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## Rehabilitation Programmes, Recidivism and Internal Security: A Case Study of Agodi and Abologo Prison Facilities, Oyo State, Nigeria

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### Abstract

*In line with global best practices in criminal justice administration, new dynamics evolved in prison management to ensure that the punitive measure of confinement is accompanied by rehabilitation package to accentuate the advocacy for reformation of inmates in preparation for productive and dignifying post-prison life. The measure is noted to be employed by many developing countries of the world, Nigeria inclusive, meanwhile, an emerging trend of recidivism in the country suggests otherwise. Using survey research design, the study sought to investigate the availability and types of rehabilitation programmes in Nigeria Prisons with specific case study of Agodi Prison in Ibadan and Abologo Prison in Oyo town, both in Oyo state, Southwestern Nigeria; the possible potential of the programmes in curbing recidivism as well as its nexus with internal security. Obtained data stated availability of the rehabilitation programmes in the affirmative to include academic, mid-range industrial vocation as well as counselling with inmates' utmost preference for secondary education, carpentry, soap making and religious counselling in their respective cluster as measures capable of reducing recidivism. Equally confirmed was the negative impact of recidivism on internal security.*

*Keywords: Reformatory programmes, criminal justice, inmates*

## Introduction

From the eighteenth century, a novel philosophy emerged that proposed a new understanding of the punitive measures to which the human person could be subjected. It emphasized the dignity of the human person while recognizing his imperfection in several spheres of life endeavour. It was a movement that sought a reform of the arbitrariness and inefficiency of the prison management system and the administration of criminal justice system at large across the globe. It questioned the cruelty meted out to inmates and sought to raise awareness on better management approaches in prisons and similar institutions. It was a philosophy that had a strong bond with the spirit of humanism of that age and greatly influenced by an Italian revolutionist; Marchese di Beccaria and his English comrades Sir Samuel Romilly, John Howard and Jeremy Bentham. The crux of the advocacy of the movement sought the relegation of capital punishment for the humanization of the penal codes. This humanitarian ideology propelled the forces for the adoption of the rehabilitative and reformatory roles that are played by penal institutions in countries across the globe from that era till today. No doubt, rehabilitation system in prisons has continued to attract interests from all and sundry till date. The system has witnessed some upgrading of the old and conventional model of solitary

confinement of inmates to incorporation of various intervention mechanisms in the provision of educational, vocational and psychological support to culminate into a holistic rehabilitation. It was Martinson (1974) who first queried the pragmatism of rehabilitation in prison and concluded in the affirmative on its ineffectiveness. Meanwhile, the mechanism is worth re-examining by noting its correlation or otherwise with recidivism. Many scholars have considered the prison rehabilitation mechanism from diverse contexts, however, the specific intention of this study is to investigate the relevance of rehabilitation measures to inmates in Agodi and Abologo Prison facilities both in Oyo state, Nigeria vis-à-vis recidivism and internal security implications.

## Statement of the Problem

From various research exploits around the world, recidivism appears to occur within three years of leaving the prison by most prisoners (Freeman, 2003). The probability of recidivism becomes higher if no support is available to the released offender (Oruta, 2016). Freeman (2003) posits that nearly 80% of prisoners are likely to re-offend and be re-arrested within a decade of release. Many scholars have opined that the level of recidivism is getting higher in Nigeria. Abrifor, Atere and Muoghalu (2012) posits that the rate of recidivism in 2005 was 37.3

percent they further held that recidivism in Nigeria was 52.4 percent in 2010 while Wilson (2014) submits that from studies conducted in Nigeria, 81percent of male criminal inmates and 45percent of female criminal inmates were re-arrested within 36 months of release or discharge from prison. Clement (2012), describes prisons in Nigeria as a fertile training ground for criminal orientation rather than rehabilitation and reformation. Quite instructive here is a maxim credited to Nelson Mandela when he said “*No one truly knows a nation until one has been inside its jails. A nation should not be judged by how it treats its highest citizens, but its lowest ones*”.

Unarguably, the prison system is an important part of the administration of criminal justice system of any nation as it plays critical roles in its functionality or otherwise. Its foundational role was significantly the incarceration of criminals, however, with the persistent advocacy, the new trend is bringing to the fore a new understanding of crimes and the dignity of human person. Prisons do not only serve as a place for incarceration but also reformation. Thus, it plays two important roles in the security of the society; keeps crimes and the criminals away thereby keeping the society safe from the inherent dangers of such crimes and attendant consequences in the immediate and remote future. Secondly, it offers deterrence measures and further assists the

criminals to get reformed, abhor crimes and become better citizens of the society. Interestingly, in the course of carrying out this study, the researchers noted that a bill seeking a *repeal* of the *Prisons Act* Cap. P29 Laws of the Federation, 2004, has passed the first and second readings in the National Assembly. The bill seeks to readjust the administrative structure of the Prison Service and assure offenders of rehabilitation and reintegration in the nation’s criminal justice system. Specifically, the bill seeks to replace prison terms with measures like community service for certain minor offences while granting the divisional prison authorities the powers to reject additional prisoners when their custodial facilities are at full capacity. Beyond the modification of nomenclature, a number of fundamental queries need be posed; does the Service recognize the importance of its statutory roles and the enormity of challenges facing it in pursuance of the goals of a correctional facility. More importantly, there is need to know the specific reformation mechanisms operated in the facility to ensure effectiveness of the implementation of rehabilitation programmes it claimed to have started decades ago. On several accounts, recidivism on the part of ex-convicts is recorded and this, calls for worries, particularly when trainings expected to make inmates become reformed persons before release from prison custody are

conducted. This is important to ascertain whether they are thriving, stagnant or retrogressing. Then, in its overall operations, what impact or influence can the efforts of the Service have on recidivism. It is against this background that this study investigated the methods and impact of rehabilitation support mechanisms available to inmates in the Nigeria Prison Service facilities with samples from Agodi (Ibadan North Local Government) and Abologo (Oyo East Local Government) prisons in Oyo state, Nigeria and the implications of these on recidivism and by extension on internal security.

### Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

- 1) To identify types of rehabilitation programmes available in Agodi Prison in Ibadan and Abologo Prison in Oyo town.
- 2) To investigate the influence of inmates' rehabilitation programmes on the rate of recidivism.
- 3) To ascertain the possible impact of recidivism on internal security.

