

Women in Prison: Unique Emotional Experiences as Mothers

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This paper is based on stress appraisal and anger expression of women in prisons while focusing particularly on the experiences of mothers and non-mothers in prison through quantitative comparative survey. A sample of 135 women (non-mothers $n = 25$, mothers $n = 110$) in prison aged between 20 to 55 years was drawn from Central Jail Kot Lakhpat in Lahore, Pakistan, using purposive sampling technique. The Stress Appraisal Measure (SAM), Anger Expression Scale (AES), and State Shame & Guilt Scale (SSGS) were used for data collection. Results showed that there was no significant difference between the levels of stress appraisal and anger expression of mothers and non-mothers in prison. Additionally, different expression of anger such as internalized, externalized and anger control was also explored and findings suggested no significant difference between convicted and under trial mothers. The study highlights the need for interventions and support for both groups in prison to help them manage their stress and anger effectively. Suggestions for future research have also been provided to further explore the emotional experiences of mothers in prison.

Keywords: Stress Appraisal, Anger Inward, Anger Outward, Anger Control, Mothers, Non-mothers, Prison

Women have been considered nurturers of the family since the inception of society. Specifically, in Pakistan, women are observed as representatives of traditions, morality, maintainers of customs, societal norms, and family cohesion. In the contemporary world, women are making strides in every sphere at an equal level to men, and their contributions to society are appreciated. However, the other side of the story is quite dim, as women's involvement in crimes is increasing in the social, cultural, economic, and political environment. Even though globally, women generally comprise between 2% and 9% of the jail population, the frequency of women's incarceration is significantly increasing. The situation of women's incarceration in Pakistan is not contradictory to other countries (Ali & Shah, 2011).

According to the census report (Government of Pakistan, GOP, 2017), women constitute 48.76% of the total population of Pakistan. Out of 207 million Pakistanis, 101 million are women, and their involvement in crime is growing at an alarming rate (Islam et al., 2019). Particularly, women's involvement in criminality has been escalating dramatically in the Punjab region; therefore, the need for in-depth research into the cause-and-effect relationship is indispensable. Women's unlawful behaviors are a veiled cultural subject in Pakistan that has been sidelined due to male supremacy and stereotypes attached to Pakistani culture (Gillani et al., 2011). The largest portion of women in Punjab detentions are incarcerated for drug offenses, while the second-highest number encompasses those charged or convicted in murder cases. The majority of women in Pakistan's prisons is married and has children. Additionally, only 134 mothers have children staying with them within the jail premises. According to reports, the majority of women prisoners are uneducated, and over half of them are married

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with children (Javed, 2019).

Additionally, women prisoners who are mothers and stay with their children or have children outside the prisons face more psychological problems than other non-mother inmates. Furthermore, according to United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC; 2014), the disruption of family bonds has distressing emotional consequences for prisoners, particularly if they are mothers. Women prisoners endure both physical and psychological torment (Ali & Shah, 2011).

UNODC (2014) states that women are more likely than males to have received treatment for psychological health issues while in prison. Furthermore, women prisoners who are mothers and stay with their children or have children outside the prisons encounter more psychological challenges than their non-mother counterparts (Ali & Shah, 2011). Stress and depression are commonly associated with incarceration experiences, especially among women prisoners (Birmingham, 2004). For many inmates, their children are a vital source of strength, and disrupting the bond between mother and child constitutes a profoundly severe form of punishment for the mother (UNODC, 2014).

Houck and Loper (2002) surveyed 362 incarcerated mothers to assess parental stress related to their imprisonment. The results indicated that mothers exhibited stress linked to heightened anxiety, symptoms of depression, and perceived competence as mothers. Additionally, an investigation explored the association between stress and anxiety concerning family visits. Women prisoners experienced a significant degree of distress related to parenting, manifesting in psychological and behavioral adjustments. Parents in correctional facilities may initially encounter the most adverse effects of incarceration, leading to feelings of inadequacy, fear, internal turmoil, and stress (Haney, 2001).

