



Review

p-ISSN 2672 – 5142; e-ISSN 2734 – 3324

REDUCING RECIDIVISM RATE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF NIGERIA AND CHINA'S PRISON SYSTEMS

BANWO, Adetoro Olaniyi

Confucius Institute at the University of Lagos, Akoka-Lagos, Nigeria.

Department of Linguistics, African and Asian Studies

Faculty of Arts, University of Lagos, Akoka-Lagos, Nigeria

abanwo@unilag.edu.ng; banwotoro@gmail.com

Abstract

This study examined the two prison systems of two different countries, Nigeria and China with the aim of identifying the rates of recidivism among them. One of the goals of any criminal justice system is to rehabilitate criminals and turn them into responsible citizens that can be reintegrated into the society. A sound criminal justice system aims to end crime not the lives of the citizens that committed the crimes. Data for this research work were obtained through critical case sampling and content analysis was used to study this work. Certain factors such as prisoners, criminal justice system, recidivism and crimes were selected for this study. It adopted the Person in Environment perspective and the Systems Theory as its theoretical framework. It depicted that the environment has an impact on the behaviour of people and that there were certain systems that interact to influence the conduct of humans. This study observed that the Chinese government has implemented effective correctional programmes and policies for prisoners to get accepted in the society while the Nigerian government has failed to design and implement policies and programmes aimed at reducing the rate of recidivism. It argued that China takes care of the rights of prisoners while in Nigeria prisoners' rights are alienated with inappropriate prisons conditions. This study recommended that prisons should facilitate prisoners' employment and skills development which can assist them to deviate from their offensive acts. It concluded that improved prisoners' conditions through education, training, skill development, and restoration of rights are of great necessity for prisoners while undergoing rehabilitation.

Keywords: Prisoners, Criminal Justice System, Recidivism, Crimes, Nigeria, China

Citation of article: Banwo, A.O. (2021). Reducing recidivism rate: A comparative study of Nigeria and China's prison system, *African Journal of Social Issues*, 4(1):1-21

Date Submitted: 15/05/2021 **Date Accepted:** 04/06/2021 **Date Published:** December, 2021

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Every criminal justice system aims to reduce the undesirable so that the criminal does not intend to exhibit the undesirable behaviour for which he has been convicted (Dressel & Farid, 2018). In reality, many criminals commit the same crimes for which they were previously punished after getting out of prison. Justice systems must include measures towards ensuring that recidivism is minimised. Mears, Cochran, Siennick and Bales (2012) highlighted that countries around the world are making efforts to ensure that the criminal justice system is strong enough to reduce recidivism. They highlighted the Chinese government's efforts to overhaul its judicial system as a standard for other countries since it has been successful in reducing recidivism.

Stephens and Nel (2014) state that the Nigerian criminal justice system seems to have great loopholes because of its high recidivism rate. The crime index in Nigeria is 63.96% while the safety index is 36.04% which indicates that the country has very high crime rate and its judicial system is not that effective in reducing the level of crime. They describe Nigerian prisons (now Correctional Service) as a breeding ground for criminals instead of a rehabilitation centre. Osayi (2013) states that the criminal system of a nation must focus on rehabilitating criminals and training them on how to avoid aggressive, harmful and criminal behaviours. If the system fails to restrict criminals from repeating the same crimes, it is a great failure because the system is not supposed to end criminals but crimes. To deal with the criminal justice, countries usually use few correctional facilities such as probation, fines, restitution, electronic monitoring and creative sentencing and community service. Drago, Galbiati and Vertova (2011) observe that reducing recidivism is one of the major challenges faced by the criminal justice system around the world. They noted the rate at which criminals get involved in crime right after coming back from the prison (correctional service) has attracted the attention of scholars, sociologists and criminologists. Osayi (2013) notes that Nigeria's recidivism rate increased from 37.3% in 2005 to 52.4% in 2010.

Mei (2011) expresses that it is important to note that the recidivism rate in China is comparatively lower than other nations around the globe, the crime rate in the country is 0.6% which is significantly lower in comparison to Nigeria. The reduced recidivism rate is related with social formal and informal control involving politics, justice, education, economic, family and communal systems. The recidivism rate in China has been between 6% - 8% for many years

while in other developed countries, the rate ranges between 20% - 30% and goes even as high as 50-60% (Criminal Reform in China, 2020). The Chinese correctional system which helped it reduce its recidivism rate is not a well-defined system that can be suggested to other judicial systems. Few factors from China's correctional system are helpful in reducing recidivism in other countries. For instance, China has been successful in treating drug addicts; its drug treatment system ensures that drug users entering the system undergo two years of treatment in a facility which is similar to the prison (Sui, Huang, Deng, Yu & Fan, 2010). The types of prisons in China are divided into two categories; prisons incarcerating inmates where criminals awarded a fixed-term sentence are kept and penitentiaries for juvenile delinquents who are the criminals of minor age who are specially protected with customized mechanism to fulfill their needs (China's Judiciary, 2020). On the other hand, the types of prisons (correctional services) in Nigeria include juveniles, female-only prisons, psychiatric prisons, security prisons and Military prisons (Tersoo, 2019).

