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A STUDY ON THE BODY-BUFFER ZONE OF FEMALE PRISON INMATES

Summary

Every person has an optimum extent of space sensitivity, known as body-buffer zone and mental health problems are engendered when this extent is taxed and strained. Body-buffer zones of 80 Bengalee, adult, femal prisoners (experimental group) were determined and compared with a matched control group. It was observed that the prisoners with aggressive temperamental dispositions had significantly high space sensitivity. The findings provided evidences contributive to dormatory-spacing for designing modern prison to ensure healthy prison environment having reformative rehabilitative base.

Every person is characterized by an optimal extent of space sensitivity and when this optimal extent is taxed and strained the mental health problems are likely to occur. The said extent of space is defined by Horowitz, et al (1964) as body-buffer zone and they also observed that pathogenic states of mind are associated with space sensitivity. The concept of body-buffer zone is thus seemed to have enough utility potentials in the field of criminal psychiatry specially when studying those offences where person-person or offender-victim interaction involves in the happening of criminal incidents. Over and above the knowledge of body-buffer zone may be effectively utilized in planning community housing, institution dormatories including prison wards. Thus its application to prison housing system in specific, and jail management procedures, in general, is expected to be beneficial in curbing and controlling the frequencities of untoward and aggressive forms of behaviour because such behaviours including other antisocial conducts bear a close relation with thick density of population.

In the context of the said frame of reference an attempt has been made in the present investigation to map out the body-buffer zones of a group of female prison inmates according to the method shown by Kingel (1970), and to test the following hypothesis:

The magnitudes of the body-buffer zone of the femal prisoners vary directly with the degrees of violency or aggressive-ness involved in their criminal activities.

The experimental group consists of 80 female prison inmates of big central prison in Calcutta, who were incorporated for law breaking activities like theft, murder, sex related crimes and excise Act violations. They were all Bengali speaking female adults (age rage: 19-30 years with an average 23.8 years) hailing from different parts of West Bengal.

the range of this stay in the prison varied from 3 months (minimum) to 2½ years counting from the day of their admission into the prison. The experimental group was subdivided into two categories : 'High' and 'Low' on the basis of the significant evidence of violence during their criminal activities. A group of another 80 normal females (having no record of imprisonment) matched in age, educational and socio-economic backgrounds were considered as control group. One way ANOVA and t-tests were applied to verify the proposed hypothesis.

The results largely attribute towards accepting the hypothesis i.e. the more the aggressive a prisoner is, the high is her body-buffer zone. In fact, the crowding and very close physical proximity existing in female enclaves cause psychoneural irritation in each jail inhabitant female. The results of wallowing under such perpetual conditions of environmental limitations in the female enclave might lead to behavioural explosion or development of diverse unhygienic habits and conditions on the part of jail detained female inmates. Since criminality is largely a matter of learning through intimate interactions, the female enclave in its existing architecture and population may be said to act as a school of crime rather than reformatory-rehabilitative base. The integral part of this study has pointed out the need of remodelling the female prison institution where irritation due to physical closeness should be brought down to the minimum.

References

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2. Kinzel, A.E. (1970) Body-buffer zone in violent prisoners, Amer. J. Psychiat., 127, 59-64.

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FUNCTIONAL CHOICE OF DRESS AND THE INFLUENCE OF CLOTHING ON SELF-IMAGE

Summary:

The choice of dress which corresponds to aims and needs or the influence of clothes on human behaviour, constitute interesting examples of inter-relationships between the individual and the environment. Attention is focused on the case of dress chosen in order to confer social prestige and on dress which confer the reverse.