



Perception of Stakeholders' on the Adequacy of Reformation Packages for Inmates in the North West Nigeria

Suleiman ISMAILA (Ph.D)

Department of Educational Foundations and Curriculum,
Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria

Abstract

The paper investigated adequacy of reformation packages as perceived by the stakeholders in the reformation process of inmates. Descriptive survey was the design for this study. The population comprised the entire prison inmates, prison officials, lawyers/judges and human rights activists in prison locations of the North West Nigeria (Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto and Zamfara States). There were 3443 inmates in the 67 prisons spread across the North West Nigeria at the time of the study. Out of the seven states, four were selected randomly; three prisons each from Jigawa, Kano and Katsina states, as well as four from Kaduna State, making a total of 13 prisons. A total number of 1,338 respondents (1,068 inmates, 200 prison officials, 50 lawyers and 20 human rights activists) were used for the study. Researcher designed questionnaire was used for the study. A questionnaire each was dedicated to prisoners, prison officials, lawyers/judges and human right activists. The validity of the instruments was ascertained using content validity. The reliability of the instrument was determined through the use of internal consistency approach based on Cronbach Alpha. The instruments were trial-tested on 40 inmates, 20 prison officials, 20 lawyers/judges and human right activists. The reliability values are; 0.742; 0.924; 0.742 and 0.742 respectively. The study found that there were inadequate facilities, personnel and reading materials; continuity of education and motivation; remedial and adult education and inadequacy of religious education, but there was adequacy of training facilities in vocational education. The paper recommend among others, that; prison rules should be reviewed in accordance with global best practices; libraries should be provided in all categories of prisons; to provide working tools for prisoners at the point of discharge; and also to involve private organisations in the establishment of private homes for the delinquents and rehabilitation centres.

Key words: perception, Stakeholders, reformation packages, inmates, North West Nigeria

Introduction

The concepts of rehabilitation and reformation are interchangeably used. This signifies insufficient understanding of the two concepts. Reformation is referring to measures meant to impart change of morality in a person's character so that he will be less inclined to commit similar or another offence in the future. While rehabilitation refers to post-release efforts made by individuals, group, society or government to make it easier for the ex-convicts to resettle in the community or family (Tanimu, 2010). Tsalha (2007) and Chukwudi (2012) traced the historical development of prisoner's reformation in Nigeria and stated that the prison authority is shouldered with the responsibility of training and reforming the prisoners.

In pursuance of the reformation ideals in Nigeria, Tanimu (2010) clarified the misconception attached to the reformation of prisoners and pointing out instances where

convicts were kept in prison waiting for the prison authority to confirm that they have been reformed. This reasoning has brought about indeterminate sentence that enforces the convict to behave in a particular manner just to satisfy the expectations of the authorities.

Adepegba (2007) opined that in terms of moral development of incarcerated persons, the initial goal of imprisonment is reformation. Explaining the serious need for reformation, Tsalha (2007) suggested that it should be done well in view of the mixed nature of people in the Nigerian prisons where young convicts are sometimes forced to intermingle and learn criminal behaviours from the hardened criminals.

Reforms are greatly needed in the areas of overcrowding, poor staff morale, adequate funding, catering for the needs and right of prisoners like in the area of food, clean environment, right to human dignity and the need for other alternatives to investment. The needed machineries are not put in place, and where available they are grossly insufficient (Chukwudi, 2012 & Joseph, 2010). Similarly, Odofin (2014) found that there is an ardent need for reformatory programmes in Nigerian prisons, particularly programmes that will take care of educational needs of inmates.

Onaadebo (2009) narrated that the Nigeria Prisons Service, as a signatory to the UN charter on the humane treatment of offenders, has since put in place concrete steps to bring about reformation among the inmates. Such steps for reformation include skill acquisition trainings, reformation and rehabilitation of the prisoners as a cardinal prison policy.