Folkman and Lazarus (1980; 1985) described three processes for handling stress. The primary process is known as primary appraisal. During primary appraisal, an individual perceives an event as a threat to oneself. Lazarus (1990) argues that stress is neither solely in the environment nor solely within the person; instead, it reflects the interaction of a person's intentions and beliefs with an environment that causes harm, threat, or challenge. In a study by McGown and Fraser (1995), it was found that the actual number of daily hassles or stressors was not linked to stress symptoms; instead, the cumulative severity of the daily hassles was associated with stress symptoms. In other words, the more one perceives or appraises the stressors to be of great concern, the more likely the individual is to experience physical manifestations of stress.

Following primary appraisal, the subsequent process is secondary appraisal, during which an individual considers potential ways to respond to the threat. The third process involves reappraisal or implementing a reaction to the threat. Folkman and Lazarus (1980) have defined reappraisal as cognitive and behavioral efforts made to master, tolerate, or alleviate external and internal strains and conflicts. In essence, it serves as a form of adaptation. They also suggest that reappraisal efforts serve two major functions: managing the source of stress and regulating stressful emotions (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985).

Imprisoned mothers describe separation from their children as one of the most challenging aspects of incarceration (Baunach, 1985; Hairston, 1991). Fathers and mothers in prisons constantly worry about their children's well-being in their absence (Hairston, 1991). According to Celinska and Siegel (2010), although mothers actively attempted to cope with the stress and separation from their children, they often found it difficult to sustain their efforts.

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Women experienced, on average, higher levels of stress than males due to the conflicting demands of motherhood and work (Mili & Cherian, 2015).

A study of 100 mothers and 111 fathers imprisoned in US prisons by Loper et al. (2009) revealed that both parents experienced a high level of parenting stress. Furthermore, heightened parenting stress in mothers was associated with depression. A descriptive, correlational study investigated the stressful life events of imprisonment for women prisoners and examined their association with selected health outcomes. Imprisoned mothers also self-reported instances of violence within the prison and an increase in aggressive behaviors. Research data indicated that a majority of respondent mothers experienced negative effects such as depression, poor psychological and physical well-being, distress, harsh attitudes, and aggressiveness after incarceration (Ferdoos & Hafeez, 2017).

Anger is a common, universally experienced emotion that occurs on a continuum from mild annoyance to rage or fury (Deffenbacher et al., 1996). Anger is likely to arise when an individual perceives a violation of their rights or values. Similarly, anger can emerge when an individual feels powerless or threatened (Horn & Towel, 1997). According to one definition, anger is an emotional state that serves as a foundation for hate and aggression (Bahrami et al., 2016). Anger can contribute to disruptive behaviors and behavioral problems in prison environments (Duran et al., 2018).

Women often experience inward anger as they suppress it, and more women cope by transforming their anger into guilt, distress, and depression. Women prisoners exhibit emotional instability, anxiety, and anger (Mili & Cherian, 2015). Prisons are emotionally charged settings, and for many individuals, they do not provide a sense of emotional security, especially for incarcerated mothers. Prison researchers have identified and described prisons as places that can frequently trigger a multitude of emotions and feelings in prisoners. Incarcerated mothers reported feelings of depression, grief, loss, frustration, guilt, shame, anger, sadness, and despair, even when they are in contact with their family and children (Baldwin, et al., 2015; Enos, 2000).

For mothers in jails, it becomes considerably more challenging to experience the commonly connected and widely expressed feelings of joy, contentment, competence, fulfillment, and pleasure surrounding their children. Even if all these emotions may still be present, they are often accompanied by stress, judgments, guilt, shame, a sense of failure, depression, anger, distress, and hurt. Research suggests that the emotional legacy of guilt and shame stemming from their incarceration is noticeable among all the mothers. Several released mothers, whose children or grandchildren were very young at the time of their sentencing, had not yet disclosed their imprisonment. Another mother explained that her baby was born during her sentence and lived with her for the initial four months in the Mother and Baby Unit (MBU). She had not yet informed her six-year-old child about the circumstances of their birth. She justified this as protecting her daughter, but also acknowledged that she was shielding herself from further shame, hurt, and guilt (Baldwin, 2018).

According to Celinska and Siegel (2010), mothers in prisons tend to experience shame and self-blame for problems in their relationship with their children more frequently than mothers who are not incarcerated. During imprisonment, mothers and non-mothers exhibit distinct patterns of emotional distress. While they may experience a similar degree of depression, their levels of anxiety differ. Both mothers and non-mothers experience high levels of anxiety at the time of incarceration, but while anxiety decreases over time for non-mothers, mothers' anxiety intensity remains elevated. This persistent anxiety among mothers is thought

to be due to the ongoing challenge of coping with the separation from their children (Fogel, 1993).

