National Open University of Nigeria and Reformation of Prison Inmates through Open and Distance Learning

L'université Nationale De L'enseignement A Distance Du Nigeria Et La Réforme Des Détenus A Travers L'enseignement À Distance

Chukwunka, C.A.C.
Department of Criminology and Security Studies
National Open University of Nigeria, Abuja
cchukwunka@noun.edu.ng

Abstract

Recidivisms have been the order of the day in Nigerian prisons as a result of many flaws in the primary objectives for the reformation of inmates in Nigeria. Prisons in Nigeria have failed in their attempts to fulfil their aim of rehabilitating criminals and make them better citizens. This is because the Nigerian prison system has a very poor rehabilitation model which has out- lived its relevance in this present age. Therefore, this paper aimed at examining National Open university of Nigeria and the reformation of prison inmates through open and distance learning. Innovation Diffusion Theory served as the theoretical framework. 500 respondents were sampled from the total numbers of One thousand four hundred and sixty inmates in Ward A cells 1-4, Ward B cells 1-4, Ward C cells 1-4, Female ward 2, and Prison Officers in Ikoyi Prison, in Lagos State. A research design used was the descriptive survey. Self-developed questionnaires and key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were used for data collection. The study was carried out using purposive and random sampling technique. The research questions were answered using simple percentage (%) to analyse the respondents' personal data and the research questions, while Chi-Square (X^2) was employed to test the hypotheses. The findings showed that reformation programmes in the prisons have not

achieved much. It was also discovered that recidivisms frequently occur in Ikoyi prison among the inmates as a result of non-implementation of rehabilitation programmes in Nigeria Prisons. Majority of the respondents agreed that lack of formal skill acquisition was the major hindrance to the rehabilitation programmes in the prisons. It is recommended that the government should complement the efforts of the National Open University of Nigeria in ensuring that adequate facilities are provided to enhance the effectiveness of the rehabilitation programmes.

Résumé

Les récidives ont été à l'ordre du jour dans les prisons nigérianes en raison de nombreuses lacunes dans les objectifs premiers de la réforme des détenus au Nigeria. Les prisons nigérianes n'ont pas réussi à atteindre leur objectif de réhabiliter les criminels et d'en faire de meilleurs citoyens. En effet, le système pénitentiaire nigérian a un modèle de réhabilitation très médiocre qui a perdu de sa pertinence à l'époque actuelle. Par conséquent, cet article visait à examiner la National Open University of Nigeria et la réforme des détenus par le biais de l'enseignement à distance. La théorie de la diffusion de l'innovation a servi de cadre théorique. 500 personnes interrogées ont été échantillonnées sur un total de mille quatre cent soixante détenus dans les cellules 1-4 du quartier A, les cellules 1-4 du quartier B, les cellules 1-4 du quartier B, les cellules 1-4 du quartier C, le quartier des femmes 2 et les gardiens de la prison d'Ikoyi, dans l'État de Lagos. L'enquête descriptive a été conçue à partir d'un plan de recherche. Des questionnaires auto-élaborés et des entrevues avec des informateurs clés ont été utilisés pour la collecte de données. L'étude a été réalisée en utilisant la technique de l'échantillonnage intentionnel et aléatoire. On a répondu aux questions de recherche en utilisant un pourcentage simple (%) pour analyser les données personnelles des répondants et les questions de recherche, tandis que le chi carré (X2) a été utilisé pour vérifier les hypothèses. Les résultats ont montré que les programmes de réforme dans les prisons n'ont pas donné grand-chose. On a également découvert que des récidives se produisent fréquemment dans la prison d'Ikoyi parmi les détenus en raison de la non-application des programmes de réadaptation dans les prisons du Nigéria. La majorité des personnes interrogées ont reconnu que le

manque d'acquisition de compétences formelles constituait le principal obstacle aux programmes de réadaptation dans les prisons. Il est recommandé que le gouvernement complète les efforts de l'Université nationale ouverte du Nigéria en veillant à ce que des installations adéquates soient fournies pour améliorer l'efficacité des programmes de réhabilitation.

Introduction

The big idea of Erving Goffman's vivid depiction of total institutional life, reflect the relic history of the inmates forced to agricultural farms through hard-labour in the 20th century (Goffman, 1961). According to Laufersweiler-Dwyer and McAnell (1999) during the 20th century, agriculture was seen as a very difficult work to do in North America and United Kingdom. For this reason, therefore, the inmates were forced to work in the agricultural farms to punish them through hard-labour. Inmates were forced to work long hours on agricultural farms to produce food for the penal institutions. The vocational training programmes came later in the 1950s, where the inmates were trained to work in the mines and quarries (Johnson, 2015). The main purpose of introducing trade areas was to reinforce manual work that prisoners had to do for the system, for themselves and to punish them through hard labour. There were common beliefs among the people in the early 20th century that inmates committed crimes because their minds were idle, which prompted the authorities to teach them how to spend their free and leisure time wisely (Laufersweiler-Dwyer & McAnelly, 1999 cited in Johnson, 2015). In the late 1950s, female and juvenile correctional education programmes were introduced to take care of the educational needs of female and youth offenders (Johnson, 2015). The rationale behind linking crime to education was that, if people were educated, they would not commit crimes. In this situation, criminality was associated with social problems, poverty and education. The importance of education featured prominently in the evolution of correctional education within the concept of Adult education (Laufersweiler-Dwyer & McAnelly, 1999 cited in Johnson, 2015).

