



## Nature and Effectiveness of Rehabilitation Programmes in Preventing Inmates' Recidivism in Nigeria Correctional Service

OSAGIE LUCKY OMORUYI, EMIKE SELINA IGBAFE AGBONTAEN  
University of Benin, Nigeria

**Abstract.** This study examined the nature and effectiveness of rehabilitation programmes in preventing inmates' recidivism in Nigeria Correctional Service. The rehabilitative theory was adopted as the study's theoretical framework. The study was purely quantitative and the cross sectional research design regulated the research methodology. The collection of quantitative data involved the participation of 695 respondents to whom questionnaire was administered. The quantitative data was analysed with Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) using frequency, tables and charts. The study found out that there were different types of rehabilitation programmes in the custodial centres. These different types of rehabilitation programmes were to meet the different rehabilitation needs of the convicts. On the effectiveness of the various rehabilitation programmes, majority of the respondents in entire sampled population unanimously agreed that the rehabilitation programmes available in the custodial centres has effectively change the lives of convicts. The study concluded that effective rehabilitation of convicts can prevent inmates from going to crime and government should always prepare a discharge package for convicts upon completion of sentence, in a way that the gains of convicts' rehabilitation will be far more than the gains of crime. The study further recommended that modern rehabilitation programmes such as prison work programmes among others should be institutionalized in custodial centres in Nigeria.

**Keywords:** Effectiveness, Rehabilitation Programmes, Convicts, Recidivism, Custodial Centre

### 1. Introduction

When offenders are perceived as sick and helpless persons, therefore, need to be treated or helped in order to recover or to be restored to a state of normalcy. This is the idea of changing the offender from their law-breaking behaviour to law abiding behaviour. The major reason of incarceration according to Nigeria Correctional Service Act (2019) is to identify offenders' antisocial behaviour, treatment and rehabilitate them to useful and law-abiding citizens. It is therefore likely that the rate of recidivism will decrease if the essence of imprisonment is realized by providing appropriate rehabilitation for prisoners. Even with the philosophical change on the rationale of imprisonment from punishment orientated to reformation and rehabilitation of ex-convicts, ex-convicts upon release into the society still of return to crime.

Consequently, recidivism remains a considerable problem which faces every society (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2012). Recidivism has not only been on the increase in Sub-Saharan Africa in general but has become a major social problem affecting Nigeria in particular. Recidivism is defined as "the re-arrest, reconviction, or re-incarceration of an ex-offender within a given time frame" (Holzer and Raphael, 2003). According to Payne (2007) recidivism refers to repetitious criminal activity and is synonymous with terms such as "repeat offending" and "re-offending". According to Tenibiaje (2013), recidivism is the act of a person repeating an undesirable behaviour after he or she has either experienced negative consequences of that behaviour or has been treated or trained to extinguish that behaviour. Similarly, Wilson (2009), stated that studies conducted in Nigeria have acknowledged that

81% of male criminal inmate and 45% of female criminal inmate were re-arrested within 36 months of release from the custodial centre. As a result of this, crime by ex-inmates account for a significant part of current and future crimes (Abrifor, Atere & Muoghalu, 2012).

However, since the inception of custodial centres in Nigeria, so much has been said about the rehabilitation and recidivism, and the neglect that characterized rehabilitation process which has led the high rate of ex-convicts returning to crime (Obioha, 2011). Reformation, rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders are key goals for the establishment of modern custodial centres; which is predicated upon the understanding that those who have deviated from the collective norms and laws of the society as expressed in criminal laws should be reformed or assisted to live a better life (Igbinovia & Omorogiuwa, 2019, Ayuk, Owan & Ekok, 2013). Consequently, the dilapidated state of the inmates' custodial centres, demonstrates a condition that cannot guarantee the reformatory process of the inmates. This can be attributed to the neglect of the welfare of the inmates and failure to implement the reforms recommendations of the custodial centres (Opafunso & Adepoju, 2016).

In recent times, corrections specialists have always asked if inmates are supposed to be punished? Is it possible to engage inmates in rehabilitation programmes to make them law abiding and self-reliant once released (Muasya, 2013)? In his response, Rice (2006) argued that the major focus of the rehabilitation programmes for inmates is to increase their education and vocational skills, so as to have competitive value upon release and minimize their chances of recidivism. Chappell, 2004 asserted that lack of rehabilitation makes inmates to be more susceptible to crime and recidivism is bound to occur. Correctional training reduces the possibility of post release re-offending and increases the chances of ex-inmates obtaining employment and becoming self-reliant and law abiding citizens.

#### State of the Problem

Without any doubt, there seems to be an increase in the rate of recidivism in Nigeria. Recidivism is a threat to peace and security; in some instances, it results in the loss of lives, the loss of properties and physical harm. It also impacts negatively on the socio-economic development and growth, thereby draining dwindling resources of the nation (Oluyemi & Norma, 2014). The high prevalence of recidivism in recent times as earlier observed, has become worrisome, and calls for concern. It is no gain saying that an upsurge of recidivism can counteract or slow down

development in any society. This is because crime is disruptive and destructive, especially, violent crimes and if left to flourish or uncontrolled, can lead to a state of general insecurity (Esiri, 2016).

