

The Prison as an Instrument of Social Reformation and Rehabilitation: A Study of Nigerian Prisons (Medium) Kiri-Kiri, Lagos

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Abstract: Prisons have always been considered as rehabilitative and reformatory centers. However in reality as a result of a number of factors this may not be possible. It may become a breeding ground for future criminals. This is the problem facing every society and Nigerian prisons are not insulated from this problem. Against this backdrop this study attempted to empirically examine the conditions in the Nigerian prisons with Kirikiri (Medium) as a case study. To achieve this sample size of one hundred and fifty prisoners were selected through simple random to participate in the study. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected through the use questionnaire and key informants interview and examine of some documents. Also the analysis of data was through the combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis. The result of the data analysis showed that the respondents varied in socio-demographic characteristics such age, marital status, family class, offence committed, etc. Further the result of the substantive data showed that most of the respondents were on the awaiting trial; most of them considered prison as a place of punishment rather than rehabilitative and reformatory centres. Moreover the result shows that quite substantial number of respondents said they had witnessed several cases of deaths in the prison and most of them were not learning any trade because the equipment and tools were in states of disrepair. Also the study showed that most of the prisoners belonged to one informal group or the other to protect themselves against other senior prisoners and prison staff considered wicked. Finally it was discovered that most respondents considered the conditions in the prisons to very treble and there has not been any improvement in the facilities in the recent time. On the basis of the finding the study recommended that the issue of prison reformation and rehabilitation must taken seriously under the current political dispensation in order to achieve the objective for which the prisons were established.

Key words: Instrument, social, reformation, rehabilitation, prisons, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

According to McCorkle and Korn^[1], prison can be defined as a physical structure in a geographical location, where a number of people living under highly specialized conditions utilize the resources and adjust to the alternatives presented to them by a unique kind of social environment. For^[2] prison is seen as a total institution. According to him a total institution is a place of residence and work where a large number of like situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for appreciable period of time together lead and enforce formally administered round of life.

While Adelola^[3] opined that the physical appearance of prison of tall walls supplanted with barbwires, an iron gates, antiquated buildings separates prisons from its larger community outside. These isolated structures according to^[3] are meant to accomplish the confinement

aspect. While confinement is made to detach the prisoners from his previous infectious groups, this new, environment is expected to provide the prisoner with particular opportunities of rethinking, stocktaking and repentance from his old ways.

According to Awake^[4], there are four basic reasons why lawbreakers are put in prison: to punish the offender; to rehabilitate the criminal, teaching him/her be law abiding and productive after release; to protect the society and to prevent future crimes.

However, the extent to which prisons in the developing societies fulfill these roles may be doubtful in view of the nature of treatment of offenders and resources available to accomplish these roles. Therefore the major concern of this study is to see whether prisons are accomplishing the objective for which they were established using the Medium prisons at Kirikiri as a case study.

The problem: Over the years, the prison as a reformatory institution has been a subject of various studies^[1,5-8]. However, very little attention has been paid to how the system of government and other external factors affect positively or negatively the condition of prisons in Nigeria. There is a growing concern among the Nigerian public that prisons are fast losing its value due to the fact that it has failed to reform the criminal^[3,7]. According to Awake and Atere^[4,9] one of the problems bedeviling the correctional institutions can be classified into economic, social and psychological in nature. Studies have shown that the condition of most Nigerian prisons is everything but favourable for the realization of Reformatory and Rehabilitative Goals.

For instance, life in Nigerian prison is so regimented to the extent that it appears that the primary purpose is punitive. A prisoner is more often than not mentally, physically as well as psychologically brutalized looking worst than he was before the incarceration^[10,11]. When the prison as a correctional institution fails to achieve its goals of rebuilding a prisoner's self image, it is just a prelude to more and worst crime. According to Awake^[4], most inmates started off with petty crime, then moved up to property crime and finally graduate to serious offences against humans. Under this condition prison can be best described as trade schools for criminals; they will pass out worst. One As put succinctly by Chiemeka^[10], the current state of affairs of prisons can only take criminals off the streets for a while, it seems that they do little, if anything to deter crime in the long term. Given this situation in prisons, the major research questions that will guide this study are what are the socio-demographic characteristics of prisoners that make up the Medium prisons, why do they think they were there?; what has been the general and specific experiences in the prisons?; and, how do they cope with the conditions in the prisons?