The ancient United Kingdom initiated the act of inflicting pain on the inmates. This brought about the idea of the traditional criminal justice system in Nigeria Obioha (2011), Imhabekhai (2002) and Asokhia and

Agbonluae (2013) all referred to the deplorable conditions and inhumane treatment that offenders in Nigeria are subjected to. "It is apparent that the prison system in Nigeria is faced with the problem of destroying the individual members of the community, which negates the essence of imprisonment, amounting to human development wastage'' (Obioha, 2011 cited in Esiri, 2016). The negative treatment of the inmates may influence bad experiences that may result in high rate of recidivism. When inmates experience bad treatment through their fellow inmates and the system as a whole, they can become hard-core criminals with little hope of rehabilitation. When inmates finish serving their terms and are released from penitentiary institutions, it is the expectation of society that they will not go back to crime. This returning to crime is what is called recidivism and defined as the return to illegal activity after release. However, over the years, studies have revealed that, inmates return to crime (Cowden, 1966, Roots, 2004, Abrifor, Atere and Muoghotu, 2010 cited in Esiri, 2016). To Bohn & Haley, (1999 cited in Esiri, 2016). According to Ahmed and Ahmad (2015 cited in Ugwuoke, 2015), the re-integration of the released inmates into the society from the prison is a challenge to almost all societies globally and breeds the phenomenon of recidivism. This is because the rate of recidivism of a particular jurisdiction can be used to measure the effectiveness of the prison's rehabilitation model. Therefore, a high recidivist rate translates to poor efficiency of the rehabilitation model; conversely, a low recidivist rate translates to high efficiency of the rehabilitation model. *Obioha (2011)* attested to Overcrowding of the prison yards as a serious and major crisis situation in prisons in Nigeria. Lack of personnel and other resources including basic infrastructure, vehicles and health facilities are described as appalling conditions as uncivilised for human habitation. But the major failure of the Nigerian prison system is the poor reintegration of released inmates into the society. The Nigerian Prisons Service, being the department of the federal government responsible for the management of prisons in Nigeria, has failed in this regards. For instance, the Standard Minimum Rules (United Nations, 1977) stipulates that there should be separate facilities for males, females and young offenders, but the stipulation is said to be non-existent in some Nigerian prisons.

> "*Our vision is that offenders according to need should have access to education and training both in prisons and in the community, which enables them to gain the skills and qualifications they need to hold down a job and have a positive role in society, and that the content and quality of learning programmes in prisons, and the qualifications to which these lead, are the same as comparable provision in the community*" (DFES/Prison Service, 2003).

From the above statement, it looks pertinent that reformation of prison inmates is one of the most important functions of the Nigerian Prisons service. Reformation of prison inmate means correcting, educating, re-orientating and rehabilitating the inmates so that they could become better citizens when released from the prison. Wikipedia (2015) defines prison reform as the attempt to improve conditions inside prisons, establish a more effective penal system or implement alternatives to incarceration. The Nigerian Prisons Service derives its operational powers from CAP 366 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 1990 Among other things, the prisons take into lawful custody all those certified to be so kept by courts of competent jurisdiction; produce suspects in courts as and when due; identify the causes of their anti-social dispositions; set in motion mechanisms for their treatment and training for eventual reintegration into society as normal law abiding citizens on discharge; and administer prisons farms and industries for this purpose and in the process generate revenue for the government (Yongo,2000). The Prisons Service in Nigeria is exclusively a Federal Government concern as no state in Nigeria for now, has the power in law to operate or maintain prisons.

According to the commonwealth of learning, open and Distance learning (2003) is defined as a way of providing learning opportunities that is characterized by the separation of teacher and learners in time or place, or both time and place (Jegede 2003). Open and Distance learning has a lot of merits to the learners. It offers opportunities for learning through flexible mode of service deliveries. Jegede (2005) asserts that, open and distance learning is a conceptual framework where the people needs of all ages at educational and occupational levels are met, despite their circumstances. The Open University, UK (2008) asserts that, the open system is a concept that will resonate and seek to make education more

open to those who need or wish for alternative opportunities to the traditional system. The Open University, UK is centred on the concept of openness and that is the institution's enormous benefit of open and distance learning.

The Open and Distance Education (ODE) is a system of education characterized by physical separation between the teacher and the learner in which instruction is deliver through a variety of media including print and other ICTs to learner who may either have missed the opportunity earlier in life or have been denied the face-to-face formal education due to socio-economic, career, family and other circumstances. Jegede, (2003) defines distance education as education provided by a mode other than the conventional face-to-face method whose goals are similar to and just as noble and practical as those of on-campus full time face-to-face education. According to Okebukola (2013) there have been three dominant forces in the growth of open and distance learning in Nigeria. The thirst for education by Nigerians has been a key driver. Between 1950 and 1964, enrolment in Wosley Hall and Rapid Results correspondence colleges was the highest in Nigeria within the British colonial territories. Between 2000 and 2012, the number of applicants for secondary and tertiary education places observed the highest growth in Africa. The second driver is technology. Mobile technologies and the Internet have hiked access to open and distance education resources. National Open University of Nigeria students that were interviewed last week confirmed that the university has increasingly deployed online resources and that many students are now able to access electronic textual materials and download same at remote locations. The third force pushing up the profile of open and distance education is cross-border higher education. There are several online courses being offered by a motley assortment of institutions from all nooks and crannies of the world (Okebukola, 2008). Enrolment into these programmes by Nigerians in spite of most being of doubtful quality has continued to take an upwards swing. Keegan (1996) recognizes the importance of open and distance learning of Open University of United Kingdom and quoted thus:

> *'Academics all over Britain accept that Open University has succeeded; that distance learning works, and that the Open University graduates are as good as any others. They (these graduates) have been accepted by every British University in Post Graduate courses without question. The quality of the course seen and is commended by academics in other universities'. Giving credence to the above is the fact that several universities in Nigeria accept students from NOUN by offering them admission into the Post Graduate programmes without question.*

The National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), was established in July, 1983, by an Act of the National Assembly as the first distance learning tertiary institution in Nigeria when it became crystal clear to the then Federal Government that, the ever growing demand for education by her people cannot be met by the traditional means of face-to-face classroom instructional delivery. The institution was suspended few weeks after its establishment and the Act that established the University was suspended in 1984 by the then Federal Military Government that overthrew the civilian government. Many years after the closure, the compelling reasons that, informed the earlier establishment of the university as well as the need to fill the gap created by the Federal Government clamped down on mushroom outreach study centres of many conventional universities all over the country .The need to take advantage of emerging developments in the field of ICTs which have revolutionized the techniques and methods of instructional deliveries in the distance learning mode necessitated the reactivation of the suspended NOUN Act of 1983 in 2002. This paved the way for the resuscitation of the NOUN (Okonkwo ,2012).

