

EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE INDEX OF SKILL ACQUISITION AVAILABLE AND LIFE CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH INCARCERATED JUVENILES IN SELECTED CORRECTIONAL CENTRES IN KOGI STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluated the performance index of skill acquisition available and life challenges associated with incarcerated juveniles in selected correctional centres in Kogi state. Juvenile structured questionnaire (JSQ) were used to collect data from three hundred and seventy two (372) respondents derived from staff and incarcerated juvenile. Purposive sampling technique was adopted for incarcerated juvenile, and random sampling was done for staff. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, mean and standard deviation. Findings on skill acquisition available showed a negative performance index for education (0.49), sport (0.42), carpentry/welding (0.46), building/design (0.35), electrical/mechanical (0.50), fashion & styles (0.52) and business (0.46), except moral teachings based on religious beliefs (1.00). Results of life challenges associated with incarcerated juveniles revealed that, peer pressure (\bar{X} 5.00), lack of meeting basic needs and physical support (\bar{X} 4.26), inadequate family care and financial support (\bar{X} 4.06), over-bearing/parenting (\bar{X} 3.95), threat from other relatives (\bar{X} 3.70), aggressiveness and heightened emotionality (\bar{X} 3.84) accounted more. In conclusion, correctional centres in Kogi state lack adequate skill acquisition programmes for an ideal rehabilitation of incarcerated juvenile. These inadequacies show the need for social rehabilitation programme for juvenile correctional centres. The study therefore recommends that, to equip juveniles and convicted inmates with the necessary survival skills after incarceration, there is need to revisit and develop a functional skill acquisition programmes for proper rehabilitation on how this juveniles inmates can be re-integrated into the society well prepared to live a life after correction.

Keywords: Skill Acquisition, Life challenges, Juvenile, Incarceration, Rehabilitation

INTRODUCTION

A skill can be described as a talent or ability an individual possesses and this could be acquired through wilful personal experiences, training, observation and practice. Skill acquisition on the other hand involves the development of a new skill, practice or a way of doing things usually gained through training or experience. It creates employment thereby eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. Therefore, for an incarcerated juveniles to be re-integrated into the society well prepared to live a life after correction, the availability of functional skills acquisition during incarceration and rehabilitation becomes imperative. But it appears that, in almost every aspect of the juvenile justice system dealing with children in Nigeria is in conflict with the law, from arrest until final disposition. The well-being, welfare and best interests of young offenders are not adequately preserved and protected. The reasons range from outdated legislation to poorly trained and insufficient personnel, inadequate facilities and lack of resources (Adegoke, 2015). While the important first step of legislative reform has been embarked upon, the other problems still loom large.

Regrettably, the state of basic requirements for an ideal social rehabilitation programmes is unclear. These are the resources that could remedy, heal or bring a turn-around in the psyche or lives of these unfortunate children. For instance, Aregbshola (2021), report that despite Nigeria's legal framework and stated commitment to international charters and conventions to protect young offenders, their rights are being consistently negated. More children who should have been reformed are either traumatized or hardened in crime. Many studies have revealed that victims of juvenile delinquency are associated with faulty family structures and other societal life challenges. According to Piccinini., Alvarenga and Marin (2014), in a study on child-rearing practices of Brazilian mothers and fathers: predictors and impact on child development discovered that delinquent behaviour come from excessive focus on proposed goals (achieving success) coupled with insufficient means to achieve these goals. In a similar study, Faisal and Muhammed (2012) worked on juvenile delinquency and family environment in Jordan, indicating that environmental variables like size of the family, economic deprivation, parental deprivation, family discipline, inter parental relationship, child – parent relationship and parental acceptance – rejection, play an important and effective role in the developmental growth of personality as well as social behavior of the delinquents. Parental style was also identified as one of the largest predictors of juvenile delinquency as it describes the attitudes and behaviors that parents express while raising their children (Bi, Yang, Li, Wang, Zhang & Deater, 2018)).being breached by those very people responsible for enforcing them.

Usman, Kenneth and Rabiah, (2023), identified deficient entrepreneurial training facilities and poor funding as the major factors affecting entrepreneurial training of inmates in correctional centers in Nigeria. The Beijing Rules (2015), state clearly that “children in custody shall receive care, protection and all necessary individual assistance; social, educational, vocational, psychological, medical and physical that they may require in view of their age, sex and personality”. These requirements demand sufficient infrastructure, as well as facilities to assist the access to families and any external professional support that may be involved in the care, rehabilitation and reintegration of children back into their communities full of challenges.