Despite statistics indicating a growing social issue of women incarceration, research on this topic has not grown proportionally. Enos (2000) notes that there are relatively few studies in the realm of criminal justice and rehabilitation that focuses on the experiences of women offenders as mothers. Furthermore, there has been minimal or no research specifically centered on the emotional impact of imprisonment on mothers in Pakistan's prisons. This paper was designed to fill this gap and aimed to investigate the diverse emotional impacts, such as stress appraisal, anger, shame, and guilt, of incarceration on mothers. The researchers focused primarily on stress appraisal and anger, aiming to discern the differential assessment of stress related to incarceration among mothers and non-mothers in prisons. Furthermore, this study sought to evaluate the expression of anger among both mothers and non-mothers within Pakistan's prison system. Hence it is being hypothesized that mothers in prison will have high-stress appraisal and anger expression than non-mothers in prison. Convicted mothers in prison will have high-stress appraisal and internalized anger expression than under trial mothers in prison. Under trial mothers will have more externalized anger expressions as compared to convicted mothers.

Methods

Current research has employed quantitative comparative survey to test the above-mentioned hypotheses.

Participants

The participants were 135 women (non-mothers $n = 25$; mothers $n = 110$) in prison, selected through purposive sampling. They ranged in age from 20 to 55 years ($M = 35.75$; $SD = 9.54$). There were both convicted ($n=39$) and under-trial ($n=71$) mothers, housed at Central Jail Kot Lakhpat in Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan. The present research focused on women who had committed crimes, specifically murder, kidnapping (boys & girls), drug trafficking, and robbery. Women prisoners with a criminal history other than those previously mentioned were excluded from the study. The details of the participants are given below.

Table 1

Frequency, Percentages, Mean and Standard Deviation of Demographic Variables (N=135)

| Variables | <i>f</i> | % | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|--------------------|----------|-----|----------|-----------|
| Age | | | 35.75 | 9.54 |
| Number of Children | | | 3.02 | 2.17 |
| Education | | | | |
| Illiterate | 81 | 60% | | |
| School Education | 37 | 27% | | |
| Intermediate | 10 | 7% | | |
| Graduation | 7 | 5% | | |
| Family System | | | | |
| Joint | 83 | 61% | | |
| Nuclear | 52 | 38% | | |
| Residential Area | | | | |
| Urban | 84 | 62% | | |
| Rural | 51 | 37% | | |
| Monthly Income | | | | |
| <10000-10000 | 66 | 48% | | |

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| | | |
|----------------------------------|-----|-------|
| 11000-20000 | 47 | 34% |
| 21000-30000 | 8 | 5% |
| 31000-40000 | 11 | 10% |
| Marital Status | | |
| Married | 84 | 62% |
| Unmarried | 15 | 11% |
| Divorced | 9 | 6% |
| Separated | 7 | 5% |
| Widow | 20 | 14% |
| Nature of Imprisonment | | |
| Under Trial | 41 | 30.4% |
| Convicted | 94 | 69.6% |
| Mothers' Nature of Imprisonment | | |
| Under Trial | 71 | 64.5% |
| Convicted | 39 | 35.5% |
| Motherhood | | |
| Non-mothers | 25 | 81.5% |
| Mothers | 110 | 18.5% |
| Duration of Current Imprisonment | | |
| 1 month- 12 months | 63 | 46% |
| 13 months- 24 months | 16 | 11% |
| 25 months- 36 months | 25 | 18% |
| 37 months- or more | 31 | 23% |

Note. M=Mean, SD=Standard Deviation, *f*=Frequency, %=Percentage

The participants were 135 women prisoners housed at central jail Kot Lakhpat in Lahore, Pakistan. They ranged in age from 20 to 55 years of age, with a ($M=35.75$ years, $SD.=9.54$). The prisoners in this sample had a different range of educational backgrounds, ranging from illiterate to more than four years of a college education. Descriptive results showed that 60% of the women were illiterate and only 7% of women completed fourteen years of education. The inmates also characterized different ethnicities, with 62% urban, 37% rural living in joint family system 61%, and nuclear family system 38%. This sample is a quite accurate illustration of the general prison population from which they were selected, which comprised of around 780 women prisoners. 81.5% were mothers and 18.5% were non-mothers of the prisoners interviewed. Women prisoners had been verdict to different nature of imprisonment. Of the interviewed sample convicted women prisoners were 30.4% and 69.6% were under trial women inmates. In addition to this, the mean and standard were also calculated for the number of children, mothers in prison have an average ($M=3.02$, $SD. =2.17$) number of children.

