



Preventing Recidivism in Nigerian Prisons through Access to Education: The National Open University of Nigeria Prisons' Special Centres Intervention

La Prévention De La Récidive Dans Les Prisons Nigérianes A Travers L'accès A L'éducation : Intervention Des Centres Spéciaux Des Prisons De L'université Nationale De L'enseignement A Distance Du Nigeria

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Abstract

Globally, the attention of the penal philosophy has moved toward reformation and rehabilitation of offenders with the hope that the ex-convicts will return to the society as a social fit. Recidivism has not only been on the increase in Africa, but has become a major social problem to every society, government, multinational humanitarian organisation and the world over. It is against this backdrop that the study examines how recidivism in Nigerian prisons can be prevented through access to education. The National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) prisons' special centres intervention was used as a case study. The study made use of ecological theory with a focus on resource deprivation as a measure commonly used in ecological studies. Survey research method was adopted as research design. The study was conducted in three selected prisons located in Kirikiri area of Lagos State. These are the Maximum and Medium security prisons and the female prison. Purposive sampling technique was employed. The study

sample size was one hundred and twenty-three (123) respondents. A questionnaire and an interview were used as instruments to collect data from the field. The finding of the study revealed that most ex-convicts were unable to get employment after release and that public attitude towards them among other are some of the factors responsible for recidivism in the country. The paper therefore recommends among others, that educational programmes should be incorporated in to the training of the inmates in preparation for incorporation into the society.

Résumé

Globalement, l'attention de la philosophie pénale s'est déplacée vers la réforme et la réhabilitation des délinquants avec l'espoir que les ex-détenus reviendront dans la société comme une adaptation sociale. La récurrence n'est pas seulement en augmentation en Afrique, elle est devenue un problème social majeur pour toute société, gouvernement, organisation humanitaire multinationale et dans le monde entier. C'est dans ce contexte que l'étude examine comment prévenir la récurrence dans les prisons nigérianes par l'accès à l'éducation. L'intervention des centres spéciaux des prisons de la National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) a été utilisée comme étude de cas. L'étude s'est appuyée sur la théorie écologique en mettant l'accent sur la privation des ressources comme mesure couramment utilisée dans les études écologiques. La méthode de recherche par sondage a été adoptée comme méthodologie de recherche. L'étude a été menée dans trois prisons situées dans la région de Kirikiri, dans l'État de Lagos. Il s'agit des prisons à sécurité maximale et moyenne et de la prison pour femmes. Une technique d'échantillonnage ciblée a été utilisée. La taille de l'échantillon de l'étude était de cent vingt-trois (123) répondants. Un questionnaire et un entretien ont été utilisés comme instruments de collecte des données sur le terrain. L'étude a révélé que la plupart des ex-détenus n'ont pas pu trouver d'emploi après leur libération et que l'attitude du public à leur égard, entre autres, est l'un des facteurs responsables de la récurrence dans le pays. Le document recommande donc, entre autres, que des programmes éducatifs soient intégrés à la formation des détenus en vue de leur intégration dans la société.

Keywords: *Inmate, National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Recidivism, Reintegration, Education.*

Mots-clés : *Détenu, Université nationale de l'enseignement à distance du Nigeria (NOUN), récidive, réinsertion, éducation.*

Introduction

Globally, the attention of the penal philosophy as moved toward reformation and rehabilitation of the offender with the hope that the ex-convict returning to the society as a social fit. The process of reintegration of the ex-convict has posed serious challenges to the government, prison and even individual ex-convicts in Africa. All over the world specifically European and American countries, a number of after-care initiatives such as re-integrative confinement, structured transition, intensive after care, and community correction which include halfway houses, furloughs, probation and parole have been developed and implemented to ease the transition problems of released offenders (Aitshuler, Armstrong and Mackerinzie, 1999).

It has been discovered overtime that the number of ex-convicts discharged from prisons sometimes increased the number of inmates in the prison. This is partly due to lack of the preparedness on the part of the ex-convict, society and on the part of the government. This is termed as an act of recidivism. The recidivism act, as described by Mckean and Ransford (2004) can be defined as relapse of an individual into criminal activity based upon re-arrests for new offense that lead to incarceration. It is a chronic psychiatric tendency towards repetition of criminal or anti-social behaviour patterns. Soyombo (2009) reported that the prevalence rate of recidivism in Nigeria in 2005 was 37.3%. Also, Abrifor, Atere & Muoghalu (2012) estimated the prevalence of recidivism in Nigeria prisons at 52.4% in 2010. Since then, there has not been any indication that the trend has declined. According to a study conducted by Wilson (2009) it was indicated that in Nigeria, 81% of male inmates were re-arrested within 36 months of discharge from the prison custody.

