective in setting standards to introduce corrections in prisons. In 1953, a separate Department of Criminology and Correctional Administration (Now Centre for Criminology and Justice) was formed at TISS, to flesh out the requirements for professional training in a correctional setting (TISS, 2007-2008).

The specialised training that was offered by the TISS advocated for the protection of an individual fundamental right including those of prisoners, as set out in the Indian Constitution (TISS, 2007-2008). Those who completed the specialised training were also educated on the legal provisions contained in various Acts of parliament that protect the rights of prisoners, including the clauses under the Indian Constitution and The Prisons Act 1894 (India). The Indian Constitution provides protection for the rights of prisoners by insisting that all people in detention should be treated with dignity. The Prisons Act 1894 (India) was used to balance the requirements of safe custody with the development or rehabilitation of all prisoners and convicted persons who were subject to community corrections.

iii. Status of Correctional Social Workers in other Countries

It is difficult to estimate how many social workers are employed in other countries' criminal justice systems, and specifically, in their prisons. However, in the United States, a survey of a sample of 104,000 social workers found that approximately two percent of the social workers were employed in the criminal justice system (Mizrah & Davis, 2014). Unfortunately, there are no international statistics that states exactly how many social workers are employed in a correctional setting. Nevertheless, it is arguable that the dramatic rise in the imprisoned population combined with the resulting societal changes as a result of mass incarceration has ended in a desperate need for social work services in all areas of criminal justice system. For example, in the United States, criminal justice social workers are able to practice in case management and behavioural health as well.

II. Objective 2: The Role of the Social Workers in Prisons as per various Reports of Committees and the Model Prison Manual

1. Status of Social Workers in Prisons and Correctional Institutions in India

The need for rehabilitation in jails is theoretically accepted and acknowledged by the Government of India through the various Jail Reforms Committees. Among the 29 states and six union territories of India, the post of a qualified social worker was found only in Tamil Nadu. All Central Prisons have a Social Casework Expert, Psychologist, and Welfare Officer as Correctional Officers. The designation of Welfare Officer is found in states like Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Kerala and West Bengal, whereas in other states, there are no such posts as Welfare Officers.

It should be noted however that Delhi, Kerala and Tamil Nadu have hired professionally qualified social workers. In a few states, the Welfare Officers are trained at the Academy of Prisons and Correctional Administration. In 2002, seven Welfare Officers were posted to the Tihar Jail by the Department of Social Welfare. The role of the social workers was to provide a bridge between the administration and the prisoners and their families. Before 2002, only the Executive Officers were part of the prison administration tasked with custodial but not welfare-related tasks. However, multiple resources state that

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social workers actually have an important role in a correctional setting, and this would include the Modern Prison Manual.

The Modern Prison Manual and other relevant reports emphasise the need for social workers in prisons, and this provides a strong basis upon which to argue over the importance of the role that social workers should occupy in prisons.

According to the Bureau of Prison Research and Development (2003), the need for correctional social worker has been realised in Young Offenders Institutions and the role of Welfare Officers or corrections personnel in adult facilities i.e. Jails.

The following rules from the Model Prison Manual set out the roles of the social worker in prisons (Bureau of Prison Research and Development, 2003):

