

THE PRISON REHABILITATION PROGRAMMES AND THEIR EFFECTS ON INMATES IN BENIN CITY PRISONS, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *Not only does the prison help to keep offenders from the society, it ensures the path to their reformation by improving on their potentials and subsequent change unto better social functioning. This study therefore, assesses the effects of rehabilitation programmes on prison inmates in Benin City. The descriptive survey design is adopted for this study. The data for this study was collected using the structured questionnaire with a four point Likert type scale consisting of 24 items. The population of this study consists of all inmates, males and females, both awaiting trial and convicted in Benin-Sapele road and Oko maximum security prisons in Benin City, Edo State. A sample size of 140 inmates was selected using the non-purposive stratified random sampling method, selecting 70 inmates from each of the prisons. The data collected are subjected to descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation. Findings reveal that the rehabilitation programmes in Benin City Prisons are social intervention services with highest mean value of 2.92 (70%), skills acquisition programmes account for 2.76 (69%); recreational activities account for 2.66 (66.5%) and educational services account for 2.51 (62.8%). It was also found that these rehabilitation programmes are worthwhile, as they influenced inmates' behaviours and inventiveness at 2.69 (67.3).*

KEYWORDS: Inmates, prison, social intervention, reformation, rehabilitation programmes.

INTRODUCTION

There is no better way to help prison inmates avoid breaking in and out of jail cycle and functioning suitably in the society on release, than assisting them acquire the skills needed to succeed in later life through rehabilitation (Uche, Uche, Ezumah, Ebue, Okafor & Ezegebe, 2015). Prison is an institution designed to securely house people who have been convicted of crimes or are on awaiting trial. These individuals known as prisoners or inmates are kept in continuous custody on a short or long-term basis. Usually, the more serious the offence, the longer the prison term imposed. Awake (2005) defined prison as a total institution or a place of residence and work, where a large number of like situated individuals are cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time together, lead and enforce formally administered round of life. This new environment is expected to provide the prisoners/inmates with particular opportunities of rethinking, stock taking and repentance from old ways (Omorogiuwa, 2014). Incarceration entails imprisonment or confinement as a deterrent without associating any privileges to it while rehabilitation of offenders may imply a more cooperative and remedial approach (Singh, 2008). Hence, the significant need for rehabilitation programmes in the transformation and restoration of prison inmates is recognized (Tanimu, 2010).

Effective rehabilitation programmes in prisons could assist inmates acquire suitable skills, promote prospect development as well as attitudinal and behavioural changes. Hence, prison

rehabilitation programmes are considered helpful provisions offered to inmates to ensure and promote their physical, mental-health, psychological, social, vocational and economic potentials (Federal Government of Nigeria, 1989; Nigeria Prison Services, 2009; Asokhia & Agbonluae, 2013). For any meaningful rehabilitation to take place in a prison, the rehabilitation services must first be based upon adequate provisions, which should be accessible to the inmates (Igbinovia, 2003; Igbo, 2007). There are a number of prison rehabilitation programmes for inmates which provide specific skills crucial for preparing inmates for better living on release from the prison; while the main objectives of the prisons service, which is the reformation and rehabilitation of inmates can be actualized through programmes such as: social case and group work/intervention, recreational activities, educational programmes and skills acquisition programmes (Nigeria Prison Service, 1989). As a consequence, prison inmates that incorporate rehabilitation services during confinement are likely to gain skills that could provide employment and entrepreneurial opportunities upon their release.