When a person, especially a youth offender re-offends, it becomes a very challenging phenomenon. Although the statistics on recidivism in Nigeria and other African countries are severely limited but estimate indicates that they are unacceptably high. The high rate of prisoners' re-entry in Nigeria indicates that the Nigerian government and prison authorities have no specific plans and programmes for the prisoners' re-entry into society. For a prisoner to be properly reintegrated and recidivism reduced in the society, the government must be able to provide adequate and high quality rehabilitation programmes which incorporate community welfare, family support and religious support. Most importantly, a series of effort has to be made in providing educational opportunities, vocational training and health counselling for the inmates for integration to the society. Efforts must also be geared towards the pre and aftercare initiative to prepare the prison inmates. Open and Distance Education can then serve as a viable tool for effective pre and aftercare initiatives for the preparedness of the convicts' release into the society so as to avoid ex-prisoners' re-entry into the prisons.

Open and Distance Learning (ODL) which is the expression that define the practice of National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) is now providing answers to the question of whether education can actually reached the unreached in the society. Kanwer (2016) describes the unreach as the groups of people who either have no access to education or have dropped out of the educational system without completing their desired goals, and therefore cannot fully participate in the economic and social development of their nations. These are people that might be located in the remote villages or regions where conventional mode of educational facilities cannot reach or the poor who cannot afford education. The unreached can also be found among the disabled, the incarcerated (the prisoners) and the rest. For instance, ODL has proved to be a viable tool to reach the unreached as the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) in India used this educational system to reach over 500 jail inmates in India.

In Nigeria, National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) established centers in more than five states to provide education for the prisons. This is one of the objectives to provide education for all and infact

those that unreachable. The school fees and books are provided free by the NOUN management.

The Nigerian Prison Service (NPS) has emerged the winner of the 2018 UNESCO Confucius Prize for prisoner's programme being run by the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN).

Winners of the prize are awarded a silver medal, a diploma and US\$20,000 prize money, as well as a trip to the birthplace of Confucius. NOUN, African's top Open and Distance Learning (ODL) Institute, has for years been running the programme in Nigerian prisons without charging any fees.

Statement of Problem

Recidivism has not only been on the increase in Africa, but has become a major social problem to the society, government, multinational humanitarian organisations and the world over (Osayi, 2013). There are many factors that encouraged many prisoner's involvements in recidivism. These factors range from unstable employment, stigmatisation and unfriendly attitude received from the members of the society, lack of parental care or the problems of youth raised by relatives rather than their biological parents. The recidivists are mostly to be young males who had not graduated from high school. Alcohol and substance abuse has been linked with criminal behaviour particularly recidivism. Most people who are incarcerated come from the community and ultimately will return to the community (Andress, Wildes Rechtime and Moritsugu, 2004) in order to reduce high rate of recidivism, there must be an examination on the causes of the high recidivism and why prison becomes a revolving door for many individuals.

When prisoners are released they are not prepared to deal with the outside world. They leave prison without any savings, no entitlement to unemployment benefit and very few employment opportunities (Stravinskis, 2009).

Society's problem with prisoners and the high rate of recidivism have greatly affected the society and families, hence the research examines

the way of preventing the recidivism in Nigeria through the use of educational opportunity provided by National Open University of Nigeria especially in the special centres in the prisons.

In Nigeria, the number of prisoners without basic level of education or craftsmanship is alarming. This is a reflection of Nigeria's population, where more than 70% are illiterate. It has been observed that education can decrease the chances of committing crime. Education provides the basic employment, which is critical since it allows offenders to become self-sufficient and avoid involvement in criminal activity (Malott and Fromader, 2010). Petersilia (2003) explains that employment is important to an offender's feeling of self-confidence, which is important in preventing recidivism. Employment helps ex-prisoners to be productive, take care of their families, and develop valuable life social connectedness (Petersilia, 2003). Lack of employment is one of the major reasons for committing crime.

When the prisoners are released from prison, they are faced with the challenge of reintegration as a result of some socio-economic factors. Hence, the effect of improper reintegration and discharged of released prisoner often poses a threat to sustainable development as they can easily go back to crime. Recidivism threatens public safety and is damaging to the communities in which these prisoners reside. In addition to the threat of crime, public money (tax) is spent in arresting, prosecuting, and incarcerating re-offenders, when it could be spent on effective programmes that will enhance the lives of the prisoners (McKean and Ranford, 2004).