- Rule No. (1.08) stipulates that the Correctional Administration of services should be aimed at the reformation and rehabilitation of the offender.
- Rule No. (1.09) makes reference to personnel employed by the Correctional Administration.
- The Model Prison Manual not only encompasses adult prison inmates within its ambit but also those who have been detained in Borstal institutions because Rule No. (1.32) expressly includes "[a] person who has attained the age of 18 years and has not attained the age of 21 years".
- Rule No. (25.23) then goes on to stipulate that the staff who should be employed in such institutions for young offenders include, among others, psychiatric social workers / case-workers.
- Rule No. (4.01) makes it clear that each institution will have personnel in accordance with the requirements of security, discipline and programme emphasis. To that end, such programs could include those that have rehabilitation and reformation objectives.
- This is quite likely as Rule No. (4.03.3) outlines that Welfare Units within these correctional institutions should include, among others, a Welfare Officer, a Counsellor, a Probation Officer and a Psychologist. It is probable that for the positions of the welfare, counsellor and probation officer, qualified professional social workers will be employed. For example, Delhi Prisons have stipulated that only personnel with a professional social work background can be Welfare Officers. The Kerala State Service Commission stated that Probation Officers must have a social work background (although there are some exceptions but even in these instances, such officers are trained in social work skills through the Academy of Prisons and Correctional Administration, Vellore). Tamil Nadu has appointed social workers and psychologists as Counsellors to work with the prisoners on a permanent as well as contract basis. In addition to the above, there is an on-going experiment in the state of Maharashtra where the social workers are placed in prisons through contractual Government appointments.
- Finally, the importance of ensuring that prisons are supported with adequate data and analytical expertise can be seen in Rule No. (3.03) where the organisational set-up of the Headquarters of the Department of Prisons and Correctional Services explicitly includes, among others, "a Statistical Officer for an ongoing collection, interpretation and presentation of factual information and data with computer back-

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up", which can be also used to support the research endeavours of social workers working either in or with the correctional institutions.

2. The Role of Welfare Officers according to the Model Prison Manual

An analysis of the duties of a Welfare Officer as prescribed in the Model Prison Manual indicates that their tasks are the same as that performed by a professional social worker. Rule No. (4.07.5b) in essence requires the welfare personnel to be primarily be concerned with the well-being of prisoners, undertaking individualised care for those needing institutional adjustment and responsiveness through correctional programmes (Bureau of Police Research and Development, 2003). Table 3 explains in greater detail the role of the Welfare Officer in prisons how these roles and responsibilities are relevant to social work. From Table 3 it is obvious that there are significant skill set convergences between what social workers are trained to do, and role and responsibilities of the prison Welfare Officers.

Table 3. The Roles and Responsibilities of Prison Welfare Officer and Relevance to Social Work

Rule	Welfare Officer's Role and Responsibilities	Relevance to Social Work
1.	Coordinating the work of the welfare unit	Social welfare administration
2.	Helping inmates to overcome their problems of institutional adjustment	Casework
3.	Assisting inmates in dealing with problems faced by their families and dependents	Casework
4.	Connecting correctional needs of prisoners with the resources available within and outside the prison	Social research Social welfare Administration
5.	Participating in the orientation, classification and reclassification programme	Casework
6.	Facilitating understanding between the inmate and administration	Case & Group work
7.	Assisting prison authorities in maintaining prison security discipline	Community organisation
8.	Participating in the pre-release programme and helping the inmate establish contacts useful to him after release	Social welfare Administration
9.	Identifying the resources for rehabilitation of prisoners.	Social welfare Administration
Source: Bureau of Prison Research and Development (2003)		

3. The Need for Social Workers in Correctional Institutions

The Encyclopedia of Social Work (Mizrah & Davis, 2014) stated that "professional social workers were identified within correctional populations in the late 1800s through settlement workers' efforts with juvenile offenders and, on an organisational level, in the early topics addressed by the National Conference of Charities and Corrections" (para. 1). However, social workers only gained professional recognition when it commenced its role in providing services to incarcerated individuals in 1904 (Roberts & Springer, 2007). The

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history of prisons is a long and regrettable description of mankind's ability to be cruel and also describes its inability to fulfil socially expected standards. The Indian Constitution protects all citizens' fundamental human rights including prisoners' rights (Art.12-22). The Constitution also makes the provision that detention should not strip a person of his or her dignity. The Prisons Act 1984 (India) provides a balance between the requirements of safe custody as well as the development or rehabilitation plan for all prisoners and persons subject to custody under the Prison administration.

The Encyclopedia of Social Work (Mizrah & Davis, 2014) stated that "[i]n the correctional setting, social workers are responsible for a variety of tasks, including completing intake screenings, assessment, providing clinical supervision, crisis intervention, ongoing treatment, case management, and release-planning services" (para.3).