Measures

Following measures were used in the current study:

Demographic Sheet

A demographic information sheet was prepared to collect data on participants' age, education, marital status, number of children, and family system, residential area and monthly income. Women prisoners were also asked to furnish information regarding their present prison status (such as convicted or under trial) and the duration of their ongoing incarceration term.

Additionally, participants were requested to provide details about their prior prison visits, the nature of past crimes, the current crime, duration of imprisonment, and nature of imprisonment.

Stress Appraisal Measure

The original version of the Stress Appraisal Measure (SAM) scale was developed by Peacock and Wong (1990). Subsequently, it was translated into Urdu for the Pakistani population by Kausar and Anwar (2010). The translated version of SAM was utilized in the present research to assess various facets of stress appraisal in women prisoners. Participants responded on a 5-point Likert Scale, ranging from *not at all* to *extremely agree*. The SAM demonstrated high reliability (.78). A higher score on the SAM indicated that the individual was experiencing more stress.

Anger Expression Scale (AES)

Shafqat and Ijaz (2016) established The Anger Expression Scale. The scale was developed in the Urdu language and comprises three subscales: anger inward, anger outward, and anger control, totaling 23 items. A Likert scale was employed for scoring, ranging from *not at all* to *extremely agree*. The three subscales include different items: items numbered (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7) measure anger inward, while items numbered (8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 21, 22, 23) measure anger outward. The third subscale, anger control, comprises items numbered (13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20). The reliability of the subscales of the anger expression scale falls within the range of .53 to .77. The overall score of the anger expression scale reliability of .69.

State Shame and Guilt Scale-SSGS

The scale was initially developed by Marshal et al. (1994). The translated version of the SSGS by Rasool and Kausar (2012) was utilized in the present study. The SSGS consists of three subscales, totaling 15 items: shame, guilt, and pride. In the current study, only two subscales of the SSGS were employed – shame items, e.g., (2, 5, 8, 11), and guilt items, e.g., (3, 6, 9, 12, 15). Responses were recorded on a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5. The values of Cronbach's α for the two subscales were consistent: for shame items ($\alpha = .89$) and guilt items ($\alpha = .82$).

Procedure

To gain access to women prisoners, a formal request letter, endorsed by the Head of the Department of Clinical Psychology Unit at GC University Lahore, was dispatched to the Inspector General (IG) of Punjab Prisons. The IG of Punjab Prisons was apprised of the nature and objectives of the research. Upon receiving final consent to collect data from Central Jail Kot Lakhpat Lahore, a purposive sampling method was employed to select a sample size of 135 women prisoners.

Furthermore, the Senior Superintendent of the jail and the staff were duly informed about the purpose and intent of the research. Subsequently, women prisoners underwent a comprehensive briefing outlining the research's objectives. This briefing explicitly emphasized the confidentiality of their responses and underscored that their decision to partake in the research would neither positively nor negatively impacts their incarcerated status.

Informed consent was procured from the prisoners through a consent form. The consent form outlined the terms of their participation and attested to their voluntary contribution to the

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research study. Notably, the inmates' names or identification numbers were not collected. Moreover, the prisoners were provided with the assurance that the information they provided would be solely utilized for research and educational purposes.

The directions were provided, and participants received the research tools, including a demographic sheet, the Stress Appraisal Measure, the Anger Expression Scale, and the State Shame and Guilt Scale. These scales were administered individually, with participants who were educated and literate reading and responding to the items. For participants who were not educated, the researcher conducted interviews to gather responses.

In adherence to APA 7 guidelines, the original wording of the items on the scales was maintained. However, for participants who did not speak Urdu and had difficulty understanding, the researcher provided explanations in their native language, Punjabi. The process of completing the entire questionnaire typically took 15-20 minutes per participant. Upon completion, the questionnaires were collected from the participants, who were then thanked for their valuable contribution to the research.