This research assesses the criminal justice systems in Nigeria and China with the goal of identifying the challenges facing the criminal justice systems in Nigeria and proffering solutions based on the learning's from China's criminal justice system. The study also highlighted the challenges faced by the criminal justice system around the world and has focused on recidivism rate significantly with the need for reducing recidivism rate. Criminal justice systems around the world focus on keeping criminals for a defined time instead of acting as a rehabilitation centre.

The key objective of the study is to review the trends in recidivism rate in China and Nigeria. It further intends to review the Nigerian and Chinese Government initiatives to reduce recidivism and provided recommendations to both countries to the initiatives they must take to reduce the rate of recidivism based on current situation. The rationale for the objectives is that two countries with completely different trends of crime rates and recidivism can be compared to look at how a country can succeed in reducing such rates. The research is divided into five sections. Firstly, the introduction provides a background to the topic and objectives of the study. Then, the literature review examines the different scholarly works about prisons and recidivism rates in the two countries. After which the theoretical framework hinges its arguments on the person in environment perspective and the systems theory. Next, is the research methodology and then the findings with conclusion and recommendations.

1.1 The Judicial Systems in Nigeria and China

The judicial system of Nigeria is the Supreme Law of the nation where there are four different legal systems including the English law, the Customary law, the Common law, and the Sharia law. There is a judicial brand where the highest court is the Supreme Court of Nigeria (Ng & He, 2017). On the other hand, the judicial system of China includes people's court exercising judicial power on behalf of the States. China exercises the system of Courts designed by four levels and two instances of trials. Four of the people's courts that exercise the judicial authority are Military Courts, Supreme People's Courts, Local People's Courts and other Special People's Courts (Salihu & Gholami, 2018). The judicial system plays a vital role in reducing recidivism rate in a country since its effectiveness can highlight the importance of giving up crimes. If the Judicial system does not lead to strict consequences of crimes, criminals would continue getting involved in crimes.

Reducing recidivism rate is a great challenge for the criminal justice system because of the tendency for criminals to become used to going to prisons and continuing the offensive behaviour when released from prison. In a strong judicial system, measures are taken to transform such criminals into normal individuals who do not think of committing any crime. According to Adegboyega, Idowu and Idowu (2019), few elements are important for the correctional system to reduce recidivism rate. These include collaboration between all criminal law justice partners and all organizations involved in the process of development of a plan that emphasizes evidence-based practices. They identified the following six components that must be effectively addressed in the plan in order to reduce recidivism rate: risk assessment, individual motivators, focusing on suitable intervention, cognitive restructuring, enhancing positive reinforcing, and ongoing support. Consideration of these factors ensures that recidivism is reduced and criminals' stay in prison is beneficial to them as well as the society. This study also compares the Nigerian and Chinese recidivism rate with the aim of revealing which country has achieved high rate of recidivism.

1.1.1 Crime Rate in Nigeria

The crime index in Nigeria is 63.96% while the safety index is 36.04% because of the weak judicial system within the country. The Nigerian society only realizes short term benefits from sending criminals to correctional service (prison) because the criminals receive no form of

training or rehabilitation while in the center (prison) so they continue to be a threat to the society when released from prison. Nigerian prisons' statistics reflect that 60% of the imprisoned are recidivists which show that such a rehabilitation centre fails to serve its purpose (correcting their antisocial behaviour).

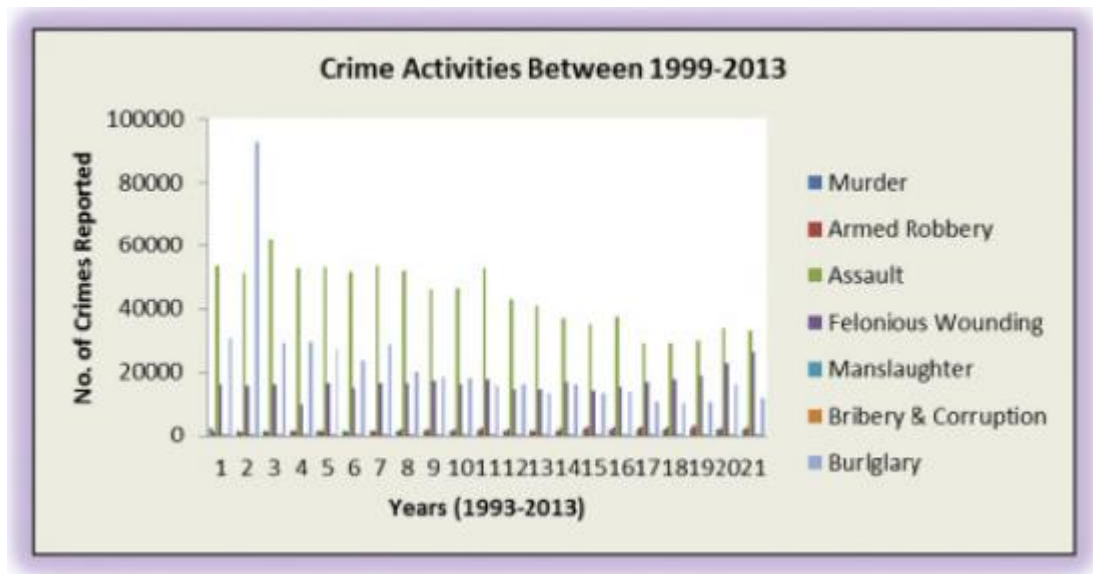


Fig. 1: Crime Activities and Crime Reports in Nigeria

Source: Oguntunde & Ojo (2018)

The figure above shows that between 1993 and 2013, the number of crimes reported skyrocketed from 20,000 to 100,000. It also exposed the different kinds of crimes that most people engage in such as murder, armed robbery, assault, felonious wounding, manslaughter, bribery and corruption and burglary. The table exposes the inherent nature of the Nigerian society, where crime rate is on the high increase and the effect of prisons as a correctional facility has lost its value or relevance.