Roberts (1997) assert that correctional institutions are characterised by four different philosophies: retribution, deterrence, incapacitation, and rehabilitation (p. 310). In practice, most systems use a mixture of these philosophies. Most of these philosophies focus on punishment (i.e. retribution and deterrence) rather than rehabilitation, which is consistent with current public sentiment towards the treatment of offenders within correctional institutions. The focus on punishment is in direct contrast to the value that social workplaces on interventions that assist individuals in changing their behaviour through counselling, education, and involvement in adaptive activity.

4. Need for Professional Intervention in Prisons by the Correctional Social Workers

In prisons, approximately 0.14 percent (Prison Statistics, 2015) of the total workforce are made up of correctional officers, and from this group, the percentage of social workers among them is meagre. According to Prison Statistics (2015), the prisoner to staff ratio is 1 to 9 (Prison Statistics, 2015). The staff in the prison department is segregated into the following three categories:

1. All Jail officers including senior officials like the Inspector General of Prisons, Warder and all ministerial staff (Prison Statistics 2015).
2. The correctional staff which includes the Welfare Officers, Psychologists, School Teachers, Foreman of Industries and other Instructors (Prison Statistics 2015).
3. The medical staff which includes the Doctors, Pharmacists and Nurses (Prison Statistics 2015).

Table 4 shows the number employed in the different staff categories as compared to the number of prisoners in India. This table highlights how out-numbered prison staff are vis-a-vis the number of prisoners.

The statistics for correctional staff includes prison social workers, psychologists, trade instructors and teachers who work within a prison. The percentage of correctional staff that are professional social workers is negligible. For a prison to be called as a correctional institution, the prison must have a professional correctional team. Within a correctional institution, social workers and psychologists play crucial roles, without them, the implementation of the concept of correction would certainly not be possible.

Prison social workers have two defined roles:

- to motivate reform, and to rehabilitate the prison inmate.

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- to attend to the families of prisoners and to enable the inmates to keep contact with the family.

Table 4. The Number of Prisoners and Correctional Officers in India from 2005 to 2015

Year	Jail Officials	Correctional Staff		Medical Staff	Total	Total Prisoner population
2005	39,762	525	1.3%	1343	41,630	358,369
2006	39,687	622	1.5%	1291	41,600	373,271
2007	39,439	585	1.4%	1404	41,428	376,396
2008	39,942	582	1.4%	1472	41,996	384,753
2009	40,192	574	1.4%	1449	42,215	376,600
2010	41,180	594	1.4%	1472	43,246	368,998
2011	40,886	676	1.6%	1587	43,149	372,926
2012	41,798	551	1.3%	1619	43,959	385,135
2013	42,927	565	1.3%	1696	45,188	411,992
2014	43,616	588	1.3%	1832	46,036	418,536
2015	44,775	597	1.3%	1866	47,238	419,623
Source: National Crime Records Bureau (2016b) – From 2005-2015						

One of the overwhelming issues is the dramatic increase in the prison/jail population. During the last 10 to 15 years, there has been an explosion in the number of people incarcerated in Indian prisons. The increase in the prison population has led to an increase in the number of incarcerated people who re-enter their communities on an annual basis. Unfortunately, approximately more than 60 percent of those released from prison are rearrested within three years of their release (Travis, Solomon, & Waul, 2001). It is important to consider how these consequences can affect the offender and why the offender reoffends.

An offender lives in a society with their parents or as a parent, with their children or siblings, with relatives, friends, neighbours colleagues and companions. However, due to various external or internal pressures, the offender commits a crime. Once the offender has committed the crime, they (he or she) will be swiftly removed from society and goes through the investigation process in the criminal justice system. The entire process will traumatise the offender since they will always be treated as a criminal whether this has been proven or not.

As a result, the offender accumulates a high level of stress. The investigation will entrust the accused person to the Judiciary. The offender will usually be tossed between the Police, Judiciary and Prisons (as an undertrial) before conviction. Once convicted, the offender is handed over to the Prisons.

During the criminal justice process, the accused person faces shame, guilt, may lose their job, relationship, family, children and everything else, in most of the cases. The way the offender is treated would reflect the philosophy of prisonisation. However, most prisons are beginning to focus on a correctional purpose, where the objectives are reformation, rehabilitation and re-socialisation.