### Conceptual Clarification

#### Recidivism

Recidivism is the act of repeating anti-social or criminal conduct after the person has either experienced the consequences of such

behaviour or has been trained to refrain from such behaviour. In penal terminology, it refers to the percentage of former prisoners who are re-arrested for a similar or dissimilar offence or offences. Though, in description, the causes are relegated, recidivism is frequently used in conceptualizing the reoccurrence of anti-social conduct by a person or group of persons. It is synonymous with relapse, which is more commonly used in the field of Medicine, particularly in the pathological model of addiction. For example, scientific literature may refer to the recidivism of sexual offenders, meaning the frequency with which they are detected or apprehended committing additional crimes of sexual nature after being released from prison for similar crimes. For others, it is a relapse into prior criminal behaviour and is measured by a former prisoner's return to prison for a new offence (Roman, Wendy & Bhati, 2003). Recidivism is not only consistent with offences and offenders but more often for their descriptions. Broadly defined, however, it is an act of re-engaging in criminal behaviour after receiving a sanction or intervention (Elderbrown & King, 2014). The three challenges to a broadly acceptable definition of recidivism according to McKean and Ransford (2004) are:

- i) Duration of time monitored
- ii) Types of offences included
- iii) Inclusions of Parole Violations

The duration of time in which an ex-offender could be said to have relapsed into crime or repeated a similar crime for which he/she was earlier convicted varies from place to place. Sometimes, a period of relapse could vary from one to a decade or two but usually most adopt one to three years. In all, this implies that recidivism could be a function of time and duration. Some may begin with release from incarceration, release from parole supervision, or release from an intervention programme. Often, recidivism is measured beginning from the release from prison, but sometimes, in cases of evaluation of parole programme, the duration may begin with release from parole. The time of the measurement varies, but may be when a new offence is committed or the date of convictions. (McKean & Ransford, 2004)

These concerns including the one on the measurement threshold constitute some challenge in the general understanding of the phenomenon. Notwithstanding, despite these challenges, rates of recidivism are provided and estimated globally to provide policy makers with information regarding relative threat to public safety initiatives in deterring crime and rehabilitating offenders (Butorac, Stanic & Nebojsa, 2017). In South Africa, 55percent has the chance of being recidivists (Kyambe, 2003). In Kenya, released offenders have a 75percent chance of committing crime

and a 50percent chance of returning to the prison two years after release (Gathu, 2012). There has been a claim that there has been a rise in the rate of recidivism in Nigeria, this is still much in the realm of speculations, as literature to support the claim is in paucity. However, a few earlier indicated suggests the need to take action. For instance, Abrifor, Atere and Muoghalu (2012) posits that the rate of recidivism in 2005 and 2010 recorded 37.3 and 52.4 respectively while Wilson (2014) submits that from studies conducted in Nigeria, 81percent of male criminal inmates and 45percent of female criminal inmates were re-arrested within 36 months of release or discharge from prison.

### Predictors of Recidivism

There are many factors capable of making people vulnerable to anti-social conduct or criminality at the height of it. Same way, there exist myriads of factors responsible for recidivism, many of which have been identified through various studies. In Hallis (2012), a positive correlation was noted between recidivism youthfulness, race, gender and socio-economic status. Earlier, in an old survey, a meta-analysis of 131 studies on adult recidivism from 1970-1994 was conducted and some demographic characteristics (age, gender, race, socio-economic status), criminal history, criminogenic needs and family-related variables were significant in predicting parole

outcome which were fall-out of their re-offending conduct (Gendreau, Little and Goggin,1996). In another meta-analysis of 64 studies by Bonta, Law and Hanson (1998), variables that predict recidivism are criminal history (adult criminal history, juvenile delinquency, and anti-social personality) and some demographic variables including age, gender and marital status significantly for non-violent offenders. Gendreau, Little and Goggin (1996) categorized these factors into two namely: Static Risk Factors and Dynamic Risk Factors. Static risk factors are demographic or criminal history variables which are determined beforehand such as gender, age when first convicted of any crime, having a parent with a criminal record, current age and types of offence or crime committed. Dynamic risk factors on the other hand, are associated with criminogenic needs such as criminal peers, criminal history or history of anti-social behaviour, some family factors as well as influences from hyped social achievement. From the foregoing, both demographic and psychological factors are established as predisposing factors to recidivism meaning that beyond the factors such as being young; being from low socio-economic background with criminal records, other personal traits could habituate offenders to re-commit the offence. The issue then leaves one with a phenomenal concern that a lot is required in terms of creating support for

the victims of the prison door entrapment particularly with a view to investigating their condition to avert possibility of getting them more hardened; a situation which could make rehabilitation a nullity and consequently pose a threat to internal security. In the words of Johnson (2015), the state holds a statutory obligation to reform prisoners since they would later become part of the same society one day.

### **Rehabilitation and Recidivism**

There are several perspectives through which the phenomenon 'recidivism' is viewed, while some see the malfeasance as a ubiquitous manifestation of personality issues and think it could largely be dissected using the lens of personality types and dispositional attributes, others who dissent consider it as a product of value damage and could only be reduced through rehabilitative measures. According to Fletcher (2000) rehabilitative support is not necessarily needed to avoid recidivism as long as the personality of the individual could resist temptation to commit crime. A school of thought, led by Grimmo (2004), posits otherwise stating that rehabilitation has appreciable impact on recidivism with the exception of few and isolated cases. He argued that psychological treatment had direct positive effect on recidivism, indicating that the conclusions of Fletcher were faulty because his approach was inadequate and

reform programmes considered in his studies could have been better implemented. Grimmo specifically espoused that the generalisation of Fletcher gave little attention to such critical concerns as what exactly constitutes rehabilitative support. Though, Grimmo's conclusion gained popular acceptance, particularly within the realm of its critiques of other works, new researches have demonstrated several other positive evidence of the effectiveness and aptness of rehabilitation measures towards the reduction of recidivism. These studies emphasized certain consideration which would later become the benchmark for the impartial evaluation of rehabilitation. Quite instructively, since the inception of modern criminal justice system, a persistent response to the question of what to do with law-breakers has been to change them into law-abiders, that is, to rehabilitate them a house. Without doubt, the task of rehabilitation of prison inmates to become reformed and returned harmless to the society, is a herculean assignment as no single approach could guarantee the desired reformation. It is particularly difficult because the inmates possess different degrees of value damage, moral damage and intensity of commitment to the crime before arrest; hence, for any intervention measures to be effective, this variation must be accorded cognizance accordingly. More disturbing still is the

constant allegation that prisons in many developing countries in Africa are dehumanizing and may not facilitate any meaningful rehabilitation. For instance, according to Oduah (2017), citing the spokesperson of the Nigeria Prison Services, Nigeria currently has 250 facilities nationwide and 74,000 inmates with about 51,384 of them awaiting trials. This reflects a whopping 69 percent, thereby making the phenomenon a worthy subject of investigation of all times. According to the report, most of the facilities held up to quadruple of the actual capacities for which they were designed, thereby creating an environment of perpetual congestion, subjecting inmates to the burden of contending with the attendant consequences, yet the inmates are expected to get reformed before serving their full terms. Besides the facility deficits, the issue of corruption has also been fingered as causes of the deplorable situation of the Nigeria Prison facilities till date. The on-going intervention in terms of renovation and expansion of some facilities across the country as championed by the Minister of Interior, Lt. General Ibrahim Dambazau (retired) is hoped to improve their pitiable states.