The prisons services providers do not only identify the causes of the inmates' anti-social behaviours, but ensures the path to reformation by impacting on their potentials and subsequent change unto social functioning (Omorogiuwa, 2014). According to Federal Government of Nigeria (1989), some of the specific objectives of rehabilitation services in Nigerian prisons include: to promote the provision of adequate and accessible recreational facilities and services for the prison inmates, provision of social welfare services for the prison inmates, development of skill acquisition programs and educational services. The philosophy of the Nigerian prison service is that treatment and rehabilitation of offenders can be achieved through carefully designed and well-articulated reformative and rehabilitative programmes aimed at inculcating discipline, respect for the law and order and regard for the dignity of honest labour ((Igbinovia, 2003; Nigeria Prison Services, 2009). Research Igbo (2007) indicates that the rehabilitation of prison inmates ought to begin from the first day of admission into the prison till the day of discharge. This is to ensure that they utilize the skills acquired through rehabilitation programmes to live a law abiding and meaningful life in the society. Rehabilitation services in Nigerian prisons therefore, should be aimed at increasing the educational and vocational skills of inmates and their chances of success upon release (Asokhia & Agbonluae, 2013). This is important for inmates particularly as a number of them are socially and economically deprived.

According to Sutton (1993), educational programmes provided in the prisons help to keep inmates meaningfully busy, change their attitudes or behaviour and enable employment and vocational skills for later life prospects. Uche et al. (2015, p. 165), indicate that "the prison authorities with the efforts of the government have provided various skill acquisition activities which range from tailoring, art and craft work, welding, carpentry and farming among others", to empower and ensure inmates vocational supports on release. Research acknowledged that exposure of prison inmates to recreational activities is significant to their upkeep, good health and long life (Mgbor & Enuke, 2003). This does not only promote healthy living but also keeps inmates eventful (Asokhia & Agbonluae, 2013). Helping professionals in the prisons; use social intervention measures while providing counselling, case work and after care services as a rehabilitative strategy to address inmates' crises situations (Tanimu, 2010). Ekpenyong and Dudafa (2016) indicate that providing inmates with the basic tools of social intervention enables targeting behaviors that can be changed; and giving the chance for substitute to an anti-social lifestyle. Although, it is likely that some inmates often choose to change on their own, however, a number of inmates require guided assistance (Asokhia & Agbonluae, 2013), which promotes effective functioning.

Prisons are assigned the dual responsibilities of ensuring the reformation/rehabilitation as well as the retribution of offenders (Nigerian Prisons Services, 2009). However, the Nigerian Prisons Service is in a dilemma because rehabilitation and retribution practices are not compatible (Igbinovia, 2003), for reintegrating inmates. Given the increasing local and global need for reintegration processes to revitalize inmates, this study therefore assesses the effects of rehabilitation programmes on prison inmates using the prisons at Sapele road and Oko maximum security, Benin City, as a case study.

Research Questions

The following questions guided the study.

1. What are the skills acquisition programmes that help to rehabilitate inmates in Benin Prisons?
2. What educational services help to rehabilitate inmates in Benin Prisons?
3. What are the recreational activities that help to rehabilitate inmates in Benin Prisons?
4. What social intervention services help to rehabilitate inmates in Benin Prisons?
5. What are the impacts of rehabilitation programmes on inmates in Benin prisons?

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey design is adopted for this study. The data for this study was collected using the structured questionnaire tagged “Effectiveness of Rehabilitation Programmes on Prison Inmates Questionnaire” (ERPPIQ). The population of this study consists of all inmates, male and females both awaiting trials and convicted in Benin-Sapele road and Oko maximum security Prisons in Benin City, Edo State. A sample size of 140 inmates was selected, adopting the non-purposive stratified random sampling method, 70 inmates were selected from each of the prisons.

A structured questionnaire with Section A requesting demographic information and section B consisting of a twenty-five items of a four-point Likert type scale, with four items each on rehabilitation programmes, skills acquisition, educational and counselling programmes, recreational activities and the impacts of rehabilitation programmes on inmates. The instrument was validated by experts in sociology and social work; and an internal consistency reliability of 0.85 coefficient was obtained using the Cronbach alpha method. The researchers administered the instrument with the help of the prison staff. The data collected was subjected to descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation at the mean test value of 2.50, as presented in the tables below.

Research Question One: What are the skills acquisition programmes that are effective in rehabilitating inmates in Benin Prisons?

