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Understanding Prisons Rehabilitation Programmes in Nigeria: Lessons from the Correctional Facilities in Imo State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT
The study is aimed at providing empirical link prisons and rehabilitation programmes in Imo State, Nigeria. The objectives of the study include the examination of the types of rehabilitation programmes, how the programmes are conceived and implemented as well as to determine the effectiveness of the programmes in terms of making inmates better people. To achieve these objectives as well as evaluate related questions and hypotheses, both primary and secondary data were sourced from respondents and used. The respondents were selected using the simple random sampling method. To determine the sample size, the Taro Yamane formula was utilized. Consequently, a total of 380 inmates, 12 staff and 12 instructors were questioned. Data analysis was done using simple percentages, descriptive models and chi square (χ^2) statistical technique. The empirical result indicated that the calculated value for χ^2 for each of the three hypotheses were higher than the table value is of 7.81. The chi square computation was done at 3 degree of freedom and a significance level of 0.05. The results provided justification for the rejection of all three null hypothetical statements and acceptance of their alternates. The findings therefore show that there are several types of rehabilitation programmes but carpentry is overemphasised. Also, the top-to-bottom approach of conceiving and implanting the programmes undermine its effectiveness. It was recommended among others that there should be widespread stakeholder consultation in the design, conception and implementation of prison rehabilitation programmes. This will go a long way to ensure wider input that will make the programmes better.
Keywords: Prisons, rehabilitation, programmes, training, Imo State

INTRODUCTION

In all societies around the world, the prisons are designed for restitutive purpose. This is a situation where all things being equal, offenders or convicted persons undergo some degree of rehabilitation required for effective functioning in society. In Nigeria for instance, the Prison Act (1972) clearly maintains that the basic aim of the prison is to endeavour to identify the reason for anti- social behaviour of the offenders; to train and rehabilitate them to be good and useful citizens (Uche, Ezumah, Ebue, Okafor, & Ezegbe, 2015). The understanding of the role of prisons in the country almost explicitly means that Nigerian prisons are endowed with the capacity to rehabilitate convicted criminals and by extension reduce the incidence of recidivism especially through programmes that empower such persons and remove them from any fall back to anti-social behaviours or crimes.

Every year, over two million people come in contact with the justice systems, and hundreds of thousands of persons, globally enter the prison facilities in Nigeria (Ayeni, 2015). The United Nations (UN, 2016) reported that out of every ten (10) Nigerian remanded in prison, only three (3) usually get

out fully rehabilitated. This according to the UN presents a major challenge to the issue of criminal rehabilitation across the country as more young people are known to be involved in high level criminality in recent times.

All over the world, the prison in conjunction with other related correctional institutions that make up the entire criminal justice system represent a formal way of managing problems associated with crime and deviance in society. However, while the function of ensuring the administration of criminal justice (Iwarimie-Jaja & Raimi, 2019), is well known, new challenges associated with performing this function continue to emerge. In fact, in its recent report, the United Nations (2016) listed a number of problems plaguing prison rehabilitation in mostly African countries. These challenges are; overcrowding which has been clearly defined as prison congestion (Ayeni, 2015), inadequate infrastructure, insufficient funding and most important to this study, weak rehabilitation character.

Following the United Nations (2016) report highlighted above, the problem of weak rehabilitation programmes is not peculiar to Nigerian prisons alone (Ekpenyong, Raimi & Ekpenyong, 2012). However, the adverse effect of inadequate rehabilitation programmes in the country's prisons goes a long way to undermine the fundamental objective of prison rehabilitation thereby increasing the risk of more crime rather than reducing criminality in our society. Much as this is the case, prisons instead of designing and implementing programmes that encourage positive values and behavior modification with future economic incentives for inmates, end up reinforcing criminal and deviant behaviours. In this regard, whenever convicted prisoners are released from prisons, they end up falling back to crime due to poor rehabilitation. This only serves to increase the statistical level of recidivism in our society.

Quite a number of empirical works have been done on Nigerian prisons but very few of them have focused directly on understanding how rehabilitation programmes such as; adult literacy, carpentry, arts/crafts, tailoring, welding among others are designed and implemented as well as how this affects convicted criminals. Studies that came close to addressing the above problems are those by Uche, Uche, Ezumah, Ebue, Okafor and Ezegbe (2015), Shimada (2016) and Onwubiko (2016). For instance, Uche et al., (2015) study focused on types of rehabilitation programmes in selected prisons within the Eastern part of Nigeria without necessarily showing how these programmes affect inmates. On the other hand, Shimada (2016) focused on inmates' welfare while failing to link this to rehabilitation programmes. Lastly, Onwubiko (2016) examined the nature of overcrowding in prisons leaving the of issue rehabilitation programmes for inmates unattended to. The fact that very little has been said on how rehabilitation programmes should be deployed may account for why crime is still very high among ex-convicts in society.