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"Reformation" of prison inmates in India is explained as bringing attitudinal changes in the inmate. Reformation of a prisoner can involve creating change in the prisoner's values, presumptions, assumptions, and prejudices. A prisoner commits crime due to negative life experiences, exposure to the various evils in society, acquaintance with bad elements, poverty, underemployment, unemployment, and social evils.

The process of bringing about an attitudinal change in prisoners requires interventions by professionally trained personnel. Even though prison officers are trained in social work skills, knowledge and practice, prison officers cannot conduct professional therapy and intervention with the prisoners. Therefore, the role of a qualified social worker in prisons is essential. Prisoners require the help of professional social workers.

Prisoners come into prison by force. None of the inmates have entered prisons willingly or surrendered themselves for punishment. For example, In India's prisons, prison industries function with the aim of utilising the human resources available to them to generate an income from the prisons. The fundamental objective of rehabilitation is not met through establishing and developing these types of profit/income generating prison industries. If industries like these are still used, then they must become work-centred and skills-building to achieve the goal of rehabilitation. The new work-centred rehabilitation aims to help the inmates to earn income while in prison as well as to assist the inmate in sharpening their knowledge, expertise and to helps them to learn new trades.

5. The Scope of Correctional Social Workers in India

Sikka (1980) stated that "professional social workers should be included in all correctional teams." Consequently, social workers should be entrusted with the classification of inmates and the formulation of individualised treatment plans. The realities of the Indian correctional situation however, fall short of the uniform application of basic correctional standards. Currently, social workers are not employed by all the local prisons. Sikka (1980) stated that "social workers are uniquely qualified to restore the inmates' feelings of personal worth which are often destroyed by the regimentation of prison life." Social workers can therefore play an essential role in reintegrating ex-prisoners to normal and productive post-release living through working with the inmates' families to ensure their acceptance and support. Community-based social services and volunteer organisations and individuals are also needed to supplement scarce government-sponsored programs (Sikka, 1980).

6. Positions that Social Workers can occupy within Indian Correctional Institutions

Within the Indian correctional institutions, social workers can be employed in various different positions. Social workers have unique skills and training that make them perfect workers within the correctional institutions. There are actually specific roles that are mentioned in the Model Prison Manual and the *Prison Act 1894* (India) that social workers are considered to be ideal candidates, and these are listed below (Bureau of Police Research and Development, 2003):

- Rule No. (3.03) where the organisational set-up of the Headquarters of the Department of Prisons and Correctional Services explicitly includes, among others, "a Statistical Officer for an ongoing collection, interpretation and presentation of factual information and data with computer back-up", which could be done by a social worker who is a doctorate and research oriented.

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- Rule No. (4.03.3) outlines what positions will fall under the Welfare Units, and they include, among others, a Welfare Officer, a Law Officer, a Counsellor, a Probation Officer, and a Psychologist. While it is probable that a social worker can be employed as a welfare officer, probation officer and counsellor, it is arguable that even the law officer needs knowledge of social work so as to deal with the inmates as expertise in law alone is insufficient to handle the inmates of the prison. It is further contended that a psychologist also needs to be oriented in social work skills as the whole of Welfare Unit has to operate on social work principles by applying the methods like casework, group work, community organisation, social welfare administration, and social research.

7. The Prison Act 1894 (India) and its Provisions in relation to Ideal Positions for Social Workers

The Prisons Act 1894 (India) has made the following provisions in relation to powers allotted to the States to make rules about what sort of duties, tasks and roles that correctional officers have to perform in the prisons. Table 5 shows that social workers within Indian prisons can work in every stage of correctional system, all the way from admission to the release of a prisoner.