1.1.2 Crime Rate in China

The level of crime in China is 25.44% which indicates that the level of safety is 74.66%. China has a strong judicial system and the country has been active in reducing crimes as well as reducing the recidivism rate. China struggled for many years with lowering its recidivism rate. Spencer (2014) notes that China started recording a lower recidivism rate in the early 2000s

when a community based correctional system was established. The correctional system was so effective that it succeeded in reducing the recidivism rate in the country. It helped the nation reduce recidivism to 6% - 8%.

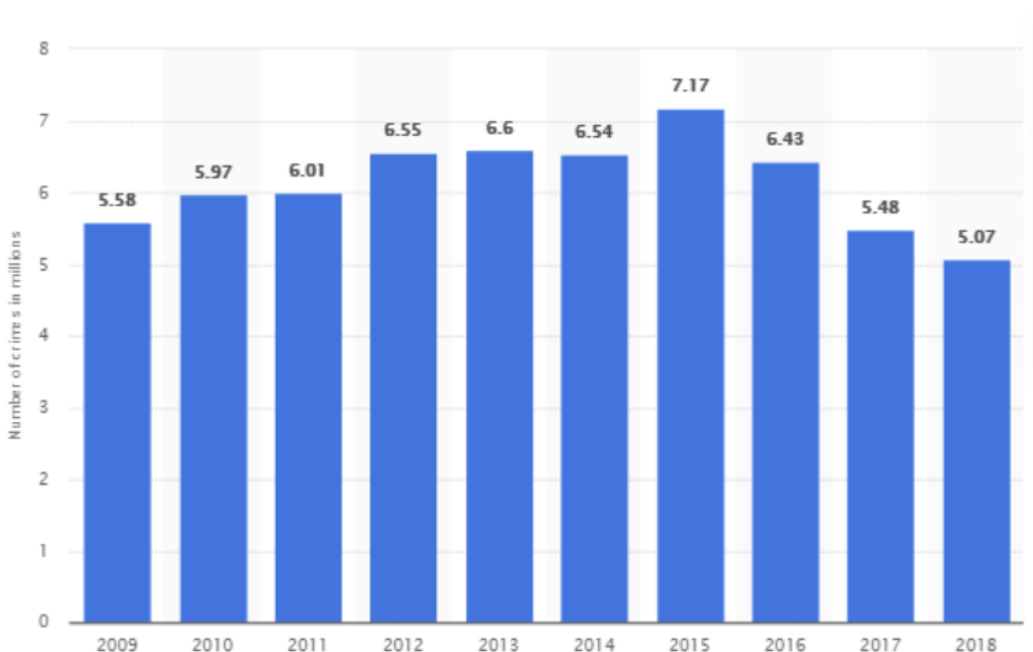


Fig. 2: Crime Rate in China

Source: Statista, 2020.

The bar chart reveals the trend of crime rate in millions from China during the period of 2009-2018. One notable trend to observe from the bar chart was the crime rate increased gradually from 5.8 million in 2009 and reached its peak in 2015 at 7.17 million. Afterwards crime rate in China reduced progressively to 5.07 in 2018. The crime rate table from Nigeria depicts clearly that the crime rate is twice as high of what exists in China. While China has done remarkably well in curbing and controlling its crime rate, Nigeria has not been able to do so effectively.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Recidivism is a concept in criminal law that indicates the repeated criminal behaviour of an individual after he gets back from the prison. This concept has received considerable attention in literature because it is one of the most important and impactful challenges faced by criminal justice systems around the world. The recidivism rate is the rate at which criminals repeat the

criminal behaviour once their imprisonment ends. According to Banse, Koppehele-Gossel, Kistemaker, Werner, and Schmidt (2013), one of the purposes of criminal justice systems is to reduce the recidivism rate. Different countries have different systems that they use to reduce recidivism rate. Countries such as China have been successful in achieving a low rate of recidivism (Tian, 2016) while other countries such as Nigeria have a high recidivism rate (Abuchi, 2015). These two countries seem to be on the opposite end of the recidivism spectrum. Therefore, a comparison is necessary to understand why China is successful and Nigeria is struggling with its recidivism rate.

Otu (2015) highlights that the correctional service (prison) in Nigeria is a place where criminals visit more often while observing no difference in their behaviour. Prison or correctional service should be a rehabilitation centre rather than just a place to spend few months or years. The criminal justice system does not exist to end criminals but its purpose is to fix their behaviour so that crime is ended and criminals are converted into a normal part of the society posing no threat to people. However, Adegboyega, Idowu and Idowu (2019) state that in Nigeria, it is a very common practice that criminals do the same acts once they come out of prison which reflects the weakness and failure of the system. Salihu and Gholami (2018) highlight the effectiveness of the judicial system of Nigeria where it has been identified that the system is prevailed by corruption and therefore, it is not effective in fighting against corruption. Salihu, and Gholami (2018) again indicate that the increase in mob Justice in Lagos state was the consequence of loss of confidence of public and their dissatisfaction with police and judiciary to administer justice impartially. According to Clubb and Tapley (2018), the correctional service system in Nigeria is experiencing an increase in individuals who go back to the same criminal or antisocial behaviour indicating no change in behaviour.