While the above studies have exposed some aspects of prison rehabilitation programmes and have succeeded in contributing to knowledge in this regard, there is still a gap in the literature especially seeing that none of the above researcher was able to show how rehabilitation programmes are designed and implemented as well as their effectiveness in integrating former convicts or prisoners into society. In order to fill this gap in knowledge, our study examines the issue of prisons and rehabilitative programmes in Nigeria using the three prisons in Imo State as its reference point.

Objectives of the Study

Essentially, the specific objectives of the study are:

1. Examine the types of prison rehabilitation programmes in Imo State.
2. Examine how these rehabilitation programmes are conceived and implemented in the prisons.
3. Determine how effective rehabilitation programmes are or have been in terms of reducing recidivism and transforming inmates into fully functional members of society.

Research Hypothesis

There is a significant difference in the way rehabilitation programmes are implemented and the effectiveness of the programmes in terms transforming inmates to better people.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In the background to this study in chapter one, it was emphasized that modern prisons in Nigeria are products of the country's colonial heritage starting as far back as 1861 according to Iwarimie-jaja (2011). However, this does in any way dwarf the fact that traditional models of incarcerations did not exist prior to this time. In fact, a classical study done in the 1970s by Dr. Jayola a seasoned sociologist had revealed that Northern as well as Western Nigeria prior to the coming of colonial masters had a strong judicial system including prisons where offenders are incarcerated for different levels of

offences. In his study which adopted an anthropological method of ethnography, Jayola (1973) examined over 500 records of elders and cultural custodians from Hausa/Fulani societies and Yoruba kingdoms. Hence, using a transcript method of interview sessions he had with his respondents/interviewees, the researcher identified prison systems that were rooted in the traditional structures of the people. He however, came to the conclusion that the prisons in pre-colonial northern Nigeria were more rigid and punitive than that of the pre-colonial Yoruba people. Sadly, he found that instead of these prisons to be seen as homes for rehabilitation for offenders, they were seen as places of punishment where in most cases, prisoners often die due to neglect and diseases.

A similar study on prisons in pre-colonial Nigeria debunked the claims of Jayola (1973) especially focusing on some of his findings which held that the justice system was wicked and brutish. For instance, Makinde (2008) in a historical study of traditional criminal justice systems of the Yoruba's prior to the colonial period, contradicted the findings of the previous scholar. Still relying on similar methods but adopting a more sophisticated qualitative method of analysis known as grounded theory, Makinde performed an axial and selective coding of over 1,200 interview sessions spanning a period of one year. After analyzing the results, the researcher came to the conclusion that traditional incarceration methods in pre-colonial Yoruba societies responded to the culturally held norms and values concerning the particular type of offence in question. This does not necessarily make them brutish as espoused by Jayola (1973) and as such were not merely punitive but serve the function of reinforcing the cultural values of the people on such matters.

While Makinde's (1997) has shed more light on the subject of the character of prisons in pre-colonial Yoruba societies, it is important to note however, that his research was conducted only in Yoruba communities and not in the North like Jayola's (1973) study. In this sense, Jayola's research cannot be completely neglected given the empirical claims by Makinde. More studies need to be done on traditional incarceration or prison systems to be able to come to a favourable conclusion on their character as well as their rehabilitative roles within the period that they existed. One thing is however clear, traditional prisons did not have the modern rehabilitative programmes associated with modern prisons that came after the period of colonialism in Nigeria. The issues of blood money, banishment, ostracism, labour and fine raised by Iwarimie-jaja (2011) as the punitive character of traditional prisons does not show in any way that these prisons had any form of organized rehabilitation programmes for their inmates during the period that they existed. This notwithstanding, further research needs to be done as earlier stated to extend knowledge concerning traditional incarceration processes in the different regions that characterized the precolonial societies in what is today called Nigeria.

While the principle function and role of prisons did not change with the advent of colonialism in Nigeria, modern prisons followed the Durkheimian character of restitution by introducing programmes aimed at rehabilitating and restoring inmates into society as fully functional citizens. This perhaps justifies the earlier assertion that prisons in traditional societies were a reflection of the character of the societies of their time. Hence, modern prisons in Nigeria following several reforms came with a new character that reflected modernity and the need to restore criminals rather than deform or incapacitate them. Rehabilitation programmes therefore provided a medium for this to happen.

