

Programme Planning in Adult Inmates Correctional Education for Sustainable Community Development in Nigeria



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ABSTRACT: This paper examined the need for programme planning in adult inmates' correctional education for sustainable community development in Nigeria. The paper also, made a conceptual clarifications of various terms attached to it. It also concluded that when Adult inmates acquire education while under incarceration, they are empowered for the future. Therefore, we should bear in mind that education is not restricted to crime free individuals but also an opportunity given to adult inmates to acquire knowledge for self reliance after their jail terms. The paper finally suggests that all hands should be on deck to see to the total success of the Nigeria Correctional Service towards successful implementation of Correctional Education programme for actualisation of sustainable community development goal in the country.

INTRODUCTION

The term Nigeria Correctional Service was formally known as Nigerian Prison Service. Hassan and Oloyede (2013) noted that the system was introduced in 1872 with the ultimate aims of custody of prisoners caught up in the criminal justice system for awaiting trails or the execution of their punishment such as whipping, banishment and death. Abba (2016) noted that since it is difficult to find a crime free society, many organizations locally and internationally, perform one or more undesirably acts either for the purpose of survival, maintenance of territorial integrity or for the expression of their inherent inimical intension. Chukwumerije (2014) noted that instead of emphasizing more on vital issues of inmate rehabilitation, reformation and re-orientation, the Nigeria prison Act (1972) merely touches the surface of the important area of the welfare of prisoners in the following sections: section 8: the removal of sick prisoners to the hospital; Regulation 22: prisoners diet; Regulation 25: Prisoners bedding; Regulation 28: Prisoners cleanliness. Thus the existing prison Act is not comprehensive enough to serve the purpose of imprisonment. Neither does it fulfill the provision of 1999 constitution in section 17 (2) b. and c. which posits that "the sanctity of the human person shall be recognized and human dignity shall be maintained" and government action shall be human.

Indeed, the Nigeria prison system emphasizes importance of custody over rehabilitation and most importantly, sees imprisonment as solely "implementing retributive sanctions rather than complementing sentence with rehabilitation". On the general issue of imprisonment, imprisonment is most appropriately conceived as a formal perspective of inflicting pain on the individuals, which has been an aspect of the traditional criminal justice system in various societies in Nigeria (Obioha, 2011). While imprisonment, is a prescription; prisonisation is the process of living within a conferment known as a prison/correctional custodial centre. A correctional custodial centre is a physical structure in a geographical location where a number of people live under highly specialized conditions, utilize the resources and adjust to the alternatives presented to them by a unique kind of social environment that is different from the larger society in so many ways of life meant for the adjustment processes of inmates with a view to training them to become useful members of the society after being discharge, so as not to relapse into more crimes and increase recidivism.

In another report about Nigerian correctional services as related to education, Evawoma-(Enuku, 2006) noted that from all available information, there is neither any official provision for organised educational activities nor is there a categorical organized financial allocation for inmates' correctional education in the country, except for inmates' correctional welfare services in which education seems to fall. Kofi and Britta (2012) reported that in today's world, education is seen as the best means of emancipating people from abuse, ignorance, unemployment, vulnerability and poverty. In pursuing this noble aim of emancipation, the constitution of liberal democratic countries make provision for educating all citizens including even correctional adult inmates or so called "law breakers".

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The adult inmates need to acquire education and training skills for capacity building and economic needs. This shows that skills are very necessary for reduction of crime in the society. Abba (2016) noted that in most countries including Nigeria, adult inmates' correctional education is not only seen as a constitutional right but also a foundation stone for rehabilitation.