The high prevalence of recidivism has both consequences and implications for social and economic growth and development in Nigeria. Recidivism contributes to high crime rates which have resulted in loss of lives and property thereby threatening peace, safety of lives and national cohesion. Also, criminal activities by such recidivists have made the country unsafe for economic and commercial activities for both local and foreign investors, sometimes forcing them to relocate to safer countries. With such development, Nigeria has lost billions of naira which could have been invested for developmental projects that could benefit the citizenry. This paper therefore examines

prevention of recidivism in Nigerian prisons, through the use of National Open University of Nigerian prison's special centres. Hence, the objectives of the study are: To examine the factors responsible for recidivism in Nigeria prisons; and to examine the relationship between access to education and recidivism in Nigeria prisons.

The following are the Research Hypotheses of the study.

1. There is no significant relationship between the factors responsible for recidivism and recidivism in Nigerian Prisons.
2. There is no significant relationship between Education and Recidivism.

Conceptual Clarification

Prison is a closed and regimented institution where people who are convicted below life imprisonment and death penalty after trial are physically confined for rehabilitation so as to be law-abiding and accepted human beings in the society upon release. It is established to keep away people who committed crime thereby enhancing the security of the general society. The prison system also serves as a protection of society, retribution, deterrence, reformation and rehabilitation of the convicted prisoners. It plays the role of safe custody of inmates to ensure recovery of those who serve the cause of disorder. The fundamental problem is that corrections/prisons services are meant to keep inmates, reform, re-orientate, and rehabilitate them to avoid recidivism and empower them to be law abiding and productive members of the society on release from prison. (Akunesiobike, 2016) Recidivism is one of the most fundamental concepts in criminal justice. It refers to a person's relapse into criminal behavior, often after the person receives sanctions or undergoes intervention for a previous crime. Recidivism is measured by criminal acts that resulted in rearrest, reconviction or return to prison with or without a new sentence during a three-year period following the prisoner's release. (National Institute of Justice, 2018). Falling back into crime (recidivism) remains a major problem of crime prevention. It is a challenging phenomenon. Although the statistics on recidivism in Nigeria and other African countries are severely limited, estimates indicate that it is unacceptably high.

Education has been said to be the most important instrument of change in any society. Education is the process of teaching and learning between the teacher and the learner with a view to effecting a change in the behaviour of the latter. In the contemporary times, conventional approach of imparting knowledge is being complemented by ODL as a result of inherent limitations of the former. Such limitations include insufficient space, time, geographical hazards etc.

Open and Distance Learning (ODL) provides greater flexibility to individual learning, where learning occurs at the time, location and pace of the learner. In ODL, the learners' concern is to acquire skills from the studies, which they can subsequently apply in their work place and businesses. According to Holmberg (2001), Open and distance learning 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 material.

Review of Important Literature

Factors Responsible for Recidivism in Nigeria Prisons

As it has been discussed earlier, many prisoners have little or no education, which makes them unfit for employment opportunities after they have been released. Most of them who learnt craft work are without tools to build a successful life. After a prisoner is released from prison, it becomes very difficult for him to obtain employment and become alienated from his family and the community.

Most ex-prisoners are always unable to integrate into the society and obtain employment after they have been released from prison. It is very important to maintain public safety by using criminal records, but the availability of these records is damaging. Background checks have greatly affected many ex-convicts. Many researchers have observed that apart from the harsh prison conditions, other factors could influence the rate of recidivism. They include age unemployment, family problems ecological problems, public attitude and education (Ugwuoke, 1993).

Public attitude towards ex-convicts contributes to the problem of recidivism. In Nigeria, a man's term in prison is held against him much more than his conviction of a crime. The police, the courts and even employers of labour tend to react negatively to a person with a prison record. The Nigerian prison authorities have also claimed that the public should be held responsible for high rates of recidivism in our prison. These officials argue that ex-convicts are denied employment by the government and are even rejected by their relations on their release (Ugwuoke, 1993). Ugwuoke (1993) noted that unemployment is another factor that is initially linked with crime and recidivism. Unemployment usually leads to poverty which is even a worse social problem. Both of them are said to be interwoven. Adedibu (1986) has noted that the most pressing social problem in Nigeria today and indeed all over the developing world stems from lack of employment.

