



Impact Of Incarceration On The Behavior Of Women Inmates Of Budaun District Jail

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ABSTRACT

Prison is the reformatory institution in our social system. Indian constitution has introduced judiciary system to control the society. Every individual, who violates the legal laws, is punished by the judiciary. Prison is an environment where criminals are kept for the purpose of reformation. It is an environment with special difficulties and repetitive activities. According to the nature of crime, prisoners have to charge for their criminal activities. Being separated from the family and friends, prisoners have to reside alone in the prison for a long period of time. Everyone around them is unknown. They find no one to share and understand their mental condition and they have to stay with the same situation. This leads to stress and emotionally weak environment in the prison. The present study assesses the effects of imprisonment on the behavior of women inmates. The aim of the study is to find out how prison environment affects the lives of women inmates and their children who are living inside the prison with their mother. The study has been conducted over 22 *under trial women inmates of Budaun district jail, Uttar Pradesh, India*. The study concludes that prison environment severely affect the mind as well as the health of the women inmates. It also creates negative impact on the behavior of children who are imprisoned with their mother without any criminal activity.

Keywords: Crime, Criminality, Women Inmates, Incarceration

1. INTRODUCTION

Crime is predominantly male phenomena, but in recent trends it has been seen that women are also being involved in the criminal activities and their numbers are increasing day by day. Women are also taking part in doing severe crime like murder and drugs. As the charge of the criminal activities, they are punished by the court to imprison for a long period of time which may vary according to the nature of crime. Human is a social animal. He cannot live in isolation. Humans live between the surroundings of the family and friends. In the situation of need, these people reach out to help them. But when people are punished for their act of crime, they have to leave all their surroundings and family to suffer punishment that affects the prisoners mentally as well physically. Women are specially attached to their family and children. They take care of the family. They look-after them in every joy and sorrow. When women have to leave their family, it creates a situation of mental imbalance that leaves the most adverse effect on them. Family and friends are the support system of the humans. They share happiness, joy, and sorrow with them. But the estrangement from their support system affects dangerously to the inmates than the prison setting. It gives stress and the feeling of detachment from every other activity. Therefore, women prisoners need special attention under the four wall of the prison. Prison environment is very dangerous to each and every person inside the prison. Criminals with different tendencies reside together in the same barrack and their small children also live their mother. There are strict rules to follow in the prison. Unhealthy food and unhygienic environment affect negatively to mother inmates and their children as well. The feeling of estrangement from the family and friends generates so much stress

and anxiety among the women inmates that instead of trouble by the prison rules, they suffered more from the irritation and isolation inside the prison. Many studies have done as Chattoraj (1985) in his study found that prison life affects women not only socially but also economically and psychologically. He explained that women affect socially at two stages of prisoners' life-first at the period of confinement and second at the re-entry into society. They suffer reduction in social status and self-confident. They suffer economically more after the release from prison as neither government nor the community helps the ex-offenders to deal with their problems. Douglas and et.al. (2009) had studied about the impact of imprisonment on health of women prisoners and found that imprisonment had negative effect on health of women prisoners. Separation from the children and family weakened the mental strength of the women prisoners. Prakash and et.al. (2015) had studied about the effect of incarceration on the well-being of prisoners. They had purposely selected eighty-six samples including thirty-six convicted criminals and fifty under-trial prisoners from Birsa Munda Central Jail, Hotwar, Ranchi. The aim of their study was to explore the effect of imprisonment on the well-being of the prisoners and they revealed that under-trial prisoners have poor well-being than the convicted prisoners. Chahal and et.al. (2016) had conducted a cross-sectional study in the district jail Rohtak, Hariyana in India. They had studied on all 200 convicted male prisoners to explore the impact of coping on mental health of the prisoners. The study revealed that in comparison to female prisoners, male prisoners used anger more frequently as coping mechanism to overcome the stress of incarceration. Researcher found that 59.5% of the convicts were affected from psychiatric morbidity and the convicts who had psychiatric morbidity, had used the higher number of coping strategy compared to those who did not have psychiatric disorder. Sharma and et.al. (2019) had studied about the impact of incarceration on nutritional and oral health among male prisoners. They had done a cross-sectional study among one eighty-one male inmates. They concluded the study by revealing that dental caries and oral health decrease with the increase of age and period of incarceration. Debnath (2022) had conducted a quantitative study on the released women prisoners of Tripura and tried to find out the impact of imprisonment on the women prisoners. She found that imprisonment adversely affects the released women's life as the society don't accept them in family, social gatherings and functions which creates psychological and psychiatric pressure on them. She stated that the life after prison becomes the worst than the life inside the prison which may be a reason to increase more crime in the future. Tripathy and et.al. (2022) had done a cross-sectional study about the burden and predictors of depression on 146 male inmates randomly selected in the central jail in Odisha. Among 146, only 105 male prisoners had completed the interview. The study showed that among 105 male prisoners, 27.6% prisoners found severely depressed and 25.7% prisoners were moderately depressed. The studied revealed that those prisoners who had higher education, found more depressed than the other prisoners.