#### Prison Classification in Nigeria

- Maximum Security Prisons
- Medium Security Prisons
- Minimum Security Prisons

- Female Prisons

### Recidivism and Internal Security

Over time, the concept of security has witnessed several evolutions in its conceptualization, practice and impact and this has continued to create difficulty in giving it a precise and universal definition. Fundamentally, security refers to safety, as well as the measures taken to be safe or protected. It connotes freedom from, or resilience against, [potential](#) harm or [coercive](#) or aversive stimulus, usually unwanted. Mostly, it refers to protection from hostile forces, but has a wide range of other realms such as the absence of harm (e.g. [freedom from want](#)); the presence of an essential good (e.g. [food security](#)); [resilience](#) against potential damage or harm (e.g. secure foundations). Most scholars do agree that security is a contested concept and there tend to be a consensus that it implies freedom from (the minutest) threats to core values (for both individuals and group), yet, there is a major disagreement about whether the main focus of enquiry should be on 'individual', 'national', or 'international' security (Baylis & Smith, 2001). Despite these specifications and definitions of security based on the socio-political and historical evolution over time, many writers contend that security, as a concept, cannot be stereotyped into the Westphalian and post-

Westphalian notions without additional specifications. The Westphalian conception of security emphasizes the obligation to protect the state and the citizens from external influences or interferences. Thus, the contention prompted Baldwin (1997) to formulate series of questions thus; security for whom, security for which values, how much security, from what threats, by what means, at what cost, in what period (Baldwin, 1997). Consequently, Ayob (1997) proposes that security or insecurity must be defined in relation to vulnerabilities, both internal and external, that threaten to or have the potential to bring down or significantly weaken state structures, either in terms of territorial or institutional system. On a broader scale, security can be in relation to a nation and her resident citizens, giving rise to what is primarily referred to as internal security (internal view) or national security (external view). From whichever perspective however, internal security refers to several dimensions, including economic security, energy security, physical security, environmental security, food security, border security and cyber security. These dimensions correlate closely with Westphalian conception of the state security which includes the obligation to protect the state and the citizens from all influences or interferences.



Stated differently, *internal security* is the act of keeping peace within the borders of a sovereign state or other self-governing territories within. While the responsibility for *internal security* specifically falls within the purview of the Police, several other agencies of the state including the Prisons Services correctional service in many advance climes are expected to be collaborators and partners in progress in the administration of criminal justice system. However, the rising rate of crime in Nigeria, particularly by serial offenders who are arrested and re-arrested for same or similar offences suggests some sort of threat to our one-time culture of social order. No doubt, misconducts which attract re-arrest are a function of so many factors and may not totally be traceable to a single source, notwithstanding, many have contended that there is need for scale up of operations of the various agencies in the sector; the prisons inclusive. In view of the foregoing, the happenings in the Nigerian Prison facilities and the resultant impact of such experience on inmates could directly or indirectly have some impact on the overall internal security of the country. As a facility where lawbreakers are kept for rehabilitation, the need to investigate possible recidivism cannot be over emphasized. Of course, crime as an act of commission or omission is a function of many interconnected factors but to protect the sanctity of public social order in a society, the

act must be abhorred, the actor punished accordingly and under certain tolerable circumstances, granted the second chance. Like in many other countries, the wisdom behind the philosophy of right to second chance which advocates the incorporation of rehabilitation programmes behind the bars is in the interest of the state at large and its internal security in particular. For instance, studies confirm that the high crime rate of neighbourhoods where released inmates reside clearly affects recidivism, conversely, these conditions should not be seen as inevitably causing rehabilitation efforts to fail. However, McKean and Ransford, (2004) posited that the measurement of recidivism may lack clarity, it was clear that the incidence of recidivism would jeopardize public safety and thereby escalate expenditure on law enforcement and criminal justice (McKean & Ransford, 2004).

### Theories Adopted

Primitively, punishment is the intuitive reaction of individuals or groups to injuries committed against them, when the individual or group has the capacity to inflict such punishment. However, the act of punishment has demanded justification in the evolution of human society from its primitive state to its complex reality. Punishment is contrary to human nature that abhors inconveniences that are unnecessary. Hence, the question

“When is punishment necessary?” has constantly begged for an answer. This has necessitated various theories of punishment. For some, punishment is not evil as long as it is not inflicted on the innocents; for some other, punishment is justifiable if it results in a ‘greater good’ (Murphy, 1995). These views have birthed some liberal-laden theoretical principles; two of which are deployed here to drive discourse in this study.

### Reformation and Rehabilitation

Liberal views on incapacitation and deterrence in penal philosophy gradually gave rise to a new perception in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. New ideas about human culpability with regards to crime began to look beyond the individual deviant to the possible motivations beyond the deviant act. The action and the actor were not the sole consideration for the infliction of punishment, but also the motives. Prior to this period, the concept ‘original sin’ (a Judeo-Christian idea of sin as an intrinsic nature of man) and the necessity of ‘expiation’ (a religious term meaning personal redemption through suffering) were the underlying ideas of retribution. However, the development of new social ideas, that emphasise the many influences which are beyond the deviant’s control and propel the deviant to crimes, brought about the new proposition of the prison as a place of reformation. Reformation and rehabilitation

focus on the individual’s capacity for change and the prison as the site of the ‘reform’ (Hirsch, 1987).

Thus, the emphasis of reformation is treatment, education and training (Miethe and Lu, 2005). The Trinitarian combination of separation, obedience and labour became the guidelines for the management of the prison (Crosley, 1986). The penal philosophy now focuses on the characteristics of the offender that requires treatment and intervention. This is encapsulated in the 2002 Prison Congresses’ philosophical principles below:

*... corrections must demonstrate integrity, respect, dignity, fairness...”*  
*... sanctions imposed by the court shall be commensurate with the seriousness of the offence, and*  
*... offenders shall be afforded the opportunity to engage in productive work, participate in programs and other activities that will enhance self-worth, community integration, and economic status. (American Correctional Association Statement of Principles, 2002).*

### The Rehabilitation Principle

The rehabilitation principle thereby adopted the “indeterminate sentencing structures” that give judges enormous discretion to tailor punishments for the greatest good to the

individual offender and provide parole boards with equally high discretion to release or retain offenders for future treatment (Miethe and Lu, 2005). The early 1900s witnessed the introduction of the science to penal institutions. The new scientific disciplines like psychiatry, psychology and criminology proposed that crime was a sickness that could be cured through therapies (clinical or non-clinical). The criminal was a product of socio-economic and psychological forces beyond his control (Campbell, 2005). In the early 1980's, the liberal conception of prison gradually diminished because of high public outcry for more severe and longer prison sentences. The corruption associated with the indeterminate sentencing and parole options and Martinson's article that claimed that rehabilitative efforts had no appreciable effect on recidivism (Martinson,1974) brought about the partial discontinuation of liberal approaches to imprisonment.