The broad objective of this study is to examine life within the prison and the implications of prison environment for the reformation and rehabilitation of prison inmates. Towards this end, the specific objectives of the study are;

- To examine the socio-demographic characteristics of kiri-kiri (medium) prisons inmates.
- To examine the opinions of the prisoners about their incarceration.
- Identify deficiencies in the handling and treatment of prisoners and locate the underlying factors responsible for such shortcomings.
- To analyze the general and specific experience of the prisoners against the backdrop of what should be the function of prisons.

- To make recommendations on the ways to improve the conditions in Nigerian prisons.

BRIEF REVIEW OF LITERATURE REVIEW

According to the United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders (1998) the current trend in the treatment of offenders is in the direction of dis-institutionalization of disposition methods. Such measures include: fine, restitution of movable property, compensation and binding over. However in Nigeria imprisonment still stands as the most utilized disposition measure^[12].

Treatment of offenders within the Criminal justice System has generated a lot of literature in recent times. Men, it has been said are in majority of persons imprisoned for one offence or the others. While women low representation in Crime and Prison Statistics has been attributed to lenient treatment given to them by men in Criminal Justice System^[6,13]. This implies that women are less likely to be apprehended by the police, found guilty or given severe sentences by the judges/magistrates. But this line of argument has been faulted by recent findings. In an article entitled Women's prisons: Over crowded and Over used, Immariageon and^[14] stated that since 1980, the number of women imprisoned in the United State has nearly tripled. In their analysis, they found out that approximately 75,000 women were locked up in American jails and prisons. Furthermore, they observed that the increases in the number of incarcerated women have surpassed comparable rates of increase for men for the past decade and an unprecedented number of expensive prison space are currently being built for women.

In Nigeria, though men still constitute a high proportion of crime and prison statistics, a similar trend has been observed. In 1997 study carried out in Nigeria, it was observed that 85% of the respondents claimed that more women are being arrested in the last 5 years^[15].

Imprisonment and rehabilitation/resettlement has generated a somewhat unprecedented reaction from scholars. For instance, Steven, (1998:5) asserts thus:

- In thirty years, we have come this far. But it hardly seems like a prison system suited for the 21st century. The present solution to crime is to send more people to prisons to hold them in better and more secured conditions. This is not a solution to the problems of crime. If prison worked then we would be closing prisons not building more.

Therefore for Chiney^[16] the issue of effectiveness of imprisonment as a penal measure should not be mere incapacitation, but reduction in re-offending behaviour. A

lot of opinions are hinged on prison as a reformatory and rehabilitative institution in crime control and prevention. For instance, Ely^[17] noted that some institution that are intended to punish or rehabilitate offenders towards acceptable rules have frequently produced negative results. The imprisonment of the delinquent to him, only further helps to educate them more on the ways of crime. This argument has been supported by many scholars such as^[18] when they suggested that prison rather than reform inmates are actually a school for criminals. The older and more experienced prisoners socialize the new and petty criminals who in addition inculcate the techniques, value and attitude of the deviant group. The likelihood that they (especially young offenders and innocent on awaiting trial population) will do so increases by the fact that they are physically and socially isolated from the large society and face the uncertainties of their social identification and stigmatization as ex-convicts after their release from prison.

Meanwhile how the Nigerian Prisons has contributed towards the effective reformation, rehabilitation/resettlement of prisoners back in the community is yet to be seen. This could be located within the historical context of the Nigerian prisons. The rehabilitative ideal of prison started in 1800 when the punitive function was dropped for reformation and rehabilitation ideal. This development came due to the belief that an offender should be seen as a soiled hand thus requires to be cleaned rather than be cut-off. As such, prisoners are expected to be treated with passion, fairly and firmly by the society. In Nigeria, first modern prison was established at Broad Street, Lagos in 1872. Presently, there are 148 prisons and about 83 satellite prisons or lock-ups, 10 prison farms and cottage industries for the training of inmates. Prisoners Rehabilitation and Welfare Action (PRAWA).