Consequently, the public and government seems to forget about sentenced offenders once they are incarcerated, but they fail to realize that the society will likely have to contend with them again upon release, if not properly rehabilitated. A majority of these inmates will certainly return to the communities from which they came with little evidence of successful rehabilitation (Sutton, Veyrat-Pontet, & Fielding 2016). Oduyela (2013) opined that Nigeria correctional system is punitive, degrading, dehumanizing and retributive which leaves inmates with the least opportunity of rehabilitation and successful re-entry into society. He further argued that those who are lucky to come out alive find it extremely difficult to re-adjust to normal lives and eventually end up in crime.

Although, since the establishment of Nigeria Correctional Service, several rehabilitation programmes have been formulated. These rehabilitation programmes are to equip the inmates with skills to ensure that they are self-dependent and not a burden or a nuisance to their families or other members of the community and can make positive contributions to the development of the areas they live in. Despite these efforts, Chikwelu et al. (2019) argued that life after incarceration indicates that, cases of recidivists who cannot generate any livelihoods upon release are quite common within communities in Nigeria. More so, huge resources invested to engage inmates on various rehabilitation programmes ranging from formal primary, secondary, counselling, skills training and vocational courses, aimed at sustaining them and their dependents has yielded little or no result in terms of rehabilitation and preventing inmates from returning to crime (Onyekachi, 2016).

The philosophy of the Nigeria Correctional Service is not different from the global philosophy of corrections which entails involving inmates in programmes that target offending behaviour, developing education and training needs, securing the right to safety in correctional facilities, ensuring physical and emotional well-being and provision of humane living conditions, and institutionalizing support after release (McAree, 2011). Consequently, this philosophy of treatment has been confronted with a lot of inconsistencies and inefficiencies in its implementation and the desired rehabilitation purpose for inmates are not achieved, thereby aggravating the rate of recidivism (Aduba, 2012; Opafunso &

Adepoju, 2016). Based on the above assertions, the study seeks to investigate the effectiveness of rehabilitation programmes in preventing recidivism in Nigeria Correctional Service.

### 1.1 Objective of the Study

To examine the nature and effectiveness of the rehabilitation programmes of inmates in Nigeria Correctional Service.

### 1.2 Research Question

What are the nature and effects of rehabilitation programmes on inmates in Nigeria Correctional Service, Edo State?

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 The Nature of Inmates Rehabilitation in Correctional Institutions

Rehabilitation has long been a contentious topic in the fields of criminology, corrections and penology. According to Ugwuoke & Ameh (2014) rehabilitation has been considered a primary goal of the correctional system throughout the twentieth century. Similarly, Igbo (2007) further argued that rehabilitation of inmates should begin from the very day they are admitted into the custodial centre to the day they are discharged. This is to ensure that they utilize the skills they acquired in the course of rehabilitation to live a law abiding life in the society. According to Okoro (2000), rehabilitation efforts are attempts through treatment or programming to stop offenders from continuing to offend. In the word of Dambazau (2007), rehabilitation is a critical way to overcome the collateral consequences of being a convict which limit the convicted individual to social, economic, and political opportunities after release. Sanda and Abba (2015) asserted that rehabilitation focuses on medical, psychological treatments and social skills training, all designed to correct the problems that led the individual to crime.

Rehabilitation of offenders is key goals for the establishment of modern correctional system; which is predicated upon the understanding that those who have violated the criminal laws of the society should be reformed or assisted to live a better life (Ayuk, Owan & Ekok, 2013). It is also predicated upon the belief that when rehabilitative, reformatory and reintegration policies and programmes are effectively and meaningfully pursued and implemented for inmates under conducive structural and environmental as well legal conditions, there will be decrease or significant

reduction in the rate of recidivism among inmates (Ekpenyong & Undutimi, 2016; Esiri, 2016). Rehabilitation and reformation as the processes of restoring the useful life through therapy and education or the process of helping an individual convict adapt to the society (Campbell, 2005).

Rehabilitation is understood in this study as including those strategies, measures and programmes applied during incarceration in preparation for release. This study admits that the use of the term “rehabilitation” is to some extent idiosyncratic in view of how it is used in criminological literature (Raynor & Robinson (2009)). It encompasses not only measures and programmes taken in custodial facility but serves as an umbrella term for programmes and structures inside and outside facility, aimed at preparing and supporting the release of offenders in form of resettlement or re-entry. This underscores the view that rehabilitation efforts ought to be offered by the correctional system from the onset of detention, during incarceration and after release, to limit the detrimental effects of imprisonment through adequate activities and services (Scheirs, 2016). As most inmates serve determinate sentences and will eventually be released, the purpose of imprisonment is to reduce future criminality by ensuring, as much as possible, that the offender is able to live a law-abiding and self-supporting life upon return to society (Huber 2016).

Rehabilitation draws its strength from Positivists’ argument that the causes of crime are present in the nature of the society, and that when these causes are identified, it would be possible to design intervention programmes for the benefit of the offenders in order to prevent further criminality (Ikoh, 2011, Cullen & Gilbert, 1982). Rehabilitation therefore links criminal behaviour with abnormality or some form of deficiency in the criminals. It assumes that human behaviour is the product of antecedent causes. The goal is to identify these antecedents’ conditions, understand the inadequacies, be it physical, moral, mental, social, vocational and or academic. Once the offender’s problems are diagnosed and classified for treatment, the offender can be corrected by appropriate psychological or physical therapy, counselling, education or vocational training, so that he or she can pursue an independent and legally accepted way of life on discharge (Allen, 1971).