There are two concepts fused into one in this terminology; these are: open learning and distance learning. It has been observed that Open Learning eludes a precise definition and that it evokes wide response from educationists. The decision of the United Kingdom government, in the mid-1960s, to rename the 'University of the Air', the 'Open University', popularized the term 'Open'. The term 'Open and distance learning', according to Mundi (2010) and Jegede (2004) refer to the flexibility of end access to instruction by the distance education mode in

order to ensure that the broad availability of educational opportunities reach as many segments of the population as possible. The Open and distance Learning offers access to education disregards of age, previous level of educational achievements and of the factors which created artificial barriers to academics as a life-long pursuit. According to Holmberg (2001), distance education could be regarded as a special kind of adult education which includes all those teaching methods, the interactive as well as the print-based self-instructional materials. The National Policy on Education was very explicit in referring to Open and Distance Learning as a system which encompasses Education for All, education for life, life-long learning, life wide education, self-learning and much more (Olojede, 2012).

Education has been said to be the most important instrument of change in any society. Any fundamental change in the intellectual and social outlook of any society has to be preceded by an educational revolution and the Open and distance education is not an exception .For us to enhance the scope and level of educational opportunities in the rural areas especially in line with the nation's commitment to the Dakar Declaration on the Education For All (EFA) forum; the development of the infrastructure in information and communication technology (ICT) and the adoption of the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) will go a long to complement the conventional system of education in Nigeria. In a radical definition of distance education, Peters (1973), who provided one of the greatest conceptual guides for the study of distance education, wrote that: Distance education is a method of imparting knowledge, skills, and attitudes which is rationalized by the application of division of labour and organizational principles as well as by the extensive use of technical media especially for the purpose of reproducing high quality teaching materials which make it possible to instruct great number of students at the same time wherever they live. The major feature of Peter's definition is the perception of distance learning as an industrialized process of teaching and learning. In other words, he associated the learning process in distance education with the industrial production process. Other features of Peter's definition are the use of technical media and the mass education of students at a distance. From these definitions, some important characteristics of distance education can be measured.

The Effective Practice and Tasks of ODL Programme in NOUN
The teaching and learning methods of ODL is determined by the nature of the programme, the profile of the students, student's access to resources and the level of the programme. It includes independent study of learning materials, completion of various activities, formative assessment tasks, tutorial, practical work and opportunities to interact with other as well as research activities. The learning materials are systematically designed as outlined in the tuition policy and framework for a team approach to curriculum and learning development. It is accessible to the target student and also built on the student's experience and knowledge enabling the student to construct new knowledge (UNISA.2008).

The delivery channel includes advanced teaching and learning models, well designed course ware, effective and efficient administrative student support using a wide range of delivery channels which are core to the success of student. Course wares are well designed to facilitate access to information. Other resources include digital media (audio and video cassettes, CDs, DVDs) satellite broadcasting on line distribution of content and possible radio and television will also be used to facilitate the process of teaching and learning. Asynchronous technologies such as blogs, social networking facilities and e-portfolios can be used effectively to support teaching and learning (Jegede.2004). The Open distance learning assessment strategy according to UNISA (2008) ensures that students develop effective cognitive, reflective and practical skills. This also includes formative and summative assessment aspects that will be used for making a judgment about the achievement of the learning outcomes. The assessment is centred on student learning and fundamentally influences the way students respond to their Studies.

The ODL has regional infrastructure and decentralized services which provide the platform for the provision of a range of student support and administrative structures. The decentralized regional structure bridges the gap between the university and its students. The regional networks will provide an expanding range of services to students such as access to facilities for both independent and group-based study and discussion, materials/library facilities, computer facilities, counsellors, tutors and literacy development. The regional offices will assist with the placement of students for work-integrated learning (Jegede, 2004). Jegede (2004)

admits that the use of modem ICTs, especially the internet and the World Wide Web, are challenges in the West African sub-region and are only emerging. But in recent times, the use of modem ICTs in education has been popularized due to the globalization and development in telecommunication, communication and computing. The National Open University of Nigeria has numerous state study centres and a couple of community study centres, from which open schools in any location can enjoy symbiotic relationship by sharing infrastructures, facilitators and expertise.