Results

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was employed to analyze the data. The data analysis is presented in two main steps. Firstly, descriptive statistics are provided. Secondly, an independent sample t-test is conducted to ascertain the extent to which factors such as motherhood and the nature of imprisonment impact the stress appraisal and expression of anger among women prisoners.

Table 2

Comparing women prisoners on their Stress Appraisal and Anger Expression concerning Motherhood

| Variables | (Non-mothers=25) | | (Mothers= 110) | | <i>t</i> (133) | <i>p</i> |
|-----------|------------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|----------------|----------|
| | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | | |
| SA | 134.32 | 16.58 | 136.17 | 18.04 | -.496 | .623 |
| AE | 42.08 | 16.71 | 46.48 | 17.15 | -1.183 | .244 |

Note. (N=135), M=Mean, SD=standard deviation, and SAM= Stress Appraisal, AE=Anger Expression, $p < 0.05$, $p < 0.001$

In the present study, where the group sizes are notably imbalanced, with non-mothers in prison comprising (n=25) participants and mothers in prison consisting of (n=110) participants, the utilization of Welch's t-test emerges as a suitable method. This approach provides a solid foundation for carrying out a reliable comparison between these two groups, effectively addressing the challenge posed by the unequal group sizes and variances.

Table 2 showing the stress appraisals of non-mothers in prison (n=25) were associated with an average score of (M= 134.32; SD=16.58). On the other hand, when looking at mothers in prison (n=110), their stress appraisal was a somewhat greater numerically, with an average of (M=136.4; SD=18.04). To test the hypothesis that mothers in prison would have higher stress appraisals than non-mothers in prison; Welch's t-test was conducted. The distributions of stress appraisals for both mothers and non-mothers were sufficiently normal for the Welch's t-test analysis. An alpha level of .05 was employed for the significance test, and it was observed that the variances were not homogenous. The outcome of the Welch's t-test yielded a statistically insignificant results $t(133) = -0.496$, $p > 0.05$ between the stress appraisals of mothers and non-mothers in prison. This means that the level of stress appraisal appears to be similar for both groups.

Additionally, Exploration of anger expression among mothers and non-mothers was undertaken, as presented in Table 2. Non-mothers in prison ($n=25$) exhibited an average anger expression score of ($M=42.08$, $SD=16.71$). On the other hand, mothers in prison ($n=110$) displayed a somewhat higher anger expression numerically, with a mean of ($M=46.48$, $SD=17.15$). To assess the hypothesis that mothers in prison would demonstrate greater anger expression compared to non-mothers in prison, an independent sample t-test was conducted. The Welch's t-test produced a statistically non-significant result $t(133) = -1.183$, $p > .05$, indicating that there was insufficient evidence to conclude that mothers in prison expressed more anger than non-mothers in prison.

Table 3

Comparing Mother in Prison on their Internalized & Externalize Anger and Anger Control concerning their Nature of Imprisonment

| Variables | Under Trial $n = 71$ | | Convicted $n=39$ | | $t(108)$ | p |
|-----------|----------------------|-------|------------------|-------|----------|------|
| | M | SD | M | SD | | |
| SA | 134.11 | 16.16 | 139.92 | 20.75 | -1.62 | .106 |
| IA | 11.08 | 7.92 | 12.74 | 9.24 | -.989 | .325 |
| EA | 20.21 | 5.64 | 19.62 | 6.93 | .487 | .627 |
| AC | 14.30 | 6.59 | 15.74 | 7.54 | -1.04 | .298 |

Note: ($N=110$), M =Mean, SD =standard deviation, UT =Under Trial, CON = Convicted, SA = Stress Appraisal, IA = Internalized Anger, EA =Externalized Anger, and AC =Anger Control, $p < 0.05$

An independent samples t-test was conducted to examine potential disparities in internalized anger expression between incarcerated under-trial and convicted mothers. The sample included under-trial mothers ($n = 71$), who exhibited an average internalized anger score of ($M = 11.08$, $SD = 7.92$). Similarly, convicted mothers ($n = 39$) displayed a somewhat higher mean internalized anger score, ($M = 12.74$, $SD = 9.24$). The t-test revealed a statistically insignificant difference, $t(108) = -0.989$, $p < .05$, internalized anger expression was similar between the two groups of mothers within the prison context. Specifically, the results suggested that convicted mothers tended to display a higher level of internalized anger expression compared to under-trial mothers.