According to it, the capacity of Nigerian prisons is about 25,000 but the prison currently holds 48,899 inmates. In May 2004, the prison population was put at 48,899 of this number, 25,579 (52.3%) were awaiting trial prisoners. Before 1960, Nigerian Prisons were under the control of different authorities, local, provincial and regional governments. Until the prison Act of 1960 brought all prisons under the jurisdiction of the Nigerian Federal Government. Presently, Nigeria prison is under the Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Identifying the major causes preventing of the Nigerian Prisons as effective reformation, rehabilitation/resettlement centres PRAWA (2001:12) identified the followings as the main causes: overcrowding; high remand population; court congestion and lack of speedy trial; over use of imprisonment by the

courts; abuse of arrest power and bail conditions by the police; inadequate legal and facilities; logistics problems relating to transportation of defendants to court; inadequate utilization of non-custodian measures and corruption.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study locations: Kiri-kiri (medium) prison lagos: Kiri-kiri (Medium Prison), Lagos was established on 4th October 1957. The prison was started by some warders drafted from Ikoyi prison in Lagos with initial staff strength of 15 warders and with first chief warder as Robinson Okoye. He was specifically asked to supervise the construction of this prison. At this period the director of prisons was an expatriate, Mr. M.C.K Carew (1954-1961). In 1959, Mr. Emos Kamalu was posted to kiri-kiri as the first officer to head this prison which was still under construction. At this period, the Administrative Block as well as Convict cells were built and thus it became operational.

In 1957, the staff strength was 15 warders and 50 inmates. At present it has staff strength of over 200. The inmate capacity of this prison is 704, but presently it has over 2,108 inmates out of which 1,928 are awaiting trial prisoners. The prison is therefore terribly congested. It has no history of prisoners' riot and therefore it is considered to be one of the most peaceful prisons in Nigeria. At present, the prison accommodates only male prisoners unlike most of the prisons in Nigeria, which houses both male and female inmates within the same prison. This is headed by Assistant Controller of Prison.

Sample size and selection procedure: The sample population for the study is made of one thousand, five hundred and eighty prisoners out of which only ten percent was selected for the study. In other words the sample size constituted only one hundred, fifty eight prisoners. The sample size which was scattered in more twenty different cells was chosen on the selected on the basis of simple random sampling using balloting method.

Method and instrument of data collection: The method of data collection for the study involved both quantitative and qualitative methods. Essentially the collection of quantitative data involved the use of questionnaire while the collection of qualitative data involved the use of key informant interview with the prison staff purposively selected for such. A three-part questionnaire was designed, tested and administered. Ten prisoners were selected for the pre-test to ascertain the validity and reliability of the instrument. All prisoners were first stratified on the basis of offence categories. The offence

categories that were stratified are Armed Robbery, murder/manslaughter, Burglary, Advance fee fraud otherwise known as 419, Rape and others which include drug related offence, stealing etc.

Moreover for key informant, it was used to crosscheck some of the information gathered through questionnaire method. This method involved selecting five respondents purposefully to give unbiased information on the prison system. The informants are considered to very knowledgeable in prison affairs. The respondents were the prison welfare staff, Medical Department staff, Records Officer, the Chief Clerk and the Inmate Religious leaders were all interviewed.

To complement primary data, secondary data was also collected. This involved the examination of some official records in which more than ten forms and Prison books were examined. These records were considered very useful because of the following reasons. First they gave insights into past history of the prisons, prisoners and officials. And second, they allowed for critical examination of such to events as riots useful in providing the history of the prisons involved, their establishments, past administrators, location and the history of prisons in Nigeria.

Data processing and analysis: At the end of fieldwork the questionnaire were collected in readiness for data processing. The questionnaires, 158 in all were edited to check for those that are not properly filled. At the end, only 150 questionnaires found to have filled appropriately, thus they were coded and analyzed.

Data analysis involved the combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis. As regards the former, information collected was coded expressed frequency distribution tables and simple percentages. While the latter involved the synthesis of the ideas from the records and key informant interview conducted.