The behavior of the women affects the behavior of all the family members, children and surroundings. A woman prisoner was not treated well by the society. If her behavior was also goes wrong, then there is no chance for her rehabilitation of the society. Therefore, the study is important in a way the causes, affecting the behavior of women prisoners, can be found out and try to be abolished. The study is important in order to grab the attention of the people towards this serious problem.

Objectives of the study are as follows

- To study the causes of crime committed by the women inmates
- To assess the impact of imprisonment on the behavior of women inmates

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Population and Sample:- The researcher has done descriptive study on the under-trial women prisoners of Budaun District Jail of Bareilly Mandal, U.P. There were totally fifty under-trial women prisoners in the Budaun District Jail. Out of them twenty-two women prisoners were randomly selected for the interview on the basis of prior permission from the officials.

2.2 Data and Sources of Data:- The researcher has collected primary data by using interview schedule and observation method. Secondary data has been collected from the various journals, books, government records, magazines etc. The researcher has used structured interview schedule and observation method to complete the study. The interview schedule was categorized into two sections. The first section carries general information about the women prisoners and the second section involves the questions regarding causes of crime and impact of imprisonment.

2.3 Data Analysis:- The researcher has done a quantitative study. After the data collection, the researcher has statistically analyzed the data using average method which is given in table form and represent through the graphs for clear understanding.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Sociodemographic profile of the women prisoners

Variable	Age	Frequency	Percentage
Age	15-25 years	02	09.9%
	25-35 years	11	50%
	35-45 years	03	13.66%
	45-55 years	03	13.66%
	55-65 years	03	13.66%
Category	General	05	22.7%
	OBC	10	45.8%
	SC	07	31.8%
	ST	00	0
Religion	Hindu	18	82.3%
	Muslim	04	18.1%
Education	Illiterate	16	72.7%
	Primary	01	04.5%
	Secondary	02	09.9%
	Higher	03	13.6%
Marital status	Married	17	77.2%
	Unmarried	02	09.9%
	Other	03	13.6%
Birthplace	Rural	16	72.7%
	Urban	06	27.3%

Table 1 represents the socio-demographic profile of the women prisoners of Budaun District Jail. The table consists of the different variables of socio-demographic profile. The first variable depicts the age of respondents. It shows that 09.9 percent respondents were in the age-group of 15-25 years. 50 percent the majority of the respondents were in the age-group of 25-35 years and each 13.66 percent respondents were in the age-group of 35-45 years, 45-55 years and 55-65 years.

The second variable shows the percentage of category to which respondents belong. It depicts that 22.7 percent respondents belong to General category, 45.8 percent respondents belong to OBC category and 31.8 percent respondents SC category.

The third variable shows the percentage of religion followed by respondents. It presents that 82.3 percent respondents were Hindu and 18.1 percent respondents were Muslim.

The next variable is education. It tells that 72.7 percent respondents were illiterate, 04.5 percent respondents had primary education, 09.9 percent respondents had secondary education and 13.6 percent respondents were highly educated.

The next variable depicts the marital status of the respondents. It shows that 77.2 percent respondents were married, 09.9 percents respondents were unmarried and 13.6 percent respondent were widow and divorcee.

The table 4.1 shows that 72.7 percent respondents belonged to rural areas and 27.3 percent respondents belonged to urban areas.