Considering the articulated theories and principles, one is sure of the variety of conceptual dispositions to crime and the attendant deterrent measures underlining the choices either to be strict or liberal in the use of the stringent ones being contemplated or already adopted as punishment for offenders. The theories hopefully have illuminated the different aspects of the literature highlighted so far, to widen our horizon in search for facts behind the different options employed to deal

with offenders. Subsequently we shall, examine outcomes of the interpreted data obtained from the field survey on the subject matter.

### Methodology

A survey research design within the prism of qualitative research was deployed for the study. The qualitative measure was accompanied by a mini-instrument for simple percentages as parameters of descriptive analysis. The qualitative survey deployed included in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with scholars, senior Police and Prison personnel as well as inmates. The inclusion-exclusion criteria captured only inmates who are prison inmates for more than once and have been exposed to the rehabilitation programmes behind the walls to examine their takes on the programmes that they once partook in or currently partaking, the structure of the programmes and impact when once discharged. Specifically, the survey included inmates at Agodi and Abologo Prison facilities both in Oyo state. The above were sources of primary data for the study while periodicals, journals, books and relevant documents, one of such being the Bill seeking a repeal of the Prison Act Cap. P29 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 served as the secondary sources. Besides the inferences deduced from the demographic data, all other obtained data were content analysed and

results therefrom presented below with due interpretations.

## Results

### Research Objective One:

Research objective one sought to identify the types of rehabilitation programmes at the prison facilities selected as case study. The in-depth interviews conducted with the principal officers in the two facilities and departmental heads within the facilities have concurrent response indicating the availability of a number of rehabilitation facilities within the facilities. These rehab programmes are categorized into four main categories namely: academic, vocational and industrial work, mid-range industrial work and counselling services. Each category is designed to address some particular competence deficiencies in the lives of the inmates. The basic aspect of the academic programmes is focuses on introduction to literacy and subsequent phases its further development. It has three specific areas namely: primary education which is the basic education that imbues the inmates with the ability to read and write; secondary education which aims at further development of the basic education acquired earlier and prepares the inmates for higher education; and post-secondary education which provides the inmates who had earlier acquired secondary

education, an opportunity to further their academic exploits, even while in confinement. Vocational and Industrial work and mid-range industrial works are intended to provide the inmates with technical-cum-economic skills that will become handy after their prison experience. Many inmates have been discovered to have little or no technical or economic skills that could provide for their financial needs; hence, resort to crimes to meet their basic needs becomes attractive. These interventions, though similar, have different goals. The vocational and industrial work programmes are supposed to provide the inmates with skills through which they can be engaged by others while the mid-range industrial works are to enable the inmates work on their own and exchange their products for profit. The vocational and industrial work programme entails such activities as carpentry, welding, masonry, building, tailoring, animal husbandry and farming. Mid-range industrial works involve such programmes as bag making, shoe making, soap making, toilet roll making, manufacturing of aluminum pots, metal works fabrication and furniture making.

The fourth aspect of the rehabilitative programmes according to obtained information are the counselling services which the inmates enjoy. The counselling services are divided into three broad categories namely: religious counselling services,

vocational/career services and social-personal services. The counselling activities are intended to aid the emotional and psychological development of the inmates. Though, all the rehabilitation and supporting services are offered inmates to grant them the opportunity of leaving the incarceration as reformed and productive citizens, it was acknowledged that there some inhibiting factors capable of defeating the anticipated

impact laudable efforts. Such factors are said to include abdication of partnership by collaborating partners in the provision of the different kinds rehabilitation support. The government inability to sustain counterpart roles and insufficient motivational support for the inmates are pitfalls of the initiative.

**Table 1: View of Inmates on Prison Experience**

Prison Experience	Frequency			Percentage
	Agodi (Ibadan)	Abologo (Oyo)	Total	
<b>Any Previous Prison experience?</b>				
Yes	70	43	113	22%
No	298	101	399	78%
<b>Recurrence of Prior Prison Experience</b>				
Once	50	31	81	71%
Twice	16	12	28	25%
Thrice	4	Nil	4	4%
More than thrice	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
<b>Did you Participate in Rehabilitation Programme in Previous Prison Experience (s)?</b>				
Yes	70	43	113	100%
No	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
<b>Looking Back Did you love the Rehabilitation Programme Group you belonged?</b>				
Yes	12	3	15	13.5%
No	58	40	98	86.5%
<b>What informed the Choice of Rehabilitation Programme Group you belonged?</b>				
Personal Conviction	21	16	37	33%
Peer Influence	49	27	76	67%
<b>Can rehabilitation programme(s) aid people outside the prison?</b>				

Yes	64	35	99	88%
No	6	8	14	12%
<b>Which of the rehabilitation programme(s) do you think is effective in the reduction of recidivism?</b>				
<b>Academic Programmes</b>				
Primary	15	12	27	24%
Secondary	51	28	79	70%
Post-Secondary	4	3	7	6%
<b>Vocational and Industrial</b>				
<b>Work</b>	2	4	6	5%
Farming	1	3	4	4%
Animal Husbandry	31	4	35	31%
Tailoring	29	18	47	42%
Carpentry	1	6	7	6%
Welding	1	1	2	2%
Masonry	1	2	3	3%
Building	4	4	8	7%
Printing				
<b>Mid-Range Industrial Vocation</b>				
Soap Making	25	17	42	37%
Toilet Roll Making	11	1	12	11%
Aluminum Pots Manufacturing	3	2	5	4%
Metal Works/Fabrication	6	3	9	8%
Shoe Making	10	6	16	14%
Bag Making	5	5	10	9%
Furniture Making	10	9	19	17%
<b>Counselling Services</b>				
Vocational/Career Service	16	5	21	19%
Social-Personal Service	20	13	33	29%
Religious Service	34	25	59	52%
<b>Do you think the rehabilitation programmes above can reduce recidivism?</b>				
Yes	39	30	69	61%
No	31	13	44	39%
<b>What is responsible for your return to the prison?</b>				
Poor disposition to previous rehabilitation training	47	34	81	72%
Prison Life is a Comfort	11	1	12	10.5%
Other Factors	12	8	20	17.5%

**Research Objective Two:**

Research objective two was to investigate the influence of inmates' rehabilitation

programmes on the rate of recidivism. To begin with, using the exclusion-inclusion criteria, only those in custody as “returnees to custody” form the nucleus of respondents and similarly they were all noted to have partaken in the rehabilitation programmes obtainable prior their current incarceration. It is quite striking and instructive to find out that no less than 85% of this category of inmates expressed dislike for the rehabilitation programme owing this to poor orientation by handlers as close to two-third of them chose one programme or the other on bandwagon effect by peer influence rather than intrinsic motivation such as self or personal conviction to be reformed. Conversely, the popular consensus by almost all respondents that the rehabilitation programmes could actually help after jail terms, reflects a ray of hope in the programmes afterall. As earlier indicated, the