Education and Recidivism

Nigeria is among the nations of the world that are generally rated as having low literacy level despite abundant material and human resources endowment. Similarly, illiteracy level of inmates is so high. According to Joseph (2010), out of 504 inmates that responded to the questionnaire administered 54.7% could not read the questionnaire and 16.2% was assisted by the researchers. Only 19.1 % had junior secondary school education and 10% had senior secondary school and tertiary education. He reported that 70.9% of prison inmates could not identify read, interpret, understand and communicate in English language or read Pidgin English fluently.

Prison education is also referred to as inmate education. It is any educational activity occurring inside a prison. These educational activities include both vocational training and academic education. In this study, we shall be concentrating on academic educational institution which offers university degree programmes in prison with partnership with prison institute. There is positive correlation between education and recidivism. Education can decrease the chance of committing crime by the ex-prisoners. It has been observed that both college and university education within a penal environment is not only a valuable tool for the prisoner in gaining self-esteem and confidence, as well as future employment, but it is advantageous to society at large.

An educated prisoner has a greater capacity to function within the social context, once he/she is integrated he/she becomes a tax payer instead of a burden on society (police investigation, prosecution, incarceration, parole supervision and in many cases recidivism).

Education is one of the best investments a society can make within a penal setting (Frolander- UIF and Yates, 2005).

Education provides the basis for employment, which is crucial since it allows offenders to become self-sufficient and avoid involvement in criminal activity. Employment is important to an offender's feelings of self-confidence, which is important in preventing recidivism. Employment helps ex-prisoners to be productive, take care of their families, develop valuable life skills and strengthen their self-esteem and social connectedness (Petersilia, 2003).

Lack of employment is one of the major reasons for committing crime. Those who are employed have a routine and schedule, remain responsive to their employer and have individual roles to play in the society. Without the employment influence; the temptation to commit crime is greater. As recidivism rates rise, more offenders are not employed full-time before incarceration (Stravinskas, 2009).

According to Karpowitz and Kenner (2015) most persons are released from prison into the community unskilled, undereducated and highly likely to become involved in crime again.

Bayse, et al. (1991) found that family life education plays an important role in curbing dysfunctional patterns within all families. Inmates who received education that helped, mend and maintain their family relationship were less likely to re-offend. They also found that inmates who completed family life education courses, designed to promote ideal family functioning, scored significantly lower on post-tests designed to measure narcissism and they desired for their families to be more cohesive in the future.

Inmates who had enrolled in most of educational programmes while incarcerated had lower recidivism rates than those who did not attend

the programmes. Inmates need education programmes that not only teach them to read and write but also provide them with the necessary skills that promote a positive transition to society when they are released.

The Study Area

National Open University of Nigeria was established in Nigeria by an act of parliament in 2002 by the former President of Nigeria, Dr. Olusegun Obasanjo with the aim of providing education to people who are not be able to attend the conventional university. It offers undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in Arts, Social Sciences, Business and Education, Law, Sciences and Technology.

It has 78 study centres across the states in Nigeria and among them are the centres established in Kirikiri, Kuje, Enugu and Port Harcourt prisons. Each centre is headed by a director and administration officers. It dedicates itself to preparing professionals in various disciplines through the ODL modes. 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 channel which are core to the success of students. Course wares are well designed to facilitate access to information. Other resources include digital media (audio and video technology, CDs, DVDS) satellite broadcasting on-line distribution of content and possibly radio and television to also facilitate the process of teaching and learning.

Research Methodology

The study adopted survey design for its research design. Research design according to Adegoke (2012) is the overall plan or scheme or programme which guides the researcher at various stages of research. The survey design type is best described as a cross-sectional study design in that it was used to capture knowledge or attitudes of a cross section of the inmate population at one point in time.

The population of the study consists of inmates from all the National Open University of Nigeria Prison Special Centres. The research made use of multi-stage sampling techniques in selecting three centres which are Kirikiri security prisons in Lagos, Kuje prison in Abuja, and

Kaduna prison. Non-random purposive research sampling method and simple random sampling were adopted to select the prison inmates. The sample consisted of the entire student inmates from Kirikiri security prisons in Lagos, Kuje prison in Abuja, and Kaduna prison. 121 respondents were sampled in all. The students registered for courses in Criminology and Security Studies, Law, Entrepreneurship studies and Peace and Conflict Resolution.

The sources of data were both primary and secondary source. The primary sources consisted of questionnaire and focus group discussion while secondary sources consisted of inmate record, record of inmates' studentship of National Open University of Nigeria, Criminal history data, journals, internet, books, etc.