Figures and Tables

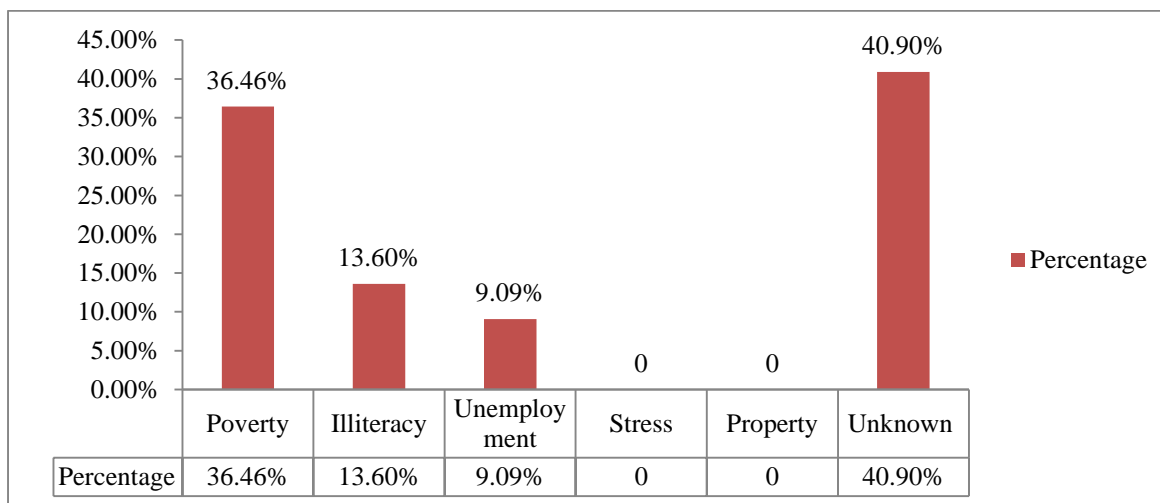


Figure 1: Causes of crime

Figure 1 analyses the causes of crime which compel the women to commit crime. It shows that 36.46 percent respondents had committed crime due to poverty, 13.60 percent respondents had committed crime due to illiteracy, 9.09 percent respondents involved in crime due to unemployment, 40.90 percent respondents did not tell the reason for being involved in criminal activity.

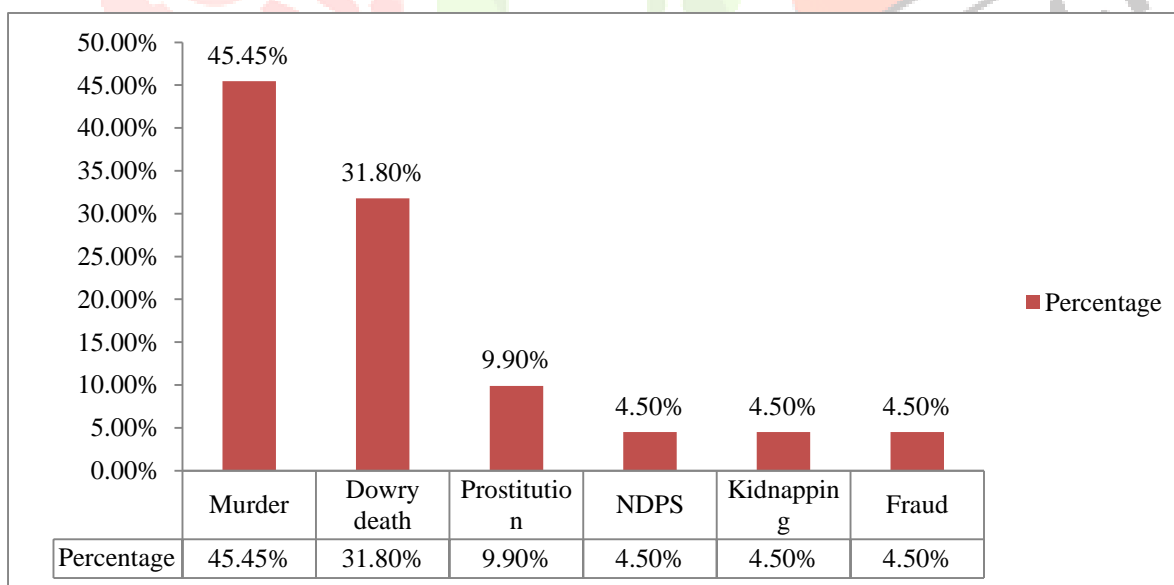


Figure 2: Nature of crime

Figure 2 comprises the nature of crime committed by women. It shows that 45.45 percent respondents were involved in murder, 31.80 percent respondents were involved in dowry death, 9.90 percent respondents were involved in prostitution, 4.50 percent respondents were involved in drugs related crime, 4.50 percent respondents were involved in kidnapping and 4.50 percent were involved in fraud. The majority of the respondents were involved in murder.