Data presentation and analysis: Table 1 above showed the various aspects of respondents' personal characteristics. From the table it was shown that most of them were within the age bracket of 30-39 years while the least was from the age bracket of 40-49 years. The inference that could be drawn here is that most persons in the prison were young men who should be in productive age. This ugly situation is further reinforced by the facts available from the Federal Office of Statistics (1998:5) that individuals within the age range of 18 and 49 who are implicated in Crime are actually more, (90.7%) than other age categories, it can be inferred therefore that the fact that they are of working age

Table 1: Distribution of respondents socio-demographic characteristics

Age (in years)	Frequency	Percentage
14-17 years	29	19.3
18-29	30	20.0
30-39	36	24.0
40-49	15	10.0
50-59	23	15.3
60 and above	17	11.3
Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Christianity	96	64.0
Islam	43	28.6
ATR	3	2.0
Others	1	0.6
N/R	1	0.6
Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage
No western education	15	10.0
Primary education	35	23.3
Secondary education	78	52.0
Tertiary	19	12.6
Others	3	2.0
No Response	-	-
Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	55	36.7
Single	91	60.7
Divorce/Separated	3	2.0
Widow/Widower	1	0.6
No. Response	-	-
Family Background	Frequency	Percentage
Poor family	76	50.7
Very poor family	24	16.0
Rich family	41	27.3
Very rich family	9	6.0
No. Response	-	-
Offence Category	Frequency	Percentage
Armed Robbery	72	48.0
Murder/manslaughter	13	8.7
Burglary	11	7.3
Advance fee fraud	18	12.0
Rape	29	19.3
Others	7	4.7
No response	-	-
Total	150	100.0

actually exposes them to crime commission or accusation of crime commission as the case may be. In addition this result is not unexpected especially in a society where there is mass unemployment and underemployment and in which poverty level has assumed unimaginable proportion.

As regards religious affiliation the data as presented in the table above showed that 64.4% of the respondents were Christians while 28.6% were Muslims and only 2.0% claimed they were members of traditional religion. Although religious inculcates morals but in reality it appears that there is no relationship between religious and criminality because people commit crime irrespective of their religious affiliation. But suffice it to say that religion is expected to be an antidote to the commission of crime since religious beliefs are predicted upon moral teaching.

As respects education there is indication that most respondents had secondary education (52.0%) while the least (10.0%) had no western education. It is also

important to observe that 12.6% had tertiary education. With this high figure, it appears that education has become a strong factor in criminality. This may not be unrelated to high level of unemployment in the country. The explanation for this high rate can be located in the context of Marxists theory of crime which posits that the children of working class people (which is mostly made up of secondary school leavers in Nigeria) in the period of economic recession have fewer options available to them of which crime is one. The theory further argues that if some of them resort more to crime than conformity this is because they are at the sharp end of the unequal distribution of resources, which typified capitalist social and economic arrangements.

Moreover, the data showed that most of the respondents were single (60.7%) while only 36.7% were married. However, 2.0% were divorce/separated and only one person (0.6%) was widowed. The inference one can draw is that most prisoners had little or not family responsibilities as most of them were singled.

Also from this data, as regards the family background the data showed that those from poor families are in majority, 76 (50.7%). The explanation that could be given here is that people are more often than not driven to crime due to poverty. This is because of inequality in the distribution of resources among individuals in the society. In other words the institutional means available for the achievement of cultural goal is not equally distributed.

According to some reports, about 70% of Nigerians are living below poverty line and Nigeria was rated the 25th poorest nation in the world in spite of abundant resources. Poor people take to crime to make ends meet. Access to education health, power and prestige is dependent upon availability of resources. No wonder most of those involved in crime are those in lower social class. Beside this, those from poor family background are more likely to be arrested by the police on suspicion, being detained without bail since they may not be able to meet the bail conditions being prosecuted and sentenced to higher prison terms, due to their inability to have access to legal representation. The data appear to corroborate this reasoning by the Marxists Criminology that there is an integral connection between crime and capitalism. To them capitalism is a crime creating system by virtue of the motivations, which it encourages in people and class relations and inequalities, which characterize it. People from the poor family or low class have fewer options available to them of which crime is one. It is an attempt to secure existing order by the ruling class that prison and many other crime control institutions were established.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents by years incarcerated and status

Years of Incarceration	Frequency	Percentage
1-11 months	22	14.7
1 year	36	24.0
2-3 years	31	20.7
3 years 7 above	48	32.0
Life	12	8.0
Death sentence	1	0.6
Status	Frequency	Percentage
Awaiting trial	105	70.0
Convicted	42	28.0
Completed term	3	2.0

On the offences committed by the respondents the data showed that armed robbery constituted the highest percentage with 48.0% while burglary and murder/manslaughter constituted the least with 7.3 and 8.7%, respectively. An inference that could be drawn here is that armed robbery is the major crime in the prison studied, in other words it is the most rampant form of crime in Nigeria. This prevalence may be linked to the general hopelessness and the inability of the political class to solve the nagging problem of unemployment and mass poverty in the land. Added to this are the issues of corrupt practices of security men at various ports who allowed the smuggling of arms and ammunition to the country. The result is general insecurity and increase in armed robbery and assassinations.

