



Prison Education or Correctional Education in Nigeria

Halima Sarkinfada

*Department of Educational Foundations Usmanu Danfodiyo University Sokoto, Nigeria
halimafada@gmail.com*

Adamu Dauda Garba

*Sociology Department Federal University Wukari, Nigeria
daudaadamu37@gmail.com*

Abstract: This paper discussed the challenges facing prison education or correctional education in Nigeria's correctional centres. Secondary data obtained from print and online publications were used for the paper. The paper concluded that poor funding, inadequate infrastructure facilities, shortage of facilitators/teachers, lack of instructional materials, poor support from religious institutions and non-organization institutions and poor implementation of education policies. To address these problems, the paper recommended the following: The federal, state and local government should capture funding of prison education in the budget. The government and private institutions should provide adequate instructional materials in all the correctional centres. This will help to improve quality of education in the centres. The religious institutions, private institutions, international non-organization, Philanthropists and donors should be invited to wholly support the prison education by providing educational resources like a well-equipped classroom with computers and state-of-the-art chairs, computer system, laptops, and tables for learning. The government should direct some companies to invest their Corporate Social Responsibilities on prison education for inmates. The government should provide avenue for those inmates who have completed their education to be given jobs.

Keywords: Prison Education.

Introduction

The Nigerian Correctional Service (NCoS) is saddled with managing the rehabilitation process of inmates. These inmates are expected to rejoin the society at the expiration of their term. The reform in the Nigerian Prison service introduced the Nigerian Correctional Service Act to infuse new life into the system. One of the significant changes in the law was a new nomenclature for the Nigerian Prison Service. The service has several developmental programmes for inmates targeted at their rehabilitation and reintegration into the society. One of the objectives of Nigerian Correctional Service Act in Section 2(1) (c) is to enhance the focus on corrections and promotion of reformation, rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders. Section 10 (g) empowers inmates through the deployment of educational and vocational skills training programmes, facilitating incentives and income generation through custodial centres farms and industries. The new Act in section 14(1) of the Act, stated that correctional service shall provide opportunities for education, vocational training as well as training in modern farming techniques and animal husbandry for inmates.

Education have been defined as Education involves the organisation of men or women, ideas and information; materials and the environment in special ways with the objective of achieving certain goals, such as the inculcation of certain values, skills and attitudes in the selected individuals. It is a

very complex process which involves teaching and learning, learners and teachers, curricular materials and strategies all of which take place in specialised environments called schools (NOUN, 2012).

Education is generally accepted as a process of transmitting the cultural heritage, stabilizing the present and improving or changing the future. It promotes development – cognitively, affectively and psychomotively.

Education is generally classified as a social service which is rendered to the citizens as a matter of right by any serious government. The issue of education is almost second to none among the services which a government renders to her citizens. At the lower levels of education, many well-meaning nations provide education freely and compulsorily for the younger citizens. That is why you often hear of universal primary education; free primary education; education for all, special education for some categories of the population; and very often non-formal and continuing education for some adults who missed the opportunity for education when they were younger (NOUN, 2012). (NOUN 2011) Education is a process, a vehicle and a means. It is, for instance, a process of acquiring knowledge of some basic facts of life; it is a vehicle or means by which a generation transmits to its succeeding generation, its cherished cultural and associated values considered for positive development. Furthermore, education can also be conceptualised as connoting and meaning some positive commodity, the quantum, stock or level of such knowledge and experience that is acquired. The knowledge and experience including the skills acquired makes him a capital, that is, human capital.