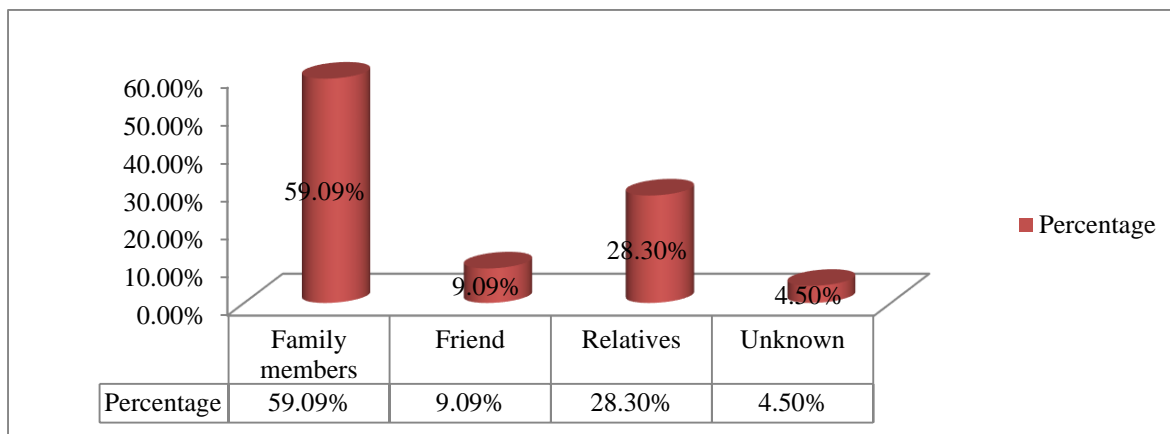


Figure 3: People who involved in crime

Figure 3 analyses the people who were involved in crime with women. It depicts that 59.09 percent respondents views that family members were involved in crime, 9.09 percent respondents views that friends were involved in crime, 28.30 percent respondents views that relatives were involved in crime and 4.50 percent respondents views that unknown people were involved with them in committing crime. The majority of the respondents had committed crime with the family members.

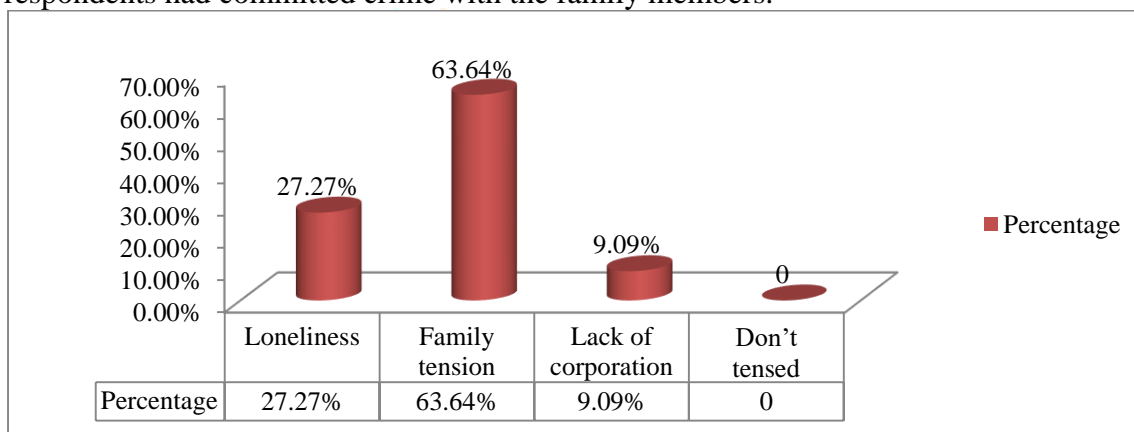


Figure 4: Causes of being tensed in the prison

Figure 4 depicts the classification on the basis of causes of being tensed in the prison. It shows that 27.27 percent respondents were tensed because of being lonely in the prison, 63.64 percent respondents were tensed due to family tension, 9.09 percent respondents were tensed due to lack of cooperation in the prison. Majority of the respondents remained tensed due to family tension.