From the above conceptions, the assumption of rehabilitation is that people are not permanently criminals and that it is possible to restore a criminal to a useful life, to a life in which they contribute to themselves and to society. According to the Nigeria Correctional Service Act (2019), Section 10, the

rehabilitative functions of the custodial centre among others are identifying the existence and causes of antisocial behaviours of inmates; conducting risk and needs assessment at developing appropriate correctional treatment methods for reformation, rehabilitation and reintegration; implementing reformation and rehabilitation programmes to enhance reintegration of inmates back to the society and empowering inmates through deployment of education and vocational skills training programmes, and facilitating incentives and income generation through custodial centres, farms and industries.

## 2.2 Effectiveness of Rehabilitation Programmes for Inmates in Nigeria Correctional Service

The purpose of establishing custodial centres in all parts of the world, including Nigeria, is to provide reformation and rehabilitation programmes for those who violate laws of the society (Chukwudi, 2012). Orakwe (2013) posits that the Nigeria Correctional Service has several programmes aimed at rehabilitation of inmates. These rehabilitation programmes among others includes the Prisons Adult Remedial Educational Program (AREP) that enables illiterate inmates to access adult education and vocational education which includes training in carpentry, metal work, and woodwork. More so, there are also other rehabilitation services offered by the Nigeria Correctional Service to equip inmates with skills in husbandry, service and maintenance of agro machines, treatment for attitudinal and behavioural changes necessary for social assimilation (Ajah & Nweke, (2017a), substance abuse treatment and life skills training such as anger management (Stephen & Linda, 2003).

Nigeria Correctional Service has long provided programming for inmates during their confinement. The growing body of literature on inmate rehabilitation primarily focus on education (Behan, 2014; Dawe, 2007), substance abuse prevention and sex offender treatment (Michels II et al., 2007; Boetticher & Feest, 2004), mental health services and cognitive behavioural treatment (Lambert et al., 2007), and obtaining housing (David J et al., 2014). In addition, Boriboonthana & Waipo (1999), also suggest that prison work has important implications for treating and rehabilitating inmates. The objective of providing inmates with rehabilitation programming is to improve their behaviour, both during and after release from custodial centre.

Indeed, correctional programming is often intended to not only enhance public safety by lowering recidivism, but also to promote greater safety within correctional

centres by reducing inmates' misconduct. Although, these rehabilitations are available but research suggests that many inmates are not exposed to treatment programming while incarcerated (Lynch & Sabol, 2001). These rehabilitation programmes in Nigeria Correctional Service are attempt to restore inmates to their fullest physical, mental, psychological, social, vocational and economic usefulness. However, the provision of these services continues and its effectiveness has always been on the front burner of public discourse (Tanimu, 2010).

## 2.3 Relationship between Rehabilitation and Recidivism

The place of rehabilitation and treatment of inmates have continued to be on the front burner of public discourse in recent time (Tanimu, 2010). Leading this discourse are professionals in the field of criminal corrections. These professionals seem to be at a consensus that rehabilitation and recidivism has strong interrelationship. The relationship is predicated on helping the inmates acquire the much needed social skills, vocational training, attitudinal and behavioural changes, and education that will help them not to relapse into criminal upon release. Abrifor *et al.* (2012) asserted that the frequency at which released inmates return to the correctional facility few months after discharge has drawn the attention and interest of criminologists, sociologists and scholars from other behavioural disciplines who now doubt the ideal function of the correctional centres. For example, statistics from Nigeria Correctional Service shows that over 60% of inmates are recidivists, and this is an indication that the correctional service as a reformatory or rehabilitation home has failed in correcting criminal behaviour of inmates, hence the high prevalence of criminal recidivism (Chukwumerije, 2012).

According to Ahmed & Ahmad (2015), the re-integration of the released inmates into the society is a task to almost all countries globally and hence the phenomenon of recidivism. The reason is that the rate of recidivism of a particular jurisdiction can be used to measure the effectiveness of the correctional and rehabilitation model. Therefore, a high recidivism rate connotes poor efficiency of the rehabilitation model; conversely, a low recidivism rate connotes high efficiency of the rehabilitation model (Ugwuoke, 2015). Ajah & Nweke (2017b) opined that Nigeria is yet to implement the United Nations minimum standard for the rehabilitation of inmates because functional correction-based prerequisites are grossly lacking in Nigeria Correctional Service. One common phenomenon in Nigeria Correctional Service is

inadequate rehabilitation facilities. As a result of this ugly and avoidable phenomenon, some inmates relapse into crime and criminality few months after their release (Alabi & Alabi, 2011).

Inmates without effective rehabilitation through skills training and capacity building usually returns to the society as a hardened enemy of the society. Such ex-convict is often full of desire for vengeance because he or she sees himself or herself as victimized rather than corrected. In addition, such an ex-convict is likely to do more harm than good to a society invariably perceived as an oppressive system. This condition explains to a very great extent why many ex-convicts end up as recidivists (Ugwuoke, 1994). Effective rehabilitation and reformation that are coupled with proper community reintegration follow up could prove effective in reducing the ever increasing rate of recidivism. Unfortunately, research has consistently shown that time spent in custodial centre does not successfully rehabilitate most inmates, and the majority of criminals return to a life of crime almost immediately (Ekpenyong & Undutimi, 2016).

The rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-convicts into the society has emerged as a key concern of the correctional system. High recidivism indicates that correctional service has not adequately prepared many inmates for life after release from correctional facility (Ganapathy, 2018). In other words, the performance of rehabilitation programmes to inmates will be realized after placing inmates on rehabilitation programmes offered in the correctional institutions which play vital role in reducing recidivism and successful re-integration of offenders back to the society. Rates of recidivism reflect the degree to which released inmates had been rehabilitated and the role correctional programmes offered (Papa, 2015). Generally, the universal picture points out that high rate of recidivism is as a result of inefficiency rehabilitation programmes performance. Some nations all over the world offer very good rehabilitation programmes and practices to decrease recidivism and successful re-integration of inmates back to the society.

#### 2.4 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study was rehabilitative theory. The theory was propounded by Jean Hampton in 1970. The ideas of rehabilitation through punishment were first embodied in the penitentiaries, built during the Jacksonian era of the

late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Reformers hoped that inmates would be kept in solitude, reflecting penitently on their sins in order that they might cleanse and transform themselves. This theory sees punishment from different points of view, that the aim of the penal system should be treatment and correction. For this theory, the means used to achieve treatment of inmates in custodial centres have also varied over time, beginning with silence, isolation, labor, and punishment, then moving onto medically based interventions including drugs and psychosurgery. More recently, educational, vocational, and psychologically based programmes, as well as specialized services for specific problems, have typically been put forward as means to rehabilitate inmates during their sentence (Omoni & Ijeh, 2009).

It is with this view that Dambazau (2007) noted that rehabilitation theory posits that inmate should be treated as an individual whose special needs and problems must be known in order to enable correctional officers to deal effectively with him/her. He also argued that one cannot inflict a severe punishment or inhuman treatment to inmates in the correctional system and expect them to be reformed and be reintegrating into the society upon release. Jean and Hampton however, contend that in the latter part of the nineteenth century, the penitentiary gave way to the reformatory, which attempted to rehabilitate offenders through educational and vocational training. Correctional Centres introduced a system of classification of inmates that allowed for individualized treatment. Inmates are expected to progress through graded stages, contingent on their conduct and performance in treatment programmes.

### 3. Research Methods

The exploratory design within the framework of the one-shot cross-sectional design was used, as it would ensure the designing of suitable pattern of gaining foundational information on a particular phenomenon and also provided an opportunity to spell out *nouveau* concepts and espouse existing ones. The target population of this study was all male and female convicted inmates in Oko medium security custodial centre, Benin custodial centre, Auchi female custodial centre, Auchi medium security custodial centre, Ubiaja custodial centre, ozalla custodial farm centre and Ogba custodial farm centre, all Edo State, Nigeria. The sample size for this study was 695 and it was represented in the table below.

**Table 1: Percentage Distribution of Sample Size According to Custodial Centres in Edo State**

Custodial Centres	Male	Female	Total Population of Convicts	Percentage of Total Population
Oko medium security custodial centre	295	4	299	43%
Benin custodial centre	161	5	166	23.8%
Ubiaja custodial centre	39	-	39	5.6%
Auchi medium security custodial centre	80	-	80	11.5%
Auchi female custodial centre	-	12	12	1.7%
Ozalla custodial farm centre	52	-	52	7.4%
Ogba custodial farm centre	47	-	47	6.7%
Total	674	21	695	100%

*Source: Operations Department, Nigeria Correctional Centre, Edo State Command, 2023*

The sampling technique that adopted for the quantitative study was stratified random sampling. The stratified random sampling ensures that the different strata or groups within a given population are proportionately represented. A semi-structured questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data needed for the study. The questionnaire was closed and opened ended questions and was divided into different sections to reflect the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents and the objectives of the study. The semi-structured questionnaire was analysed with the aid of the Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22. The analysis of the different categories of the quantitative data was done with frequencies, percentages, tables, charts, and cross tabulations.

### 3.1 Analysis of Nature and Types of Rehabilitation Programmes in Custodial Centres

**Table 2: Nature and Types of Rehabilitation Programmes**

Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Are there different types of rehabilitation programme in this custodial centre	Yes	530	76.3
	No	165	23.7
	Total	695	100
If yes name one rehabilitation programmes	Weaving	21	3.9
	Carpentering	88	16.6
	Tailoring	98	18.5
	Poultry	57	10.8
	Soap making	50	9.4
	Electrical	87	16.4
	Education programme	38	7.2
	Others	91	17.2
Total	530	100	
Did you find it difficult to access rehabilitation of your choice	Yes	274	39.4
	No	421	60.6
	Total	695	100
Are there facilities for convicts' rehabilitation in this custodial centre	Yes	429	61.7
	No	266	38.3
	Total	695	100
Are there convicts that enrolled in vocational training in this custodial centre	Yes	453	65.2
	No	242	34.8
	Total	695	100
Are there convict that enrolled in educational programme in this custodial centre	Yes	471	67.8
	No	224	32.2
	Total	695	100
Are there treatment programme for convicts with drug addiction, mental and sexual disorder in this custodial centre	Yes	370	53.2
	No	325	46.8
	Total	695	100
Are recreational activities available in this custodial centre	Yes	440	63.3
	No	255	36.7
	Total	695	100
Do convict complete rehabilitation programme beyond six 6 months	Yes	423	60.9
	No	272	39.1
	Total	695	100