The Table 2 presented the length or period of the incarceration and the status of the respondents, respectively. It was shown that those with 3 to 7 years constituted the majority with 32.0% while those meant for death for death sentence constituted the least with 0.6%. Also the status of the respondents showed most of the them (70.0%) while those who had completed their terms constituted only 2.0%.

The reason for long years of incarceration has been traced to the high number of awaiting trial prisons. Some of whom are spending as long as 14 years without any trial. Besides, there is high rate of armed robbery, which usually attracts capital punishment or very long prison term. It is condemnable that the problem of awaiting trial prisoners has continued to rear its ugly head. It has led to congestion of prisons which in turn has made prison impossible of reforming the inmates. Also, this argument has been advanced by Atere^[9] when he said that prison rather than reform inmates are actually a school for criminals. This is made worse as juvenile prisoners are kept in the same prison with adult offenders, some of whom are hardened criminals. The young offenders or suspects are socialized into the techniques and values of the deviant groups as they are physically and socially isolated from the larger society and the uncertainties of their social identification and stigmatization as ex-convicts after their release from prison.

Table 3 presented the various aspects of respondents' experiences in the prison. The data showed that most prisoners believed that the reason for being incarcerated is to punish 58.0% while 27.3% attributed that to reformation and 8.7% attributed that to the act of God. From the outcome of the response, it is evident that prisoners did not see prison as reformatory/rehabilitation centre. Rather it is punitive. What this means is that Nigerian prisons do not reform nor rehabilitate those it plays host, but inflict sufferings. This portends danger for the society, more so, when more than two third of those in prison are on awaiting trial. In other words, they are assumed to be innocent for the time being. Those who after several years are on awaiting trial and are later discharged and acquitted should not be expected to be happy with the society that incarcerated them unjustly.

Those juveniles who live with the adult hardened criminals have actually socialized into criminal behaviours. Also the data showed that only negligible number of the respondents 15.3% agreed that they learning trade while vast majority 78.0% said they were not learning any trade. Collaborating this during the oral interviews it was discovered that most of the equipment/tools for the training of prisoners are in the state of disrepair. Accordingly most prisoners do not have interest in learning any trade apparently because some of them are not happy being in the prison. While it appears to be compulsory for the convicts, inmates on awaiting trial were completely excluded from almost all the vocational as well as recreational activities.

A disturbing development here is the fact that since awaiting trial prisoners are not allowed to take part in vocational training and about 70.0% of the prisoners are on awaiting trial; this means that Nigerian prisons cannot adequately rehabilitate prisoners. Furthermore, this is against the United Nation Declaration of Human Rights which specifies that untried prisoners shall always be offered opportunity to work, but shall not be required to work. if he chooses to work, he shall be paid for it.

On the number of deaths they had witnessed the data showed that most of the indicated that they had witnessed many deaths(40.0%); 18.0% said between six and ten persons;14.5% said between one and five; 0.6% indicated between eleven and fifteen deaths and 4.0% said none. This result confirms various studies in the past, which have painted a gloomy picture of the health conditions in Nigeria prisons. With this development one may not be totally wrong to describe inmates of Nigerian prisons as corn in the mill.