On the other hand, China has been making policies and procedures since the early 2000s to reduce its recidivism rate. This led to China having one of the lowest recidivism rates in the world (Li, 2014). According to Li, the Chinese government's efforts include the implementation of cost-effective community-based corrections that act as an alternative to the jail or prison. The major purpose of the community-based correction system was to standardise the operation of community-based corrections and minimise interagency and interregional variations. It comprised of rehabilitation and treatment in community-based corrections which require

authorities to provide social, legal, and moral education to offenders. It also required them to offer community service opportunities and psychological treatment to criminals when appropriate. The implementation of these policies has also been effective since March 2012; this has made China achieve a lower rate of recidivism (Li, 2014). MacCormack (2015) states that China faced increased lawlessness in the 18th century which was the result of the economic downturn leading to a full-scale recession. However, the nation improved its judicial conditions to work on bringing back the law and minimising the crime rates including thefts, robberies, murders etc. The country did not only succeed in reducing the crime rates but also reducing the recidivism rate.

According to Osayi (2013), in Nigerian correctional services, it is very common to see remanded and convicted offenders together in the same prison center. The country has been contravening the rules set by United Nations Standard Minimum Rules (UNSMR). These rules state that prisons must be set as per some specifications and categories such as the mental condition, sex, and nature of the offence. The prisons must have educational, correctional and religious facilities and a healthcare centre. However, Nigerian correctional services are suffering from poor staff morale, overcrowding, inadequate funding, poor feeding conditions, poor environment and cleanliness, and poor enforcement of the rights of the prisoners such as right to be treated fairly, right to basic necessities such as food, water and bath. The Nigerian government's low focus on developing an effective criminal justice system reflects in the country's recidivism rate. Nigeria's recidivism rate increased from 37.3% in 2005 to 52.4% in 2010 (Osayi, 2013). This shows that the criminal justice system in Nigeria makes no difference to society.

It is important to make the system effective and efficient so that society is protected from the criminals and offenders of the law. According to Ogwezzy, Adebayo and Kekere (2016), a weak system of criminal justice leads to increased crime scenes and this is specifically seen in developing countries like Nigeria where the system is not efficient enough to reduce the recidivism level. Apart from Nigeria, there are other African countries experiencing a high rate of recidivism. Mauritius witnessed an increase in its prison population which led to the construction of new prisons in 2010. The cost of such establishment was Rs 1.4 billion. The cost had no provision for educational and vocational skills training to facilitate the reintegration of the

prisoners into the mainstream society (Stephen & Dudafa, 2016). Qualitative educational programmes and training are the most effective recidivism-control strategies that prison management is supposed to implement to curb this social problem (Otu, 2015). China has used this strategy and has been successful in maintaining a low recidivism rate.

Researchers have identified programmes used by different countries to reduce their recidivism rate. An example is the Prison Entrepreneurship Program (PEP) in Houston, USA, a not-for-profit enterprise that connects released criminals with entrepreneurs who teach them innovation and leadership skills. The programme introduced in 2004 has helped about 1300 graduates start their careers (Douglas, Vincent and Edens, 2018). Another effective programme is the Community Bridges' Forensic Assertive Community Treatment (FACT) programme introduced in Arizona, USA. The programme focuses on the mental health of criminals because almost half of the prison population suffer from various forms of mental illness (Van, Gibbs, Stams, Bijleveld, Hendriks & Van Der Lan, 2011).

Bales and Piquero (2012) identified the Safer Foundation's programme as another successful effort in reducing recidivism rate. The Safer Foundation is an enterprise operating for more than 44 years in Illinois, USA which helps criminals and ultimately reduces recidivism. According to a research by Loyola University, Chicago, participants in the programme who achieved employment after the programme are 58% less likely to return to the prison. Another example is The Last Mile programme introduced at San Quentin Prison in California, USA. The programme helps criminals learn about technology, business, and digital transformation. After training, the inmates were given actual entry-level front-end coding positions from organisations so that they get an employment opportunity and give up crimes (Van et al., 2011). Although these programmes require investment, they also provide a return because they ensure criminals released from prison to contribute to the economy by getting employment.

The overall literature has indicated that researchers in the past have identified the strength of the Chinese criminal system that has been successful in reducing the recidivism rate while the researchers are of the view that in Nigerian correctional centers, criminals have all the reasons to do the same crime again since it does not act as a rehabilitation centre. It has been identified as a similar finding among all the studies reviewed that the effort of Chinese government to reduce the recidivism rate are worth appreciating.