*Source: Researcher's Survey, 2023*

From Table 2 above, majority of the respondents who affirmed that there were several forms of rehabilitation programmes in correctional institutions. The respondents further enumerated the different types of rehabilitation

programmes available; among the respondents who affirmed that there were various rehabilitation programmes, 3.9% of the respondents listed weaving, 16.6% of the respondents listed carpentering as rehabilitation programme. 18.5% of the respondents, representing an overwhelming number of the entire respondents, affirmed that tailoring, a widely accepted vocational training exists in the various custodial centres while 10.8% of the respondents' listed poultry as their vocational option.

Accordingly, 16.4% and 7.2% of the respondents who participated in this study listed electrical wiring and educational programme as one of the rehabilitation programmes available in the correctional centres respectively. While 17.2% of the sampled respondents listed other aspects of rehabilitation programmes such welding and fabrication, plumbing, life skills and hair plaiting. Meanwhile, 60.6% of the respondents representing 421 claimed that there was usually no difficulty in accessing the various programmes for convicts' rehabilitation in the custodial centres and conversely, 39.4% representing 274 of the respondents who participated in the study affirmed that there were difficulties in accessing the rehabilitation programmes in the custodial centres. On the issue of availability of rehabilitation facilities, a majority of the respondents representing 61.7% affirmed that facilities are availabilities for rehabilitation of convicts but also admitted that some of these facilities are relatively old. Conversely, 38.3% of the respondents claimed that there are no facilities for convicts' rehabilitation.

On whether there were convicts that enrolled in vocational and education programmes in the custodial centres. For vocational training, majority of the respondents, constituting 65.3% representing 453 of the respondents claimed that there were significant number of convicts on vocational training programmes and 34.8% of the respondents believed that convicts do not enrol in any of the vocational training in the custodial centres. Also, for education programmes, overwhelming number of the respondents representing 67.8% (471) agreed that some convicts who want to further their education do enroll in education programmes, certificate and tertiary admission examinations such as GCE, WAEC, NECO, NABTEB and JAMB. But on the contrary, 32.2% of the respondents claimed that convicts do not enroll in education programmes.

From Table 2 above, there were considerable number of convicts in custodial centres who suffers from drug addiction, mental and sexual disorders; and these behavioural and cognitive disorders instigated them to commit crime which brought them to custodial centres. An analysis of whether treatment programmes were available for such categories of convicts, 53.2% of the respondents stated that there were treatment programmes for convicts with behavioural and cognitive disorder while 46.8% asserted that there were no therapies administered to convicts with disorder in the custodial centres. The respondents who affirmed that there were therapies for behavioural and cognitive disorder for these categories convicts further listed some of the treatments for convicts with drug addiction, mental and sexual disorder to be behavioural counseling, medication, withdrawal method, skills training, and follow up.

As part of the reformation of the convicted inmates, the study elicited responses from respondents who participated in the study if there were recreational and sporting activities within the custodial centres to engage the convicts, 440 respondents representing 63.3% of the sampled population affirmed that recreational and sporting activities existed in the custodial centres. While 36.7% representing 272 believed that recreational and sporting activities do not exist in the custodial centres. In terms of convicts' completion of rehabilitation programmes, Table 2 above indicated that a cumulative majority (60.9%) of the respondents submitted that majority of the convicts who enrolled in various reformation programmes usually complete it beyond six months. But smaller proportion (39.1%) of the respondents affirmed that convicts do not complete their rehabilitation programmes beyond six months.

### 3.2 Analysis of Effectiveness of Rehabilitation Programmes on Convicts

**Table 3:** Effectiveness of Rehabilitation Programmes on Convicts

Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage
How would you rate the rehabilitation programmes?	Positive Rating	298	42.9
	Negative Rating	248	35.7
	No rating	149	21.4
	Total	695	100
Would you say these rehabilitation programme has effectively changed their lives?	Yes	391	56.3
	No	304	43.7
	Total	695	100
Which of this rehabilitation programme or treatment changed your life positively?	Education programme	103	14.8
	Vocational training	260	37.4

	Life skill training	100	14.4
	Mental health	95	13.7
	Cognitive behavioural Treatment	39	5.6
	None	98	14.1
	Total	695	100
Are these rehabilitation programmes properly funded?	Yes	240	34.5
	No	455	65.5
	Total	695	100

*Source: Researcher's Survey, 2023*

On the effectiveness of rehabilitation programmes on convicts, from Table 3 above, a majority of the respondents which constituted 298 (42.9%) respondents affirmed that the programmes have positive rating while 248 (35.7%) respondents claimed that the various rehabilitation in the custodial centres have negative rating. Meanwhile, 149 (21.4%) could not rate any of the rehabilitation programmes either positive or negative. With 56.3% of the respondents affirming that the rehabilitation programmes have effectively changed the lives of the convicts. The rehabilitation programmes have not effectively changed the lives of the convicts, this was the position of 43.7% of the respondents. On the types of the rehabilitation programmes or treatment that has changed the lives of the convicts, 14. % of the respondents affirmed that education programme has effectively changed the lives of some convicts in the custodial centre. By aggregate, majority of the respondents representing 37.4 claimed that vocational training programmes has also impact positively on the lives of convicts.