The research instruments used in the collection of data were (a) a questionnaire and (b) record of focus group discussion. The form of data collection was a self-administered questionnaire. The rationale for using this method was that it was the most efficient method to gather data directly from the jail due to the fast pace of the research. Copies of questionnaire were distributed to the inmates especially those who were student of the NOUN by the staff. A focus group consists of the prison inmate in which the research is the facilitator who describes the topic population.

The questionnaire considered five demographic questions relating to age, number of times incarcerated, marital status, completed educational level and employment history before participants were incarcerated. Respondents were given 15 close-ended questions based on a 5- point likert scale which measured the intensity of their attitudes ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Data were analysed with use of the chi-square (χ^2), simple percentages, frequencies, and tables.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant influence between the factors responsible for recidivism and rate of recidivism in Nigeria prisons

Table 1: The Factors Responsible for Recidivism and Rate of Recidivism in Nigerian Prisons

Variables	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Unemployment after release	6	7	-	3	1	17
Environmental factor	3	4	1	1	2	11
Drug abuse	3	4	-	5	1	13
Poor educational attainment	6	4	-	2	4	16
Inadequate craftsmanship	4	5	1	3	3	16
Public attitude	6	3	-	2	2	13
Prisons' conditions	6	8	-	-	1	15
Family dysfunction	2	2	1	2	3	9
Government inability to provide for inmates after rehabilitation facilities	3	4	-	1	2	10
Total	39	41	3	19	19	121

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

Table 1 presentation reveals the responses of the respondents on the factors responsible for recidivism in Nigeria. Thirteen (13) respondents agreed that unemployment after release was a factor responsible for recidivism in Nigeria, while four (4) disagreed. Seven (7) agreed to environmental factors, 3 disagreed, while 1 was indifferent. Seven (7) agreed that drug abuse is a factor, while 45 disagreed. Ten (10) agreed that poor educational attainment was a factor, while 4 disagreed. Nine (9) agreed that inadequate craftsmanship was a factor, 1 was indifference, while 6 disagreed,

Nine (9) agreed that public attitude was a factor, while 4 disagreed. Fourteen (14) agreed that prisons' condition was a factor, while 1 disagreed. Four (4) agreed that family dysfunction was a factor, 1 was indifference, while 5 disagreed. Seven (7) agreed that government's inability to provide for after rehabilitation facilities was a factor, while 18 disagreed.

Table 2: Summary of Chi-square of the Factors Responsible for Recidivism and Rate of Recidivism in Nigerian Prisons

O	E	O - E	(O - E) ²
39	24.2	14.8	219.04
41	24.2	16.8	282.24
3	24.2	-21.2	449.44
19	24.2	-5.2	27.04
19	24.2	-5.2	27.04
			1004.8

$$X^2 \text{ cal} = (O - E)^2 / E = 1004.8 / 24.2$$

$$X^2 \text{ cal} = 41.52$$

$$X^2 \text{ tab} = 9.49$$

$$\text{Degree of freedom (df) } = r - 1, c - 1$$

$$\text{Where } r = 5, c = 2$$

$$5 - 1, 2 - 1 = 4$$

$$X^2 \text{ cal} > X^2 \text{ tab}$$

$$41.52 > 9.49$$

From Table 2, with calculated X^2 higher than the X^2 value on the table at the level of significance 0.05, we therefore reject the null hypothesis and accept the hypothesis that says that there is a significant influence between Unemployment after release, Environmental factor, Drug abuse, Poor educational attainment, Inadequate craftsmanship, Public attitude, Prisons' conditions, Family dysfunction, Government inability to provide for inmates rehabilitation facilities and Rate of recidivism in Nigerian prisons .

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between educational opportunity and the rate of Recidivism.

Table 3: Educational Opportunities and Rate of Recidivism.

Variables	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Total
Education	45	48	-	22	16	121

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

Table 3 above reveals the responses of the respondents on the provision of educational facilities and reduction in recidivism. Ninety – three (93) respondents agreed that education reduces the rate of recidivism, while 38 disagreed That with provision of educational opportunities in the prison it has a significant relationship in reducing crime and rate recidivism.

