Name of the scholar: **Pearly Paul**

Name of the supervisor: **Prof. Archana Dassi**

Name of the Department / Centre: **Department of Social Work (Faculty of Social Sciences)**

The topic of research: **Impact of social support on the young adults of incarcerated mothers**

FINDINGS

Parents play an important role in the upbringing of their children, especially mothers, as they have socially been given the role of caretakers. This study analyses the living experiences of young adults as children of incarcerated mothers. Unlike other studies of children of incarcerated parents (CIPs), in this study, the researcher has strived to understand and depict the strength and gaps of social support programs the young adults had to undergo during their developmental phases, primarily through external agencies, a visible form of support system.

No official data is available for the children of incarcerated parents who continue to live in the community. There are no methods or systems introduced in the child welfare system or the criminal justice system to record the data on the children of incarcerated parents above six years for planning and implementing the well-being programs for this group at the state or national level. Currently, as per the Juvenile Justice Act, CIPs are counted under the vulnerable category of children who need care and protection during their parent's imprisonment. However, a gap was observed in the planning and implementation of the child welfare system for the CIPs regarding their welfare needs only under the conditions of their parent's incarceration period. Planning should be done for their holistic well-being at physical, psychological and social levels; the provision of partial financial or institutional support will not help these vulnerable groups of children in the long run.

The experiences of the young adults living with their mothers in the Tihar prison crèche and their institutional life surrounded by caregivers, peer groups and teachers were challenging in the initial years. However, they learnt to adapt to the challenges over the years on their own. For most young adults, family relationships were limited to external agencies' organized mother-child meetings at the prison. The relationship conflicts experienced by young adults with their fathers, stepfathers, mothers and siblings indicate the high risk of detachment from familial roots, which highly affect the inter and intra-personal conflicts in

the relationship patterns of young adults in the long run. While discussing the survival stories with a supportive peer group, teachers and caregivers, an act of negligence to protect the incarceration background of their mothers, raised concerns about taking the right steps against the stigmatization of society toward the right of the CIPs to lead a respectful and responsible life. The reintegration challenges of the mothers, mostly in the role of a single parent with their struggles for self-sustainability and lack of parenting skills highlight the requirements of social support even after the mother's release as a part of long-term support. Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model was adopted while exploring more about the psychosocial coping strategies of young adults during their developmental stage. The evolved changes in the attitudes, interests, behaviour, thoughts and opinions of the study participants (young adults) over a period of time were also observed and analyzed. The commonality observed was that all the young adults had gone through very challenging life situations during their childhood and adolescence. Instead of an immediate environment surrounded by parents, siblings and kinship, the young adults were surrounded by prison inmates, people of the criminal justice system, and strange caregivers of the institutional setting. The unexpected environmental shifts from home to a prison and institutional setting were the repercussions due to their mother's incarceration. Even in the middle of a shattered childhood, the young adults were supported and cared for by a group of caregivers, teachers, peer groups and professionals. A detailed analysis of this support system in the view of young adults and mothers found it to be relieving and influenced their behaviours and emotions positively even though certain gaps were identified with the social support system. It was, as it is said, "Something is better than nothing".eved.