The damage done to victims of juvenile delinquency, occasioned by challenges associated with incarceration could be reversed only if the correctional centres are pro-active and vibrant and that could bar offenders from a recurrence crimes committed. This again, brings to the fore, the need to explore the status of the social rehabilitation programmes and facilities. While many studies have focused on the causes of juvenile delinquency in Kogi state, there is a paucity of research on performance index of skill acquisition available in correctional centres in Kogi state. This study aims to fill this gap by investigating the availability and functionality of skill acquisition provided in correctional centres in Kogi State, with a view of proffering more potent rehabilitation strategies.

Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the performance index of skill acquisition available and life challenges associated with incarcerated juveniles in selected correctional centres in Kogi State. The specific objectives are to:

1. investigate skill acquisition available in all the selected correctional centres in Kogi state.
2. identify life challenges associated with incarcerated juveniles in all the selected correctional centres in Kogi State.
3. determine the basic juvenile rehabilitation requirements for a social programme in selected correctional centres in Kogi state.

Research Questions:

1. What are the skill acquisition available in all the selected correctional centres in Kogi state?
2. What are the challenges associated with incarcerated juveniles in all the selected correctional centres in Kogi State?
3. What are the basic juvenile rehabilitation requirements for a social programme in selected correctional centres in Kogi state?

METHODOLOGY

Design of the Study: The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design. It measures the outcome and the exposures in the study participants at the same time (Maninder, 2016).

Area of Study: The study was conducted in the six local governments' correctional centres (Ankpa, Dekina, Idah, Okene, Kabba and Kotonkarifi) in Kogi state. This local government were chosen because of the frequency of juveniles' related crimes and poor juvenile rehabilitation within correctional facilities.

Population of the Study: The total population of the study comprised of all the 87 juveniles incarcerated and 1,051 staff in Kogi correctional centres (NCS, 2022).

Sample of the Study: Purposive sampling technique was used to select incarcerated juveniles and a random sampling technique was used to select Staff of these correctional centres across each of the six local government sample size determination was not performed for juveniles because of the limited population size. The sample size for the study was all the 87 juveniles incarcerated and awaiting trial in Kogi correctional centres. Sample size of 285 staff has been obtained from the chart developed by Krejcie & Morgan (1970). A total of 372 including juvenile inmates and staff were used.

Instrument for Data Collection: Juvenile structured questionnaire (JSQ) was developed after an extensive literature review based on the objectives of the study. It was developed into three sections to address each of the objectives. Section 'A' identified skill acquisition available in correctional centres. Section 'B' identified life challenges associated with incarcerated juveniles 'C' identified basic requirements for a good rehabilitation centre. Some items were made of 5-point Likert response scale of preference including, 5(Agree=SA), 4(Agree=A), 3(Undecided = UD), 2(Disagree=D) and 1(Strongly Disagree=SD). Some scaled into 3 scale of preference including; 3(available /functional); 2(available /not functional); 1(unavailable).

The questionnaire was validated by three experts, (one child development specialist and two correctional service staff.). Reliability indices of .820 was obtained using Cronbach's alpha.

Data Collection Technique: Preliminary visits were made to the selected correctional centres to obtain permission/ ethical approval to conduct the study. During the visits, a letter of introduction and approval of research was used to seek permission to conduct the study. This visit enabled the researcher to identify the contact persons and research assistants (admin staff of the facility) were briefed on the data collection process. Data collection was conducted between July and August, 2022. 400 Questionnaires were administered and collected back on spot. Out of which 372 correctly filled were selected and used.

Data Analysis Techniques: Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequencies, mean and standard deviation SD. The decision rule of mean above 3.00 taken as agreed while less than 3.00 was taken as disagreed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Table 1: Respondents Mean Rating on Skill Acquisition Available in Correctional Centres in Kogi State

S/N	Skills	Items	Mean	Std	GM	IM
A	Educational	1. Schooling	2.43	0.50	1.48	0.49
		2. Debate	1.00	0.00		
		3. Speech writing	1.00	0.00		
B	Sport	1. Football	2.30	0.46	1.27	0.42
		2. Lawn tennis	1.30	0.00		
		3. Handball	1.00	0.00		
		4. Athletics	1.00	0.00		
		5. Volleyball	1.00	0.00		
C	Carpentry and Welding	6. Basket ball	1.00	0.00	1.39	0.46
		1. Roofing	1.96	0.18		
		2. Lumbering	1.97	0.18		
		3. Metal fabrication	1.04	0.18		
		4. Metal/Aluminium Doors and Windows Construction	1.00	0.00		
D	Building / Design	5. Smash Repairer	1.00	0.00	1.05	0.35
		1. Mencing	1.07	0.26		
		2. Block moulding	1.07	0.00		
E	Electrical / Mechanical	3. Graphic Designer	1.00	0.26	1.51	0.50
		1. Wiring	2.00	0.00		
		2. Vulcanizer	1.00	0.00		
		3. Motor/ Bike Repairer	2.00	0.00		
F	Fashion and Styles	4. Solar panel installation	1.04	0.18	1.56	0.52
		1. Fashion designer	2.60	0.49		
		2. Modelling	1.10	0.39		
		3. Barbing	2.40	0.61		
		4. Embroidery	1.13	0.50		
		5. Over lucking	1.07	0.37		
		6. Knitting	1.00	0.00		