In addition to this, it was gathered through the oral interview that deaths in the prison were very high before 1999. This was explained as the outcome of the clamp

Table 3: Respondents opinions on the various aspects of the experiences in the prison

What in your opinion is the purpose were you incarceration?	Frequency	Percentage
To change you to a better persons	41	27.3
To suffer you	87	58.0
It's God's Act	13	8.7
No. Response	9	6.0
Do you learn any Trade here?	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	23	15.3
No	117	78.0
No. Response	10	6.7
Total	150	100.0
How many deaths Have witnessed in this prison?	Frequency	Percentage
1-5 persons	22	14.7
6-10 persons	27	18.0
11-15 persons	1	0.6
Many	60	40.0
Don't know	14	9.3
None	6	4.0
No Response	20	13.3
Do you belong to a union in this prison?	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	110	73.3
No	32	21.3
Don't know	8	5.3
Why do belong to any informal group?	Frequency	Percentage
For protection	26	23.6
Emotional support	10	9.1
Because of wicked staff	24	21.8
Because of wicked fellow prisoner	19	17.3
Because of prison strict rules and regulations	31	28.2
Total	110	100.0

down on the perceived enemies of the state which accompanied annulment of June 12 1993 general election. In general, it shows that the situation is still very bad in terms of health conditions of prison inmates across the country.

On belonging to an informal group in the prison, though 21.3% of the entire respondents said they did not belong to any prison inmates association, data collected through the oral interview revealed the contrary. The data showed that virtually all inmates belong to one informal group or the other. The reasons for this included as shown in the table, for general protection (23.6%) for emotional support (9.1%) to protect against wicked prison staff (21.8%); to protect against wicked prisoners (17.3%) and to protect against the strict rules and regulations of the prison. It was further discovered that some of these associations have rules and regulations different from the conventional prison official rules. This is referred to as prison subculture. This development corroborates our theoretical framework-R.K. Merton's theory of anomie^[19].

On why prisoners would belong to association for all sorts of protection, it learnt through oral interview that brutality of prisoners by fellow senior prisoners and prison staff was very high. Hence the need for protection to overcome the stress associated with imprisonment. Also in the informal groups they learn both good and bad

Table 4: Respondents opinion on the conditions of the prisons

Are the facilities in the prisons adequate?	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	49	32.7
No	100	66.7
No response	1	0.7
Has there been improvement in the recent times?	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	44	29.3
No	104	69.3
Don't know	2	13.3
No response	-	-
Total	150	100.0

from the members. It was learnt that this enabled them to adjust to the prison environment so as to leave prison psychologically undamaged. This confirms^[2] reasoning that prisoners adapt several forms of mechanism to cope with prison harsh conditions. This was corroborated by various interviews conducted with the staff of the prisons.

The Table above showed the responses of the respondents on the conditions of the prisons. The data showed that 66.7% said the facilities such as clinic, halls, recreational and vocational facilities and quality of the food is not adequate. Further on whether there has been any improvement on the conditions of the prisons 69.3% said no while only 29.3% admitted there was improvement in the prison conditions. An inference one could draw this response is several prison reforms embarked by the present civilian government may have been a drop in the ocean in connection with improving the facilities and conditions in the prisons.

Furthermore, in the area of decongestion of prison and improvement in the facilities, one can argue that the efforts of the present democratic government appear to have been a mirage. A Non Governmental Organization Prisoners Rehabilitation Action PRAWA observed that in its January 2000 fact sheet thus:

- When in June 1998 the leadership of the country changed, its fortune changed. There was a stop or drastic reduction in the number of political detainees. The figure of prison inmates were expected to drop even further with the completion of the job of the Presidential Committee on Prison Decongestion which recommended over 8,000 prisoners for release.

It further argued that however, by January 1999 there were a total of 44,868 prisoners in our prisons all over the country 7,000 prisoners were released in May 1999. the number dropped to 40,899. It was discovered that even with the release of about 7000 prisoners the difference between January and May figure were about 4,000 which is a far cry from the 7,000 released. After the May 1999 release, the present civilian administration completed the

last batch of those recommended for release. Thus, another 1,403 prisoners benefited. However, the figure of prison inmates as at 31 October 1999 stood at 44, 797 which has not shown the impact of the over 8,000 released. What this has shown is that the number of prisoners has actually increased thus questioning the impact of democracy on prison reform, which the government has been emphasizing on in the last three years.

DISCUSSION

The unique nature of the problem understudy requires the use of more than one theory. As a result of this attempt is made to present prisons as the outcome of class domination in the capitalist society.

Marxist theory of crime become relevant because it employs a structural conflict model of the society and social relations assigning central important to economic arrangements and seeing societies as typically characterized by divisions of interest and class conflict. According to Bilton^[20], Marxist criminology identified an integral connection between crime and capitalism. For them, high levels of crime in capitalist societies are simply unsurprising, because capitalism is a crime-creating system by virtue of the motivations which it encourages in people and the class relations and inequalities which characterize it. It promotes and prioritizes self interest, personal gain and the accumulation of wealth and material possessions as supreme virtues and goal.

