A perusal of the prison statistics of our country would show that of the total number of convicts in prisons all over India, an overwhelming proportion is in for long durations.

The present study of whole life sentences is perhaps a pioneer study of this type in our country. The study focuses attention on eliciting information on the existing institutional programmes for life-term offenders from the prisoners, jail officials and judiciary of Delhi. An effort has been made to find out the socio-economic background of the life-term offenders, their experiences while in police custody and in court, in particular, and in correctional institutions in general.

The views and opinions of the judiciary about whole life convicts have also been examined in order to get an insight into the problem attention has also been paid to the matter of delays in administration of criminal justice at various phases like police and court.

The present work deals with the aspects such as with offence, offender, police, court and prison in the context of life-term sentences.
The study has been confined to the Central Jail, Tihar, Delhi and the Judiciary in Delhi. However, it may be expected that the implications of life-term sentences, in the location would be relevant in general to the administration of criminal justice.

Chapter one provides an introduction dealing with the historical background and importance of the problem in contemporary times.

Chapter two has been devoted exclusively to the opinions of the Jail staff of Tihar, Jail, Delhi. In this chapter an attempt has been made to locate the areas of correctional programmes by making use of the available data.

Chapter three deals with the socio-economic background of the individual offenders on the basis of information obtained from those in Tihar Jail.

Chapter four has been devoted to the offence offenders and his experience in police custody, court and also in prison.

Chapter five brings out the opinions of the judiciary on whole life convict.

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Chapter six deals with existing alternatives to whole life convicts in India, based on the secondary data in particular and the opinions of the Jail staff, offenders and Judiciary in general.

Chapter seven presents the conclusions emerge from the study and makes suggestions in regard to policy.

It is hoped that the present work will be of interest to those involved in the criminal justice system as well as to the general reader.

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