G	Business	7. Weaving	1.18	0.46		
		8. Laundry	2.47	0.50		
		9. Hair stylist	1.60	0.56		
		10. Make-up artist	1.00	0.00		
		1. Cooking	2.89	0.41		
		2. Cake design	1.00	0.00		
		3. Shoe making	1.00	0.00		
		4. Bead making	1.04	0.18		
		5. Farming	1.92	0.51	1.39	0.46
		6. Tiller	1.00	0.00		
H	Moral Education Based on Religious Beliefs	7. Bole Hole Digging	1.22	0.60		
		8. Photographing	1.00	0.00		
		1. Islamic Preaching	3.00	0.00		
		2. Christian Preaching	3.00	0.00	3.00	1.00

Key: Std. = Standard Deviation; GM= Grand mean, IM= Index mean

Results from table1 shows that education (GM=1.48; IM=0.49), Sports (GM=1.27; IM=0.42), reflecting fairly available and but poor functionality. Also carpentry and welding (GM1.39; IM= 0.46), building / design (GM=1.05; IM= 0.35), electrical / mechanical (GM=1.51; IM= 0.50), Fashion and Style (GM=1.56; IM=0.52), business (GM=1.39; IM= 0.46) having poor availability and almost zero overall functionality. Only Moral education (GM=3.00; IM=1.00) that is having excellent availability and overall functionality.

Table 2: Respondents Mean Rating on the challenges of Incarcerated Juveniles in Kogi State

S/No	Challenges	Mean	Std	Remark
1.	Financial challenges	4.06	1.60	Agreed
2.	Lack of Family support	3.90	1.55	Agreed
3.	Poor Self esteem	2.56	1.63	Agreed
4.	Lack of Home Care	3.64	1.68	Agreed
5.	Aggressiveness and Heightened Emotionality	3.84	1.48	Agreed
6.	Poor Schooling	2.33	1.82	Disagreed
7.	Joblessness	1.00	0.00	Disagreed
8.	Lack of Basic Needs and Physical Support	4.26	1.32	Agreed
9.	Poor Parents Background	2.87	2.01	Agreed
10.	Poor Housing and Living off the Street	2.40	1.79	Disagreed
11.	Peer Pressure	5.00	0.00	Agreed
12.	Over-bearing / Parenting	3.95	1.28	Agreed
13.	Natural Disaster	1.18	0.84	Disagreed
14.	Poor Health	1.18	0.84	Disagreed
15.	Lack of Access to Quality and Enough Food	2.38	1.81	Disagreed
16.	Threat from other Relatives	3.70	1.50	Agreed
17.	Migration	1.18	0.84	Disagreed

Table 2 result revealed that Peer Pressure (\bar{x} 5.00; SD=0.00), lack of meeting their basic needs and physical support (\bar{x} 4.26, SD= 1.32) accounted for the highest life challenges of these incarcerated. While financial support (\bar{x} 4.06; SD=1.60), over-bearing/ parenting (\bar{x} 3.95; SD=1.28), lack of family support (\bar{x} 3.90; SD=1.55), threats from other relatives (\bar{x} 3.70; SD=1.50), aggressiveness and heightened emotionality (\bar{x} 3.84; SD=1.48) accounted for the lowest.

Table 3: Respondents Mean Rating on Basic Requirements in Planning Rehabilitation Programmes for incarcerated Juveniles in Kogi State

S/No	Basic Requirements	Mean	Std.	Remark
1.	Provision of Juvenile Justice system	4.37	0.34	Agreed
2.	Observation homes or special homes at many correctional centres	4.60	0.49	Agreed
3.	Adequate counsellors	4.77	0.42	Agreed
4.	Adequate psychiatrists	4.54	0.50	Agreed
5.	Medical personnel	4.64	0.37	Agreed
6.	Trained social workers	4.97	0.18	Agreed
7.	Provision of physical infrastructures	4.66	0.47	Agreed
8.	Clean and spacious environment	4.78	0.42	Agreed
9.	Adequate equipment and tools	4.69	0.46	Agreed
10.	Proper funding	4.84	0.37	Agreed
11.	Design should be convenient with peaceful features that allow rehabilitation	4.70	0.46	Agreed
12.	Optional acquisition skills availability	4.95	0.25	Agreed