Empirical research on the nature of prisons during the colonial period also revealed the absence of organized rehabilitation programmes. Even though these prisons and their administrative character were deemed better in terms of welfare than their likes in the precolonial days, they nevertheless reflected the oppressive philosophy of the colonial masters. In a seminal study on colonial justice system in Nigeria and still depending on archival information and widespread interviews, Ihua (2011) collect data from over 700 participants across the country and after analyzing the data, he found that colonial prisons were actually repressive and had little intention of rehabilitating inmates. Perhaps, this is why Uche et al., (2015) in their own study on rehabilitation of inmates in Nigerian prisons argued that Colonial prisons in Nigeria were not designed for reformation or rehabilitation rather prisons were intended to be punitive. Hence, according to them, prisoners were used mainly for public works and other jobs for the colonial administrators as a form of punishment.

Hence, in comparing the precolonial prisons with that of the colonial days, it is easy to see that one common character that they have was the issue of using inmates for the purpose of providing labour help. However, the issues of ostracism and banishment which were very common in pre-colonial

justice system where completely removed from the colonial prisons. Uche et al., (2015) reported in their work that after the Second World War, the philosophy of the prison system changed from having a punitive to having a restitutive character. Hence, there were widespread demands for prison reforms all over the world and this triggered significant alteration in the character of prisons. In Nigeria, especially in the early seventies, the Prison Act of 1972 clearly articulated the fact that the aim of the prison was for rehabilitation and reformation. In this regard, several vocational trainings were injected into the prisons to ensure that inmates learn some kind of trade that would help them whenever they are finally released into society. According to Oliatan (2016), the choice of teaching prisoners vocational jobs rested on the knowledge that a significant number of inmates in the Nigerian prisons were unemployed youths who in most cases got frustrated by their unemployed status to get involved in criminality.

In the light of the introduction of rehabilitation programmes into Nigerian prisons, a number of studies have been conducted on the nature and character of such programmes. The first among these studies is that conducted by Asokhia and Osumah (2013) in their study of rehabilitative services in Nigerian prisons. Hence, using selected prisons in Edo State as their case study, the researchers outlined the following umbrella categories or programmes; educational, skill acquisition, counselling, religious, recreational and agricultural. However, in their study which relied on a sample size of 700, the researchers came to the conclusion that more of the inmates were engaged in the skills acquisition rehabilitation programmes where trades such as carpentry, tailoring, masonry, soap making and metal works were taught to them. This further justifies the fact that most of the inmates were unemployed youths who needed some form of handwork to survive outside the prisons or in the larger society.

Interestingly, the study of Uche et al., (2015) corroborates that of Ashokhia and Osumah (2013), where it was found that more of the prison inmates in Enugu State were engaged in carpentry, tailoring, welding and arts/crafts. However, in their study, adult literacy programme was also highlighted as a key rehabilitation activity where inmates are trained since in most cases, the inmates were mostly non-literate youths. Uche et al., (2015) however argued that while most of the inmates engaged in adult literacy programmes, a good number of them still engage in vocational training so as to have some kind of hard skills which they believe will help them to be self-employed bearing in mind the scare in the larger society with regard to employing ex-convicts.

In another survey carried out by Ekpenyong and Undutimi (2016) at the Okaka prison in Bayelsa State using a sample of 150 inmates, it was discovered that more inmates were engaged in skills acquisition programmes in accordance with the previous two studies. However, Ekpenyong and Undutimi decried the ineffectiveness of the rehabilitation programmes. In fact, the researchers pointed out that the programmes where hardly active in their study area. This is because according to them, only 10% of inmates agreed that they have any form of skills acquisition training while the rest 90% of their sample said they have not had any form of training for the past two years. Reports on their observations corroborated the response of their respondents because they pointed out that vocational training workshops at the prisons were empty in terms of equipment and even trainees.

Theoretical Framework

The systems theory is adopted as the theoretical framework for the study on prisons and rehabilitation programmes in Imo State, Nigeria. Hence, the analytical rigor of this study, is anchored on the assumptions of the *Systems Theory as developed by Louis Ackoff (1974)*. As postulated by Adams (cited in Brian, 2008) systems theory is an input-output process. According to this theory, it is the quality of input invested in any part of society that determines how much output that the part delivers to society as a whole. In fact, from Ackoff's point of view, this is where systems theory far outshines the functionalist perspective as a distinctive theory of society. This is because, the theory implies from its basic assumption that a system or society can be in order if what it takes in is order since it must produce order. On the other hand, if the system or any of its part takes in conflict as input, it will definitely produce conflict or crime as the case may be.

