

## Influence of Sports on Moral Rehabilitation of Prison Inmates in Kogi State of Nigeria

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### *Abstract*

*The study of assessed and analyzed the influence of sport on the moral rehabilitation of prison inmates in Kogi state of Nigeria. The population of the study consists of the selected prison from the three geopolitical zones of the state namely. Kogi-west, Kogi-east and Kogi-central of about 2,500 and a total of five hundred (500) subjects were randomly selected from prisons inmates of the state. The instrument used for the study was a well developed and validated questionnaire which contains forty-five(45) items. One hypothesis formulated to direct the study using one sample to test employed in testing the hypothesis on the influence of participation in sports on prison inmates mental rehabilitation. The outcome of the study revealed that the respondents were of the opinion that participation in sports has positive influence on the mental rehabilitation of the inmates. As a way forward, sporting activities should be made mandatory for prison inmates as such would influence their mental behaviour and development. The outcome of the study revealed that the respondents were of the opinion that participation in sports has positive influence on the moral rehabilitation of the inmates. As a way forward, sporting activities should be made mandatory for prison inmates as it could influence their moral behavior and development. The outcome of the study revealed that the respondents were of the opinion that participation in sports has positive influence on the moral rehabilitation of the inmates. As a way forward, sporting activities should be made mandatory for prison inmates as such would influence their moral behavior and development*

**Key Words: Sports, Moral, Rehabilitation, Prison, Inmates.**

## **Introduction**

The prison is used to punish and also help offender to change from their bad behavior. This is why it could be said that correction facilities owe it to the community to do more than detain or penalize prisoners until their release. The functional correction facility prepares the individual to return to lives in harmony within the community. This is done through the introduction of various activities in the prison. In accordance with the Nigerian prison acts, it is the study of prison service “to ensure that the deprivation of liberty is implemented in such a way as to promote (prisoners) ability and chances of socially adapting to a subsequent life of freedom and to ensure that harmful effects of imprisonments are reduced as far as possible. By Norwegian standards and this probably also applies to other countries affiliated to the council of Europe, there is high correspondence between the general legislation and the prison Act in terms of the rehabilitation of inmates.

According to the Skosona (2003,) on French prison service, individuals placed in prison establishment have the right to work, they also have access to various activities and sports. Benson (2008) stressed that in South Africa, Music has served as one of the most effective mode of rehabilitation in the prison services. Accordingly, music as arts is the indication of the desire to create something new. The ability to create anything and the realization of such a desire leads to a degree of high self-esteem in that the presence of seeing one’s music. being approved and appreciated by others raises one’s level of self regards. Sports have been used as a key factor in prison rehabilitation. In that, in 1983 the Norwegian central prison administration launched a project with a physical activity program for substance abusers in prison. The purpose of the project was to capacity and to create a basis for an active and positive use of their leisure time both during their stay in prison and after their discharge.

With a view to a more deliberate effort to use physical training as an integral part of rehabilitation, the prison authorities have employed consultants in sports who were responsible in preparing and implementing activities for inmates. Their tasks include the training of physical activities, in that these officers become greater resources for this sporting work (Bucher 1979).

## **Theoretical Perspective**

According to the French prison service, rehabilitative programme included culture and health Sports help to preserve the mental balance of inmates, Sports plays an essential role in improving detention conditions and maintaining a good atmosphere in prison establishments. Sports aid individuals to abide by rules, take responsibilities and get involved in group activities. The French