A study by Oyahanye (2011) discovered that problems like incompetent staffing, insufficient vocational programmes for inmates, insufficient fund, ineffective correctional programmes, ineffective classification of inmates and overcrowding were all attributed to be militating against effective correction of inmates in Nigerian prisons.

Showing the resultant consequences of our failure to reform the prisoners fully, Tsalha (2007) lamented that it may pose serious threats to peace which will hinder sustainable development in Nigeria. Prisons should be given due attention, else the security tone of the nation would be in jeopardy. In the same vein, Onaadebo (2009) explained that if prisons can be justified on the grounds that they make prisoners less likely to offend in future or because they have been scientifically, or clinically-treated and not merely deterred, then the social and economic costs of incarceration seem so much more worthwhile and the retributive urge in ourselves and that of others can be clothed in a more palatable disguise.

The Federal Government of Nigeria [FGN] (2013) stated that education is an instrument for national development and social change and that education is to be qualitative, comprehensive, functional and relevant to the needs of the society. In this regard, education is synonymous to change in behaviour, for it is the major instrument for effecting change in the rank and file of people. Joseph (2010) gave a layman's definition of literacy, which is considered to be the ability to read and write or the ability to use language to read, write, listen and speak. The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO] (1990) as in Joseph (2010) defined literacy as the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts.

The Comptroller of Nigerian Prisons in 2008 described the purpose of establishment of NPS as a means of giving adequate training in vocational education which is the key to inmate reformation. The solution is there in an attempt to address the needs, which will invariably lead to eradicating or at least minimizing crime (NPS, 2008).

When Vocational Education is functional, it could provide ample employment opportunities. In view of its importance, the NPS is set to provide vocational training for the

inmates as explained by Onaadepo (2009) that prison industries and farms are located at strategic places and manned by project managers and officers, including operational staff as instructors and trainee inmates as production work force. Nigerian government seeks a prison system that will provide security, rehabilitate inmates, help in reintegrating inmates back into society, generate revenue through prison enterprise, and partner with the private sector to accomplish mission.

For the purpose of vocational training of inmates, Onaadepo (2009) said that different prisons across the states of the federation have their workshops in various sizes, other related property owned by the NPS that are meant for training of inmates include; toilet roll and printing cottage industry and a poultry farm in Lagos State; furniture cottage industry in Osun State; Ozalla farm centre, Ogba piggery and soap cottage industry in Edo State; soap cottage industry, poultry and piggery farms in Imo State; soap cottage industry and Adim farm centre in Cross River State; Kujama farm centre in Kaduna State; soap cottage industry in Yobe State; and, Kuje block industry and soap cottage industry located in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

On the inmate population that pursues vocational training in Nigeria, Ogundipe (2008) explained that in two years (2006-2008), about 14,000 inmates went through vocational training programmes in different prisons across the nation. 10,000 of these were trained and settled in various vocations, 3,000 were settled in carpentry; 1,020 in woodworks; 2,000 in welding; 542 in shoemaking; 85 in building and plumbing, 3,600 in barbing; 800 in electrical works. And interestingly 1,900 of them passed the government approve Trade Test in the vocations. In view of the swelling nature of the population in Nigerian, the above figures are not to be proud of, in a study with convicts at Kaduna convict prison, Tsalha (2007) lamented over the defeat of the main aim of reformation in Nigerian prisons, 35% of the respondents in affirmative tone, testified having lessons on vocational training that may later help them to be self-employed, but 65% of the subjects denied receiving training of that nature. In the same vein, Chukwudi (2012) exposed the devastating nature of workshops in the Nigerian prisons that some areas that have existing trade skills acquisition centres within the prison yards are either functioning or unsuitable for some inmates who may prefer other trades and educational learning process that do not exist in the prisons rehabilitation strategies. In such cases according to Joseph (2010) this type of training would not prepare them for productive employment and cannot reduce recidivism. This type of training does not offer the skills needed in today's job market and does not provide for the needs of prison inmates. The prison inmates need skills such as literacy and vocational skills that are functional and productive.