Correctional adult inmates' population in Nigeria has witnessed a dramatic increase in recent years of which seventy percent are functionally illiterates because of limited resources allocation for educational programmes. Hassan and Oloyede, (2013) reported that a Nigerian government white paper in 1971 outlined the functions of the prison services to include: custody, diagnosis, correction, training and rehabilitation of incarcerated offenders. In spite of these functions, most of the Nigerian Correctional Custodial Centres are associated with high rate of recidivism among adults inmates. One of the yardsticks for judging the effectiveness of the correctional system and its informative capability is the number of inmates who remain outside the prison wall after completing their jail terms. In support of this assertion, Chukwumerije (2014) reported that statistics from 19 prisons across the country shows that over 60% of inmates are recidivists (i.e. inmates who have been convicted more than once). This is an indication that the correctional system has failed in treating anti-social behaviors of inmates.

In support of this contention, rule 79 of United Nation's standard minimum rules (Rule 79 of SMR) for the treatment of offenders states that, "Provision shall be made for further education of all prisoners"/correctional custodial inmates while rule 40 provides that "every institution shall have a library for the use of all categories of prison, adequately stocked with recreational books and prisoners shall be encouraged to make full use of it (Hassan and Oloyede, 2013). Evawoma-Enuku (2006) noted that prison/correctional custodial facility as a human invention that has correction as one of its objectives has undergone series of improvements in modern world. In another report, (Chukwumerije, 2014) reported that with the current reform of the Nigeria Correctional system, practices exist in some Nigerian Correctional Custodial Centres where inmates acquire skills especially in the area of arts and craft. But this is only a policy: it is not backed by the force of law. This lack of legal backing is a great obstacle constraining the development of Adult inmates' correctional education in Nigeria. Despite this development, Abba (2016) noted that not much was achieved in rehabilitation of inmates to acquire education/skills for employment after their jail term. Therefore, the main philosophy behind correctional adult education for custodial inmates is rehabilitation and reduction in crime. Also, is an opportunity to acquire basic, social and vocational skills which will aid in the rehabilitation of offenders. Despite the newly introduced correctional system policy to rehabilitate offenders rather than imprisonment alone, Abba (2016) noted that the rate of crime and recidivism among ex-inmates continue to increase. This is as a result of inadequate planning and evaluation in the implementation of correctional education programmes for the rehabilitation of inmates in most Nigerian Correctional Custodial Centres. It is against this background that this paper set to examine the need for programme planning in adult inmates' correctional education for sustainable community development in Nigeria.

Conceptual Clarification

Adult Inmate: means a person who is kept in a conformed place known as the correctional custodial facility as an accused or convicted of violating the criminal law. Omoni and Ijeh (2013) views inmate/prisoner as a person proved guilty of a crime alleged against him/her and legally sentenced to punishment of confinement in a prison. In other words, an inmate is a person sentenced to penal servitude.

Rehabilitation/Correction: means the process of helping a person or a inmate to re-adapt to society or to restore someone to a former position or rank. Ghering (1993) noted that the term can also be viewed as an act "to restore to useful life, as through therapy and education" or "to restore to good condition, operation, or capacity". Mun and Tsanga (2007) noted that rehabilitation techniques vary according to the nature of the offender, the type of offence committed, and the institution in question. Techniques vary from educational and vocational training to help the offender learn a skill for use outside the correctional custodial facility, to psychological rehabilitation, dealing with various problems the individual offender may experience. The assumption of rehabilitation/correction according to Evawoma-Enuku (2006) is that people are not permanently criminal and that is possible to restore a criminal to a useful life, to a life in which they contribute to themselves and to society. According to Rhode (2004) the word "correction" has been associated with the work of social workers aimed at correcting young children's behavior. It entails the techniques, methods and approaches applied in changing the undesirable behaviors of deviant members or offenders in the society with the view of making them better and useful members of the society. A goal of correction is to prevent habitual offending, also known as criminal recidivism, using education and therapy as a means, to bring criminal into a more peaceful state of mind, or into an attitude which would be helpful to society, rather than be harmful to society.

Community Development

A common definition of community development is not simple to attain, nor is it universally agreed upon. Part of the confusion rests with the fact that community development is both process and product. Glym, and Tracey (2012) noted that the practice of community development is not one focused solely on material resource development, nor is it devoted exclusively to systems for addressing community needs.