prison service has 188 prisons establishment with 96 Sports grounds, 67 exercise areas, 33 gymnasias, 120 multi-purpose halls. The population has access to Sports facilities for 2 to 3 week on the average. Accordingly to the New York 70 state prisons, inmates participates in intramural leagues in Basket balls, soft balls, soccer, volley ball and hand ball. Many prisons offer separate league for inmates over 40 of the inmates play on all star teams against outside squads. Duhu (2004) revealed that in South Africa, inmates have had the chance to represent their country in international Sports competitions. According to Skosona (2003,) Hendrik Mokgan yet represented the country in athletics, the common wealth Games in Manchester, Eugene Frances at the Rogby world cup in Australia, Anton Chassen in Jenkslei and many others. In Nigeria prisons, there are many rehabilitative programme such as Vocational Jobs where inmates are taught various skills in different types of trades. According to the prisons manual, Agriculture received a strong impetus in consonance with the Government policy on re-organization of the prison service in 1971. Consequently prisons farm use were established in different States of the country and were equipped with modern agricultural equipment. Recreational and cultural activities such as football matches, Cenima shows and lectures were introduced to break the monotomy of prison life.

Olumba (2000) asserted that the early man`s life was based on physical activity, he worked vigorously in order to get his daily needs, he moved from one place to another climbing trees and mountains in search for food and also to protect himself against wild animals. Because of his vigorous daily activities he lived a healthy life. In modern world, Sports is viewed from many perspectives, according to Olumba (2001) Sports in the world over is recognized as a means of training and moulding the character of the youth for nation building. Beyond the reaches of academic knowledge, Sports provides a culture that imports refinements, character blending and stabilization of personality. Therefore, everybody irrespective of gender, race, class, religion and culture needs exercise in order to be healthy and fit in the society or the environment he or she find himself or herself. Nixon and Jewett (2004) says sports in the modern world has gone through a lot of changes as a result of the influence of technology.

Bucher (2000) concluded that the problem of crime is a major issue faced by all mankind; He further revealed that, crime has reached alarming proportions. The mass media is filled daily with lurid description of murders, robbers, corruption and embezzlement by respected financial officers and politicians. As a result of the increase in crime, there has been a corresponding increase in prison congestion and overcrowding (Federal Government of Nigeria Policy 2000).

The prison organization has certain roles to play in order to curtail the breakdown of law by the citizens. The Nigerian Prison Service Annual Report of 1981 specified the statutory role of the Nigeria Prison Service as trip or file in nature. These roles are namely the safe custody of inmates, their treatment and rehabilitation. The Tenth United Nations Congress on the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders (2000) maintained that treatment and rehabilitation of offenders are completed through carefully designed and well articulated administrative, reformatory and rehabilitative programme aimed at including discipline, respect for laws and order and the dignity of labor by this treatment, the offender is assisted to become not only law abiding but also a useful citizen of a free society on discharge. Generally the prisons department contributes its own quota towards the overall national security, peace and economic development. Nigerian prison service Annual Reports 1983. Okonkwo (2001) asserted that psychologically, Sports can help to shape individual behaviours or help the individual to adjust into the society by getting off negative behavior such as aggression, anxiety, emotional stress, tension, fatigue and so forth which are mostly associated with idleness. These characteristics have to do with mental and emotional well being of the individual.

Physical activities of a competitive nature have long been regarded as an effective medium of psychological illness espoused by components of competitive Sports are the development of character, adjustment to societal Norms and values, desirable personality traits, emotional control, positive attitudes, Sportsmanship, qualities of good leadership, consideration, self actualization, self confidence, initiative, courage, loyalty and self expression. The attainment of one`s potential in Sports requires the training of the body (physical) and the mind (psychological) (Okonkwo, 2001). Despite the rehabilitation of the prison inmates, by the government, the inmates do not seem to appreciate the efforts it is against this background that this study is carried on the influence of Sports in the moral rehabilitation of prison`s inmates in Kogi State of Nigeria.

### **Null Hypothesis**

For the purpose of the study, one hypothesis was formulated to direct the study.

**H<sub>0</sub>**: There is no significant influence of participation in Sports on the moral rehabilitation of prisons inmates in Kogi State, Nigeria.