In order to keep the inmates busy, the NPS gives a lot of vocational training, Labo (2004) explained that the agricultural unit of the Inmate Training and Productivity Directorate (ITP) operates farm centres, subsidiary farms and market gardens, trains inmates in various agricultural techniques including plant spacing, produce processing, grading, dosage technique and vaccination of livestock as well as application of agro-chemicals. It is however, instructive to note that only convicts are eligible to participate in this vocational skill acquisition programmes. Since nearly 70% of the inmates in the nation's prisons constitute those awaiting trial who might have been kept in prison for between 2-10 years, this aspect of prison law could be said to be counter-productive and only lead to unnecessary waste of human talent.

Although great progress was made in the field of industry and vocational education towards the rehabilitation of the prisoner in the society after discharge, no effort was made at formal education. The teaching of reading and writing was considered utterly useless, even for the long-sentence prisoners. Hence, it was considered more beneficial to teach the prisoner a craft than to spend long hours in teaching him to speak, read and write English indifferently well, which is the most that could be expected. The reformation of the long-term unlettered and primitive native prisoner could thus best be achieved in the workshops. In point of fact, there was no education in prisons other than vocational training until the 1950s (Ogunleye, 2007).

In Nigeria, a new philosophy of reform arose as a justification for prison industry. Indeed, as early as 1917 special attention had been given to industrial labour in the South, although it was much earlier in the North. In 1922, there was a plea for the employment of skilled instructors in various trades, and it was in the following year that a new grade of warder called technical instructors were added. Carpentry, shoe-making, tailoring and printing were taught at the Lagos, Lokoja and Kaduna prisons. A new block of workshop was opened at Kaduna Prison in 1926 (Ogunleye, 2007).

It was accordingly reported in 1930 that most prisoners from the rural areas became greatly interested in carpentry, blacksmithing, cane or cloth weaving. Once their interest had been expressed in this way, the authorities believed, the sympathetic contact is established and the reformatory element could be introduced. It is significant, however, that no mention was ever made in any of the reports of this period that prison industry, in addition to serving the government and the public, was geared to providing a means of livelihood for prisoners on discharge. The major effort of the system, in this way, seems to have turned away from harsh punishment to teaching prisoners a trade, not from any clearly articulated concept of penology (Ogunleye, 2007).

Joseph (2010) further explained the ugly picture of prison education in Nigeria, that library facilities were not included in the structure of prisons built by the colonial administration (about seven decades after their departure). The omission of library facility fails to abide by the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners approved by the Economic and Social Council by its resolution 663C (XXIV) of 31st July, 1957 and 2076 (LXII) of 13th May, 1977 stated on paragraph 40 that “every institution shall have a library for the use of all categories of prisoners adequately stocked with both recreational and instructional books and prisoners shall be encouraged to make full use of it.” But out of all the prisons visited by the researcher, only Ilesa and Ile-Ife prisons have sections where old books and newspapers are kept, though these sections are not used by the inmates as library.

On another note, Onaadebo (2009) opined that prison education should be directed towards future needs rather than present needs, it should be concerned more with career growth than immediate performance. The educational needs should be directed towards future manpower needs of the Nigerian Prison Service, and secondly on the growth needs of individual prisoners

In cognisance of the importance of religion the Prison Service employed Imams and Chaplains to provide spiritual counselling and guidance to the inmates. They are usually paid a token honorarium to cover costs in transportation and other incidentals (Labo 2004).

Owan and Ekok (2013) explained the living conditions of Nigerian prisons as very terrible and incapable of guaranteeing expected reformation of inmates. This was attributed to general paucity in infrastructures, policies, workshops and corruption. Onaadebo (2009) opined that there is need therefore, to ensure that inmates have access to good education, especially Open Distance Learning (ODL) where possible. This will enable them to develop

the confidence and skills to gain meaningful employment on release and to open door which they never knew existed. In most African countries, much has been done to help prison inmates to acquire education beyond the primary and at most secondary school levels.