Furthermore, 14.4% of the respondents submitted that some convicts received life skill training such as anger management, resilience and ability to cope with problems, self-control, emotional intelligence, and decision making and problem solving. However, 13.7% of the respondents submitted that some convicts received treatment for mental related illness; 5.6% of the respondents also admitted that some convicts received cognitive behavioural treatment such as cognitive restructuring, guided discovery, exposure therapy, thought recording, relaxation stress reduction techniques and behavioural experiments and 14.1% of the respondents affirmed that none of the rehabilitation programmes has effectively changed the lives of convicts. On the aspect of funding of the rehabilitation programmes, 65.5% of the respondents claimed that the programmes in the custodial centres were poorly funded and 34.5% of the respondent admitted that the programmes were not poorly funded.

#### 4. Discussion of Findings

The study found out that there were different types of rehabilitation programmes in the custodial centres.

The availability of the array of rehabilitation programmes was to meet the rehabilitation needs of the convicts. The finding was supported by Uche et al (2015) who asserted that there were a lot of rehabilitation programmes convicts could participate in. The study discovered that convicts could access these programmes easily immediately they were admitted into the custodial centre.

It was also discovered in the study that a majority of the convicts enrolled overwhelmingly in different vocational trainings of their choice. However, a handful number of convicts who were desirous of pursuing their education in the custodial centre enrolled in various educational programmes available such as adult literacy and certificate programmes. This finding was corroborated by the assertion of Oladokun (2021) that more inmates in the various custodial centres across the country were indicating interest to further their education, having gone through several education reform programmes.

The study also found out that there were other life changing programmes or treatment within the custodial centres. The programmes were communication and life skill training, anger control, social skills, sexual disorder treatment, treatment for mental illness, cognitive and behavioural modifications etc. However, the study discovered from the majority of respondents (98.3%) that work-release programme, as part of rehabilitation programmes of custodial centres globally was not available in custodial centres in the study areas specifically and generally in custodial centres across the federation.

A majority of the respondents in entire sampled population unanimously agreed that the rehabilitation programmes available in the custodial centres has effectively change the lives of convicts in one way or the other. This finding was the submission of 56.3% of the respondents and it was supported by Ekpenyong & Undutimi (2016) who opined that majority of the respondents (62%) sampled in their study claimed that rehabilitation programmes successfully transformed the lives of inmates. Based on the confirmation of the majority (59.6%) of the respondents, the study

discovered that corrections or welfare officers in the various custodial centres in Edo State have always participated in the treatment or rehabilitation of convicts by correctives services, this finding was supported by Schaefer (2018).

## 5. Conclusion

The nature and types of rehabilitation programmes or services available were such a programmes designed to change the criminal behaviour convicted inmates to one that conforms to acceptable behaviours. According to United Nations Standard Minimum Rule for the treatment of inmates, Section 58 & 59 states that correctional centres across the globe are saddled with the responsibility of designing, initiating and implementing rehabilitation programmes to reform the inmates while in lawful custody, so as to live a law abiding and supporting life upon discharge. The most common of the programmes and services are vocational and educational programmes, social welfare, religious services, recreational activities, and the permission of communication between inmates and their families and friends.

The Nigerian Correctional Service has continued to offer various inmates rehabilitation programmes and vocational and educational training that would assist the inmates to reintegrate into the society and actively participate in lawful activities upon discharge. The skills acquired help the inmate to have a competitive advantage over others in gainful employment and eliminate the opportunities of returning to criminal life. The major purpose of acquiring skill while in custodial centre is to modify the inmates' behaviour by diverting their attention away from crime and focusing it on legitimate activities. Rehabilitation has become an integral part of inmates in most country including Nigeria. Unarguably, rehabilitation programmes reduce re-arrest, reconviction and re-incarceration of ex-convicts.

## 6. Recommendations

Based on the conclusion of this study, the following recommendations arise:

- Government should introduce prison work programme that allows inmates to take up paid job from the prison with electronic monitoring. This programme allows inmates to be busy and maintain work history and experience after release.
- Government and stakeholders in corrections help discharge convict to mitigate obstacles usually experienced by them by creating a

reintegration model that will discharge convicts to easily cope with others in the society.

- Government should plan empowerment for inmates before discharge. When inmates are eventually discharged, it will be easy for them to live successfully in the society, thereby preventing recidivism.
- There is a need to institutionalize contemporary rehabilitation programmes and facilities with international best practices, capable of reforming and rehabilitating convicted inmates with modern vocational and educational skills.
- Government should build modern custodial centres in the country. Most of the existing custodial centres in Nigeria are old because they were built during the colonial era. The existing ones can also be upgraded to meet custodial and rehabilitation goals.