It persuades (through a culture of advertising and media fiction), that life is incomplete without expensive clothes, the latest model of stylish fast cars, high tech. Leisure items and in doing so, it motivates individuals to accumulate by both legal and illegal means. To them, people act upon these exhortations with the resources and options at their disposal. Upper class businessmen have more legal means to realize their material aims and desires, (though Marxist argue, they frequently do use illegal ones), while working class people have fewer options available to them of which crime is one. So if some of them resort to the later than the former, this is because they are at the sharp end of the unequal distribution of resources which typifies capitalist social and economic arrangements. In a society such as Nigeria with a capitalist political economic structure, those who own and control the means of production; the capitalist class, attempt to secure existing order through various forms of domination especially crime control by the state. It may be very difficult if not impossible for the prison to re-socialize the inmates into law-abiding individuals, especially in the presence of high rate of white-collar crime which has

remained unpunished and unabated. More so, with the level of poverty hopelessness reaching all high. The extent to which individuals who are locked up because they are powerless are reformed by the same institution that has deprived them of their liberty is yet to be seen. This situation becomes more worrisome when studies have shown that more than 85% of those incarcerated are of lower class in the society.

The Anomic theory of Merton^[19] becomes relevant here. It demonstrates how individuals react to social economic inequalities existing in the society as a way of adaptive mechanism. In a nutshell the theory was originally propounded as an explanation of the causes of crime and pattern of criminality. The beauty of this theory lies in its ability to provide one systematic approach to the analysis of social and cultural sources of deviant behaviour. It helps to discover why some people indulge in conforming behaviour while others do not. The theory recognizes several elements of social and cultural structures discussing the issue of crime and anomie.

CONCLUSION

From the result of quantitative and qualitative data, the following conclusions were drawn. The reformation and rehabilitative function of prison is necessary for the survival of prisoners and society at large. Moreover that prison system is a microcosm of the larger society and so what happens in the prison will affect the larger society. The get rich quick culture of Nigerians has affected prison as an institution. It is also believed that the rate of crime will continue to be high as long as nothing is done to address the issue of unemployment, poverty, corruption and social injustice.

The physical detachment of prisoners and subsequent isolation has created so much problems in the families of those incarcerated. This is more especially with the gradual erosion of extended family system in Nigeria. And this is worse for prisoners who are married and who are from poor socio-economic backgrounds. Prisoners who have been kept in awaiting trial for a long time especially the innocent among them would not be reformed; rather they will show disloyalty to the system that punished them unjustly.

Prisoners have devised a means of adjusting to the harsh prison conditions. Thus become re-socialized into a more dangerous crime and may come out worse than ever. Finally, in as much as the prison has failed to produce positively adjusted rehabilitated and reformed inmates then it has outlived its usefulness and so should be discarded and replaced with a non-punitive method of correction. Based on the above conclusion the following

the recommendation is thus offered. First, government should ensure that prison services are adequately funded. This will translate to adequate Improvement on the existing rehabilitative as well as other facilities in prison.

This will make the prisoners to be useful to themselves when they had completed their jail terms. Second, there should be segregation of prisoners on the basis of severity of the offence. This will make it possible for hardened criminal to socialize the non-hardened ones into their trade when they had completed their jail terms. Moreover the mentally sick, patients be evacuated to hospitals. Third, there is also the need to take a second look at the entire criminal justice system so that the police, judiciary and prisons will be totally overhauled. Fourth, the severity and certainty of punishment does not generate conformity to prison rules and regulation. Rather it reinforces aggression in the prisoners. Therefore, the stringent punishment in the prison should be eliminated. Fifthly the cases of awaiting trial persons should be reviewed with the view to ensuring speedy trial at courts.

This will also help to decongest the prisons as the study has shown that most inmates were persons awaiting trial.

Finally, the researchers recommended that prospective researchers in prison should find out how far the new status granted to the prison authority by Federal Government (granting of self accounting) has helped to address problems in prisons which the prison authority has said delay decision making in the past. This will ensure transparency and reduce the incidence of corruption in prisons.

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