Statement of the Problem

In an attempt to reduce reoffending among ex-prisoners and also to minimize crime in our society there is need to assess the adequacy of reformation facilities in Nigerian prisons. For an individual to commit a crime and be sent to prison for correction of behaviour, and after some time to come out of prison and reoffend. It raises a lot of questions as par the nature of training inmates received while in prison and it also raises doubt on whether the society is doing its own part of reintegrating, re-socializing and remoulding the behaviour of the convicts after serving their jail terms. It looks like the inmates are lacking vital things that may help in shaping their life while serving jail terms and after their release for a better life. It is doubtful whether the facilities for reformation of inmates are adequate. The aim of imprisonment can be achieved when facilities meant for correction of behaviour are available in adequate form.

It is lamentable and disheartening that after the release of a prisoner, members of the society may fail to integrate the ex-prisoner fully into the society. Even if prisoners are well trained, their moral aspect need to be developed. When ex-offenders resort to re-offending, it is a clear indication that the aim of incarceration is not achieved. When the prison system is lacking adequate funds and facilities, the negative consequences may be prisoners' malnourishment, deficient occupational training and inmates may likely be infected with different types of diseases, and by so doing the aim of incarceration is defeated.

Research Question1: What are the available facilities in the realization of reformation packages of prison inmates in the North West Nigeria adequate?

Research Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between stakeholders' status and their assessment on the adequacy of reformation packages for inmates in the North West Nigeria.

Methodology

Descriptive survey was the design for this study. The population of the study comprised the entire prison inmates, prison officials, lawyers/judges and human rights activists in prison locations of the North West Nigeria (Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto and Zamfara states). The target population comprised the stakeholders in the prisons of the sampled states; Kaduna, Katsina, Jigawa, and Kano. There were 3443 inmates in the 67 prisons spread across the North West Nigeria as at April 2017. The total number of prisons in states of the target population was 47 prisons. Inmates and other stakeholders responded to the questionnaire tagged 'Adequacy of Reformation Packages for Inmates in the North West Nigeria (ARPINWN).' Stratified random sampling technique was employed in this study. Simple random sampling was used in selecting the states and the prisons covered by the study. Out of the seven states, four were selected randomly. Therefore, three prisons each from Jigawa, Kano, and Katsina states were sampled proportionately, and four prisons were sampled from Kaduna state. Thus making a total of thirteen prisons. A total number of 1,338 respondents (1,068 inmates, 200 prison officials, 50 lawyers and 20 human rights activists) were used for the study. This is in agreement with Research Advisor (2006) sample size table. Researcher designed questionnaire was used for this study.

There were four different types of questionnaires. A questionnaire each is dedicated to prisoners, prison officials, lawyers/judges and human right activists. The validity of the instruments was ascertained using content and face validity. To ensure the reliability of the instrument, Lafiagi prison in Kwara State, Nigeria was used for trial-testing of the instrument, the reliability of the instrument was determined through the use of internal consistency approach based on Cronbach Alpha. The instrument was trial tested on 40 inmates, 20 prison officials and 20 (lawyers/judges/human right activists). The reliability values are; inmates' questionnaire 0.742; prison officials' questionnaire 0.924; lawyers'/judges' questionnaire 0.742 and human right activists' questionnaire 0.742. The data collected from the study were analysed using descriptive statistics and chi-square for research question and hypothesis respectively.

Result

Research Question 1: What are the available facilities in the realization of reformation packages of prison inmates in the North West Nigeria adequate?