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In the context of this paper, the term “*community development*” can be seen as a process where community members come together identify their needs and problems and as well take collective action and generate solutions to their common problems and needs satisfaction. The process of community development according to Kenny (2007) involved citizens, and professionals to improve various aspects of communities, typically aiming to build stronger and more resilient local communities. Oviawe and Aluyor (2009) argued that community development should be viewed as “a continuous process of social action by which the people of a community organize themselves informally or formally for democratic planning and action, define their common group” felt” needs and problems, make group and individual plans to meet their felt needs and solve their problems, execute these plans with a maximum of reliance upon resources found within the community and supplement community resources when necessary.

In the word of Jessica (2017) Community development seeks to empower individuals and groups of people with the skills they need to effect change within their communities. These skills are often created through the formation of social groups working for a common agenda. Community developers must understand both how to work with individuals and how to affect communities' positions within the context of larger social institutions.

Correctional / Inmates' Education:

This term means a comprehensive educational programme provided to all adult inmates. Correctional Education (CE) programs according to Hassan and Oloyede, (2013) are categorized into two basic types: vocational training and literacy development. Vocational training courses focus on the acquisition of skills that are directly transferable to a workplace, such as appliance, etc. Literacy development courses are loosely based on the traditional classroom model centered around the improvement of reading and math skills such as basic literacy, post literacy, continuing education, religious educations , higher education and general education all aimed at correcting the offenders' behavior. Abba (2016) views correctional education as inmate education and correctional education that encompasses any number of educational activities occurring inside a prison. These educational activities according to Hassan and Oloyede, (2013), include both vocational training and academic education. The goal of such activities according to Duguid (1993) is to prepare the inmate for success outside of correctional custodial facility and to enhance the rehabilitative aspects for inmates in the custodial facility. that educational programs offered inside prisons are typically provided and managed by the prison systems in which they reside.

In recent times scholars Andrey and Jessica (2004) came to associate the word “correction” with the work of an adult educator, social worker and any stakeholder of behavior modification. Behavior modification is aimed at modeling, modifying and rehabilitating anti-social behavior of an individual or group of persons. The modification could be inside or outside restricted environments as the case may be. Such environments include schools, adult learning centers, resettlement centers, penitentiaries (prisons), hospitals and even a house designed for such purpose.

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The term “ Planning “ as used in this context, means an attempt to set out on paper, what government intends to achieve in the process of rehabilitation of Adult inmates over a specific period of time with available and potential human and material resources such as personnel, land, money, and materials including equipment. According to Sanda and Abba (2015), planning is the process of thinking about and organizing the activities required to achieve a desired goal. It involves the creation and maintenance of a plan, such as psychological aspects that require conceptual skills. There are even a couple of tests to measure someone's capability of planning well. In the word of Rhode (2004), planning is the process of thinking about and organizing the activities required to achieve a desired goal. It involves the creation and maintenance of a plan, such as psychological aspects that require conceptual skills. There are even a couple of tests to measure someone's capability of planning well. As such, Sanda and Abba (2015) views that planning is a fundamental property of intelligent behavior. In planning Adult inmates Correctional Education (AICE) programmes, the goals must be decided, then the priorities must be listed i.e. the scale of preference) after listing the priorities then the resources available must be considered and then the step by step implementation of the programme commences, starting from simple to complex, known to known. The planning process begins with clear objective of each proposed programme. The objective or reasons for each programme according to Imhabekhai (1998) are the answers to the question ‘why’ of such programme? For instance, is important to ask.

- Why does government want to introduce educational programmes for inmates in correctional facilities?
- Why does government want to alleviate crimes in the society?
- Why are philanthropies coming in to support adult inmates' welfare in correctional facilities?