2.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1.1 The Person in Environment Perspective (PIE)

The PIE is a theory in social work which states that the environment of a person has a significant impact on his/her behaviour. Therefore, any change in the environment can bring change in a person's behaviour. Social work is a field that is highly affected by the PIE theory since the theory plays a crucial role in giving credibility to the field in the scientific community (Dybicz, 2015). The theory is relevant in reducing recidivism as it suggests providing criminals an environment where they believe that there is no need for crime such as providing a thief an employment opportunity which will eliminate the need to steal. According to Teixeira and Krings (2015), the theory states that the behaviour of an individual cannot be understood without understanding his environment and factors within such as social, economic, political, physical, and spiritual.

2.1.2 Systems Theory

According to Massey and Gerstein (2015), systems theory represents an organisational model in which a person in environment (PIE) perspective is developed to deconstruct situations and again construct them while considering different systems and broader social environment. This may help an individual change his perspective regarding the situation or event so his action and response may also change for betterment. The model was guided by ideas presented by both Durkheim and Weber and was created using frameworks associated with fields including Biology, Anthropology, Psychology, and Physics. The theory is composed of varying 'systems' interacting with each other and have a driving force in such interaction. The micro-level comprises the ex-offender and those closest to him like friends and family while the mezzo level is the community that belongs to the person and the supervision and programmes they are involved in. At macro level, social injustice on state level is catered; it talks about how social injustice affects an individual and motivates them to commit crime. The last level is exo level which focuses on environmental impact on the individual and how it motivates them to commit a crime, for instance; if he is brought up in a criminal environment.

Paulson (2013) highlighted that systems theory also includes the understanding of crimes and recidivism; it breaks down the levels and allows people to see how each level is interconnected and also affected by the other. Mezzo system determines what the individuals who have been released are allowed and disallowed to do and who they can be affiliated with. Breaking down the levels helps us understand how each level is interconnected.

The PIE theory is relevant to the study since the environment has an impact on individuals. It has already been proved in the case of both the nations; in China the condition in 18th century gives an indication to this theory as recession brought a change in behaviours and people got more involved in crimes. On the other hand, in Nigeria, weak judicial system made an environment where people were comfortable with crimes. Moreover, the systems theory can be helpful in the situation of Nigeria where there is a need to deconstruct current situation of Nigeria and construct it again.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data were collected from two major sources. The Nigerian and the Chinese criminal justice system as depicted in its role of reducing recidivism were downloaded from Nigerian and Chinese databases through the internet. Relevant information as related to the subject matter were selected through the purposive random sampling method. Prison policies were downloaded from the internet, specifically on how they facilitate education, training, skill development, and prisoners' rights. Hence, the data for this work were considered representative of how they reduce recidivism through its prisons systems as engraved in the Nigerian and Chinese criminal justice system. The data used for this work were analyzed through content analysis that aims to compare two government policies as embedded in their legal policy framework whose main objective is to minimize undesirable behaviour.

4.0 DISCUSSION

Zhang, Liang, Zhou & Brame (2010) posit that communitarianism is a social condition in which there is a huge network of individual interdependencies having strong cultural commitments to trust and mutual obligation. In this kind of society, group loyalty is given priority instead of individual convenience. China has changed a lot since 1949; it can be

considered a communitarian society which seeks to reintegrate offenders into society. The contemporary conditions in China and its cultural traditions explain several social factors that contribute to the low recidivism rates in the country. In contrast to this, there is a need in Nigeria to help the prisoners get accepted in society once they are released. It is quite difficult because people are scared of their behaviour which may be antisocial and violent to others (Aliyu, 2018). However, if people accept them as part of the normal members of the society, they may change their mindset and lifestyle for the betterment of themselves and the society.

Zhong (2013) highlights that China makes its prisoners do productive and socially beneficial labour so that their punishment becomes productive while they also learn that social wealth is not easy to get. This approach gives the prisoners a sense of responsibility and helps them remain physically fit. They keep a safe space from demoralisation, depression, thoughts of suicide, or escape. Labour makes them acquire productive knowledge and skills which can also help them earn for their families when their prison sentence is over. However, Ahmed (2015) stated that although the Nigerian government has not been totally unaware of the issue of recidivism, it has been trying to introduce the programmes to reduce the rate but it has been concluded that its efforts are not that active and effective to reduce the rate to the same level as China. The Nigerian government has a long way to go in reducing its recidivism rate. It should focus more on the educational and skill-building programmes since the major reason why people commit crimes is unemployment as they do not earn enough to feed themselves and their families so they decide to commit crimes to fulfill their needs.

It has been found by reviewing the recidivism status of both the countries that Nigerian government needs to change the environment of the correctional centers (prisons) and introduce programmes to educate prisoners and to provide them employment opportunities. This is because the unemployment rate and economic conditions of the country are contributing to the high rates of crimes. Moreover, there is no training and education in the prisons to bring back the criminals to normal life. On the other hand, China is already putting every effort to ensure reduced rate of recidivism. Its efforts have been effective and the reduced rate of recidivism is evidence that the country has worked on it.

Recidivism rate in China is among the lowest around the world. China's recidivism rate has been around 6-8% for many years while recidivism rates of western developed nations such

as the US are as high as 64%. Annually around 400,000 cases of crimes are reported in China, the crime incidence rate in China is 2 per thousand annually which is one of the lowest around the world. China has achieved this low rate of recidivism because of its policies and strategies. China's focus on the education of prisoners including cultural, moral, technical, and legal education, guaranteeing the criminals' rights and their reform through labour has played a major role in achieving their low recidivism rate.