Table 1: Stakeholders' Assessment of Adequacy of Available Reformation Provisions for Prisoners in the North West Nigeria

Adequacy of Reformation provisions	Stakeholders' Assessment			
	Adequate		Not Adequate	
	f	%	f	%
a Adequacy of facilities, personnel and reading materials	14	1.1	1315	98.9
b Continuity of education and motivation	9	0.7	1320	99.3
c Remedial and adult education	21	1.6	1308	98.4
d Adequacy of religious education	231	17.4	1098	82.6
e Adequacy of training facilities in vocational education	1024	77.1	305	22.9

Table 1 shows stakeholders' assessment of adequacy of available reformation provisions for prisoners' reformation in the North West Nigeria. As shown in the Table 16, 14(1.1%) of the stakeholders described available facilities, personnel and reading materials in the North West Nigeria prisons as adequate while 1315(98.9%) described such as not adequate. While 9(0.7%) of the stakeholders described available programme for continuity of education and motivation as adequate, 1320(99.3%) described such programme as not adequate. Also, 21 (1.6%) of the stakeholders described remedial and adult education as adequate while 1308 (98.4%) described it as not adequate. Furthermore, 231 (17.4%) of the stakeholders described available religious education in the prisons as adequate whereas, 1098 (82.6%) described such as not adequate. Finally, training facilities in vocational education is described as adequate by 1024 (77.1%) of the stakeholders while 305 (22.9%) described training facilities in vocational education in prisons as not adequate.

Research Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between stakeholders' status and their assessment on the adequacy of reformation packages for inmates in the North West Nigeria.

Table 2: Chi-square Analysis of relationship between stakeholders' status and their assessment on the adequacy of reformation packages for inmates in the North West Nigeria



Stakeholders	Facilities, personnel and reading materials			χ^2	df	P
	Adequate	Not Adequate	Total			
Lawyers/Judges	0(0.0%)	50(100.0%)	50(100.0%)	19.81	3	.000
Human Right Activists	0(0.0%)	20(100.0%)	20(100.0%)			
Prison Inmates	6(0.6%)	1053(99.4%)	1059(100.0%)			
Prison Officials	8(4.0%)	192(96.0%)	200(100.0%)			
Total	14(1.1%)	1315(98.9%)	1329(100.0%)			
Stakeholders	Continuity of education and motivation			χ^2	df	P
	Adequate	Not Adequate	Total			
Lawyers/Judges	0(0.0%)	50(100.0%)	50(100.0%)	38.66	3	.000
Human Right Activists	0(0.0%)	20(100.0%)	20(100.0%)			
Prison Inmates	1(0.1%)	1058(99.9%)	1059(100.0%)			
Prison Officials	8(4.0%)	192(96.0%)	200(100.0%)			
Total	9(0.7%)	1320(99.3%)	1329(100.0%)			
Stakeholders	Remedial and adult education			χ^2	df	P
	Adequate	Not Adequate	Total			
Lawyers/Judges	0(0.0%)	50(100.0%)	50(100.0%)	29.88	3	.000
Human Right Activists	0(0.0%)	20(100.0%)	20(100.0%)			
Prison Inmates	9(0.8%)	1050(99.2%)	1059(100.0%)			
Prison Officials	12(6.0%)	188(94.0%)	200(100.0%)			
Total	21(1.6%)	1308(98.4%)	1329(100.0%)			
Stakeholders	Religious education			χ^2	df	P
	Adequate	Not Adequate	Total			
Lawyers/Judges	24(48.0%)	26(52.0%)	50(100.0%)	1080.32	3	.000
Human Right Activists	5(25.0%)	15(75.0%)	20(100.0%)			
Prison Inmates	11(1.0%)	1048(99.0%)	1059(100.0%)			
Prison Officials	191(95.5%)	9(4.5%)	200(100.0%)			
Total	231(17.4%)	1098(82.6%)	1329(100.0%)			
Stakeholders	Training facilities in vocational education			χ^2	df	P
	Adequate	Not Adequate	Total			
Lawyers/Judges	0(0.0%)	50(100.0%)	50(100.0%)	530.57	3	.000
Human Right Activists	0(0.0%)	20(100.0%)	20(100.0%)			
Prison Inmates	953(90.0%)	106(10.0%)	1059(100.0%)			
Prison Officials	71(35.5%)	129(64.5%)	200(100.0%)			
Total	1024(77.1%)	305(22.9%)	1329(100.0%)			