### **Methodology**

The Information required to assess the influence of Sports on the moral rehabilitation of prison`s inmates in Kogi State of Nigeria was already available without manipulation of variables. Therefore, ex-post facto research design was used in this study. The sample for this study consisted of

five hundred (500) subjects from the population of two thousand five hundred (2,500) prison inmates from the three geopolitical zones of Kogi state of Nigeria They were selected at random from 5 units of prison inmates for the study. The main instrument used was a structured and validated questionnaire to elicit appropriate information from the respondents. The designed questionnaire was presented to three experts in the field of sports management for their input and necessary comments. Their suggestions and corrections were adopted in the final print out of the questionnaire which was personally distributed to the selected subjects from the prison`s inmates. The filled and returned questionnaire were however collected for data analysis and t-test was used to assess the influence of sports on the moral rehabilitation of prison`s inmates in Kogi state of Nigeria.

## Result and Discussion

### Null Hypothesis

*H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant influence of participation in Sports on the moral rehabilitation of prisons inmates in Kogi State, Nigeria.*

**Table 1: one sample t-test on the influence of participation in sports on prison`s inmates moral rehabilitation.**

Variable	Mean	SD	SE	df	t-value	P-value	t-critical
Observed Mean	3.97	0.71	0.03	459	14.15	0.000	1.96
Constant Mean	3.50						

$$t = 14.154, @459, p < 0.05$$

Table 1, reveals that significant difference exists between the constant and the observed mean. The observed mean is higher. The observed t-value in the test is 14.15 while the critical value is 1.96, implying that the observed t-value is higher than the critical value . The probability level of significance for the test is 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ). therefore the null hypothesis which says that there is no significant difference of the participation in sports on the moral rehabilitation of prison`s inmates is therefore rejected. This implies that participation in sports by the prison`s inmates significantly contribute to their moral rehabilitation

### Discussion of Findings

On Table 1 it was observed that the respondents were of the opinion that participation in sports has positive influence on the moral rehabilitation of the inmates. The effect of participation in

sports on the moral rehabilitation of the prison's inmates revealed positive effect of participation in sports by prisoners. it further shows that participation in sports could significantly improve the moral rehabilitation of the prison's inmates. From the opinion of the respondents, they all agreed that participation in sports significantly contributed to the moral rehabilitation of the prison's inmates. This finding is in line with the finding of Dubie (2004) who reported that organized sports is an essential part of prison life, it eases aggression, relieves boredom and other moral disturbance among prison inmates The present finding is also in congruence with the finding of Okonkwo (2001) who asserted that psychologically, Sports can help to shape individual behaviours, help the individual to adjust into the society by getting off negative behavior such as aggression, anxiety, emotional stress, tension, fatigue and so forth which are mostly associated with idleness. These characteristics as confirmed by Olumba (2001) asserted that Sports in the world over is recognized as a means of training and moulding the character of the youth for nation building. Beyond the reaches of academic knowledge, Sports provides a culture that imports refinements, character blending and stabilization of personality.

**Conclusion:**

South Africa, inmates like Hendrik Mokgan have had the chance to represent their country in international Sports competitions., the common wealth Games in Manchester, Eugene Frances at the Rugby world cup in Australia, Anton Chassen in Jenkslei and many others. In Nigeria prisons, there are many rehabilitative programme such as Vocational Jobs, Agriculture training received a strong impetus in consonance with the Federal Government policy on re-organization of the prison service in 1971. But not much has heard on the use of Sport for rehabilitation of prison's inmate. This article therefore, seeks to establish the need to establish and equip different States prison with modern sporting facilities and equipment.

**Recommendation:**

In light of the finding of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The officials of the Federal and State Government should provide standard sports programme for prison's inmates in order to enhance their physical, intellectual, emotional and moral well-being development.
2. In other to promote health status of the prison inmates, the prison inmates should be involved in active participation in recreational activities.

3. The Federal Government of Nigeria should increase the allocation of budget that will admit the sponsorship of sporting activities for the prison inmates during the period of their jail term.
4. The State and Federal Government should make provision for sporting materials such as jersey, shirt, pants, soccer boots, stocking, horse as such will enhance active participation of prison inmates in sporting program among others.
5. Free medical checkup should be made available for the prison inmates before and after th participation in physical activities.

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