The Chinese government enforces the rights of prisoners even when in prison. This includes their right to appeal. The right to appeal states that a prisoner in the prison has a right to defend himself and prove that he has not committed the crime. The prisoners also have a right to personal safety and human dignity. This means that they have the right to vote when in prison, educational programmes, sanitary conditions, or recreational activities. They also have the right to live a normal life which includes access to good food, clothing, medical care and housing. The average per capita space to live for a prisoner is more than 5 square meters. The government ensures that prison buildings are clean, solid, ventilated, and well-insulated. Another right is the right to religion which permits a prisoner to follow his/her religion while in custody. There are also few civil rights for prisoners such as inheritance and property rights. The Chinese government also provides a special treatment separate from the general prison population to the elderly, female and disabled prisoners in terms of labour requirements and daily activities. These conditions in the Chinese prisons make them responsible for their role and they become less willing to commit such actions again.

Correctional institutions such as the Sunshine Halfway House in the Chaoyang District of Beijing assists prisoners to be part of the society again after their imprisonment by offering them legal education, vocational training, counseling and psychological support and assistance in preparation for their return to society. These educational programmes help them build skills that can assist them in finding work so they do not have to commit crime to feed themselves and their families. Correction officers live alongside the prisoners in order to assist them with development. This institution is located in Beijing but the same model is being followed in different parts of the country. Overall, it has been found that the Chinese government's initiatives have been active and effective to reduce the rate of recidivism. Current condition of the country is favourable as it has moved from a high rate to a very low rate of crimes.

Recidivism in Nigeria has been increasing. The rate was 37.3% in 2005 which increased to 52.4% in 2010. This shows that there are no effective policies used by the Nigeria Correctional Service to manage the rate of recidivism. The increased rate of recidivism in Nigeria shows that the government has had no effective programmes and policies to reorient criminals. The major issue faced is the lack of funds/resources needed in establishing correctional programmes like formal education and vocational programmes. Although there are few facilities like agricultural or industrial plants, vocational trade, or trade but they are so obsolete that they fail to motivate and reform individuals to live a crime-free life. When the so-called rehabilitation centres in Nigeria fail to educate prisoners, train them, or develop their skills, prisoners will have no other option than to get involved in crime.

The correctional system in Nigeria is experiencing an increase in individuals who go back to the same criminal or antisocial behaviour while the population in prison is likewise increasing year by year leading to the higher tax burden on taxpayers. Between 2006 and 2007, the Nigerian government allocated about 87 billion Naira to the Nigeria Correctional Service, 7 billion naira was specifically allocated to the welfare of inmates and prison cottage industries. The crimes by individuals released from the prison require continuous expenditures on law enforcement and prisons and decrease the funds available for public education, health, and community development.

The Nigerian government introduced the Prison Act Bill in 2012 to reduce the recidivism rate. This bill was named as 'Explanatory Memorandum on Amendment of Prison Act' and was actually an amendment of the original Prison Act. This change was proposed by Senator Uche Chukwumerije in 2012 as an effort to reduce the recidivism rate and was implemented in 2012. The major purpose of the bill is to improve the penal system and prison and to improve the scope of services to appropriately serve both the reformatory and retributive purposes of imprisonment. The bill also intended to upgrade the existing law using the following provisions:

- Introduction of rehabilitation and reintegration programmes focusing on the development of inmates which will comprise five elements including mental well-being, education, social services, prison vocational skill, and religious care.
- Focusing on the non-retributive purpose of imprisonment through: rehabilitation, reform, welfare, and integration into wider society.

- Sufficient funding through the self-financing prison industry.

In essence, we can deduce from our discussion that Nigeria and China have different attitude, culture and policies towards the welfare of prisoners in their different nations. While funding might have hindered the development of certain programmes in Nigeria, China has funded and initiated direct influential policies that would have long-lasting effects on the lives of prisoners.

5.0 FINDINGS

It has been identified that Chinese government has been taking many effective initiatives to educate the prisoners and provide them employment opportunities as a consequence of which the recidivism rate in the country has enhanced. However, Nigeria is facing problems in dealing with the recidivism rate since it has lack of funding and the environment in the correctional centers (prisons) is such that they do not act as rehabilitation centres. The Nigerian government has been making efforts such as the Prison Act Bill in 2012, and changes in the bill, allocating about 87 billion Naira to the Nigeria Correctional Service etc. However, it seems like the implementation of the correctional systems is weak in comparison to China. There seems no similarity in both the countries as the correctional system is strong in China while Nigeria has been facing high rate of crime and the recidivism rate is also increasing.