Using the system theory, it is the contention of this study that good inputs, in terms of effectiveness of prison rehabilitation programmes will definitely lead to good outputs. This is because systems theory more like functionalism sees society as being made up of parts that are intricately tied together in terms of output and input functions in order to make the society stable. It is a basic assumption of the

theory that parts are interdependent and interrelated in such a way that they account for the survival of the larger social system.

The concept of system connotes in all ramifications the relationship between entities in such a way that these seemingly independent entities become knitted as one interdependent whole. Structurally, systems are made up of distinct and autonomous sub systems that are in constant interaction. These interactions lead to the generation of system out-put. The effectiveness of these interactions depends on the viability of individual subsystems. However, a sub-system's viability depends on the contribution of other subsystems and its ability to contribute to other sub-systems (Ackoff, 1974). More than other theories, the systems theory is particularly concerned with analyzing society from the point of view of the functional prerequisites that each part must perform if society is to survive.

System theorists also contribute immensely to the understanding of prison rehabilitations programme especially in terms of programme design and implementation in the early 1970s. For instance, Ackoff (1974) developed a methodology for stakeholders' analysis of organizational system. He argued that stakeholders' participation in conceiving rehabilitation programmes is essential for system design and through the support of effective implementation strategies, such rehabilitation programmes as a matter of must, will produce the desired results especially when other input factors such as funding, manpower and the enabling social environment are in place.

Applied to the present study, the system theory provides a better appreciation of the fact that it takes concerted efforts on the part of all within the system or subsystem in this case government, prison administrators, prisoners and their rehabilitators/instructors to deliver effective rehabilitation programmes in any correctional facility especially prisons.

It is therefore, the position of this study that the systems approach especially is emphasis on input-output provides a distinctive analytical process for understanding prison rehabilitation programmes in Imo State. Hence, more than other theories discussed above, the systems theory represents a more befitting theory and is adopted here as the theoretical framework to guide further analysis as the study progresses.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopts the survey research design, which, by studying large number of subjects, provides a general descriptive knowledge upon which further research could be built in the future. The population of the study is the total number of inmates in the Imo State Prison which is located at Okigwe road, Owerri. A preliminary visit to the prison shows that the total population of inmates is 2,431. For the staff (prison wardens), there are 21 of them currently working at the Imo State prison in addition to 12 instructors engaged for the purpose of training the inmates on vocational trades. Based on this the total population for this study is put at 2,464. the sample size for this study is 400 inmates, 12 staff and 12 rehabilitation programme instructors amounting to 424. The sample size of 400 was derived using the Taro Yamane formula expressed thus: $n=[N/1+N (e)]^2$ -where n =sample size, N = population size, and e = level of precision (see appendix 1 for sample size computation). To select the sample of 400, the simple random sampling technique was adopted. The technique is preferred to others since the number of inmates is already known especially with availability of adequate record keeping at the prison. However, the sampled 12 staff and 12 rehabilitation programme instructors were targeted on purpose as participants in the FGD sessions. Data were collected through the distribution of a self-designed questionnaire to the 400 inmates in the Imo State prison and two FGD sessions were convened at different times for the staff and instructors. The study adopted both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis. Under the qualitative method, the thematic approach was employed, while the quantitative method involved the use of percentages, descriptive statistics and chi-square ($\chi 2$) statistical techniques.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-Demographic Data

The major components of the socio-demographic information collected from the fieldwork are as follows: age, sex, marital status, number of years in detention, educational status, category of inmate and religion.

Table 1: Age distribution of respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Below 19 years	10	3
20-29	98	26
30-39	232	61
40-49	30	8
50 and above	10	3
Total	**380**	**100**

Table 1 above reveals information on the age distribution of respondents who took part in this study. From the data presented in the table, it can be seen that 10(3%) of the respondents are below the age of 19 years, 98(26%) of them are between 20 and 29 years of age, 232(61%) of them fall under the age bracket of 30-39 years, 30(8%) of them are aged 40-49 years, while 10(3%) of the respondents are within the age bracket of 50 years and above.

Table 2: Gender of respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	320	84
Female	60	16
Total	**380**	**100**

Table 2 above shows information on the gender of respondents in this study. From the data, it can be seen that 320(84%) of the respondents are males, while 60(%) of them are females. This goes to show that there are more males committing crimes in the study area than females.

Table 3: Marital status of respondents

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	266	70
Married	74	19
Widowed	10	3
Separated/Divorced	30	8
Total	**380**	**100**

From Table 3 above, the marital status of respondents in this study can be known. The data in the table shows that 266(70%) of the respondents are single, 74(19%) of them are married, 10(3%) of them are widowed, while 30(8%) of them are either separated or divorced. The large number of inmates that are single shows that singles who especially may be unemployed commit more crime that others in the study area.