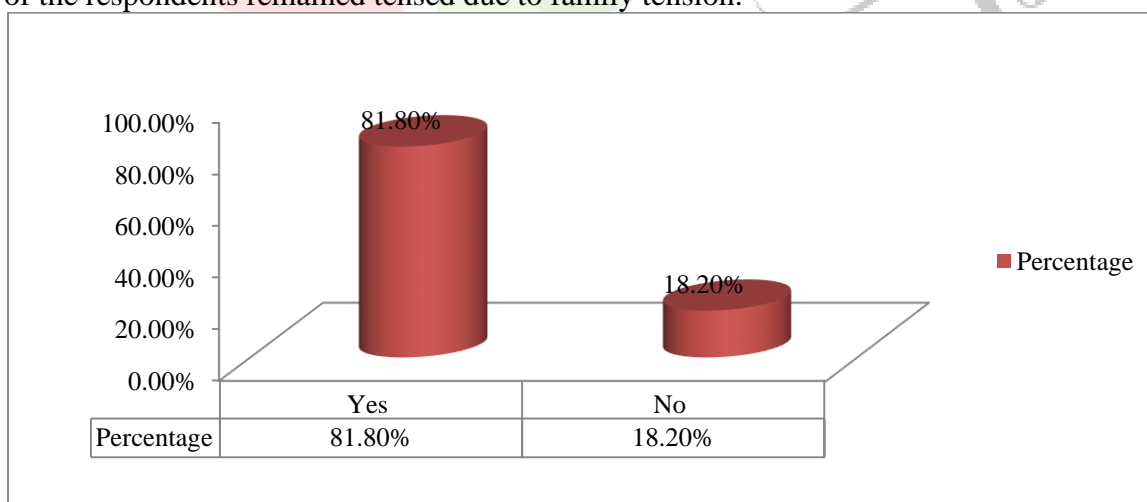


Figure 5: Feeling of loneliness in the prison

Figure 5 depicts the classification on the basis of opinion of respondents on feeling of loneliness in the prison. It shows that the majority 81.80 percent respondents felt loneliness in the prison and 18.20 percent respondents did not feel loneliness in the prison.

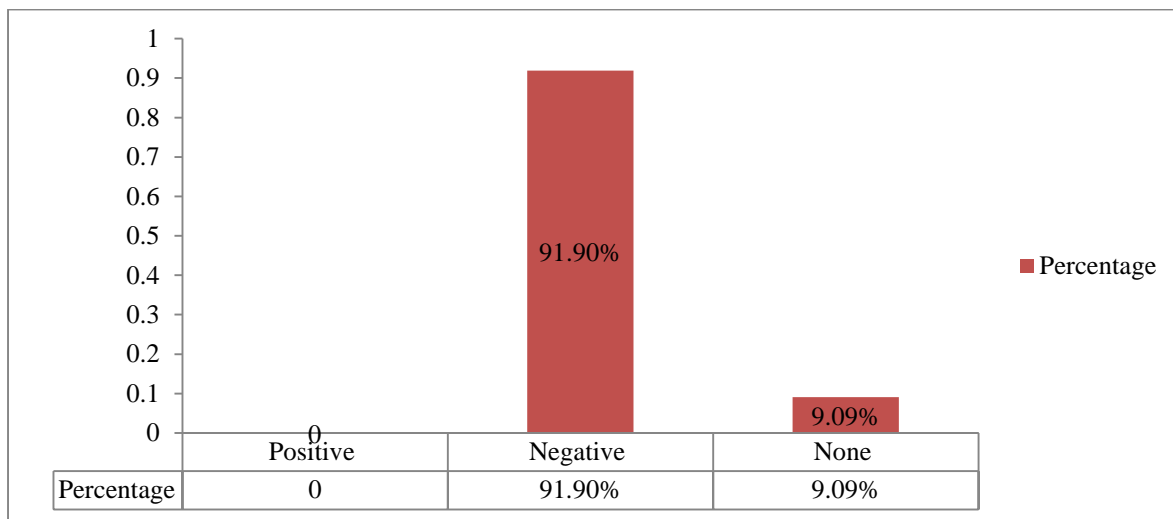


Figure 6: Impact of prison environment on health

Figure 6 analyses the opinion of respondents regarding impact of prison environment on their health. It shows that no respondents supported that prison environment positively affects them. The majority 91.90 percent respondents opined that prison environment had negative effects on the health of respondents. 9.09 percent respondents opined that prison environment did not affect them.