## References

- Abrifor, C. A., Atere, A. A. & Muoghalu, C. O. (2012). Gender Differences, Trend and Pattern Recidivism among Inmates in Selected Nigerian Prisons. *European Scientific Journal*, Vol. 8 (24): 25–44.
- Aduba, N. (2012). Nigeria prison service reform agenda: Far from Reality, pp. 12-13
- Ahmed, A. M. & Ahmad, A. H. (2015). Prison, Stigma, Discrimination and Personality as Predictors of Criminal Recidivism: Preliminary Findings. *Journal of Social and Development Sciences*, 6 (2): 20-30.
- Ajah, B. O. & Nweke, J. O. (2017a). Prison Facilities and the Welfare of Inmates in Nigeria: A Study of Abakaliki and Awka Prisons. *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 35(3), 361-369.
- Alabi, T. & Alabi, S. O. (2011). The pains of imprisonment: A sociological analysis of the experiences of inmates in Ilorin and Kirikiri Prisons. *Journal of Research in Peace, Gender and Development*, 1 (8), 235-241.
- Ayuk, A. A., Owan, J. E. & Ekok, C.O. (2013). The Impact of prison reforms on the welfare of the inmates: A case study of Afokang prison, Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria. *Global Journal of Human Social Science, Sociology & Culture*, 13(2), 2-6
- Boetticher, A. & Feest, J. (2004). Johannes German Criminal and Prison Policy. In: Peter Tak/Manon Jendley (eds.) *Prison Policy and Inmates' Rights*. Nijmegen, 361-390.
- Boriboonthana, Y. & Waipo, M. N. (1999) *Rehabilitation Programmes in the Prison to*

- Prevent Inmates' Recidivism: The Actual Situation, Problems and Countermeasures (From UNAFEI Resource Material Series No. 54, P 360-390, 1999 – See NCJ-190077)
- Campbell, K. M. (2005). Rehabilitation Theory. Encyclopedia of Prisons & Correctional Facilities. SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Chappell, C. (2004). Post- Secondary Correctional Education and Recidivism: A Meta-Analysis of Research Conducted 1990-1999. *Journal of Correctional Education* 55(2) 148-69
- Chikwelu, N. E., Ajah, O. B., Egbegi, F. R. & Onyejebu, D. C. (2019). Across the Wall: The perception of rehabilitation, reformation and Reintegration Programmes in Anambra State Prison Command. *Journal of Law and Judicial System. Volume 2, 2019 pp. 3-22*
- Chukwudi, F. (2012). Challenges of reforms in the Nigerian prison system: lessons from the USA and South Africa. *Journal of Social Science and Public Policy*, 4 (9): 35–46.
- Chukwumerije, U. (2012). Explanatory memorandum on amendment of prison act. (On-line: <http://www.Senatorchukwumerije/id63html> Assessed 20/05/2020).
- Cullen, F. T., Smith, P., Lowenkamp, C. T., & Latessa, E. J. (2009). Nothing works: Deconstructing Farabee's Rethinking Rehabilitation. *Victims & Offenders*, 4, 101-123
- Dambazau, A. B. (2007). *Criminology and Criminal Justice* (2nd Ed.). Kaduna: Nigeria Defence Academy Press.
- David, J. H., Jessica, J. B. W., Cheyney, D. & Jeffrey, D. M. (2014). Making Ends Meet after Prison. *J Policy Anal Manage. Spring*; 33(2): 440–470.
- Ekpenyong, N. S., & Undutimi, J. D. (2016). Prisons Rehabilitation Programmes in Nigeria: A study of inmates' perception in Okaka Prison, Bayelsa State. *Studies in Sociology of Science*, 7(6), 1-12.
- Esiri, M. O. (2016). The Upsurge of Recidivism and the Penitentiary Institutions in Nigeria. *International Journal of Business and Social Science Vol. 7, No. 6; 184-193*
- Ganapathy, N. (2018). Rehabilitation, reintegration and recidivism: a theoretical and methodological reflection. *Asia Pacific Journal of Social Work* 28(3);1-14
- Holzer, H.J.S. and Raphael, M.A.S. (2003). Employment Barriers Facing Ex-Offenders, Urban Institute Reentry Roundtable, Employment Dimensions of Reentry: Understanding the Nexus between Prisoner Reentry and Work, New York University Law School.
- Huber, A. (2016). "Women in Criminal Justice Systems and the Added Value of the UN Bangkok Rules." In *Women and Children as Victims and Offenders: Background–Prevention–Reintegration*, edited by H. Kury, S. Redo and E. Shea, 35-84. New York: Springer.
- Igbinovia, P. E & Omorogiuwa, T. B. E. (2019). The Prison Rehabilitation Programmes and their Effects on Inmates in Benin City Prisons, Nigeria. *International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology Research, Volume 5(1), pp. 23-31*
- Igbo, E. U. M. (2007). *Introduction to Criminology*. Nsukka: University of Nigeria Press Ltd.
- Ikoh, M. U. (2011). Nigerian Prison System and The Failure of Rehabilitation: An Examination of Incarceration Alternatives. The Nigerian Academic Forum 20 No. 1
- Lambert, E. G., Hogan, N. L., Barton, S. & Stevenson, M. T. (2007). An evaluation of change, a pilot prison cognitive treatment program. *Journal of Articles in Support of the Null Hypothesis*, 5(1), 1-18.
- Lynch, J. P. & Sabol, W. J. (2001). Inmate Reentry in Perspective: Crime Policy Report. Washington, DC: Urban Institute, Justice Policy Center.
- McAree, T. (2011). Inmate rehabilitation in South Africa: A case study of Phoenix Zululand's work in Eshowe correctional facilities.
- Michels, I. I., Stöver, H. & Gerlach, R. (2007). Substitution Treatment for Opioid Addicts in Germany. *Harm Reduction*; 4:5
- Muasya, J. K. (2013). Impact of Prison Rehabilitation Programmes on Self Sustainability of Ex-Convicts: A Case of Thika Sub-County, Kenya. Unpublished Research Project Report Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Award of Degree of Master of Arts in Project Planning and Management, University of Nairobi.
- Nigeria Correctional Service Act (2019). Part I: Functions of the Custodial Service.
- Obioha, E. E. (2011). Challenges of Reforms in the Nigerian Prison System. Pretoria Press, South Africa.
- Oduyela, S. (2013). Prisons of Horror. Nigeria world. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 10(1):40-47
- Okoro, O. M. (2000). Advances in Programme theory, new direction in Programme Evaluation. Uruowulu-Obosi: Pacific Publishers
- Oladokun, R. (2021). 20 Inmates to Write UTME at Ikoyi Custodial Centre. The Nation Newspaper, April 23<sup>rd</sup>