Table 1: Skills Acquisition Programmes

S/N	Items	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
1.	Tailoring as a capacity building activity is available for inmates in the prisons	140	2.84	0.92	Accepted
2.	Carpentry is offered to inmates in the prisons	140	2.54	0.81	Accepted
3.	Craft/art activities are provided for inmates in the prisons	140	2.91	1.24	Accepted
4.	Farming activities are available to inmates in the prisons	140	2.70	0.91	Accepted
	Skills Acquisition Programmes	140	2.76	0.97	Accepted

N=140 Criterion mean=2.5

Table 1 reveals a calculated mean value of craft/art activities with 2.91 and standard deviation of 1.24, showing greater involvement of inmates in craft/art work. For tailoring, mean value of 2.84 and standard deviation of 0.92; for carpentry, a mean value of 2.54 and standard deviation of 0.81; for farming skills, a mean value of 2.70 and standard deviation of 0.91, showing least involvement of inmates in farming activity. The composite mean value is 2.76. The mean value is higher than the test value, and so, inmates are engaged with skills acquisition programmes. This implies that the prison inmates of this study accepted that they are engaged in different skills acquisition programmes in the prisons.

Research Question Two: What educational services help to rehabilitate inmates in Benin Prisons?

Table 2: Educational Services

S/N	Items	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
1.	Adult and literate education programmes are provided to inmates in the prisons	140	2.85	1.11	Accepted
2.	Reading and writing capacity that prepares inmates to function better in the society are encouraged	140	2.52	0.87	Accepted
3.	Schooling materials are accessible to inmates in the prisons	140	2.68	0.91	Accepted
4.	Participatory teaching and learning is encouraged to develop inmates' scholastic abilities		2.00	0.73	Rejected
	Educational Services	140	2.51	0.92	Accepted

N=140 Criterion mean=2.5

Table 2 reveals the calculated mean value of 2.85 and standard deviation of 1.11 for adult and literate educational programmes, showing the high involvement of inmates in educational programmes. For accessible schooling materials, mean value of 2.68 and standard deviation of

0.91; for reading and writing, a mean value of 2.52 and standard deviation of 0.87; for participatory teaching and learning, a mean value of 2.00 and standard deviation of 0.73, showing least involvement of inmates in educational activity. The composite mean value is 2.51. The mean value is higher than the test value, and so, inmates are engaged in adult and literate educational programmes. This implies that the inmates of this study accepted that they participate in adult and literate educational programmes available in the prisons.

Research Question Three: What are the recreational activities that are effective in rehabilitating inmates in Benin Prisons?

Table 3: Recreational Activities

S/N	Item	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
1.	Inmates participate in football as a rehabilitative activity	140	2.89	0.95	Accepted
2.	Inmates are accessible to table tennis in the prison	140	2.06	0.79	Rejected
3.	Indoor games such as ludo, cards and draft are available to inmates in the prisons	140	2.82	0.86	Accepted
4.	Inmates have access to basketball and volleyball games in the prisons	140	2.00	0.67	Rejected
	Recreational Activities	140	2.66	0.81	Accepted

N=140 Criterion mean=2.5

Table 3 reveals the calculated mean value of 2.89 and standard deviation of 0.95 for football, showing the high involvement of inmates in football recreational activity. For indoor games such as ludo, cards and draft, mean value of 2.82 and standard deviation of 0.86; for table tennis, a mean value of 2.06 and standard deviation of 0.79; for basket and volley ball, a mean value of 2.00 and standard deviation of 0.67, showing least involvement of inmates in recreational activities. The composite mean value is 2.66. The mean value is higher than the test value, and so, inmates are engaged in recreational activities. This implies that the inmates of this study accepted that they participate in different recreational activities available in the prisons.

Research Question Four: What social intervention services help to rehabilitate inmates in Benin prisons?