Table 2 shows the relationship between stakeholders' status and their assessment on the adequacy of reformation packages for inmates in North West Nigeria. The reformation programmes assessed include facilities, personnel, and reading materials, educational continuity and motivation, remedial and adult education, religious education, and facilities for vocation education. It can be observed that a Chi-square test result indicated that there exists a significant relationship between stakeholders' status and their assessment on the adequacy of the assessed reformation packages such as facilities, personnel, and reading

materials (χ^2 (n = 1329) = 19.81, df = 3, p = .000); educational continuity and motivation (χ^2 (n = 1329) = 38.66, df = 3, p = .000); remedial and adult education (χ^2 (n = 1329) = 29.88, df = 3, p = .000); religious education (χ^2 (n = 1329) = 1080.32, df = 3, p = .000); and facilities for vocation education (χ^2 (n = 1329) = 530.37, df = 3, p = .000). Since the p-values are less than .05 thresholds, we therefore reject the stated null hypothesis. This result concludes that there is significant relationship between stakeholders' status and their assessment on the adequacy of reformation packages for inmates in North West Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

This study agree with the findings of Onaadebo (2009) who narrated that the Nigeria Prisons Service (NPS), as a signatory to the UN charter on the humane treatment of offenders, has since put in place concrete steps to bring about reformation among the inmates. The steps being taken by the NPS include skill acquisition trainings, reformation and rehabilitation of the prisoners as a cardinal prison policy. This study found that facilities, personnel and reading materials were found adequate to handle the issue of reformation in prisons. In the same vein Chukwudi (2012) and Joseph(2010) found that needed machineries meant for reformation of prisoners were not put in place, and where available they were grossly inadequate. In another research by Oyahanye (2011)insufficient vocational programmes for inmates was said to be a stumbling block in the area of inmates' reformation. Hence there is agreement with the findings of this study that found that facilities for training in vocational education were also inadequate.

But on the contrary the findings of this study are not in harmony with the findings of other researches conducted at different locations and at different point in time. For instance Chukwudi (2012) and Joseph(2010)found that reforms were greatly needed in the areas of overcrowding, poor staff morale, adequate funding, catering for the needs and right of prisoners like in the area of food, clean environment, right to human dignity and the need for other alternatives to investment. But this this study found that facilities, personnel, reading materials and the opportunity given by the prison authority for motivation and continuity in education were all available. Similarly, Odofin (2014) found that there is an ardent need for reformatory programmes in Nigerian prisons, particularly programmes that will take care of educational needs of inmates. But this study found that religious education as well as remedial and adult education were all found to be adequate. In another study by Oyahanye (2011) it was discovered that problems like incompetent staffing, insufficient funding, ineffective correctional programmes, ineffective classification of inmates and overcrowding were all attributed to be militating against effective correction of inmates in Nigerian prisons. The differences in the findings could be as a result of time lag. Possibly the NPS is trying to improve standards.

Recommendations

1. The Nigeria Prison Service (NPS) should involve more private and public sector organizations willing to partner with NPS especially in the area of training and development of inmates.
2. The Federal and State Governments should encourage private organizations like NGOs, to establish private homes for delinquent, private rehabilitation centres, etc, to partner in the reformation process of offenders.



3. The Prison Service should review existing rules relating to prisons and prisoners so that international best practices can be incorporated.
4. Prison authority should provide well-stocked libraries in all prisons, prisoners who excel in academics should be rewarded with scholarship opportunities to continue with their educational pursuit even after jail term.
5. Prison authority should provide working tools for prisoners at the point of discharge in different trades. This will help in keeping them busy, and also put into practice what they learnt while in prison.

Conclusion

Prison service is a child of necessity, it sprang up as a result of the need to mitigate crime. But when the prison service is taking prisoners into the prison, after release they reoffend and go back to prison, then something is wrong with the process of reformation. There is need to put a stop at this social menace, something must be done.

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