Education can take place in any institutions and organization. Education in the prison or Correctional education is coined prison education or Correctional education. It is an organized education provide for interested inmates while in the prison or Correctional centres. According to Yinka (2018), the Nigerian correctional service has education programmes for inmates at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. "We have teachers and officials who teach inmates. There are schools with classrooms inside the custodial centres. The schools are provided for those interested depending on how many years of imprisonment. The service provides the enabling environment, including encouraging inmates to invest their time in developing themselves through education. Prison education program allows inmates to learn "pro-social norms" by providing an enclave removed from the "criminal subculture" predominant. Interacting with educators can familiarize inmates with the norms and beliefs that law-abiding citizens observe. At the same time, it also reduces the feeling of alienation that inmates tend to experience while in prison. The resulting improvement in social skills can make it easier for inmates to find and hold a job upon release, which in turn reduces their likelihood of re-offending or returning to crime (Taib, 2012; Jovanić, 2011; Jovanić et al., 2019). Also, Ajufo, & Osiyemi, (Undated) submitted that education of the inmates in the prison yard is a necessity for two reasons. Firstly, every eligible citizen of Nigeria has right to education, Incarceration in the prison cannot erode such right in as much as the citizenship of such inmates is not questionable. Secondly, Learning is only possible through Education. If prison is to serve actually correctional function of the life of the inmates, education in the prison is important and should gain the attention of the government. Knowledge is acquired or imparted through education. The inmates need to be trained toward correcting some of the fundamental blunder or notion imbibed in life that put them into problem.

Educational programmes are crucial if men and women in prison are to be helped toward a productive life instead of a return trip to prison. It is important to note that inmates who improve their educational levels are infinitely less liable to commit new crimes upon release (Ajufo, & Osiyemi, Undated).

The Objectives of educational programmes to Inmates according to Ajufo, & Osiyemi, (Undated) include; to improve inmates' academic and vocational skills; to assist inmates in becoming responsible and productive citizens in the society; to change inmates' attitudes regarding work and responsibility; to prepare inmates for the competitive job market they will face upon release; to promote inmates' self-confidence which will stand them in good stead when they leave prison and to prepare inmates for a successful life after release from prison. For Ogbaka et al., (2017) there are three main objectives of prison education at the primary level, which cut across different views of the purpose of the criminal justice system. These include keeping inmates meaningfully busy, causing a change in their attitude

and behavior, and opening up employment opportunities through vocational skills, further education, and training. Ajufo, & Osiyemi, (Undated) concluded that Education has a key role in rehabilitating prisoners into the society and helping them to secure employment. With 80 percent of prisoners functionally illiterate, the best crime prevention programme of all is education. Educational programme is a necessary viable and positive component of the rehabilitation programme for inmates since it does not involve additional security risks.

There are many challenges facing prison education or correctional education in the Nigerian correctional centres. It is very important to examine some of the problems affecting the development of prison education or correctional education in Nigeria.

Challenges facing Prison Education or Correctional Education in Nigeria

There are many challenges hindering development of prison education or correctional education in Nigeria. Some of these challenges includes; poor funding, inadequate infrastructure facilities, shortage of facilitators/teachers, lack of instructional materials, poor support from religious institutions and non-organization institutions and poor implementation of education policies

Poor Funding

The major issue in providing educational services in the various is correctional centres across Nigeria is shortage of funds. One of the most serious problems threatening the development of quality education service is that of dwindling level of funding available for funding educational services. This shortage of funds affects education services provision in the various institutions across the federation. Educational services in correctional centres cannot achieve its objectives optimally without funding. This situation of poor funding of education in the centres calls for increased fund initiative from both the government and educational stakeholders. The inability of the Nigerian government to objectively provide adequate funds for implementation of educational services in the correctional is hampering the development of education in the various centres. Generally, investment in education both at federal, states and local government level is low and below the recommendation of UNESCO 15% to 20% of annual budget. Guardian (2020) quoted Iwuagwu who concluded that it is common knowledge that the country's educational system is grossly underfunded. According to him, ASUU's protracted faceoff with government on its refusal to honour the agreement reached with the union is one of the clear indication of problems facing the sector.