Benefits of Open and Distance Learning to Reformation of Prison Inmates
As long as people have been able to write or even draw pictures, they have tried to use these skills to get messages sent to other people. The invention of technology in the last century has enabled the development of new methods of information technology with people who are interested in the empowerment of education via the open and distance learning (Akpan, 2008). These techniques have also made it possible to communicate with very large numbers of people through a single act of writing or broadcasting, very many more people than a teacher or lecturer could teach in a lesson. The factors that have brought distance education in such profound popularity have to do with the following reasons. They include: -

1. The increasing demands for reformation of increasing number of persons for higher education especially the inmates who missed the opportunity at their youthful ages to gain admission to conventional universities.
2. The need to exploit the vast potential of modern technology for educational purposes of transference of knowledge, experience of inmates and to reduce recidivism.
3. The need to update the inmates the knowledge through lifelong learning because of the exponential developments in information gathering and storage as well as rapidly dynamic analysis and application, which tend to render previously acquired knowledge obsolete in little or no time.
4. In order to relate the education of the inmates to work. Chandlers (1991) looking at the objectives of distance

education stated that it should aim at computer mediated communication at some or all of the following: -

i.   Providing an additional or parallel system to the formal system.
ii.   Providing for a more flexible diversified and open system.
iii.   Provide for an egalitarian society reaching people of all age, sex, economic classes and remote areas.
iv.   Provide for a means of in-service and lifelong education and lastly,
v.   To make use of communication technology with a view to achieving a wider reach of education, this is more important (Akpan, 2008).

The teaching and learning methods of ODL is determined by the nature of the programme, the profile of the students, student's access to resources and the level of the programme. It includes independent study of learning materials, completion of various activities, formative assessment tasks, tutorial, practical work and opportunities to interact with other as well as research activities (Akpan, 2008). The learning materials are systematically designed as outlined in the tuition policy and framework for a team approach to curriculum and learning development. It is accessible to the target student and also built on the students' experience and knowledge enabling the student to construct new knowledge (Akpan, 2008).

The delivery channel includes advanced teaching and learning models, well designed course ware, effective and efficient administrative student support using a wide range of delivery channels which are core to the success of student (Ani, 2007). Course wares are well designed to facilitate access to information. Other resources include digital media (audio and video cassettes, CDs, DVDs) satellite broadcasting on line distribution of content and possible radio and television will also be used to facilitate the process of teaching and learning. Asynchronous technologies such as blogs, social networking facilities and e-portfolios can be used effectively to support teaching and learning (Ani, 2007).

National Open University of Nigeria as a distance Education institution has depended totally on internet for her delivery of instruction to her students and even in the management of students' activities. First, the National Open University of Nigeria lecturers use the internet tool as provided by the CNS (Computer Network Services) directorate to upload both their assignment questions to their various inmates and Internet is used by the NOUN Lectures in this aspect to upload their tutor-marked assignments, which were made available to the inmates. The current bandwidth of NOUN handles conveniently the uploading of course materials, TMAs and Examination question which are administered by the lectures. E-mail Message to inmates is another aspect in which the internet is utilized in NOUN to reach the students or other academic institutions. The lecturers send messages to their inmates; have their online publications and other academic related contacts (Ani, 2007).

Download and Submission of Answered TMA and Examination Questions are the major aspect of internet usage by students of NOUN. In this aspect, all the inmates must of necessity download their course materials, answer and submit their tutor-marked assignment and they use the Internet during their examination. Therefore, internet becomes the variable instrument that NOUN students must explore for the successful execution of their programmes.

In E-mail Messages to Lecturers and Colleagues is where the inmates reach their lecturers at will with their messages. They also connect their colleagues and other academic interests with their requests or solution to problems raised earlier and *Sourcing* of Other Open Educational Resources Materials pertinent to note that the NOUN lecturers encourage their inmates to source for other open educational resources, which are useful to their course of study. In this way, the students are properly equipped with enough materials in their area of study.

The Application and Acceptance of Admission Forms are where the aspiring inmates of NOUN are encouraged to use the internet for application and processing of their forms. In the same vein, they admitted students use the internet for their registration formalities, including their course registration. The internet is also veritable

instrument in the hand of the management of NOUN. For example, the Online Vetting of Students Projects are used for *the* inmates to encouraged them write and submit their projects or seminars to their various supervisors online. This gesture invariably reduces the movement of the students to their lectures office, hence saves cost of transportation. Sourcing of Online Instructional Materials: The staff of NOUN have constant internet connectivity, hence are at liberty to source for materials of educational relevance from the net.

Mode of delivery of instruction is very important for open and distance learning. There are four major types of mode of instruction for open and distance learning including: (i) mixed mode of instruction delivery system: this system uses several different media methods or deliveries such as video and e-mail. (ii) Single mode of instruction delivery system: this method according to Hirschbuhi (1995) does not provide enough instructional power to ignite student's interest because they fail to provide student involvement. As a distinct mode of imparting education, NOUN relies heavily on print materials, and face-to-face tutorial services. The use of these techniques helps NOUN to take its academic programmes to the door steps of her students far and wide. It makes room for in-house education. Considering the rapid expansion of ITs in the country, NOUN has commenced a plan on the introduction of more electronic media like CD-ROM, e-mail, internet and interactive e-learning systems for its courses delivery.

Challenges Confronting Reformation of Prisons in Nigeria
(Ugwuoke, 2015), enumerates some of the challenges confronting reformation of prisons as follows:

1.   **Skewed Ideology of Prisonization in Nigeria:** The ideology of the Nigerian prisons system is still hinged on brutality and vengeance. The ideology is premised on punishment than rehabilitation, reformation and resettlement. In Nigeria, offenders are sent to prison to atone for the wrongs they have committed, instead of treatment like is obtainable in other crimes. Hence, ex-offenders are not properly prepared for life after imprisonment, and this contributes to the seemingly high rate of reoffending in Nigeria.

2. **Poor Rehabilitation Model of the Nigerian Prison System:**
    The major aim of any prison is to rehabilitate those who are in conflict with the law. Prisons in Nigeria have failed in their attempts to fulfil their aim of rehabilitating criminals and make them better citizens. This is because the Nigerian prison system has a very poor rehabilitation model which has out- lived its relevance in this present age. The rehabilitative model of the Nigerian prisons system is a continuation of the colonial model; little or no change has been made since the in introduction of conventional imprisonment in Nigeria. Again, the rehabilitation facilities in Nigerian prisons are archaic, comatose and non-functional. This has become an impediment in the rehabilitation model in our prison. In fact, as it stands now, there is little or no rehabilitation in Nigerian prisons as the facilities for rehabilitation are not there. There is also dearth of professionals such as psychologists, social workers, counsellors etc., in our prisons. This has led to poorly rehabilitated inmates. In fact, the inmates are deformed in prison instead of being reformed.