Furthermore, the attitude of prisoners when reintegrated back into the society comes into limelight. While the Chinese government have helped and gradually assisted prisoners to get a soft landing back into the society, most prisoners in Nigeria don't have a positive impression once released from the centers. Likewise, the state of centers come into fore in our discussion, while prisons in China are well built, designed and equipped with simple facilities, most centers in Nigeria are dilapidated and lack the simple facilities therein. Similarly, both countries have given their prisoners certain rights and benefits. Prisoners in Nigeria and China have the right to seek legal counsel, redress, and appeal and engage in participation of their civic duties. Equally, Prisoners in China have also been engaged in productive activities that have assisted in engaging their minds and keeping them mentally fit. While some Nigeria centers have some of these facilities, it is not well rooted and grounded in building and training the minds of prisoners

6.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusion

Based on the findings, the Chinese government has implemented effective correctional programmes and policies for prisoners to get accepted in a normal society which motivates them not to get involved in any kind of offense again. The Sunshine Halfway House and the cultural, moral, technical, and legal education by Chinese prison system to the prisoners to ensure that they do not repeat the same criminal offences after getting out of the prison. The experience in Nigeria has not enabled it to reduce its recidivism rate to the same level as China. The rate of recidivism is significantly higher in Nigeria in comparison to China because of the ineffective policies of the Nigerian government. The key issues identified are: the correctional services do not act as rehabilitation centres, prisoners are not educated morally and legally, they do not get any employment opportunities or learn any new skill. It faces a lack of funds/resources needed in establishing correctional programmes. It can learn lessons from China which is one of the most successful countries in reducing the recidivism rate. What China does differently from Nigeria includes taking care of the rights of prisoners while in Nigeria prisoners are treated badly with inappropriate conditions of prisons. Strict treatment makes prisoners rebellious and motivates them to do even more wrong. On the other hand, allowing them to get employed by developing their skills in labour can also help them leave the offensive acts as they can earn fairly. Their education, training, skill development, and restoration of rights are the factors that China focuses on but Nigeria has failed to provide.

6.2 Recommendations

It has been recommended that:

- The establishment of effective correctional institutions like China did in form of the Sunshine Halfway House in Beijing and many more similar programmes must include effective programmes that can help prisoners turn back to a normal life not harming society.
- Nigeria should learn from countries that have already reduced the recidivism rate through their effective programmes such as Prison Entrepreneurship Programme (PEP) in

Houston, USA. A not-for-profit enterprise can be created to connect released criminals with entrepreneurs who teach them innovation and leadership skills.

- Government should initiate more people-oriented policies for prisoners to ensure that their rights are protected and guaranteed.
- Government should pledge more money to the rehabilitation of correctional centers to make it conducive for prisoners.
- Government should engage the private sector in hiring some of the prisoners or engaging them with labour. Making them productive while in correctional centers guarantees some form of economic mobility after their prison sentences.

References

- Abuchi, U. K. (2015). An aetiological study of criminal recidivism in Nigeria. *Journal for Studies in Management and Planning*, 1 (1): 11-13.
- Adegboyega, L. O., Idowu, O. O. & Idowu, A. I. (2019). Suggested solutions to recidivism by prison officers in Kwara State, Nigeria. *Indonesian Journal of Guidance and Counseling: Theory and Application*, 8(2): 81-90.
- Ahmed, A. M. (2015). Social discrimination as a predictor of criminal recidivism: A study of ex-prisoners in metropolitan Kano, Nigeria. *Journal of Social and Development Sciences*, 6(3): 58 – 68.
- Aliyu, K. A. (2018). *The correctional rehabilitation programme on recidivism among inmates: A case of Oke-Kura Prison, Kwara State, Nigeria*, Doctoral Dissertation, University Utara Malaysia.
- Bales, W. D., & Piquero, A. R. (2012). Assessing the impact of imprisonment on recidivism. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 8(1), 71-101.
- Banse, R., Koppehele-Gossel, J., Kistemaker, L. M., Werner, V. A., & Schmidt, A. F. (2013). Pro-criminal attitudes, intervention, and recidivism. *Aggression and Violent Behaviour*, 18(6), 673-685.
- China's Judiciary, (2020). Jail system.
<http://www.china.org.cn/english/Judiciary/31277.htm#:~:text=Prisons%20in%20China%20are%20divided%20into%20two%20categories%3A&text=Penitentiaries%20for%20juvenile%20delinquents%2C%20criminals,penalty%20with%20two%20years%20reprieve.>
Accessed: 20th January, 2020.
- Clubb, G., & Tapley, M. (2018). Conceptualising de-radicalisation and former combatant re-integration in Nigeria. *Third World Quarterly*, 39(11), 2053-2068.
- Criminal Reform In China, 2020. [Online] Available At: <Http://Lt.China-Embassy.Org/Eng/Zt/Zfbps/T125237.Htm#:~:Text=%2D%2D%2D%20China's%20rate%20of%20recidivism,%25%2C%2060%25%20and%20more.> Accessed 11th August 2020