Answers to .these types of questions help to meaning to what government does. They help to convince the apathetic citizens that their efforts shall not be in vain and that even if they do not benefit directly from the programme or any particular project related to inmates' correctional education, their children and children of their children shall derive great benefits from them in future. In the word of Yabo (2003), without clear objectives, planning for project is painlessness.

The second stage in planning process is the setting of target in terms of quality and quantity of projects and services. Target in a plan according to Rhode (2004), helps to establish the answer to the question “How many and how much” for instance,

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if the objectives of introducing adult inmates' correctional educational programmes for inmates' rehabilitation in correctional custodial centres or to alleviate/reduce crimes in the society. The next questions are: "How many more correctional education programmes should be mounted in each correctional facility? Target according to Imhabekhai (1998), is the quantitative expression of plan objectives. It is plan target that helps to measure the success and or failure of the plan in the final analysis.

The third stage is to allocate financial resources for the AICE programme implementation. The allocation should be spread over continuously to ensure sustainability of the programmes. In allocating financial resources for the programme implementation, Sanda and Abba (2015) views that the assistance of an economist or professional planner may be required. Philanthropies and private organisations need to be mobilized to come in and support the programme for adequate financial support and sustainability.

The fourth stage in the planning process is to establish or project the financial and material assistance the correctional service authority is expecting from Governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations for the smooth implementation of correctional education programme for inmates' rehabilitation in the country..

The fifth stage is to determine the recurrent expenditure of projects that may not be solely taken over by government alone. This is important so that assistance or services that are provided by other agencies such as Non-Governmental and Private individuals can also help in improving the AICE programme. Recurrent expenditure include; things like salary and allowances of staff to run a particular service in the delivery of the programme, stationery, repairs and maintenance which must be met to keep the programme going. Yabo (2003) noted that failure to take care of this in planning for AICE programme leads to abandonment and failure to achieve the desired objectives of the target programme. Abba (2016) noted that it is not just enough to set up an educational programme in correctional centre and expect correctional authority a lone to take them over. It is equally important to consider their running cost and regular management.

The sixth stage is to allow various groups in the community, such as educated elites, youth associations, unions, religious groups, traditional rulers and influential people to go through the draft of the plan, before it is finally approved by the Government. The rationale behind this is to create room for such groups and influential people in the society to have some input or contribute their own ideas so that they will feel part and parcel of the planning machinery of the AICE programme. The advantage of this is that they will participate fully during the actual programme implementation.

CONCLUSION

Despite the newly introduced correctional system policy to rehabilitate offenders rather than imprisonment alone, various reports indicates that the rate of crime and recidivism among ex-inmates continue to increase in the country. This is as a result of inadequate planning and evaluation in the implementation of correctional education programmes for the rehabilitation of inmates in most Nigerian Correctional Custodial Centres. When Adult inmates acquire education while under incarceration, they are empowered for the future. So also, community development is all about quality raising and capacity building. Therefore, we should bear in mind that education is not restricted to crime free individuals but also an opportunity given to adult inmates to acquire knowledge for self reliance after their jail term.

SUGGESTIONS

In view of the foregoing, the following suggestions are made:

The Nigerian Government's intention of making education accessible to everybody is a project whose success lies on with the cooperation of administrators, programme organizers, teachers/instructors and indeed the adult inmates and correctional service authorities. Therefore, all hands should be on deck to see to the total success of the Nigeria Correctional Service towards successful implementation of Correctional Education programme for actualisation of sustainable community development goal in the country.

Adequate support should be provided by both governments and private sectors adult inmates' correctional education delivery and as well the teaming Nigerian correctional custodial inmates should be adequately motivated to participate in the correctional education programmes for sustainable community development in the country.

Finally, the paper suggests that adequate programme supervision should be mounted by governments of both local, states and federal government to ensure proper planning in the implementation of correctional education programmes in the custodial centres of the country for actualizing the goal of correctional service and sustainable community development in the country.

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