3. **Poorly Funded Aftercare Programme:** The major objective of the Aftercare programme is in the counselling and rehabilitation of released prisoners to assist them to integrate back into the society. The Aftercare unit of the Nigerian prisons system is poorly managed cum funded. Ideally, the Aftercare unit is to follow up on released inmates, supervising them in the resettlement process so as to ensure efficient reintegration back to the society. In Nigeria, the resettlement of offenders is poorly coordinated and fails to address social exclusion issues such as housing, employment and drug addiction problems that could lead people back into crime. Most prisoners often are released from prison ill prepared to live and work in the community, and without having addressed their offending behaviour. This causes them to relapse to criminal livelihood as soon as they are outside the prison gate.

4.   **Poorly trained staff of the Nigerian Prison system:** This is one of the major causes of recidivism in Nigeria. The quality of the staff in the Nigerian prison system is very poor. Recruitment into the Nigerian Prisons Service is based on biases and sentiments; hence, at the end, criminals and all manners of misfits find their ways into the payroll of the Nigerian Prisons Service. Asides, the quality of training given to these staff is grossly inadequate. Most staff are recruited and deployed to the prison without being effectively trained; while those that find their ways into the training schools are not properly trained in contemporary issue on prison management.

Remedies to These Challenges Confronting Reformation of Prisons in Nigeria
The following remedies are proffered to address the lapses inherent in the Nigerian prisons system that leads to the high rate of recidivism in Nigeria.

1.   The Aftercare unit of the Nigerian prison system should be overhauled to provide reformation to inmates, and also to study the needs of inmates while in prison. This part should be strengthened to provide link between the prisoners and their families.

2.   The Nigerian Prisons Service should collaborate with the National Open University of Nigeria and other media organizations to change the mind-set of the public that prison is for rehabilitation and not for punishment. This will go a long way in improving the skills of inmates that are churned out of our prisons.

3.   The Nigerian Prisons Service should understudy the rehabilitative models. Models of other countries like the United States of America, the Netherlands and Australia. The rehabilitation models of these countries have provided results, hence leading to low rates of recidivism. The Nigerian Prisons authority can understudy these countries' rehabilitation models and adopt them.

4.   The Nigerian prisons should be properly funded. Workshops and other facilities which will aid smooth rehabilitation should be provided (Ugwuoke, 2015).

The study is guided by the innovation diffusion theory. Innovation Diffusion theory is a theory of how, why, and at what rate new ideas and technology could spread through cultures, operating at the individual and firm level. The theory sees innovations as an important ingredient which could be communicated through certain channels over time and within a particular social system (Rogers,1995). These days, information technology is universally regarded as an essential tool in enhancing the competitiveness of the economy of a country. Today, National Open University of Nigeria as a Single mode of instruction delivery system provides enough instructional power to ignite inmates' interest in reformation and ensure efficient reintegration back to the society. It is commonly accepted today that Information Technology has significant effects on the productivity of firms. These effects will only be fully realized if, and when, Information Technology Manpower of the National Open University of Nigeria are widely spread and used. However, precise analysis of user acceptance has now become a central concern of disciplines studying information technology in particular rather than general technological innovations. This work concentrates more directly on the determinants and importance of the inmates' user acceptance, rather than the broad issues of social diffusion. At the highest level, acceptance has been subsumed under the theoretical analysis of innovation diffusion. Its primary intention is to provide an account of the manner in which any technological innovation moves from the stage of invention to widespread use, diffusion theory offers a conceptual framework for discussing acceptance at a global level. Diffusion theory posits five characteristics of innovations that affect their diffusion:

(a)   Technology has relative advantage (the extent to which a technology offers improvements over currently available tools)
(b)   Compatibility (its consistency with social practices and norms among its users).
(c)   Complexity (its ease of use or learning).
(d)   Trial ability (the opportunity to try an innovation before committing to use it, and
(e)   Observability (the extent to which the technology's outputs and its gains are clear to see).

The theory tries to determine information technology adoption and usage as the viable instruments for the Nigeria prisons alternative to the reformation of inmates in Nigeria. The theory fashions out the individual usage characteristics, information sources and communication channels as well as innovation characteristics.

Research Questions

1. What is the perception of prison inmates on open and distance learning delivery (National Open University of Nigeria) towards their reformation?
2. What is the perception of prison warders on open and distance learning delivery (National Open University of Nigeria) towards their reformation?
3. What is the perception of prison inmates on open and distance learning (National Open University of Nigeria) towards their reformation based on their gender?
4. Can open and distance learning (National Open University of Nigeria) programme reduce recidivism of the prison inmates?
5. What is the perception of prison warders on open and distance learning (National Open University of Nigeria) programme in reducing recidivism of the prison inmates?
6. What is the perception of prison warders on open and distance learning (National Open University of Nigeria) programme in reducing recidivism of the prison inmates based on their gender?

Hypotheses

HO_1: There is no significant relationship between perception of prison inmates on open and distance learning delivery (National Open University of Nigeria) towards their reformation

HO_2: There is no significant relationship between the perception of prison warders on open and distance learning delivery (National Open University of Nigeria) towards their reformation

HO_3: There is no significant relationship between the perception of prison inmates on open and distance learning (National Open University of Nigeria) towards their reformation based on their gender

H0₄: There is no significant relationship between the open and distance learning (National Open University of Nigeria) programme reducing recidivism of the prison inmates.