Table 4: Educational status of respondents

Status	Frequency	Percentage
No Formal Education	70	18
Primary	160	42
Secondary	99	26
Tertiary	16	4
Vocational Training	35	9
Total	**380**	**100**

Table 4 above provides data on the educational status of respondents in this study. From the data presented in the table, it is easily seen that 70(18%) of the respondents have no formal education, 160(42%) of the respondents have primary education, 99(26%) of the respondents have secondary education, 16(4%) of them have tertiary education, while 35(9%) of the respondents have some form of vocational training. This goes a long way to show that inmates in this study have very low educational status and this may account for their criminal behaviours.

Table 5: Number of years respondents have been in prison

Number of Years	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 1	52	14
1-4 years	225	59
5-10 years	70	18
11-15 years	22	6
16 and above	11	3
Total	**380**	**100**

Table 5 above shows data on the number of years that respondents have been incarcerated. The data in the table shows that 52(14%) of them have been in prison for less than 1 year, 225(59%) of them have been in prison for 1-4 years, 70(18%) of them have been incarcerated for 5-10 years, 22(6%) of them have been in prison for 11-15 years, while 11(3%) of them have been incarcerated for 16 years and above.

Table 6: Category of respondents by inmate status

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Awaiting Trial Inmate	92	24
Convict	288	76
Total	**380**	**100**

From Table 6 above, the category of respondents by their respective inmate status can be known. For instance, 92(24%) of the respondents are Awaiting Trial Inmates (ATI), while 288(76%) of the respondents are already convicted persons.

Substantive Data

Objective 1: *Examine the types of prison rehabilitation programmes in Imo State.*

Figure 1 above shows information on the types of rehabilitation programmes as listed by respondents in this study. From the data presented above, 194(51%) of the respondents said carpentry is the dominant rehabilitation programme at the prison, 70(18%) of them said arts/crafts, 58(15%) of them said tailoring, 22(6%) of them said welding, 17(4%) of them said adult literacy programme, 11(3%) of them said catering, while 8(2%) of them said others. Based on the distribution of the data, it is easily seen that more of the respondents point to carpentry as the dominant rehabilitation programme in the prisons.

Objective 2: Examine how these rehabilitation programmes are conceived and implemented in the prisons.

Fig. 2: On how rehabilitation programmes are conceived in Imo State prison

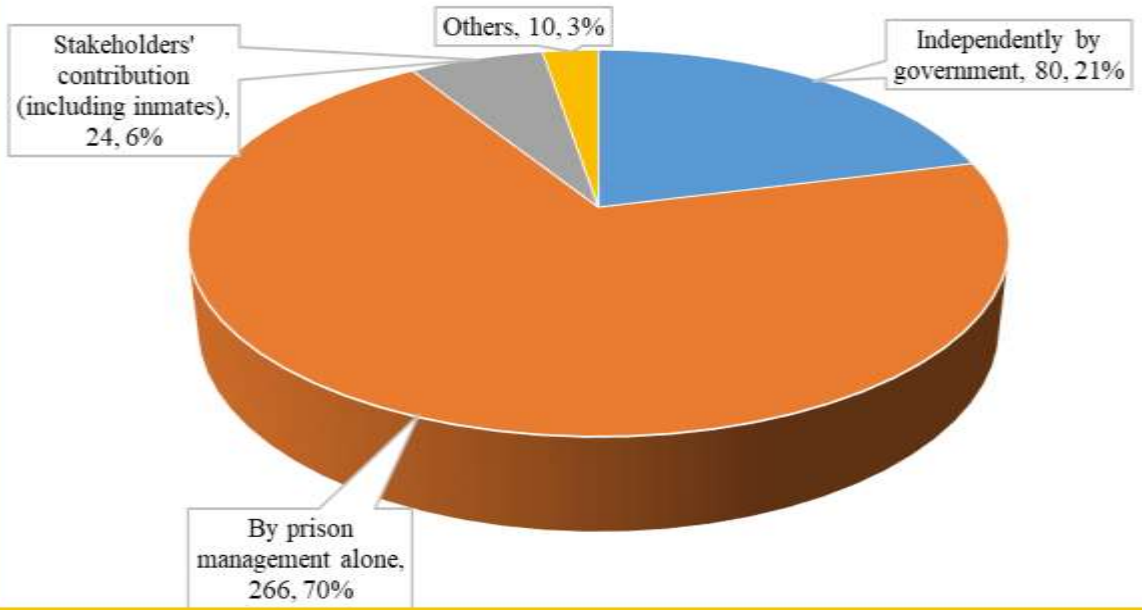
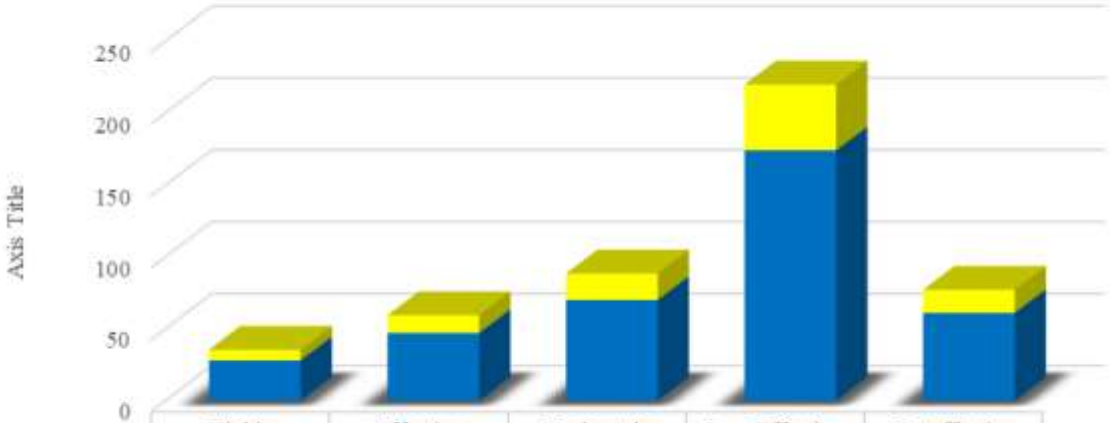