*Inmates when contextualized within the parlance of Nigeria Prisons services, applies to both convicted and awaiting trial inmates. Within both groups, there appears to be a considerable level of recidivism. There are awaiting-trial inmates who have being bailed but within a short while are back in the prison for similar offence or a new offence entirely. Many of such find comfort and security within the confinement of the prison than outside;*

rehabilitation programmes include academic programmes, vocational and industrial work, mid-range industrial vocation as well as with counselling services. In line with peddled rumours that the rate of recidivism in Nigeria Prisons is alarming, obtained data in the two selected case study reflects same; of the total number of inmates in custody at the time of the data collation, 22% has got prior prison experience. Disaggregating this further, data shows 71% of the recidivists in the prison has got one prior prison experience, 25% twice and 4% thrice, meaning that their current terms are twice, thrice and quadruple respectively. Perhaps, a trend analysis, as a further study, would be needed to substantiate the claim of rising rate. Meanwhile, from FGD conducted, the popular consensus opines:

*hence, are less bothered about the consequences of being re-incarceration.*  
(FGD, 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2017)

From the FGD held at Abologo with the inmates (convicted and those awaiting trial) it was popular that:

*Since re-arrest and re-incarceration are not necessarily done in the same vicinity, coupled with database deficit about incarceration and the general administration of criminal justice system, there may be more “returnees to*

*custody” than reflected in the questionnaire. Conversely, they stated further that because the law enforcement operatives do not carry out diligent investigation before arrest and presentation in courts, many are incarcerated for minor or insignificant offences and because they do not have the wherewithal to post their bails, they are brought back to the prison. (FGD, 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2017)*

In other words, besides the fact that some recalcitrant offenders find the prison as a safe haven, others are victims of poor investigative process of the security and judicial systems. As noted in Table 1, about 24% of inmates in Agodi and 43% in Abologo are recidivists. The recurrence of recidivism is obviously higher in Abologo, but this does not suggest that the recidivists were earlier incarcerated in the current prisons. Among the recidivists in Abologo, 72% has had prison experience twice, with 27% having had the experience thrice. Same way, of the total recidivists in Agodi facility, 71% has had one prior prison

experience, with 23% having had two prior experiences while those with three prior prison experiences accounts for 6% of the group. Meanwhile, no inmate in the two case study facilities (Agodi and Abologo) has had previous prison experience beyond thrice.

On further enquiries over the potential effectiveness of the rehabilitative programmes in reducing possible recidivism, as much as 70% of the inmates agreed that secondary school education was most useful, 42% concurred that carpentry was the most useful among the Vocational programmes while 37% concluded that soap making among the Mid-Range Industrial Vocation was most useful. Similarly, of the three streams of counselling services (vocational/career; social-personal and religious) rendered behind the bars, religious counselling accounting for 52% was ticked as the most potent to deter recidivism. In all, it was noted also that poor disposition of inmates to rehabilitation programmes was fingered as a cardinal reason why people could still become unproductive after jail terms, leading to another crime and re-incarceration.



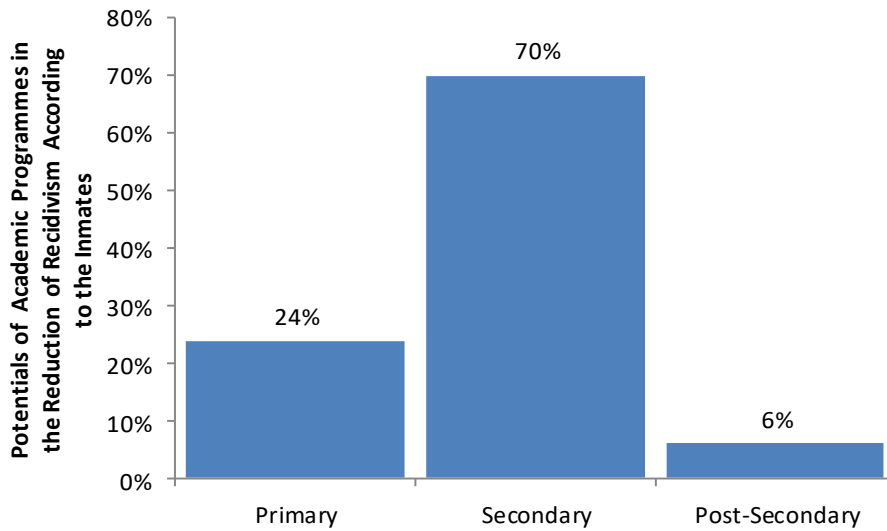


Figure 1.

With regards to the effectiveness of rehabilitation programmes as indicated in Figure 1, respondents opined that in the academic programmes, secondary education training has the highest potential in the reduction of recidivism while primary education and post-secondary education were given mild consideration in this regard. Complementing the administered instrument, the FGD conducted summarized the opinion of the interviewees;

*environment, they are provided with a new perception of education and the opportunities that education can provide. Hence, majority are*

*Low level of education appears to have contributed enormously to the increase or persistence in crimes. Many of the inmates were poorly educated or were not fortunate to have perceived education as a path of liberation, hence, their choice of crime as the source of hope. However, when such are provided with opportunities to improve their education within the prison*

*enthusiastic about secondary education training (FGD, 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2017).*

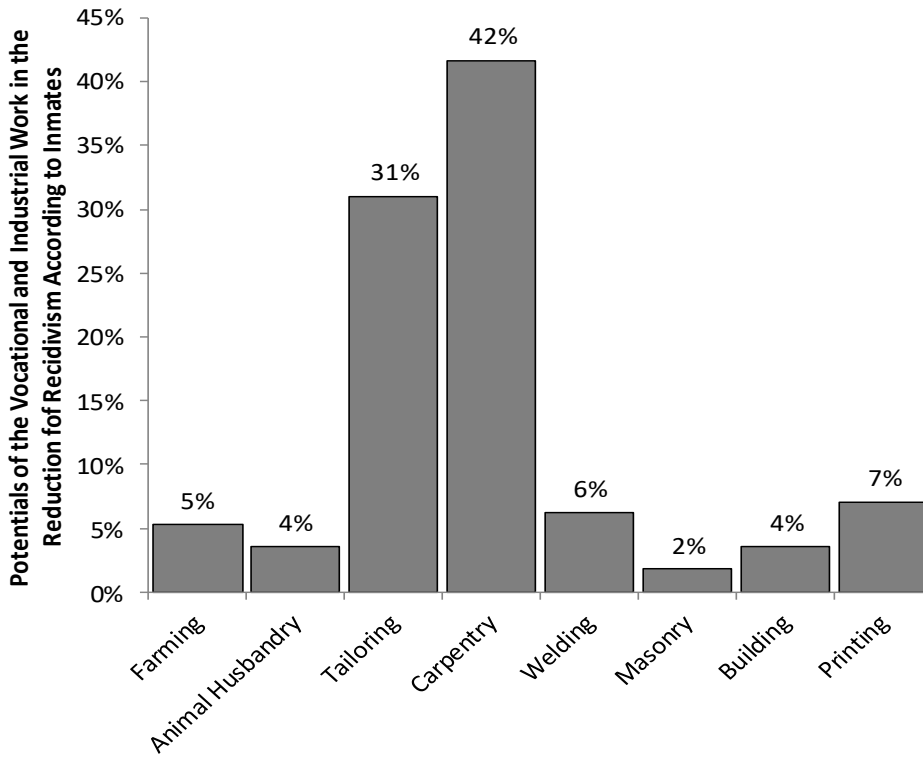


Figure 2

With regards to vocational and industrial work as captured in Figure 2, carpentry is seen as the most effective vocational and industrial work in the reduction of recidivism, and this is strongly followed by

tailoring. Printing has 12%; welding 10%; building 6%; farming and animal husbandry 4% each; and masonry comes with the lowest perception of effectiveness with 2% from the respondents.