Furthermore, an examination of differences in externalized anger was conducted between under-trial mothers ($M = 20.21$, $SD = 5.64$) and convicted mothers ($M = 19.62$, $SD = 6.93$). Notably, all groups exhibited a normal distribution of the measured variable. However, it is important to acknowledge that the assumption of homogeneity of variance was not met, as indicated by the Levene's test $t(108) = 0.487$, $p > .05$ results indicated that their insignificant difference in the externalized expression of anger between under-trial and convicted mothers within the prison context. The examination of stress appraisal and anger control among under-trial and convicted mothers in prison also revealed interesting insights. The results indicated that there was insignificant difference in stress appraisal and anger control between mothers based on their nature of imprisonment.

Discussion

This paper is based on stress appraisal and anger expression of women in prisons while focusing particularly on the experiences of mothers and non-mothers in prison. In the context of women imprisonment, the journey is multifaceted, comprising emotional experiences that go beyond the gates of the jail. The complex terrain of mothers in Pakistan prison, providing a thorough examination of the emotional factors that affect the lives of both jailed mothers and non-mothers. Researchers uncover the fundamental emotional obstacles that characterize the

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path of jailed mothers in this cultural setting through an extended examination of stress appraisal, anger expression, and the relationship between emotional reactions. For illustration, motherhood is a very crucial aspect influencing women's prison emotional experiences, and this aspect was investigated as it relates to the specific stress which incarcerated mothers face, as well as the expression of anger they employ in dealing with these various emotions related to motherhood in jail.

The results obtained in current research did not support the hypothesis that mothers in prison would have greater stress appraisal than non-mothers. The lack of statistically significant differences indicates that both mothers and non-mothers experience equivalent levels of stress appraisal in the prison setting. These results are consistent with prior research by Loper (2006), it is clear that the distinction between mothers and non-mothers in prison goes beyond their levels of stress appraisal. In order to shed light on the distinct contexts connected with these two groups of jailed women's criminal behavior, it was found out that, non-mothers were more likely than mothers to be imprisoned for violent crimes like homicide. It's significant to note that, despite variations in the circumstances that push mothers and non-mothers into jail, both groups experience comparable challenges adjusting to life inside prison. This similarity in the spectrum of adjustment issues emphasizes the emotional toll that incarceration demands on all prisoners, regardless of their parental situation. Moreover, it is critical to recognize that the common difficulties of confinement, separation from loved ones, and the inherent difficulties of adjusting to the prison environment are not specific to mothers or non-mothers. These events are common in the prison system and greatly contribute to the emotional toll of incarceration on both groups such as mothers and non-mothers. Indigenous research supported the findings of current research that criminal justice system prisoners are also vulnerable to maltreatment, physical abuse, and sexual assault. Many of the women imprisoned in Pakistan suffer from mental health difficulties such as depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress syndrome as a result of their experiences with gender discrimination both before and after being imprisoned (Alam, 2018).

On contrary to expectations, did not indicate a significant difference in the expression of anger in the prison population between mothers and non-mothers. This data contradicts the concept that mothers are angrier as a result of the challenges associated with their parental obligations. Nonetheless, research reveals linkages between emotion, and confinement, indicating that the emergence of anger is a complex phenomenon that extends beyond parental obligations. Furthermore, the similarity in anger expression between mothers and non-mothers may be indicative of the universal hardships shared by all women convicts, regardless of parental status. These findings are consistent with a prior research done in Kot Lakhpat Jail in Lahore, Pakistan, which confirmed our findings. Poverty, retaliation, anger, and a lack of autonomy were all linked to criminal activity among women in that research, which included 114 women convicts (Khalid & Khan, 2013). In reaction to their offenses, the women experienced sentiments of guilt, anger, guilt, and sadness. This ingenious cultural agreement of our data supports the hypothesis that women inmates' display of anger is driven by a complex interplay of circumstances that go beyond motherhood and are shared by imprisoned women globally.