Figure 2 above shows information on how rehabilitation programmes are conceived and implemented in the prisons. From the data presented in the pie chart, it is easy to see that 266(70%) of the respondents which form a significant number point to the fact that the rehabilitation programmes are decided and implemented by the prison management, 80(21%) of them have the opinion that it is government that conceives and implement such programmes, 24(6) of them says inmates make contribution, while 10(3%) of them said others.

Objective 3: Determine how effective rehabilitation programmes are or have been in terms of reducing recidivism and transforming inmates into fully functional members of society.

Fig. 3: Level of effectiveness of rehabilitation programmes for inmates at the Imo State prison



	Highly effective	Effective	Moderately Effective	Less Effective	Not effective
Percentage	7	12	18	46	16
Frequency	28	47	70	174	61

Figure 3 above shows information on the level of effectiveness of rehabilitation programmes for inmates at the prisons. Data in this regard shows that 28(7%) of the respondents believe that the rehabilitation programmes have high effectiveness, 47(12%) of them just said it is effective, 70(18%) of them said it is moderately effective, 174(46%) of the respondents believe that the programmes are less effective, while 61(16) of the respondents said they are not effective.

Test of Hypothesis

The hypotheses stated in their null forms were tested in this section. As earlier pointed out, the chi-square ($\chi 2$) statistical method shall be employed here to test the hypotheses.

Hypothesis: There is likely to be no significant difference in the way rehabilitation programmes are implemented and the effectiveness of the programmes in terms transforming inmates to better people in Imo State.

Table 7: The way rehabilitation programmes are implemented helps in transforming inmates to better people

Respondents	*SA*	*A*	*D*	*SD*	*TOTAL*
Male Inmates	31	10	199	80	320
Female Inmates	12	11	22	15	60
TOTAL	43	21	221	95	380

Source: Field Survey, 2017

Table 7 above is a contingency table showing information on whether the way rehabilitation programmes are implemented helps in transforming inmates to better people in society when they eventually exit the prisons. From the data in the table, it can be seen that 43 of the respondents strongly agree that the way rehabilitation programmes are implemented helps in transforming inmates into better persons in society, 21 of them agree, 221 of the respondents disagree, while 95 of them strongly disagree. This information is further subjected to Chi-square test of the hypothesis as presented in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Chi-square computation for hypothesis 3

Respondents	*O*	*E*	*O-E*	*(O-E)2*	*(o-e/e)2*
Male Inmates	199	186.11	12.89	166.27	0.89
	80	80.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	31	36.21	-5.21	27.15	0.75
	10	17.68	-7.68	59.05	3.34
Female Inmates	22	34.89	-12.89	166.27	4.77
	15	15.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	12	6.79	5.21	27.15	4.00
	11	3.32	7.68	59.05	17.81
Chi-Square	χ^2=				31.55

Source: Data derived from Table 4.11 above & computed using Microsoft excel 2013

From the table above, the chi-square χ^2 calculated value for hypothesis 3 is as follows:

Chi-Square= $\chi 2 = \frac{(o-e)2}{e}$

Where o= observed frequency
e= expected frequency

Note that expected value is calculated by multiplying the row total by column total for each response and dividing by total number of respondents. After this, chi-square calculated value is compared with chi-square table value based on the calculated degree of freedom (df). Hence, to ascertain the degree of freedom the following formula applies.