Objectives of The Study

The general objective of this study was to examine National Open University of Nigeria and the reformation of prison inmates through open and distance learning.

The specific objectives are as follows:

1.   To examine the perception of prison inmates on open and distance learning delivery (National Open University of Nigeria) towards their reformation
2.   To know the perception of prison warders on open and distance learning delivery (National Open University of Nigeria) towards their reformation
3.   To determine the perception of prison inmates on open and distance learning (National Open University of Nigeria) towards their reformation based on their gender
4.   To identify the open and distance learning (National Open University of Nigeria) programme reduce recidivism of the prison inmates
5.   To explore the perception of prison warders on open and distance learning (National Open University of Nigeria) programme in reducing recidivism of the prison inmates

A research used descriptive survey design. 500 respondents were sampled from the total numbers of One thousand four hundred and sixty inmates in Ward A cells 1-4, Ward B cells 1-4, Ward C cells 1-4, Female ward 2, and Prison Officers in Ikoyi Prison, in Lagos State. Self-developed questionnaires and key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were used for data collection. The key Informant Interviews were preferred because they served as a confirmation technique, which increases the validity and credibility of the data. The study was carried out using purposive and random sampling technique. I adhered to the necessary ethical measures - willingness to participate in the investigation and informed consent. Ethical considerations were carefully attended to: informed consent, confidentiality, obtaining the

necessary permission, privacy, anonymity and encouraging participants to speak freely without fear of repercussions (Cohen *et al*, 2009). The risk category was low because this research involved human participants directly and the study only caused inconvenience on their side. The research participants were adults who were based in their daily working environment. The research questions were answered using simple percentage (%) to analyse the respondents' personal data and the research questions, while Chi-Square (X^2) was employed to test the hypotheses. Since the levels of measurement for this topic is nominal, the Chi-square independent test is used. The chi-square (x^2) is used to evaluate a relationship between two nominal or ordinal variables, Voelker, Orton and Adams (2001). We examined the use of chi-square test in a bivariate analysis (i.e. an analysis in which each participant is classified in terms of two variables in order to examine the relationship between them, Patten (2005). Chi-square is example of the non-parametric or distribution -free tests. The tests are used when assumptions about normal distribution in the population cannot be met. (I.e. they do not require the assumption of a normal population, Blalock (1979).

A pilot study was conducted using 50 respondents from the area. The area was stratified into different wards in Ikoyi prison, Lagos state. In this perspective, we used multiple sources to obtain data on the research topic. The technical name for this is data triangulation. The aim is primarily to increase the validity of the findings (Ahonsi & Soyombo, 1996). Both the quantitative and qualitative techniques were integrated for the validity of the conclusions.

Presentation of Data and Findings
Hypothesis 1
There is no significant relationship between perception of prison inmates on open and distance learning delivery (National Open University of Nigeria, (NOUN) towards their reformation (H_0).

Level of measurement for the variable: Two nominal scales model: Independent Random samples level of significance: 0.05

Table 1a: Frequency Distribution of NOUN and prison inmates, it is referred to as a contingency table or a two-way table, because it relates two categories of data. The row variable is the Prison Wards status, because each row in the table describes the Prison Wards of the inmates. The column variable is the Respondents of the group testifying the effectiveness of NOUN on reformation. Each box inside the table is referred to as a cell. Each cell contains the frequency of the category.

	Responses					
Variables	**SA**	**A**	**D**	**SD**	**Total frequency**	**%**
Ward A Cells 1-4	52 (52.99)	40 (39.36)	3 (3.26)	1 (0.38)	96	19.2
Ward B Cells 1-4	54 (52.99)	39 (39.36)	3 (3.26)	0 (0.38)	96	19.2
Ward C Cells 1-4	57 (59.06)	47 (43.87)	3 (3.64)	0 (0.42)	107	21.4
Female Ward 2	53 (54.64)	42 (40.59)	4 (3.37)	0 (0.39)	99	19.8
Prison Officers	60 (56.30)	37 (41.82)	4 (3.47)	1 (0.40)	102	20.4
Total	276 (55.2%)	205 (41%)	17 (3.4%)	2 (0.4%)	500	100

Source: *Researchers field work Ikoyi prison, 2018.*
Key: SA=strongly agreed; A=Agreed; D=Disagreed; SD=strongly disagreed.
(N.B. Figures in brackets are in"fe")
Table 1a: Frequency Distribution of NOUN and prison inmates

Table 1b: Result of Chi-Square (X^2) analysis on the NOUN for prison inmates and Computation of chi-square(X^2) for 4x5 contingency table

Expected Frequency (fe) = (row total) (column total)
n
Where n is the overall
(N.B. figures in brackets are in "fe").

Table 1b
Computation for chi-square (x^2)
For 4 x 5 contingency table

Cell	Fo	Fe	$\sum \dfrac{(fe - fe)2}{Fe}$
A	52	12.2	0.030
B	40	7.8	0.082
C	3	2.1	0.005
D	54	19.8	0.002
E	39	7.3	0.012
F	3	1.9	0.637
G	57	20.5	0.012
H	37	7.5	0.033
I	2	2.0	2.000
J	57	20.5	0.012
K	37	7.5	0.033
L	2	2.0	2.000

$$X^2 = 4.858$$

Thus $x^2 = 4.858$
Degree of freedom (df) = (r-1) (C-1)
Where r = 4 and C = 5
df = 12
Our calculated $x^2 = 4.86$
X^2 0.05 at 12 df = 3.71

Decisions: From the table 1a, there are 500 respondents, of which inmates from the Ward c Cells 1-4 ranked the highest level on the acceptability of NOUN as the ideal instrument in reformation and in reducing recidivism among the prison inmates. In percentage, they ranked the highest in the acceptability of education which constitute 21.4%. We posited the above hypothesis that the acceptability of NOUN as an important factor in developing learning potentials for reformation is a welcome development to the prison inmates.