Table 4: Social Intervention Services

S/N	Items	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
1.	Counselling to reshape inmates behaviours and build on their strengths to cope on release is offered	140	3.29	1.06	Accepted
2.	Social case and group work measures are used to assist inmates in crisis	140	2.54	0.85	Accepted
3.	Social advocacy on behalf of inmates promote inmates rehabilitation	140	2.81	0.91	Accepted
4.	After care services are offered to ensure inmates reformation	140	2.77	0.74	Accepted
	Social Intervention Services	140	2.92	0.89	Accepted

N=140 Criterion mean=2.5

Table 4 reveals the calculated mean value of 3.29 and standard deviation of 1.06 for counselling, showing the engagement of inmates in counselling session of intervention. For social advocacy, mean value of 2.81 and standard deviation of 0.91; for social case and group work, a mean value of 2.54 and standard deviation of 0.85; for after care services, a mean value of 2.77 and standard deviation of 0.74, showing least involvement of inmates in social intervention provisions. The composite mean value is 2.92. The mean value is higher than the test value, and so, inmates are involved in social intervention measures. This implies that the inmates of this study accepted that they are exposed to different social intervention services available in the prisons.

Research Question Five: What are the impacts of rehabilitation programmes on inmates in Benin prisons?

Table 5: Impacts of Rehabilitation Programmes on Inmates

S/N	Items	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
1.	Inmates are less inclined to commit crime due to rehabilitation?	140	2.82	1.01	Accepted
2.	Rehabilitation programmes influences greater chances of change in inmates	140	2.52	0.79	Accepted
3.	Inmates become more socially conscious of the negative impacts of crime and violence	140	2.56	0.95	Accepted
4.	The exposure of inmates to prison rehabilitation programmes makes them more productive and creative	140	2.89	1.06	Accepted
	Impacts of rehabilitation programmes	140	2.69	0.95	Accepted

N=140 Criterion mean=2.5

Aggregate mean=2.69 (Accepted)

Table 5 reveals the calculated mean value of 2.89 and standard deviation of 1.06 for inmates' productive and creative tendencies, showing the impact of rehabilitation programmes on prison inmates. For inmates less inclination to commit crime, mean value of 2.82 and standard deviation of 1.01; for inmates social consciousness of the negative impacts of crime and violence, a mean value of 2.56 and standard deviation of 0.95; for inmates greater chances of change, a mean value of 2.52 and standard deviation of 0.79, showing impact of rehabilitation programmes on inmates in the prisons. The composite mean value is 2.69. The mean value is higher than the test value and so, the rehabilitation programmes available to inmates in the prisons impacts positives on them. This implies that the inmates of this study accepted that the prison rehabilitation programmes they are exposed to are worthwhile and influences their changed attitudes/behaviours and inventiveness in personal and societal development.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study reveals that the rehabilitation programmes of inmates in Benin City Prisons, Nigeria, as indicated by the research respondents include social intervention, skills acquisition, educational and recreational services. The findings of this study is in agreement with the research that found that the prisons reformation and rehabilitation of inmates can be actualized through programmes such as: social case and group work/intervention, recreational activities, educational and skills acquisition programmes (Nigeria Prison Service, 1989), which encourages their physical,

educational, social and vocational capacities. This study reveals the different skills acquisition programmes that are available to inmates in the prisons, given their involvement in craft/art, tailoring, carpentry and farming skill activities. These findings support the study by Uche et al. (2015, p. 165) that the aim of prison skills acquisition activities is to provide inmates with various skills to empower and ensure their vocational supports on release. This is also supportive of Asokhia and Agbonluae (2013) that the skills acquired through rehabilitation programmes often help inmates to live a law abiding and meaningful life in the society.