Furthermore, women in jail frequently confront barriers to necessary services and support networks, complicating their capacity to control their emotions and regulate their behavior. They may also face the harsh reality of stigma and prejudice from fellow inmates and prison officials, increasing their mental health issues and leading to anger expression. Given that both mothers and non-mothers face these challenges, it's not unexpected that their

expressions of anger are comparable. It is worth mentioning, however, that earlier research contradicts the conclusions of our current study. According to Tuerk and Loper' (2006), jailed mothers have more difficulty adjusting to and negotiating the problems of prison life than non-mothers. This paradox implies that there may be distinct refinements and contextual elements at work, which may differ between prison conditions and populations. Hassan et al. (2023) investigated in their research that women prisoners in Pakistan have a number of psychological obstacles that negatively impact their mental health and well-being. Depression, anxiety, and emotional distress are all prevalent mental issues among women prisoners. Incarceration can result in emotions of powerlessness, loneliness, and isolation, all of which can harm one's mental health. Women inmates commonly express anxiety and sadness as a result of their uncertain future, distance from family, and lack of social support.

The current study focused on the examination of stress and the difficulties connected with expressing anger among mothers in connection to the type they are imprisoned. The results showed that there were no significant changes in the assessment of stress and the display of anger among mothers who had been convicted or were on trial. They evaluated stress and exhibited anger in comparable ways. According to a report by Human Rights Watch (HRW; 2020) women inmates in Pakistan have a variety of psychological challenges, many of which are exacerbated by the disgraceful conditions in which they are held. Women's prisons in Pakistan are typically overcrowded and under-resourced, resulting in filthy circumstances that may be detrimental to detainees' mental health (Hussain, 2023). These findings are also supported by research conducted by Pakistan's Human Rights Ministry (2020), which found that women in prison face terrible living conditions and inadequate medical treatment. According to this study, *Plight of Women in Pakistan's Prisons*, which was given to the government in 2020, Pakistan's prison laws did not correspond to international standards, and authorities regularly disobeyed lawmaking aimed at protecting women and convicts. As of mid-2020, 66 percent of the 1,121 women imprisoned had not been proven convicted of any crimes and were being held pending the results of their cases. Family visits were impossible since over 300 women were being housed in sites far from their home districts (Mustafa, 2023).

Conclusion

Mothers and non-mothers in prison do not differ from each other when it comes to their emotional needs. The current study has some important implications for those who are involved in the treatment of correctional services of prisoners. Both mothers and non-mothers in prison are dealing with emotional challenges, so they need specific psychological treatment facilities.

Implications

Given such challenges, correctional facilities must provide specialized services and support for both imprisoned groups (mothers & non-mothers), such as parenting classes, counseling, and family visitation programs. These programs can assist women in jail in coping with their emotions, maintaining ties with their children, family and improving their general well-being. We can reduce angry expressions and improve results for both mothers and non-mothers.

Additionally, correctional policies and practices that promote family contact and engagement can plan to help incarcerated mothers and non-mothers and arrange frequent meetings with their children. It is also important for correctional facilities to provide adequate resources and support to both groups of women who are reentering society after incarceration,

such as employment and housing assistance, to ensure successful reintegration and reduce the likelihood of recidivism. Overall, by understanding the specific needs of mothers and non-mothers correctional policies and practices can be developed that not only support the well-being of incarcerated mothers and non-mothers but also contribute to the long-term success of the criminal justice system.

Limitations and Future Recommendations

Despite the insignificant results of the current research, a few limitations are worth consideration. These interpretations are highly tentative, with this research being limited in several areas. The sample for this study was small; therefore, it is important to consider this factor while interpreting the results. One reason for the small sample was that the data was collected only from the central jail Kot Lakhpat in Lahore Punjab. Women prisoners are only kept in this jail in Lahore, and there is no other jail in Lahore for women prisoners. Data could not be obtained from any other jail in Punjab due to reasons such as lack of permission and time constraints. Therefore, it is suggested that future researchers increase the sample size and collect data from other provinces as well so that the results can be more generalizable.

Further, in this research, only mother prisoners were included. However, future researchers can also study fathers in prisons to understand their stress and related emotions. This would help in gaining a more complete understanding of the experiences of both mothers and fathers who are incarcerated.

Another limitation of the study was that the sample was selected through purposive sampling, which means there is a possibility that the sample of women prisoners may not represent the entire population of women prisoners. Therefore, future research may benefit from using a larger and more diverse sample that is selected through a random sampling technique to improve the generalizability of the findings.

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