From the table 1b, the calculated Chi-square (chi-square (X^2)) of 4.86 is greater than the critical value (the chi-square (X^2) table value) of 3.71 it means that the result is significant at level of significance 0.05. The Null Hypothesis is thus rejected. Hence, the null hypothesis (H0) which

states that there is no significant relationship between perception of prison inmates on open and distance learning delivery (National Open University of Nigeria, (NOUN) towards their reformation is rejected while the alternative hypothesis which assumes that there is significant relationship between perception of prison inmates on open and distance learning delivery (National Open University of Nigeria, (NOUN) towards their reformation is accepted. This means there is a significant relationship between the acceptability of NOUN and the acceptability of NOUN as an important factor in developing learning potentials for reformation as stated by the respondents from the Ikoyi Prisons, Lagos. The result shows that there is a positive relationship which is very strong between the dependent and independent variables.

This therefore confirmed the sayings of Opara (1998) that skill acquisition is necessary for prison reformation. Opara (1998) mentioned the following seven points as methods to be used to achieve educational technologies for prison inmates in Nigeria, viz:
(1)   Discipline and disciplinary action
(2)   Medical treatment
(3)   Staff attitude
(4)   Education
(5)   Industrial Training
(6)   Religious Instructions

On admission, every prisoner is allowed to choose which trade he or she wants to learn while in the prison. However, prisoners will be guided with the options available, that is, the trades and workshops that are functional in the prison. This is made known to the prisoners by the admission board constituted by the Superintendent in charge of the prison, who must be guided by standing order (S.O) of the Nigeria Prison Service.

This introduces the process of reformation and rehabilitation as the prisoner is introduced to the kind of skill he/she wants to acquire for his/her eventual resettlement on discharge. While he is learning the skill or the trade, he is also under character remoulding. The prison officer in charge of the workshop is performing the duty of reforming the prisoner. This is done so that the prisoner on discharge would not

only have acquired skills but also is reformed. The process of reformation is not the duty of one person (officer) in the prison. It is a collective effort, as there exists division of labour among the officers (reformers). Some officers are tradesmen (in the workshops) while some are general duty officers, medical officers, welfare officers, and so on. All these groups of prison personnel exist for a common purpose (Omu, 2008).

Discussions on Findings
As a result of the acceptability of NOUN as an important factor in developing learning potentials for reformation, there was a tremendous increase intake of inmates as students into the university. The number of matriculates increased from 15 in 2013 to 465 undergraduate students, 23 master's degree students and two PHD students in 2018 in the NOUN special study centres across the country, especially a period the university management offered 100% bursary to the inmates as students (NOUN news, No.7, 2018). Due to these unique circumstances, the inmates have come to realise the core mandate of the university, to reform them so that after serving their prison terms they can properly be integrated back into the society. To set cap at the discussions of the findings, the UNESCO Confucius Prize for Literacy awarded and highly appreciated the Africa's top open and Distance Learning (ODL) Institute, (NOUN) for its innovative approach in equipping prisoners with useful skills and professions to facilitate income generation upon discharge and discourage future crime. The Director-General of UNESCO, Ms Audrey Azoulay eulogises our Vice-Chancellor of NOUN, Prof.Abdalla Uba Adamu, and said " with the current global paradigm shift in the concept of growth and economic inclusiveness, it goes without saying that occupation specific and Literacy skills will continue to play vital roles particularly in addressing ex-convicts' acceptance back into the society"(NOUN news,No.8,2018).

Conclusion

The prison is a component of the criminal justice system like every other place in the world. In conclusion, the government and the prisons authorities, should wake-up from their slumbers and do what it takes in

the administration of the prisons in Nigeria by complying with the international standards. The government and the prisons authorities, should partner with the National open university of Nigeria to enhance the capacity of the prisoners to access knowledge and skills for self-development.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and analysis thereof, the following recommendations are made:

a) Inmates should be realistically introduced to useful skill acquisition, so that they could better their lives on discharge from prison.

b) The federal government should take concrete steps to rehabilitate the cells, and offices occupied by the prison staff.

c) Adequate and functional medical facilities should be provided to arrest the high rate of diseases and death incidence among the inmates.

d) There should be a body established by law and charged with visiting prisons with a view to identifying and proffering solutions to the immediate problems of the Nigerian prison system.

e) There should be law requiring the controller of prisons in various states to compile the names of convicted prisoners who have been of good behaviour within a specific period and provide educational scholarships for the purpose of granting a better livelihood to them.

References

Abrifor, C. Atere, A.& Muoghalu, C. 2010. '*Gender Differences, Trend and Patter Recidivism among Inmates in Selected Nigerian Prisons*' European Scientific Journal 8(3) 25 – 44 Correctional Services Portfolio Committee. 2002. Restorative justice: Briefing by NICRO; Planning for international study tour [online]. Available from: <http://pmg-assets.s3website-eu-west 1.amazonaws.com/docs/2002/minutes/020219pccorrect.htm> [Accessed 20 september 2018]

Adams, S.V., Voelker, D. & Orton, P. 2001.Statistics. New York: Wiley.

Adekoya, S. & Adetoro, J.(2001.Fundamentals of statistics and Research Methodology. Lagos: Tunwobi.

Adelaja, A. 2009. *State of Nigerian Prisons*. Retrieved January 3, 2016, from http://234next. com/csp/cms/sites/Next/Home/5250407-146/story.csp.