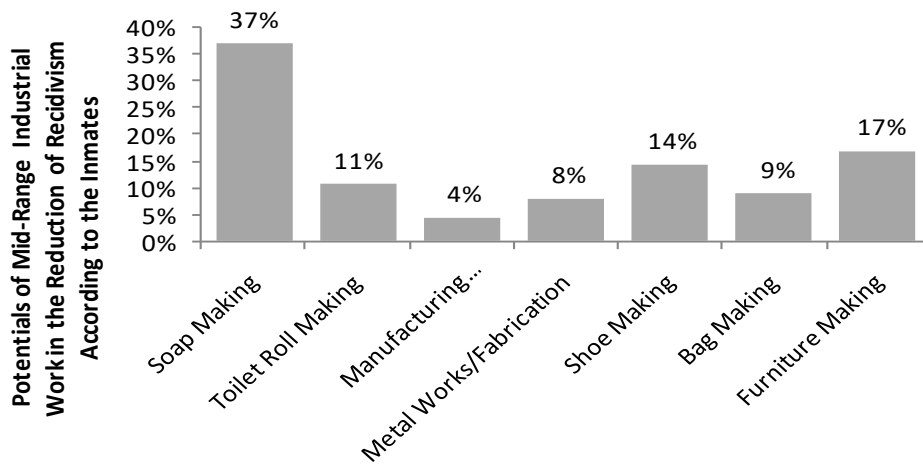


Figure 3

In the mid-range industrial production, soap making is taken to be the most effective in recidivism reduction with the highest

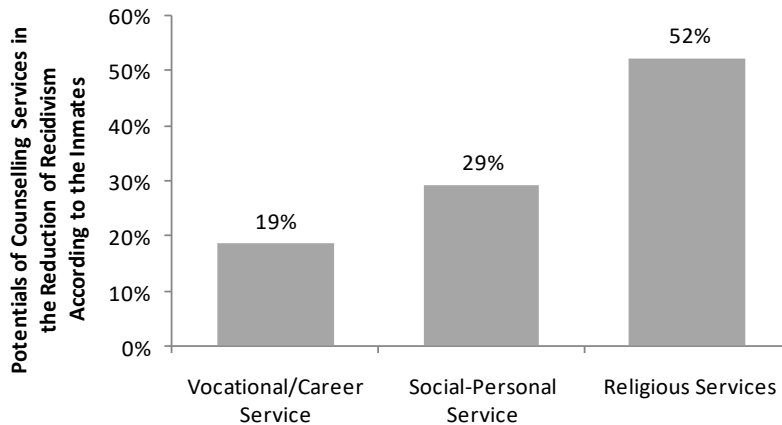


Figure 4

Among the counselling rehabilitative services, religious counselling services were tipped to have the highest potential on the reduction of recidivism followed by social-personal services and vocational/career service at a distant margin.

From observation of inmates while in the prison, it appears many go into crimes because no one reiterates the importance of morality and impacts of crimes on the deviant individual and those at the receiving ends of crimes. Further data obtained from FGD is reflected below:

*Many individuals are incarcerated because they have lost a sense of morals. They have not availed themselves of the opportunities outside*

acceptance. Following this is furniture making while others such as shoe making and bag making as well as metal works and fabrication do not reflect any significant potential in reducing recidivism.

*there to learn about what is proper and improper. In a way this (to be deviant) is like a revolt against the state. Hence, it is when they come to the prison that the counselors and the religious teachers from outside come to teach and imprint upon them the importance of living a moral life. Some of the inmates are changed more by these lessons and interactions and are influenced for a better life outside the prison. (FGD, 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2017)*

#### Research Objectives Three:

The third objective investigated the causative factors of recidivism and the relationship between recidivism and internal security. In addition to the Focus Group Discussion

(FGDs) with recidivist-inmates, researchers had in-depth interviews with the Police, Prison Officers as well as scholars in relevant fields for a further exploit. In-depth interviews were conducted with the selected respondents to elicit data necessary to make logical and reliable conclusions. Two Senior Police officers, two Senior Prisons Officers and two scholars were interrogated. A close examination of the two scholars' submissions indicate clearly that return to incarceration by criminally inclined people was not only a Nigeria phenomenon as the criminal justice systems anywhere in the world are designed to restrict, restrain and confine anyone capable of disrupting public social order or inflicting harms on other citizens. Also, in their preliminary remarks, the Police and Prison Officers confirmed that recidivism is apparent in Nigeria as many ex-convicts are re-arrested either for same offence, similar ones or totally different crimes all together. On the specific issue of possible nexus between recidivism and internal security the respondents bore their minds clearly. Excerpts of the interviews are captured below: The two Prison Officers reflect thus:

*“Since the government still owns the prisons, the act of re-incarceration will amount to expending resources on the same person or persons over and over again as inmates. This no doubt, will deplete the resources expected to be*

*expended for other purposes. For the avoidance of doubt, the higher the number of inmates in the prisons across the country, the more the budget of the Ministry of interior because every inmate must be budgeted for fed and maintained; hence, the more budget for the prisons, the more depleted are available resources for other sub-sectors in the internal security sector. Just like defence, internal security is equally expensive, for instance, rather than deploy available arms to avert crimes, more personnel and more arms will be needed to man the prison when the population continue to rise, so, recidivism has a direct impact on the internal security of a nation” (18<sup>th</sup> April, 2017)*

In like manner, the two Police officers were unanimous in relating recidivism to internal security, however, their opinions are divergent on the predisposing factors.