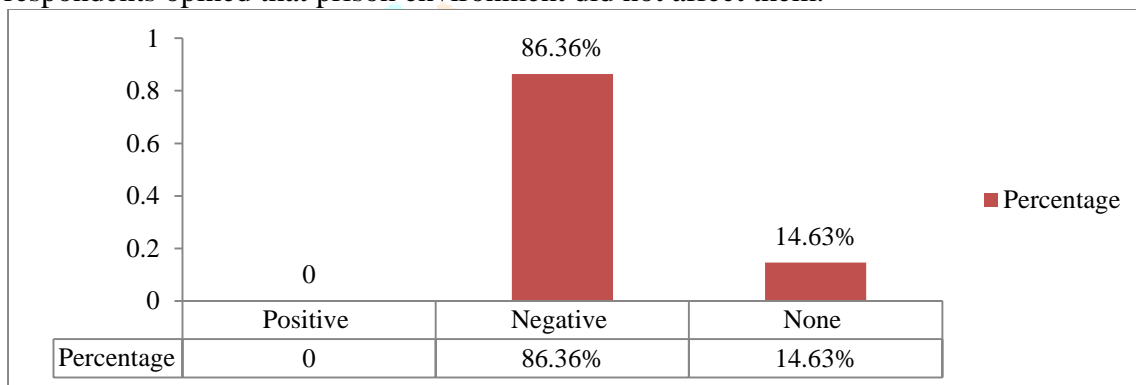


Figure 7: Impact of prison environment on personality

The above classification (figure 7) is about the impact of prison environment on personality of women prisoners. It shows that the majority 86.36 percent respondents viewed that prison environment had negatively affected the personality of women prisoners as they become more frustrated and aggressive inside the prison walls. 14.63 percent respondents viewed that prison environment neither positively nor negatively affect their personality.

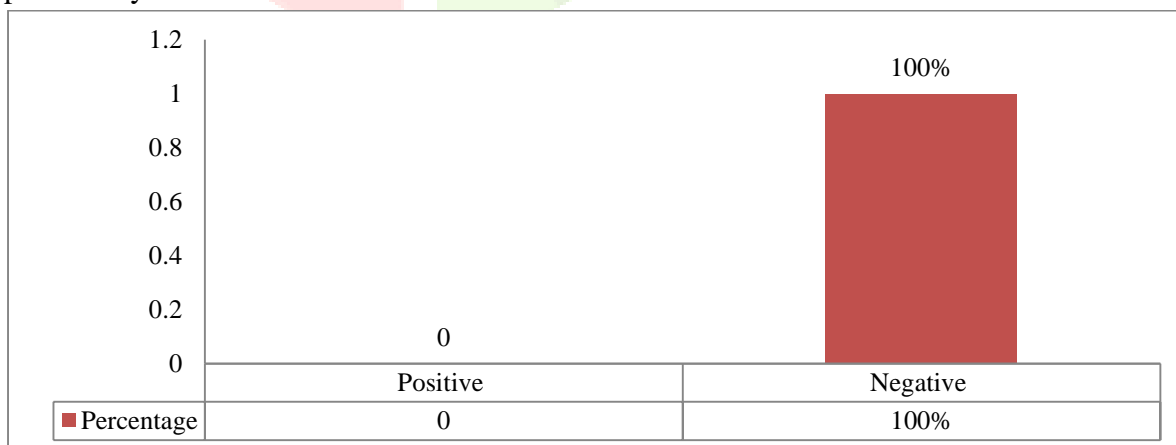


Figure 8: Impact of prison environment on personality of children

Figure 8 analyses the impact of prison environment on personality of children. It shows that all the respondents opined that prison environment negatively affected the personality of children residing with their mother inside the prison.