- Oluyemi, A. S. & Norma, M. N. (2014). Recidivism and Emotional Intelligence of Male Recidivists in Lagos State, Nigeria. *Journal of Psychology, 5(2): 115-124 (2014)*
- Omoni, G. E. & Ijeh, S. U. (2009). Qualitative education for inmates: A panacea to effective rehabilitation and integration into the society. *Edo Journal of Counselling, 2(1), pp. 28-37*
- Onyekachi, J. (2016). Problems and Prospects of Administration of Nigerian Prison: Need for Proper Rehabilitation of the Inmates in Nigeria Prisons. *Journal of Tourism & Hospitality, Volume 5, No. 4, p. 228*
- Opafunso, Z. O. & Adepoju, O. O. (2016). Prison reforms system and inmates' welfare in Nigeria. *Arts and Social Science Journal, 7 (1), p.166*
- Orakwe, I. W. (2013). Reform and Rehabilitation of Inmates: Achievements and Challenges. A paper presented at the National Summit on Penal Reform and Prison Decongestion, Abuja.
- Papa, E. (2015). Factors Influencing Rehabilitation Programmes Performance and Recidivism of Male Inmates. A Case of Gk Prison in Kisii County, Kenya. Unpublished Master in Art in Project Planning and Management, University of Nairobi, Kenya
- Payne J 2007. Recidivism in Australia: Findings and Future Research. *Research and Policy Series No. 80. Canberra, Australia: Australia Institute of Criminology.*
- Raynor, P. & Robinson, G. (2009). "Why Help Offenders? Arguments for Rehabilitation as a Penal Strategy". *European Journal of Probation, 1(1):3-20.*
- Sanda, M. U. & Abba, M. (2015). Effect of Planning in Vocational and Technical Education: A Strategy for Poverty Reduction among Adults in Nigeria. *Bayero Journal of Education in Africa: 4(1), 279 – 290*
- Rice, E. (2006). *Assessment of Quality Vocational Education in State Prisons*, Executive Final Report.
- Schaefer, L. (2018). Correcting the "Correctional Component of the Corrections Officers Role: How Offender Custodial Can Contribute to Rehabilitation and Reintegration. *Journal of Corrections, Policy, Practice and Research 3(1), 38-55*
- Scheirs, V. (2016). Doing Reintegration: The Quest for Reintegration in Belgian Sentence Implementation. *European Journal of Probation 8(2):82-101.*
- Stephen J. S. & Linda, G. S. (2003). Education Reduces Crime: Three State Recidivism Study, Centerville, UT: Management and Training Corporation.
- Sutton, H., Veyrat-Pontet, A. & Fielding, W. (2016). A Collection of Papers Arising from Survey of Inmates at the Bahamas Department of Correctional Services Facility at Fox Hill, University of Bahamas
- Tanimu, B. (2010). Nigeria Convicts and Prison Rehabilitation Ideals. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa. 12 (3), 140-152.*
- Tenibiaje, D. J. (2013). Educational attainment and peer group influence as predictors of recidivism. *International Review of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vol. 5 (1): 30-37.*
- Uche, I. B., Uche, O., Ezumah, N. N., Ebue, M. O., Okafor, A. E., & Ezegebe, B. N. (2015). Effectiveness of Rehabilitation Programmes in the Nigerian Prison: A Study of Perception of Inmates in Enugu Prison. *Mediterranean Journal Social Sciences, 6, No 4, pp. 1164-170*
- Ugwuoke, C. U. (1994). Recidivism in Nigerian Prisons: A Case Study of Enugu Prison. M.Sc. thesis, Department of Sociology/ Anthropology, University of Nigeria, Nsukka
- Ugwuoke, K. A. (2015). An Aetiological Study of Criminal Recidivism in Nigeria. *Journal for Studies in Management and Planning, 1(11): 1-13*
- Wilson H 2009. Curbing Recidivism in Our Society. From <[http://www.pioneering.com/article.php?title=Curbing\\_Recidivism\\_In\\_Our\\_Society&id=2765](http://www.pioneering.com/article.php?title=Curbing_Recidivism_In_Our_Society&id=2765)> (Retrieved on 10 February 2023).