- Douglas, K. S., Vincent, G. M., & Edens, J. F. (2018). Risk for criminal recidivism: The role of psychopathy. In C. J. Patrick (Ed.), *Handbook of psychopathy* pp. 682–709. The Guilford Press.
- Drago, F., Galbiati, R., & Vertova, P. (2011). Prison conditions and recidivism. *American Law and Economics Review*, 13(1), 103-130.
- Dressel, J., & Farid, H. (2018). The accuracy, fairness, and limits of predicting recidivism. *Science Advances*, 4(1), Eaa05580.
- Dybicz, P. (2015). From person-in-environment to strengths: The promise of postmodern practice. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 51(2), 237-249.
- Gelb, A., & Velazquez, T. (2018). The changing state of recidivism: Fewer people going back to prison. *The Pew Charitable Trusts*. Available from : <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/articles/2018/08/01/the-changing-state-of-recidivism-fewer-people-going-back-to-prison>. Accessed: 20th January, 2020.
- Jiang, S., Xiang, D., Chen, Q., Huang, C., Yang, S., Zhang, D., & Zhao, A. (2014). Community corrections in China: Development and challenges. *The Prison Journal*, 94(1), 75-96.
- Jianming, X. (2011). Reflection upon and criticism of theory of recidivism [J]. *Global Law Review*, 3.
- Jonker, J., & Pennink, B. (2010). *The essence of research methodology: A concise guide for Master and Phd students in management science*. Springer Science & Business Media.
- Kumar, R. (2019). *Research methodology: A step-by-step guide for beginners*. Sage Publications Limited.
- Ledford, J. R., & Gast, D. L. (Eds.). (2014). *Single case research methodology: Applications in special education and behavioral sciences*. Routledge.
- MacCormack, G. (2015). Recidivist, multiple and gang thefts: The transformation of the law of theft in late Qing China. *J. Comp. L.*, 10, 455.
- Massey, W. V., Whitley, M. A., Blom, L., & Gerstein, L. H. (2015). Sport for development and peace: A systems theory perspective on promoting sustainable change. *International Journal of Sport Management and Marketing*, 16(1-2), 18-35.
- Mears, D. P., Cochran, J. C., Siennick, S. E., & Bales, W. D. (2012). Prison visitation and recidivism. *Justice Quarterly*, 29(6), 888-918.

- Mei, C. O. N. G. (2011). Study on the present situation and tendency of recidivism in China. *Journal Of Social Work*, 63(4), 359-363.
- Ng, K. H., & He, X. (2017). *Embedded courts: Judicial decision-making in China*. Cambridge University Press.
- Oguntunde, P. E., & Ojo, O. O. (2018). Analysis of selected crime data in Nigeria. *Data in Brief*, 19, 1242-1249.
- Ogwezzy, M. C., Adebayo, A. A., & Kekere, A. I. (2016). Restorative justice and non-custodial measures: Panacea to recidivism and prison congestion in Nigeria. *Nnamdi Azikiwe University Journal of International Law And Jurisprudence*, 7, 69-78.
- Osayi, K. K. (2013). Socio-cultural factors affecting reintegration of discharged prisoners in Anambra State, South East, Nigeria. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 4(10), 775-775.
- Otu, M. S. (2015). Analysis of the causes and effects of recidivism in the Nigerian Prison System. *International Journal of Development and Management Review*, 10(1), 136-145.
- Paulson, Paige. (2013). The Role of Community Based Programs in Reducing Recidivism in Ex-Offenders. Retrieved from Sophia, the St. Catherine University repository website: https://sophia.stkate.edu/msw_papers/247. Accessed: 2nd February, 2020.
- Salihu, H. A., & Gholami, H. (2018). Mob justice, corrupt and unproductive justice system in Nigeria: An empirical analysis. *International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice*, 55, 40-51.
- Salihu, H. A., & Gholami, H. (2018). Corruption in the Nigeria judicial system: An overview. *Journal of Financial Crime*. 25 (3): 669-680. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JFC-01-2017-0005>
- Spencer D. Li (2014). Toward a cost-effective correctional system: New developments in community-based corrections in China, victims & offenders, 9:1, 120-125, DOI: 10.1080/15564886.2013.860936. Accessed: 1st February, 2020.
- Statista, 2020. Number of crimes committed in China between 2009 and 2018. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/224778/number-of-crimes-in-china/>. Accessed: 22nd February, 2020.

- Stephen, E. N., & Dudafa, U. J. (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.
- Stephens, O. A., & Nel, N. M. (2014). Recidivism and emotional intelligence of male recidivists in Lagos State, Nigeria. *Journal of Psychology*, 5(2), 115-124.
- Sui, Q., Huang, J., Deng, S., Yu, G., & Fan, Q. (2010). Occurrence and removal of pharmaceuticals, caffeine and DEET in wastewater treatment plants of Beijing, China. *Water Research*, 44(2), 417-426.
- Teixeira, S., & Krings, A. (2015). Sustainable social work: An environmental justice framework for social work education. *Social Work Education*, 34(5), 513-527.
- Tersoo, 2019. Types of prison in Nigeria. <https://www.legit.ng/1215919-types-prison-nigeria.html> Accessed: 4th June, 2020.
- Tian, W. (2016). Research on the special recidivism in the criminal law of the People's Republic of China. *Евразийский научный журнал*, (6). Accessed: 4th June, 2020.
- Van Vugt, E., Gibbs, J., Stams, G. J., Bijleveld, C., Hendriks, J., & Van Der Laan, P. (2011). Moral development and recidivism: A meta-analysis. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 55(8), 1234-1250.
- Zhang, A. (2020). Chinese practice of Foucault's 'Disciplinary Power' and its effects on the rehabilitation of female prisoners in China. *The British Journal Of Criminology*, 60(3), 662-680.
- Zhang, J., Liang, B., Zhou, Y., & Brame, W. (2010). Prison inmates' suicidal ideation in China: A study of gender differences and their impact. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 54(6), 959-983.
- Zhong, L. (2013). *Communities, crime and social capital in contemporary China*. Routledge.