This study also reveals that educational services are available to inmates in the prisons, given the provision of schooling materials, opportunities for reading and writing, participatory teaching and learning and availability of adult and literate educational programmes. This finding is supportive of Sutton (1993) that educational programmes provided in the prisons help to keep inmates meaningfully busy, change their attitudes or behaviour and enables employment and vocational skills for later life prospects. This is consistent with Asokhia and Agbonluae (2013) that the concerns for the rehabilitation of prison inmates include the provision of schooling materials and learning opportunities. The result of the study further reveals that inmates were also engaged in recreational activities including football, table tennis, basketball, volleyball and indoor games such as ludo, cards and draught. This concurs with Mgbor and Eneku (2003) that acknowledged the engagement of prison inmates to recreational activities as crucial to keeping them eventful promotes the maintenance of healthy living and sustains long life.

Moreover, this study reveals that inmates participate in social intervention services in the Benin prisons, given their engagement in counselling session, social case and group work, social advocacy, and after-care services, by an assisting professional. This is consistent with Tanimu (2010) that assisting professionals in the prisons use social intervention measures while providing counselling, case work and after-care services as a rehabilitative strategy to address inmates' crises situations. Ekpenyong and Dudafa (2016) also confirm that providing inmates with the basic tools of social intervention enable targeting behaviors that can be changed, and giving the chance for substitute to an anti-social lifestyle. Finally, this research reveals that the various prisons' rehabilitation programmes have worthwhile impacts on inmates' social functioning. This is because inmates attested that the experiences of rehabilitation activities had inclined their productive and creative tendencies, lessened inclination to commit crime, developed social consciousness of the negative impacts of crime and violence, and greater chances of changed attitudes/behaviours. This is supportive of Omorogiuwa (2014) that the prison rehabilitative services help to promote inmates' path to reformation by improving on their potentials and subsequent change unto social functioning. In conclusion, Uche et al. (2015) in their study concurs that prison inmates recognized that rehabilitation programmes influenced their lives positively by instilling on them skills needed for later life. Based on the findings of this study, all rehabilitation programmes provided in the Benin City prisons show the possibilities for effective reforming of inmates.

The effects of prison rehabilitation programmes on inmates show high for social intervention services with mean value of 2.92 (70%), skills acquisition programmes with 2.76 (69%); recreational activities with 2.66 (66.5%) and educational services account for 2.51 (62.8%). It was also found that these rehabilitation programmes have achieved much, as they influenced inmates' behaviours and inventiveness at 2.69 (67.3); indicative that prison rehabilitation programmes play a vital role in influencing social well-being of inmates. Hence, the effective rehabilitation of inmates in the prisons was not restricted to any specific programme, rather it was recognized in all activities, though with petite variance.

CONCLUSION

Given that the rehabilitation of offenders can be achieved through carefully designed and well-articulated reformatory and rehabilitative programmes (Igbinoia, 2003), this current research attempts to offer an understanding of the rehabilitation programmes available in the Prisons in Benin City as experienced by the inmates, as well as their effectiveness. Given the findings of the study, it is ascertained that the effectiveness of the rehabilitation programmes is not limited to any particular programme; rather it is prevailing in all services, social intervention, skills acquisition, educational, recreational, although with variance. Moreover, majority of the inmates acknowledged that the rehabilitation services they received influenced them positively, given their changed attitudes and the skills learned for personal and social development. It may possibly be established that inmates are likely to function positively on release in the society as a result of the effectiveness of the rehabilitation services received in the prison, which enhances their well-being. Therefore, the results of this study provide momentous evidence in support of the need to improve prison rehabilitation programmes in order to enhance their successful restoration and reintegration into the society.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the aforementioned findings, recommendations are made that:

- The prisons are sufficiently funded by the Government to boost effective rehabilitation of inmates.
- Formal schools equipped with educational facilities and qualified teachers are established within the prisons premises.
- Additional skills acquisition programmes such as computer trainings, auto-mechanics, photography, barbing and hair-dressing are established to boost inmates' employment opportunities on discharge from the prisons.
- The provision of more recreational activities in the prisons by the Government, since inmates preferred one recreational activity to the other.
- The employment of more helping professionals such as social workers, to improve the social intervention services rendered to inmates in the prisons.

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