*“When the prisons are made comfortable for the inmates, the purpose (punishment for reformation) for which a prison was designed would be defeated and this would encourage the ex-convicts to be back in-there. Of course, before being arrested and consequently prosecuted, they would have to commit another crime and in this whole process, the security of the state and individual citizens would have been undermined. So recidivism has roles to play in internal security and should be curbed*

*by gazetting severe punishment for serial offenders or criminals". (IDI 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2017)*

Stated otherwise, the second officer avers thus:

*"Too tough drillings behind the walls would harden the inmates and when such people come out they become liabilities to the state and are more prepared to dare constituted authorities; hence, they become threats to internal security. Without mincing words, recidivism commands some untoward impact on internal security of any country"(IDI 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2017)*

From the scholarly worldview, the first scholar (expert in Sustainable Development and Security Studies) concludes thus:

*"All things being equal, a recidivist is a serial offender or criminal. Of course, no human being in his right senses would want his freedom denied, let alone, denied repeatedly. Within this period he remains unproductive to self, the society at large and this could cause exponential impact on the socio-economic value of the society that breeds such people. In clear terms, recidivism has negative impact on internal security, in the least, their marginal contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the state is missing" (IDI 26<sup>th</sup> April, 2017)*

The second scholar (expert in Legal Criminology) asserts thus:

*"Yes, criminals are re-arrested, re-prosecuted and jailed again, such people are called serial offenders. Many known criminals are noted for this 'record' and this connotes both benefits and detriments for internal security. As a benefit, the presence or convergence of people in this category signals potential security threat; hence, it could help security operatives in designing and monitoring the security architecture of an area. Similarly, it reflects a strong system of criminal justice with the strength to re-apprehend and re-prosecute elements capable of undermining the security of the state. Simply put, it helps in security threat analysis of a given area. On the other hand, recidivism could be detrimental to the overall image of a country as it could be labelled as country or state of serial offenders" (IDI 27<sup>th</sup> April, 2017)*

From the FGD, one of the discussant narrates what happens in the prison and how inmates get attracted to return to custody. According to him:

*"Most of the time spent in the prison is within the cells. The period for relaxation and learning various rehabilitation skills are less than four hours. The remaining hours are spent within the cells as inmates tell various stories of their previous crimes, primarily to while away the time, and take pride in such*

narrations. Hence, the longer one stays listening to such stories the gradual consciousness in the mind of the listener that he could perform like this other criminal and get-away with it. An impression is created when such stories are shared. It is an impression that they were caught by mistake and promised to watch their steps and correct such mistakes in the future. Thus, there is no feeling of remorse rather, the cells become an environment where criminal brag about crimes and dare others to outperform them in such exploits" (FGD, 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2017)

Related to the assertion above is the issue of peer pressure noted as another factor that discussants considered as causative factors of recidivism. Many are supportive of this view while few expressed dissent. A discussant states:

*"Crimes fester more among friends and peers who are in the covert life of crime. As such, when an inmate is discharged, he/she has no family to return to but folks of same mindset. Even, in the possibility of having a family, sometimes they are reluctant to accept the ex-inmate into the family because a prison experience is considered a social stigma. The ex-inmate is therefore subtly encouraged to return to his crime-minded peers at their usual rendezvous in town. Thus, a supposedly rehabilitated inmate who had previously*

*decided to forego a life of crime unwillingly returns to it because only those in crime are willing to welcome him and if he is unfortunate, he gets caught for another crime"* (FDG, 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2017)

In furtherance of the above rendition is another causative element of recidivism as agreed to by inmates being inadequate family support of which many youths are allegedly considered victims. Majority of the discussants believe that such neglect contributes significantly to recidivism. A discussant bares her mind thus:

*"The family plays a great role in the complete or gradual change in life of an ex-convict. To a great extent, the family determines if the ex-convict returns to crime or not. The government does not have the wherewithal to provide for all ex-convicts and this burden rests on the family. However, if such support does not come or readily available, ex-inmate may choose to explore all avenues to survive and this may be via precarious means which could earn him another round of prison experience"* (FDG, 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2017)

Quite instructive is the last opinion here; despite admitting that the training programmes in the prison could rehabilitate and reform inmates, they are unanimous in

their resolution that the ineffectiveness of the programmes is another factor considered responsible for recidivism and a threat to internal security. Some discussants relate:

*“If well managed the training can cause real reformation, but as it is today, some of the facilities provided for training are outdated and time allocated to training sessions too short that it becomes practically difficult to learn effectively. Materials for practical learning are usually unavailable, hence, we rely on improvised materials most of the time. It appears the prison authorities are sincere and willing but are incapacitated in many ways. For any inmate who got such training, he is hardly reformed, hence, may still indulge in crimes after discharged and get caught again” (FGD, 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2017)*

### Discussion of Findings

As an import from the study, it is necessary to interrogate the impacts of prison rehabilitation programmes on recidivism and internal security. There are writers like Martinson (1974) who believe that rehabilitation has no impact on recidivism and consequently, none on security. Nonetheless, there are other writers who proposed otherwise (Gendreau and Ross, 1979; Palmer,

1983; Zimring, 1985; Thornton, 1987 and Van Voorhis, 1987). However, to gauge the impact of rehabilitation on recidivism and internal security, it is necessary to evaluate the level of enthusiasm and change witnessed by inmates. However, for an extensive consideration of the impact on recidivism, it is important to query the relevance of the rehabilitation to crime prevention.

There are various schools of thought when it comes to unraveling the underlying causes of crimes. For the Utilitarianists and Classical school of thought adherents, crimes are deviant actions committed in pursuit of personal gratification and pleasure; the sociological positivists emphasize the internal and external factors that are beyond the individual's control; poverty, membership of subcultures, and low level of education still predispose people to crimes. These were reinforced in the study and buttressed to claim that societal structures are cardinal causative factors of crime. For some others, crimes are committed by the inability of individuals to achieve socially accepted status, which they lack the means to effect. This in a way, is capable of making an offender re-commit the offence the second or third time (recidivism). One can imagine from these ideas that crimes have two major underlying motivators: personal and societal. The personal motivators of crimes are those realities that are within the scope of

individual's capability such as poor management of emotions, discontentment, unrealistic evaluation of needs together with the precarious means of attaining them as well as misuse of intellectual endowment. The societal motivators are those beyond the individuals such as social structures and various social demands or expectations. Elvis (2000), evinced this clearly when he asserted that environmental factors are indispensable moulder of social image of each individual.

Rehabilitation programmes as targets human motivation and its impact on recidivism and security can be gauged from its effectiveness in addressing the specific concerns. From the analysis of the various data obtained in this research, it is summarized that rehabilitation programmes if well deployed and well managed could enhance potentials of inmates with attendant consequential impact in reducing recidivism and internal security. Also, the academic enhancement programme as a target for the inmates is laudable, as it paves way for higher aspiration, even in the bleak of travails. This inculcates a sense of self-esteem in the inmates and creates a veritable tool for employment or further academic pursuit after release. The inmates particularly place a high preference on secondary education as the most valid level of education capable of discouraging recidivism, hence, justifies the basis for further education for inmates and the attainment of higher goals.