Table 4: Summary of Chi-square analysis of relationship between Educational opportunities and Rate of Recidivism

O	E	O - E	(O – E) ²
45	24.2	20.8	432.64
48	24.2	23.8	566.44
0	24.2	-24.2	585.64
22	24.2	-2.2	4.84
16	24.2	-8.2	67.24
			1656.8

$$X^2 \text{ cal} = (O - E)^2 / E = 1656.8 / 24.2$$

$$X^2 \text{ cal} = 68.46$$

$$X^2 \text{ tab} = 9.49$$

$$\text{Degree of freedom (df) } = r - 1, c - 1$$

$$\text{Where } r = 5, c = 1$$

$$5 - 1, 2 - 1 = 4$$

$$X^2 \text{ cal} > X^2 \text{ tab}$$

$$68.46 > 9.49$$

From Table 4, with calculated X^2 higher than the X^2 value on the table at the level of significance 0.05, we therefore reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis that educational opportunity reduces the rate of recidivism in our prisons in Nigeria.

Discussion of the Findings

From the Table 1, it was revealed that the majority of respondents agreed that inmates were not able to get employment after release from the prison. According to Stravinskan (2009), the prisoners in Nigeria are not well prepared by the government for after prison life. They are always released without the capacity to deal with the challenges of the society or take a prepared mind to re-enter the society. A typical prisoner leaves prison without savings, no entitlement or employment benefit and very little employment avenue and very few employment opportunities. A prisoner is released without any money in his pocket. He is left to choose a place to live, to buy basic goods and services and to find a job.

Tenibiaje (2013) lists both the social and prison factors that make certain individuals to get into prison and consequently predict their eventual re-entry into prison as follows: situational, personal, interpersonal, familial, structural, cultural and economic etc.

From the data presented, the majority also agreed that drug abuse was a strong predictor of criminal recidivism among ex-prisoners. McKean and Ransford (2004) observes that substance abuse is a primary cause of recidivism. Research consistently indicates that a significant association exists between drug abuse and recidivism.

Ugwuoke, Dauda and Otodo (2016) also buttress the finding that prisons' conditions have significant influence on the rate of recidivism. According to them, Nigerian prison system has a very poor rehabilitation that is archaic, comatose and non-functional. They further emphasise that Nigerian prisons are bereft of facilities for rehabilitation and reformation of inmates.

The findings of the following scholars' Igbo and Ugwuoke (2003) also buttress that harsh prison conditions and negative attitude of the public towards ex-convicts influence the rate of recidivism. Chenube, (2011) posits that poor educational attainment and group influence also affect the rate of recidivism.

From Table 3 and 4, the study revealed that there is significant relationship between educational opportunities and rate of recidivism. The result shows that the provision of educational opportunities to the inmates reduced the rate of recidivism in the prisons. The effect of educational opportunities on inmates' rehabilitation was, to a large extent, a catalyst for reducing recidivism both in the short and long-runs. Qualitative educational programmes are among the leading recidivism-control strategies prison management ought to implement to the fullest in the onerous task of curbing this egregious social problem (Otu, 2018). Also Muhammed and Muhammed (2015) posit that providing offenders with education and training will provide significant benefit in addressing issues that cause offences as well as reduces their recidivism rate.

Conclusion

In conclusion, in order to reduce the harm in the society and prevent crime, it is important to reduce the risk of re-offending. The successful resettlement of prisoners back into the society is extremely challenging. Hence, to facilitate and sustain an ex-prisoner's desire to lead a law-abiding lifestyle, the factors that are responsible for recidivism of ex-prisoners have to be taken importantly by the government.

The importance of education in re-modelling the character and attitude of the inmates have been emphasised by many scholars. This is because it has been discovered out that those with low level of educational attainment have a higher probability of becoming prisoners, those with higher educational attainment have a lower probability of becoming prisoners. Education offers inmates the need to be relevant to employment opportunities and for the ex-offenders to be self-employed. According to the Director-General of UNESCO, Ms Audrey Azoulay (2018), "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-convict's acceptance back into the society" (NOUN news, 2018). In fact, the provision of educational opportunity for the inmates in Nigerian prison provides uniqueness in

enhancing the capacity of prisoners to access knowledge and skill for self-development.

The following are the Recommendations provided which are based on the findings of the paper:

1. Educational programmes should be incorporated into reformation and rehabilitation agenda of the prison which assist them in securing job after being discharged.
2. There should be practical and conscientious positive actions towards enhancing the condition of the discharged prisoners in the Nigerian society.
3. There should be improvement in the provision of infrastructure and the welfare for the prison inmates
4. There is need for individuals, government and nongovernmental organisations to provide scholarship to assist inmates to acquire education.
5. Other educational institutions should be encouraged to offer scholarship like NOUN.
6. Entrepreneurship skill acquisition should be emphasised and encourage by the government for all the long term inmates which improve their ability to easily incorporate into the society.

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