Table 3 displayed the results of respondents mean rating on basic requirements to be included in planning rehabilitation programmes for incarcerated juveniles in Kogi state. All the 12 items were readily acceptable with optional acquisition skills availability (\bar{x} 4.95; SD= 0.25) topping and provision of juvenile justice system (\bar{x} 4.37; SD= 0.34) becoming lowest.

Discussion

Data results of the respondents on skill acquisition available in correctional centers in Kogi state revealed that, apart from moral education teachings based on religious beliefs, that were available and functional in all the correctional centres, every other skills acquisition activities were either available but not functional [education (GM=1.48; IM=0.49), Sports (GM=1.27; IM=0.42)] or not available and not functional [carpentry and welding (GM1.39; IM= 0.46), building / design (GM=1.05; IM= 0.35), electrical / mechanical (GM=1.51; IM= 0.50), Fashion and Style (GM=1.56; IM=0.52), business (GM=1.39; IM= 0.46)]. This findings are similar to the results of the work done by Benjamin and Joshua (2017) who studied the challenges of vocational training of prison inmates in Nigeria: a study of Abakaliki and Awka correctional centres.

The results revealed that, the following vocational facilities do not exist in most Nigerian correctional systems: barbing and hair dressing saloon (52.1%), auto repairs and mechanics (79.5%), shoe making (65.8%), fashion designing (84.0%), carpentry and electrical repairs (91.2% respectively). Also, the recreational facilities that were lacking include: table tennis (64.8%), basketball (77.6%) and volleyball (84.7%). The report further showed that the only recreational facility available is football (82.4%). This shows clearly that Kogi state correctional centres and Nigerian by extension lacks adequate and basic functional skill acquisition facilities for good social rehabilitation of inmates.

Data on life challenges associated with incarcerated juveniles in Kogi state revealed peer pressure (\bar{x} 5.00; SD=0.00) and lack basic needs and physical support from the family (\bar{x} 4.26, SD= 1.32 topping. This is similar to the work done by Aronson, Wilson and Akert (2013), who investigated whether a group could influence an individual's behavior revealed that peer group deviant behavior can influence an adolescent to engage in similar activities. It was also observed that once an adolescent becomes part of a group, they become susceptible to peer pressure and pleasure. Also, Eremie, Ogechinyere and Augustine (2019) reported from a study on the influence of parental involvement on adolescents' juvenile delinquency in Ahiazu-Mbaisi Local Government Area of Imo State: Implication for Counseling, found that, poor family environment prevailed among the families of delinquent adolescents when compared with the positive family atmosphere among the non-delinquent behaviour of adolescent families. The results further revealed that poor family environment was marked by family fights, less communication with the father, alcoholism, and incompetency in dealing with adolescent delinquent behaviour. This is an evident that families who fail to support their children with basic necessity of life will definitely witness their children finding shelter somewhere to survive. This can force children to join bad gang who will in turn become leaders and mentors of other bad groups.

The result on basic requirements for rehabilitation programmes for incarcerated juveniles in Kogi training social workers (\bar{x} 4.97) came highest as the best requirement for juvenile rehabilitation. Training and retraining is one of the sure ways of improving skills with individuals shouldered with responsibilities to provide adequate rehabilitation and intervention programmes. Training and retraining is the surest way to catch up with new technology. Similar results were reported by Hassan and Rosly (2021) who worked on juvenile inmates who enrolled in vocational education and training in correctional institutions found that, majority of participants hold more positive beliefs about vocational education and training that the institutions made available were good.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results showed serious inadequacies of functional skill acquisition requirements for an ideal social rehabilitation programme for juvenile in correctional centres in Kogi State and Nigeria in general. These inadequacies have serious implications for the social rehabilitation programmes. Based on findings from this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Government should provide functional and optional skill acquisitions facilities that will be adequate for rehabilitation programmes in correctional centres in Kogi state.
2. Adequate training and retraining should be organized periodically and experts be invited to teach basic managerial skills based on juveniles personal unique characteristics for correctional centres staff saddled with the responsibility of rehabilitating incarcerated juveniles in Kogi state.
3. Parents should be interested in knowing the kinds of friends their wards keep.
4. Government should arrest and prosecute parents who fail in their responsibilities of providing the basic necessities of life for their children.

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