Relating this to real time occurrence, one could deduce this as correct reflection because many inmates are young adults whose average education status roves around the post-basic education level (Afolabi, 2011). Hope Alive Initiative Report (HAI, 2014) confirmed this, claiming that Nigeria Prisons are mostly populated by young adults and those who got incarcerated within the young adult age range. Equally obtained is a fact that bad peer influence, inadequate family support and ineffective handling of the rehabilitation programme are elements responsible for recidivism as life after jail terms are hostile to many ex-convicts. This may not be far-fetched as obtained facts suggest that the Nigeria prisons have more young adults than the elderly; of course, this group of people would require strong social support in such circumstances, but when such support is absent, turning to crime again becomes an option. Equally observed is the fact that among the rehabilitation training programmes available to inmates behind the bars, soap making (within the mid-range industrial cluster) and carpentry (within the technical vocation cluster) were most preferred as skills capable of reducing recidivism. The outcome that these are these vocational options ranked highest may not be strange because it may not be unconnected with affordability for this group of people. According to Emenalor (2010), sense of affordability is a major driver



of vocation choice in most climes and this attracts significance in most cases more than several other important considerations. Another possibility of the preference of these could also be because they have greater potential of providing quick returns on investment owing to the fact that the tools needed for establishment can be relatively acquired within a short time. Lastly, it is no surprise that religious counselling was considered the most potent to reform inmates and by extension reduce recidivism. It is believed that such support is capable of dissuading them from indulging in crimes after being discharged from prison custody. More so, Nigerians are popularly known as being ardently religious (Bhrant, 2013), as such, religious sermonization in form of counselling could easily equip inmates with emotional enhancement and spiritual appeal to gradually check innermost criminal-tendencies and by extension shun acts capable of making him/her incur the wrath of the law. Recall, innermost being is a factor of emotional stability, maturity and reformation. This form of counselling support therefore provides the necessary tools for such emotional development with attendant moral development and moral compass for inmates to gauge their future actions outside the prison. Other programmes are intended to build socio-personal relationships of the inmates with others outside the prison.

### Conclusion

The old idea of prison being primarily designed for incarceration of criminals was brought to the fore in the study. However, the study expressed that with the evolving development in humanism and humanitarian circle, there came a trend that considering prison as a place of incarceration solely was not only inadequate but also obsolete. Literature avers that the hoary approach has often led to recidivism wherein offenders re-commit the offence for which they were arrested and prosecuted in the past or other offences and back in prison. The concern no doubt, spurred the advocacy that there was need for the inmates to be aided, with capacity to still live and have second chance of a re-defined and re-directed life. Hence, the adoption of rehabilitation programmes by Nigerian Prisons Services in various prisons facilities across the country to help mitigate criminal inclinations; hence, reduce return to prisons as often witnessed.

The rehabilitation programmes in Agodi and Abologo prisons facilities were the specific case study investigated. Focus was on an investigation whether the interventional measures to which inmates are exposed could reduce recidivism or otherwise and the possible implication of that on insecurity or otherwise. As part of the rehab programmes, academic programmes are offered to create

opportunities for intellectual development of the inmates. The various vocational and industrial programmes with mid-range industrial trainings are noted to be capable of providing the inmates with skills usable when discharged and thereby reduce possibility of recidivism. The study did not capture trend to find out rate of rise in recidivism in the selected facilities but noted that the structures of the prison, the management of the rehabilitation programmes and the assistance provided could actually achieve more. Conclusively, the shortcomings of rehabilitation programmes do not necessarily mean that the rehabilitation programmes are not relevant to the inmates rather it appears that the Nigeria Prisons Service focuses more attention on the security of the prisons and confinement of inmates above all other considerations. These shortcomings here noted are not entirely of Nigeria Prison Service but also of the various stakeholders in the administration of criminal justice system in the land. Noted from literature also is a fact that the Nigerian legal system prioritizes incarceration for crimes committed irrespective of their severity. And a poverty plagued society finds the perfection of bail for minor crimes difficult and thereby intensify the exposure of a minor offender to hardened criminals within the prison. Thus, the prison system is overburdened by a number that it cannot cater for effectively, hence, the prison

staff like many others stakeholders, are compelled to concentrate on the provision of basic needs which are not also enough as required.

### Recommendations

The findings of this study are significant in no small measure to different stakeholders; policy maker, the Police Force, Prison Service, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and other agencies in the administration of criminal justice system in Nigeria and beyond. The following recommendations should be considered accordingly.

The current rehabilitation and reformation programme in Nigeria Prison facilities across the country is commendable and should continue. However, to ensure that the overall objectives of the programme are accomplished as designed, effort should be intensified in its management and monitoring; as a matter of fact, a designated monitoring and evaluation desk should be created for the purpose. Also observed was that the training programmes are not statutorily regulated, no doubt, such programmes require adequate regulation, and one of such is that curriculum should be designed and approved by experts and regulatory body with specific indication of roles to stakeholder. This should be considered a priority of urgent attention.

Noting that the lack of necessary support or insufficient of it is often a point of

disappointment for ex-convict, particularly for re-uniting again with criminal-minded associates, then the mandate of the Prison service could be extended to include reintegration of ex-convicts. Under such mandate, the Service would have the statutory responsibility to rehabilitate and reform the person as an inmate and reintegrate him when discharged. This extension of mandates becomes highly imperative if indeed the desire to reduce recidivism would heed positive results. Such reintegrated person will be followed up to ensure that beyond being accepted back into the society by significant others, he is dissuaded from illicit comraderies, but persuaded and supported to employ the vocational training skills acquired when behind the walls to redirect his/her life. Having also noted in the study that some discharged inmates vehemently complained of stigmatization when once discharged, a vigorous public sensitization is needed to reset public orientation about prison experience. In this regard, the government is enjoined to expedite the on-going process of reviewing the Prison Act Cap. P29 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004. A glimpse of the bill which has passed the first and second readings as at 26 October, 2016 suggests that many derogatory descriptions ascribed to the prison will be downplayed as such, gradual removal of the negative public impression about the prison and ex-inmates is attained.

Hence, ex-inmates will be free of stigmatization and live a fulfilled life afterwards. More important in this regard, is to rechristen the Nigeria Prison Service with Nigeria Correctional Service as done in developed climes across the world.

It was observed that some civil society organisations are collaborating with the Nigeria Prisons Service in her delivery of the programme, this is not a bad idea at all; it is a practice encouraged across the world, hence, should be consolidated as government cannot at, all times, boast of full capacity for effective delivery. In this regard, stakeholders' meetings should be held regularly to evaluate roles, achievements, setbacks and milestones.

With all the afore-stated recommendations implemented, inmates are likely to get reformed as desired and when discharged, they are likely to eschew criminality, refrain from related conducts, live a better second chance life and get exonerated from offences and crimes for which they could be jailed again; hence, reduction in recidivism. In the long run, the second chance could avail them the opportunities to be more responsible enough to contribute own quota to nation building efforts as expected of all citizens. By extension, such feat would have assisted in depleting the unscrupulous potential of the criminal population in state and its environs, thereby enhancing internal security of the

pacesetter state with several accruable benefits.

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