To fish out further details on this matter, the following processes in prisons requires the presence of the social workers to perform particular tasks that they are especially suitable to do.

i. Admission

Educating the prisoners about prison life and rules in prisons

- Taking the case histories of the inmates (which is a task that social workers are skilled at and trained to do)
- Administering the mental status examination wherever required
- Identifying emotional disturbances in the prisoners and administering treatments for separation anxiety, phobias about the new environment and people, guilt feelings to be dealt with, and identifying suicidal ideations
- Identifying prisoners medical problems

ii. Classification

The classification committee in prisons should involve prison social workers or the welfare officer or the counsellor in the prison who is a qualified social worker.

iii. Quarantine Process for Newly Admitted Prisoners

The prison social worker educates the prisoners about prison life, adjustment, educates the inmates on prison rules and regulations and prepares the inmate for prison life. The prison social worker also identifies emotional disturbances such as guilt feelings, suicidal ideation, health and mental health problems that prisoners may have. Social workers will assist under trial prisoners to achieve speedy court cases, help them with speedy trial procedures and help apply for videoconferencing trials.

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Table 5. Rules within the Prison Act 1984 (India) that Apply to the Type of Tasks that Social Workers can be Employed to Perform

Rule Number	Rules that Apply to the Scope of the Social Worker	Role of Social worker
7.	Defining the circumstances and regulating the conditions under which prisoners in danger of death may be released	Yes
8.	For the classification of prisons, and description and construction of wards, cells and other places of detention	Yes
9.	For the regulation by numbers, length or character of sentences, or otherwise of the prisoners to be confined in each class of prisons	Yes
12.	For the employment, instruction and control of convicts within or without prisons	Yes
14.	For classifying and prescribing the forms of labour and regulating the period of rest and labour	Yes
15.	For regulating the disposal of the proceeds of the employment of prisoners	Yes
17.	For the classification and separation of prisoners	Yes
18.	For regulating the confinement of convicted criminal prisoners under Section 28	Yes
19.	For the preparation and maintenance of history-tickets	Yes
20.	For the selection and appointment of prisoners as officers of prisons	Yes
21.	For rewards for good conduct	Yes
23.	For the treatment, transfer and disposal of criminal lunatics or recovered criminal lunatics confined in prisons	Yes
24.	For regulating the transmission of appeals and petitions from prisoners and their communications with their friends	Yes
27.	Regarding the admission, custody, employment, dieting, treatment and release of prisoners	Yes

8. Social Work in Women Prisons

The need for the intervention of social workers is more acute in women prisons than in any other institution. According to an article by MacDonald (2013) on women prisoners, mental health and violence – most of the women prisoners have mental health problems. They have problems of adjustment with the prison environment, prison personnel, and the life inside the prison. The prison social worker, however, will be able to help to:

- Find out what are the skills, knowledge and the expertise of the inmate;
- Apply motivational analysis before allotting an appropriate work programme to them; and
- Devise a need-based work programme to them.

9. Prison Suicide and the role of Social workers

From Table 6, it is evident that the suicide rates are increasing in prisons but the accurate statistics are missing, and the unnatural deaths statistics could also be considered as potentially a suicide. Senior Prison Officers have been reporting suicide attempts and

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inmates dying in hospitals under the Unnatural Death category. Suicide and self-harm are a menace faced by the prison administration where the intervention of the social worker would prove to be of great help.

Table 6. Prison Death Figures from 2009 to 2013

Number of Suicides in Prisons from 2009-2013								
Year	**Natural**		**Unnatural**		**Suicides**		**Total**	
	M	**F**	**M**	**F**	**M**	**F**	**M**	**F**
2009	Data not found							
2010	1344	29	92	---	-	05	1436	34
2011	1244	35	88	-	-	08	1332	43
2012	1345	47	126	-	-	08	1471	55
2013	1482	48	115	07	-	-	1597	55
Source: National Crime Records Bureau (2016b) From 2009 to 2013								

10. Working with Mentally Ill Prisoners

> *"Mrs. Mala (name changed due to privacy reasons) administered poison to herself and all her children who were two years, 12 years and 14 years of age respectively. Her husband was a drunkard and had illegal affairs and wouldn't take care of the family. The children were starving for food and whatever Mala earned was not sufficient for the children. Unfortunately, Mala and her two daughters survived, and the child died. Mala was arrested and brought to jail leaving the two adolescent girls behind with relatives who were not willing to accept them. Mala had complaints of insomnia and hallucinations of hearing voices of the child, feeling the child pulling the sari.., Mala had severe mental health problems which needs the intervention of social workers* (quoted story is from the direct interview of the authors with the inmate)."