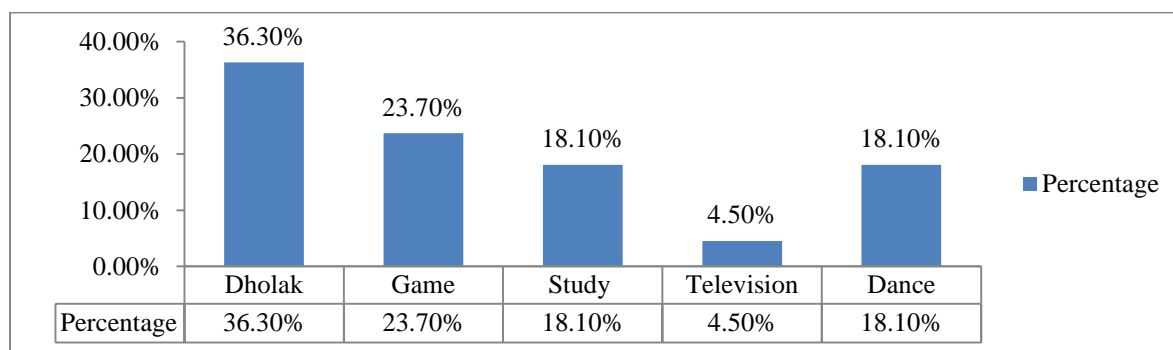


Figure 9: Activities to be done to overcome loneliness

Figure 9 presents the classification on the basis of activities which are done to overcome the loneliness in prison. It shows that 36.30 percent respondents played Dholak, 23.70 percent respondents played games, 18.10 percent respondents did study in the prison, 4.50 percent respondents watched television and 18.10 percent respondents involved in dance on Dholak to overcome the loneliness in the prison.

4. FINDINGS

The present study reveals that among twenty-two women prisoners, the maximum numbers of respondents were from the age group of 25-35 years. Majority of them were Hindus, belong to OBC category, illiterate and live in rural area having joint family. It has been observed that women prisoners were very poor and vulnerable as the majority of the women prisoners had 5000-10000rs monthly income of their family. Majority of the respondents were married and had maximum 4 children.

The study further reveals that the majority of the respondents was indulged in murder and also involved their family members in with them. The majority of the women did not accept that they had done any crime. They argued that they were secretly ensnared in a trap by some other people. Some of the women had committed crime because of poverty, illiteracy and unemployment.

The study shows that for women prisoners, there is no work to do in the prison except their own work of bathing, clothing, sweeping the barrack and work of their children. Due to that they feel isolated and remain worried about their family, life and future. The majority of the women feels loneliness in the prison and was involved in activities like dholak, knitting, dance, etc. just to pass their cursed time. They feel good and relaxed after meeting to their family.

Women said that prison environment is badly affecting their behavior and health. They remain worried about their children and family. They think all time about their children and family and cry for them which weaken their health. They feel irritated and isolated which directly affect their mental balance as they are not able to sleep at night because of the worry about their children and family. The prison environment also creates bad impact on the children living with their mother. According to the mother, prison is not the right place for the socialization of their children as they are learning abusive words from the environment and getting involve in fighting with other children. Also there is no separate place for the education of their children.

5. CONCLUSION

Thus, the study reveals that prison environment severely affects the mental peace of the women inmates that resulted in the depressed and aggressive behavior of the women prisoners. Lack of nutritional food, no recreational activity, lonely environment, negative vibes and malnutrition that the society shows to the women prisoners are the reasons to deteriorate the mental balance and health of the women prisoners.

6. LIMITATION

- The present study is limited only to the under-trial women prisoners. Further, a comparative study can be conducted between convicted and under-trial prisoners or male and female prisoners.
- Another limitation is that the study has been conducted only on the prisoners of one jail i.e. Budaun District jail. Prisoners from another jail can be added to the study.

7. SUGGESTIONS

- There is need to improvement in the nutritional amount in food and necessary condition of existence.
- There is also need to pay attention for the special program launched for the rehabilitation of the women prisoners.
- There is need of the separate place for children to study and play.
- There is need of the proper hygiene and sanitation as it directly affects the health and mind of the prisoners.
- There is need of the reconstruction of the prison as per the need of present time situation.

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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