DF = (R-1) (C-1)
= (2-1) (4-1)
= 1x3
Therefore DF =3
At 3 DF, the table value of $\chi 2$ at 0.05 level of significance is =7.81

Decision rule: The general accepted decision rule for the application of chi-square $\chi 2$ test states that: Accept null hypothesis if calculated value is less than the table value and reject hypothesis if the calculated value is greater than table value. In this study, since calculated value for $\chi 2$ is 31.55 and table value is 7.81, the hypothesis which states that "There is likely to be no significant difference in the way rehabilitation programmes are implemented and the effectiveness of the programmes in terms transforming inmates to better people in Imo State*"* is hereby rejected. Based on the results from the application of the chi square, it is safe to accept the alternate hypothesis which is that "There is a significant difference in the way rehabilitation programmes are implemented and the effectiveness of the programmes in terms transforming inmates into better people in Imo State. As a result, it becomes easy to affirm that the way rehabilitation programmes are implemented makes them ineffective in terms of turning inmates into better persons when they eventually leave the prisons. This result also justifies the outcome of the data presented and analysed in figure 4.2 above. Similarly, the finding also corroborates those of Mazden (2008) and Richard (2015) who both found that poor implementation of rehabilitation programmes makes such programmes ineffective.

FGD Results

Nature of Rehabilitation Programmes

Here, FGD participants were mostly administrative staff at the selected prisons. The prison wardens who took part in the study provided telling insights on the nature of rehabilitation programmes. However, they asked to be anonymous hence, the need to avoid mentioning names here. For instance, one of the staff aged 42 years old, pointed out that the programmes were focused more on hard skills such as carpentry and tailoring so that when inmates finally leave the prisons, they will be able to fend for themselves. He however lamented that the carpentry and tailoring aspects of the programme is faced with challenges especially due to lack of funds. In fact, another participant aged 40 years was blunt enough to reveal that for over six months prior to this study the rehabilitation programmes have not been very stable. This perhaps justifies why the inmates had earlier pointed out that the programmes were not effective. In the same vein, in another FGD session with a few of the instructors, one of them aged 48 years had alluded to the fact that he cannot remember when he visited the prisons last to train the inmates. He nevertheless pointed out that the inadequate training of inmates with regard to their rehabilitation is not the fault of the prison administrators but the fault of government who have failed to provide funding for the activities. In this sense, this results support the fact that the nature of the rehabilitation programmes in the selected prisons is appalling since a significant part of the time is spent doing nothing by inmates.

Implementation challenges

The discussion under this section is a follow-up to the one presented above. The character of the implementation of rehabilitation programmes in the selected prisons showed that it is haphazard and uncoordinated. In this regard, one of the staff or wardens at the prison pointed out that when programmes are implemented without any coordination, it almost always does not produce the required results. The participant who is aged 46 years maintained that the current way that the programmes are implemented lacks any known strategy which further undermines the impact of the programme. However, another warden, this time a female aged 37 years while corroborating the position of the above warden, nevertheless blamed government for irregular funding which she said usually truncates the programme intermittently. According to her, when programmes stop midway due to funding, the trainees also get half knowledge which is more likely not enough to increase their capacity for a better life after they are released from the prisons.

Rehabilitation programmes & reduction of recidivism

This aspect of the FGD led to some level of mixed feelings among the participants. Here, participants were highly divided on their opinion concerning whether the weakness of the rehabilitation programmes is the major reason for the high rate of recidivism experienced in the study area. In this regard, two schools of thought emerged with the first believing that if the programmes were effective in terms of timeliness and consistency, recidivism would not have been high as being experienced. Among this school of thought, the opinion of one of the oldest staff/warden who is aged 52 years was very clear especially when he pointed out that ex-convicts who relapse and return back to prison have always complained bitterly for lack of job as the major reason for going back to crime. This corroborates one previous study by Fagade (2014) who found that unemployment and society's scare in terms of giving job to ex-convicts is a major contributory factor for recidivism among prison inmates.