Inadequate Infrastructure facilities

Shortage of infrastructure facilities is a major project in majorities of correctional centres in Nigeria. (Ogunode 2020) defined infrastructural facilities as to facilities aiding delivery of academic and non-academic services in educational institutions. Infrastructural facilities include; libraries, laboratories, halls, offices, administrative blocks, hostels, roads facilities, water, electricity, internet etc. The availability of the infrastructural facilities in adequate quantities will support effective administration of educational institutions and the inadequacies will prevent effective administration of educational institutions. It has been observed that many correctional centres in Nigeria are in shortage of facilities in their correctional centres. Guardian (2020) quoted Alabidun who was interviewed on the problems facing education of correctional centres, He observed that there are no schools or library structures in some of the correctional centres. Also, Ajah, & Joshua (2017) did a study on challenges facing vocational training of Prison Inmates in Nigeria and discovered that the Nigerian prison system also lacks the following educational facilities: library (95.7%) and teaching aids (97.7%). A survey of the Nigeria prison, reported in of Friday June 26,1998 the Vanguard and cited by Ajufo, & Osiyemi, (Undated) concluded that the Nigeria prisons provision of facilities a near impossible feat, facilities for rehabilitation of prisoners, which is a major reason for imprisonment, are virtually lacking or grossly inadequate. Sarkinfada, (2013); Sarkinfada, (2011) and Ismaila, (2020) on availability of Reformatory Education programmes for prisoners in North West Nigeria and discovered that there is no adequate infrastructure facilities in some

Shortage of Facilitators/Teachers

Shortage of professional teachers in the various correctional centres across Nigeria has militated against development of correctional education in the various correctional centres in Nigeria. Ogunode & Paul (2021) observed that the teacher is an important figure in the realization of the objectives of educational institutions. The teacher is responsible for the training and production of manpower for the social, economic and technological advancement while *Sarkinfada, & Multafu, (2022)*; *Sarkinfada, & Kyari, (2022)*; *Atiga & Ogunode (2021)* opined that teachers are the implementers of school curriculum. Teacher's functions include teaching, preparing lesson notes and lesson plans, evaluating the students, setting examination questions and marking the answer sheets. Their functions also include providing leadership in classes, perform academic services, relating with parents on feedback on students' progress and sometime taking students for excursion with school permission. The teachers are very important factors in the management of educational institutions especially the schools. The teachers' roles cannot be replaced in teaching and learning process. Teachers have been described as the most recognized and indispensable human resources in the educational system. It have been observed that majorities of correctional centres across Nigeria do not have adequate teachers to support delivery of teaching services. Guardian (2020) quoted Alabidun submitted that in most correctional centres in Nigeria, there are shortage of personnel to deliver quality education and lack of motivation and absence of community support either from companies or organisations. The problem of shortage of professional teachers in the prisons is not only commom to the Nigerian correctional centres only. A study was conducted by this organization based on extensive interviews with prison officials, police, lawyers, NGO staff, and human rights activists in Islamabad, Lahore, Karachi, and Quetta to identify the flaws in the system. The study concluded that an acute shortage of adequately trained personnel that can handle reformative education as well as that of disciplined and well-paid staff has led to a spike in crime within prison premises, including substance abuse and violence. Overcrowded facilities make it difficult to isolate hardened criminals from remand prisoners in Pakistan (Faizi et al., 2017).

Lack of Instructional Materials

Another problem hindering the development of prison education or correctional education in Nigeria correctional centres is shortage of instructional materials. Ogunode & Ibrahim (2023) noted that the school system is designed to function with the application and deployment of instructional materials. Instructional materials are very essential to the development of education. Instructional materials are one of the critical components of the educational system. According to Quadri et al., (2003), the usefulness of instructional materials is based upon the following ideas that learning is more likely to occur in a class where there is: active involvement of learners in the teaching-learning process; negotiation of individual learning objectives, opportunities for demonstration, practice and feedback; continuous evaluation of learning; and support for learners and teachers. The objectives of the schools will not be fully realized without the deployment and utilization of various instructional materials. Instructional materials are teachers' tools for implementing the lesson plan in the classroom. Instructional materials are educational resources that are useful for school administrators, teachers and students. Instructional materials are one of the most important educational resources in the school system that are used for supporting the implementation of teaching and learning programmes. Guardian (2020) quoted Alabidun stated that most correctional centres in Nigeria lack of learning materials and personnel to deliver quality education, lack of motivation and absence of community support either from companies or organisations. Ismaila, (2020) on availability of Reformative Education programmes for prisoners in North West Nigeria and found out that there are no adequate reading materials in the centers. Aliyu et al., (2016) opined that since the inception of prison service in Nigeria, there have been little or no systematic educational provisions for inmates due to limited resource allocation. On challenges facing reformation of inmates through education, Guardian (2020) quoted Ogu who identified lack of adequate learning facilities, which include modern learning tools like computers and inadequate numbers of motivated correctional officers with capacity to facilitate education of inmates. According to her, the congestion of some of the centres, especially those in

urban areas, is a big issue as the high number of inmates, particularly those awaiting trial makes reformation difficult