Agomoh, U; Adeyemi, A. & Ogbebor, V.2001. *The Prison Service And Penal Reform in Nigeria: A Synthesis Study For the Safety, Security And Access to Justice Programme of the Department for International Development (DFID)*, PRAWA: Lagos at page 13

Ahonsi, B. & Soyombo, O. 1996. Reading in Social Research Methods and Applications. Ibadan: Caltop Publication.

Akpan, C.P. 2008. Enhancing Quality in Open and Distance Education through Effective Utilization of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Nigeria. A paper presented at the 2nd African Council for Distance Education (ACDE) Conference and General Assembly 8-11 July, 2008. Lagos, Nigeria.

Alessandro, P. 2009. Social reintegration. Retrieved from: www.wikipedia.com.

Allen, H. E. and Simonsen, C. E .2001.Correction in America: An introduction. 9th Edition, Prentice Hall Publication.

Amili, F. O. 2016. "Progression: Preventing Recidivism through Post-Secondary Education". *MAIS Projects and Theses*. 47. http://digitalcommons.tacoma.uw.edu/ias_masters/47

Ani, A.A. 2007. Enhancing Access to Education through the Open University and Distance Learning Programmes in Nigeria. In J.B. Babalola G.O. Akpa, A.O. Ayeni & S.O. Adedeji (eds). *Access, Equity and Quality in Higher Education*; NAEAP Publication.

Anikpo, M. 1986. Foundations of social science Research. Enugu: Abic Publishers.

Ayodele,T. 1993. The Prison in Nigeria. *Daily Guardian,* pp. 17-19.

Babbie, E. 2010. The Practice of Social Research. 12th ed. Belmont: Wadsworth   learning.

Blalock, M.H. 1979. Social statistics. Tokyo: McGraw-Hill Kogakusha, Ltd.

Braimoh, D. 2010. Learner support services in an open and Distance Learning Environment: How does it advance learning effectiveness within the African Sub-Region? In B. Ifeanyi(Ed.) Global perspectives in Open and Distance Learning.

Chandlers, J. N. 1991. *Management of Distance Education.* New Delhi: Starling Publishers Ltd.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. 2009. *Research Methods in Education,* New York: Routledge.

Esiri, M.O. 2016. The Upsurge of Recidivism and the Penitentiary Institutions in Nigeria. International Journal of Business and Social Science Vol. 7, No. 6

Gerber, J. & Fritsch, E. 1995. 'Adult academic and vocational correctional education programs: A review of recent research', Journal of Offender Rehabilitation, 22: 119-142.

Goffman E 1961. *Asylums*. New York: Garden City Anchor Books. Howard DL 1960. *The English Prisons: Their Past and their Future*. London: Butler and Tarmer Ltd.

Jegede, O. 2002. A celebration of teacher Education and ODL in Nigeria: Attainments, challenges and strategies. A paper presented to the National Teachers Institute, 25th Anniversary. *E-learning case studies in post-secondary education*. Paris: OECD

Johnson, L. R. 2015. 'Adult learners' experiences in correctional services environment'. In Merrington, M. (Ed). *Including the Excluded: Educating in the 21st Century:* Cape Town: Pearson Education.

Laufersweiler-Dwyer, D. & McAnelly, B. 1999. 'From phosphate mines to diplomas ... the history of correctional education in Florida: Part 1: 1800-1970', in *Journal of Correctional Education,* 50: 4, 112-122.

NOUN news. More prisoners Embrace NOUN's Free Scholarship. A monthly Bulletin of the National Open University of Nigeria, Vol.27, No.7, July, 2018: www.nounnews.org

NOUN news. NOUN's tuition-Free Programme for Prisoners Wins UNESCO Prize. A monthly Bulletin of the National Open University of Nigeria, Vol.27, No.8, August, 2018: www.nounnews.org

Obioha, E.E 2002. Punishment in Society. In: U.C. Isiugo- Abanihe, A.N. Isamah, O. Adesina 'Jimi (Eds.): *Currents and Perspectives in Sociology*. Lagos: Malthouse Press Limited, pp. 367-379.

Okebukola, P**.** 2013. Open Education and the March to 2020: can Nigeria make it? Lagos: NOUN.

Okonkwo, U. M. 2012. Establishment and Development of National Open University of Nigeria in (Eds) Ivowi, U. M. O., MON, F. Inst P, FNAE & Akpan, B.B- Education in Nigeria from the Beginning to the future. Lagos: NOUN.

Olojede, I. ed.2012.Operating Open and Distance Learning in Nigeria: The National open university of Nigeria Experience. Lagos: Concept Publication

Omu, L.H. (2008). *Basic Principles of Penology in Nigeria*. Port Harcourt: Anyifovy Complex.

Open University UK. 2009: www.open.ac.uk

Patten, M.L. 2005. Understanding Research Methods: An Overview of the Essentials: (5th Ed.). New York: Malloy.

Rogers, E.M. 1995. Diffusion of innovations, 4th ed., New York, Free Press.

Ugwuoke, K. A.(2015). An Aetiological Study of Criminal Recidivism in Nigeria. Journal for Studies in Management and Planning Available   at http://internationaljournalofresearch.org/index.php/JSMaP   e-ISSN: 2395-0463 Volume 01 Issue 11 December 2015.

University of South Africa (UNISA): www.unisa.ac.za

United Nations. 1955. *Standard minimum rules for treatment of offenders (SMR) of (1955 ratified in 1977; Clause 8 (a)*. New York: United Nations.

United Nations. 1990. *Standard minimum rules for non-custodial measures,* Adopted by General Assembly resolution 45/110 of 14 December 1990. New York: United Nations.

Yongo, P.P. 2000. Prisons Await Obasanjo's Attention. *The Punch*, 21 November, 2000, P. 33.