However, the second school of thought is of the opinion that the rehabilitation programme not being effective has nothing to do with recidivism. According to them, ex-convicts who return back to crime and subsequently prison is as a result of the fact that they like committing crime and not because they are unemployed or not well trained enough to be self-employed. One of the instructors who is aligned to this opinion argued clearly that anyone who leaves the prison and returns for another crime committed is indeed a pathological criminal and should not blame it on the ineffectiveness of the rehabilitation programmes.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In this section, the findings shall be discussed based on the objectives that guided the study. In this regard, the objectives shall be laid out and the findings associated with it shall be highlighted and reference shall be made to the data associated with it. Also, the findings shall be evaluated in the light of previous findings to see whether they corroborate or disprove previous findings.

The first finding of this study addressed the first objective which was to examine the various rehabilitation programmes for inmates in the selected prisons in Imo State. In the course of gathering data to address this objective, the following research question was raised; What are the various rehabilitation programmes for inmates in the selected prisons in Imo State?. Response to this research question informed the data presented in Figure 4.1 above. The analysis that followed led to the finding which revealed that several rehabilitation programmes such as carpentry, arts and crafts, tailoring, catering as well as adult education were among the major rehabilitation programmes existing in the study areas. However, carpentry stood out as the dominant programme that inmates are involved in for their rehabilitation. This goes a long way to show that carpentry is more preferred by the prisons management than other rehabilitation programmes mentioned above. This finding corroborate that of Uche et al., (2015) who also found that carpentry is the most dominant type of rehabilitation progarmme in the prisons that he studied.

The next finding of this study relates to the second objective of the study which to determine how rehabilitation programmes are conceived and implemented in the selected prisons. Much as this is the case, the question; How are rehabilitation programmes conceived and implemented in the selected prisons, in Imo State?, was asked to guide data collection. Hence, the data collected in this regard was presented in Figure 4.2 above and the analysis that followed led to the finding which revealed that the rehabilitation programmes are conceived and implemented by the prison management. This shows a top-to-bottom approach of capacity building which strongly negates current best practices in this regard. This finding was further justified by the results from the test of hypothesis two presented in Table 4.10 above. Similarly, the finding corroborates those of other scholars such as Mazden (2008) and Richards (2015) who found that when rehabilitation programmes are not participatory enough as to incorporate the opinion of others especially the beneficiaries of such programmes, such activities are bound to yield adverse results.

Finally, the last finding of the study addressed the third objective which is to examine how effective rehabilitation programmes are in terms of reduction of recidivism and transforming inmates into fully functional members of society. To achieve this objective, the question; how effective are rehabilitation programmes in terms of reduction of recidivism and transforming inmates into fully functional members of society?, was asked. The data collected in this regard was presented in Figure 4.3 above and the analysis thereof revealed that the rehabilitation programmes are not effective. This

was strongly supported by the outcomes of the FGD sessions which revealed among other things that the rehabilitation programmes are unable to reduce the incidence of recidivism because the programmes are not adequate enough to make inmates employable or self-employed when they eventually leave the prisons. This was also supported by the results of the chi-square test for hypothesis three presented in Table 4.12 above where it was affirmed that the way rehabilitation programmes are carried out in the prisons makes them ineffective and inadequate in terms of reducing recidivism among inmates.

CONCLUSION

The study on prison and rehabilitation programmes revealed some very telling findings as highlighted above. The types of rehabilitation programmes in the selected prisons are adequate but there is overemphasis on carpentry which makes it a little bit narrow in terms of choice for the inmates. Besides, the nature of the carpentry programme is too dated since in most case, when ex-convicts reenter into the larger society, they find that the character of the carpentry knowledge they acquired at the prisons differ remarkably from the one outside the prisons. This undermines their capacity to function fully in the larger society.

Another conclusion reached is that the way the rehabilitation programmes are conceived and implemented is too authoritative. This top-to-bottom approach of conceiving and implementing programmes is now outdated and as such ineffective. This ordinarily leads to the final conclusion of the study which is that the rehabilitation programmes are ineffective in terms of ensuring that ex-convicts end up living better lives after their release from prison. This is the major reason why the recidivism level is high as observed in the study area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations have been made:

1. That the various types of rehabilitation programmes existing in the prisons should be taught equally without emphasizing on carpentry alone. By doing this, inmates have a choice of choosing the one that they deem best for their growth and reintegration into society.
2. Also, there should be widespread stakeholder consultation in the design, conception and implementation of prison rehabilitation programmes. This will go a long way to ensure wider input that will make the programmes better.
3. In addition, government should endeavour to make funding of rehabilitation programmes timely so that the training sessions for inmates will not be cut short due to inadequate funding. This will go a long way to reduce the issue of incomplete training sessions currently being complained about.
4. Finally, prison management should embark on partnership with private organizations in their areas and beyond for funding as well as technical support.

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