The above-mentioned case would clarify the intensity of pains suffered by the inmates and the need for intervention among such mentally affected inmates. A prison social worker's plays an inevitable role in assisting mentally ill prisoners. In prison, there is approximately 1.2 percent of prisoners have mental illness that requires the assistance of a psychiatric social worker (Table 7). Without the intervention of a psychiatric social worker, it may become worse. Mental illness ranges from constant worries to schizophrenia. From Table 7 it is noted that there are 4820 mentally ill prisoners awaiting an intervention from a prison social worker. And the Table on mental illness was inserted only from 2012 before which there was no statistics on mentally ill prisoners.

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Table 7. Mentally Ill Prisoners from 2012 to 2015

Number of Mentally Ill Prisoners		
Year	**Mentally ill prisoners**	**%**
2012	4470	1.2
2013	4820	1.2
2014	5394	1.3
2015	5203	1.3
Source: National Crime Records Bureau (2016b) – From 2012 to 2015		

11. Working with Foreign Prisoners

A social worker's role from admission to discharge and aftercare is inevitable. At every stage and step in prison, the role of a social worker is essential. Foreign prisoners need more care and intervention as they might be new to the culture, food and people. They need to be educated about the people, the prison environment, the prison rules and regulations. Other social work interventions could be done with foreign prisoners so as to help identify the real reason behind their imprisonment. According to prison statistics in India from 2009 to 2013, around 5000 foreign prisoners were arrested and released every year (Table 8).

Table 8. Foreigners in Indian Prisons from 2009 to 2013

Foreign Prisoners in India's Prison (2009-2013)										
Year	**Convicts**		**Total**	**Under trial**		**Total**	**Detenues**		**Total**	**Grand Total**
	M	**F**		**M**	**F**		**M**	**F**		
2009	1784	258	2042	2470	426	2896	108	01	109	5047
2010	1543	172	1715	2656	228	2884	130	06	136	4735
2011	1858	162	2020	3230	371	3601	133	04	137	6758
2012	2345	138	2483	3486	498	3984	95	00	95	7565
2013	2192	161	2353	3905	448	4353	40	01	41	6747
Source: National Crime Records Bureau (2016b) From 2009 to 2013										

"Mr Becky, a foreigner, (name changed due to privacy reasons) was arrested by the Delhi Police for drug smuggling and dealing. A social worker had a few sessions with Becky and found that Becky is innocent and was cheated on by her boyfriend. Becky did everything for her boyfriend, and finally, the boyfriend forced her into drug smuggling. Becky's boyfriend tortured her and locked her away in the toilet because he suspected she had informed the Delhi police about the drug smuggling. She underwent torture and finally surrendered for arrest. Becky never disclosed anything to the police. However, after an intervention with a social worker Becky helped the Delhi Police to identify the drug traffickers, and as a reward, her sentence was reduced, and she got released (quoted story is from the direct interview of the authors with the inmate)."

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Conclusion

In India, very few states understand the importance of professional social work interventions in the prisons. The prison population keeps rising higher and higher every year, and the rate of recidivism in India keeps increasing. The rate of recidivism has now reached 15.1 percent among the undertrials and 3.5 percent among the convicted population (National Crime Records Bureau, 2016a). Therefore intervention needed among the under trial population and the habitual offenders. By increasing the strength of professional social workers, the rate of recidivism could be challenged and reduced. Overall to summarise,

- The Indian prison system needs to understand the role and importance of professional social workers in prisons;
- The prison administrators should be professionally qualified social workers;
- Unless social workers are inducted into the prison system, India cannot convert its prisons into successful correctional institutions; and
- Prisons may develop and progress in their rehabilitative work programs but cannot be true correctional institutions without the help of social work intervention.

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