Poor Support from Religious Institutions and Non-organization Institutions

Poor support and contribution from religious institutions and private organization in the development of correction education or prison education have affected the development of prison education. Religious institutions and private institutions globally are major supporter of prison education. In some countries, religious institutions provide complete educational facilities in the prisons to support the education of inmates. Jacob (2013) observed in most developed countries, religious institutions and private institutions are the institutions supporting the rehabilitation of the inmates by providing them with healthy and education facilities. Guardian (2020) quoted Alabidun stated that most correctional centres in Nigeria lack of motivation and absence of community support either from companies or organisations.

Poor Implementation of Education Policies

The poor implementation of educational policies in the area of provision of quality and accessible education to all Nigeria has affected the development of education. The Nigerian National policy on education (2013) in section 1 sub-sections 3. Nigeria's philosophy of education is based on the following set of beliefs: a. Education is an instrument for national development and social change; b. education is vital for the promotion of a progressive and united Nigeria; c. education maximizes the creative potentials and skills of the individual for self-fulfillment and general development of the society; d. education is compulsory and a right of every Nigerian irrespective of gender, social status, religion, colour, ethnic background and any peculiar individual challenges; and. education is to be qualitative, comprehensive, functional and relevant to the needs of the society. The poor implementation of this policy has affected the development of prison education in the various correctional centres. Ogunode, Jegede, & Solomon, (2021a); Ogunode, & Samuel (2020) observed the Nigerian government is known for formulation of best policies but implementation is a problems. Ogunode. Chijindu, & Jegede, (2022); Ogunode, Johnson, & Olatunde- (2021)) lack of political will is a major factor responsible for poor implementation of educational policies. Ogunode, & Adanna, (2022); Ogunode, & Jegede, (2021) identified poor funding as a challenge to implementation of education while Ogbonnaya, (2010); Ogunode, Gregory & Abubakar (2020); Ogunode, Solomon, & Jegede, (2021a); *Sarkinfa, & Multafu, (2022)* and Ogunode, Akinyode, & Ayoko, (2023) concluded that the causes for educational policy instability in the Nigerian educational sector include; capital intensive policy implementation, poor consultation, political instability, poor coordination and cooperation of policy formulation, the appointment of Non-professionals as heads of educational institutions, dynamics in the educational system and practices and poor formulation of educational policies.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper discussed the challenges facing prison education or correctional education in Nigeria's correctional centres. The paper concluded that **poor funding, inadequate infrastructure facilities, shortage of facilitators/teachers, lack of instructional materials, poor support from religious institutions and non-organization institutions and poor implementation of education policies.** To address these problems, the paper recommended the following:

1. The federal, state and local government should capture funding of prison education in the budget. This will help to develop the prison education. Adequate budgetary provision should be made for education of inmates if we must get their correction right. Funding for education of inmates should not be left in the hands of donor agencies; government should consciously work on this to ensure effective reformation of inmates. This should be accompanied by systematic strategies to ensure that inmates that are able to acquire education while in custody are put to effective use.”

2. The government and private institutions should provide adequate instructional materials in all the correctional centres. This will help to improve quality of education in the centre.
3. The religious institutions, private institutions, international non-organization, Philanthropists and donors should be invited to wholly support the prison education by providing educational resources like a well-equipped classroom with computers and state-of-the-art chairs, computer system, laptops, and tables for learning.
4. The government should direct some companies to invest their Corporate Social Responsibilities on prison education for inmates.
5. The government should provide avenue for those inmates who have completed their education to be given jobs. This will motivate other inmate to enroll in educational institutions. Economic empowerment in terms of employment is critical to proper reintegration into the society, while implementation of the provision on non-discrimination is quite important.
6. Government should direct National open-university and other distance learning higher institutions to locate their study centres in all geo-political correctional facilities.
7. Government should direct internal and external examinations bodies like WAEC, NECO, JAMB, NABTER etc to open their centre in all the correctional facilities across the country.

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