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**REVAMPING THE CONDITIONS OF AWAITING TRIAL INMATES
IN NIGERIA: EXPERIENCE FROM KWARA STATE
CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES**

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ABSTRACT

The paper aims to gauge the perceptions of awaiting trial inmates across correctional facilities in Kwara State, Nigeria. This research also intends to uncover the state or conditions of inmates awaiting trial in relation to the statutory functions of correctional services as stipulated in the Nigerian 1979, 1989, and 1999 constitutions as amended, as well as other reforms on the criminal justice act. The methodology adopted for this research purpose was the descriptive survey design method. Data collection procedures consisted of both primary and secondary materials sources. Principal information was collected by administering questionnaire forms to inmates awaiting trial, while the secondary data consisted of the internet, websites, journals published theses, etc. The study revealed that corruption, favoritism, poor hygiene, hard labor, and health issues have major challenges across correctional facilities. It was also discovered that there are no clear-cut differences in the treatment and handling of convicted criminals from inmates awaiting trial in correctional facilities. The study recommended improvement in conditions of service for correctional officers. It also advocates for the adoption of information and communications technology (ICT) within correctional facilities, and there should be segregation of convicted criminals from awaiting trial inmates, among other recommendations. This study will no doubt contribute to existing knowledge in criminal justice systems and will help countries know the antecedent effect of increased awaiting trial on correctional facilities, their staff, state security, and government expenditure and, finally, how it could be addressed.

Keywords: Awaiting trial, convicted inmates, correctional service, criminal justice system.

INTRODUCTION

The ratio at which the population of awaiting trial inmates is increasing across its homes is geometrical in nature. This unprecedented upsurge makes it a global topic of interest among criminal and security studies professionals. Inmates awaiting trial are now the most dominant population in correctional facilities across the globe in both developed and developing countries. The global detainees list discloses that over 3.2 million inmates are awaiting trial worldwide (World Prison Awaiting Trial List, 2023). Presently, in Nigeria, data indicates that about 73% of Nigeria's prison population is awaiting trial (World Prison Brief, 2021). In another research by the Institute for Criminal Policy Research (ICPR), one-third of the world's prison population consists of inmates yet to be fined for any crime. In the words of Ukwayi & Okpa (2017), Nigeria's number of awaiting-trial inmates is alarming. It's important to note that other suspects in police custody are not included in the number of inmates awaiting trial lists globally.

The rationale for the rise in the number of prison inmates and consequent consequences manifesting in Nigerian correctional homes was buttressed by Ogundipe. In the submission of Ogundipe (2009), he declared to the public notice that; the geometrical increase in the purge of remanded prisoners into correctional homes has characterized today correctional centers, and this has come with different unprecedented issues due to the reason that remanded prisoners were not for housing in the framework design of the Nigeria correctional centers. This situation varies in other countries of the world. For example, in Finland and Denmark, there are separate cells for the housing of convicts which judgment has been passed and given appointed time to use in correctional homes. The effectiveness of correctional service is however hang on how well they could manage inmates across its centers. The key Functions of the correctional officers are to ensure the good well-being of inmates, rehabilitation, and punishment when attested guilty. Also in a similar view, Ajah et al. (2022), posit that the rise in the rate of un-sentenced inmates has been attributed to challenges with information sharing among agencies of government involved in the management of justice dispensation, especially in Nigeria.

Given the increased number of inmates awaiting trial, the effect has been traced to an increase in the number of inmates in Kwara State correctional facilities. The extent to which inmates awaiting trial are competing for resources in terms of food, bed space, medical service, and other necessary infrastructural and administrative services with the condemned criminal is overhauling. Therefore, it's important to measure the perception of inmates in correctional facilities in Kwara State to validate the research problem. There are four correctional facilities in Kwara State. In their record as of June 19, 2018, the Oke Kura Correctional Facility housing size is one hundred and twenty-one (121) but holds four hundred and seventy-one (471), inmates, out of these sum of 471 inmates, eighty-seven (87) are condemned criminals, four (4) sentenced females, and fifty-seven (57) are convicted males, three hundred and nineteen (319) awaiting trial males, and four (4) awaiting trial females. The Mandala Correctional Facility has a capacity of one hundred and sixty (160). It holds about two hundred and fifty-nine (259) inmates with seventy-nine (79) condemned criminals, three (3) convicted inmates, and one hundred and seventy-seven (177) awaiting trials. The Omu-Aran Facility has a total of sixty-eight (68) inmates of thirty-four (34) condemned criminals and thirty-four (34) awaiting. In comparison, Lafiagi has a total of forty-six (46) inmates; forty (40) are condemned criminals, and six (6) are awaiting trials. (NPS, 2018; NPS, 2019).

Below are the driving objectives of this paper in question:

- i. To examine the conditions of awaiting trial inmates in correctional facilities.
- ii. To assess the views of inmates awaiting trial on the criminal justice process.
- iii. To evaluate the effect of the increase in awaiting trial on correctional service and its facilities.

Research Questions

- i. What are the conditions of inmates awaiting trial in correctional facilities?
- ii. What are the perceptions of inmates awaiting trial on the criminal justice process?
- iii. What are the effects of the increased awaiting trial inmates on correctional service and correctional facilities?

Research Hypothesis

Hypothesis one:

H0 - There is no relationship between the increase awaiting trial and condition of awaiting trial inmates in correctional facilities

Hypothesis two:

H1 - There are effects of the increase awaiting trial inmates on correctional service and correctional facilities

This study's significance will undoubtedly contribute to existing knowledge in the field of criminal justice systems. It will also help countries and experts understand the antecedent effect of increased awaiting trial on correctional facilities, their staff, state security, and government expenditures and how it can be addressed.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Correctional Service

Correctional services are germane to every state, as their importance is among the state functions. In Nigeria, it falls under the division of the Ministry of Interior and is instructed by the Comptroller General of Correctional Service. It was renamed Correctional Service on the 15th of August 2019 from its former name, Prison Service. However, correctional homes are long-aged establishments that feature in every society across the globe. For example, in Nigeria, the Yoruba traditional system is called the Ogboni house; in the Benin kingdom, it is called Ewedo, and it depicts that Gidan Yari was founded in the pre-colonial days of the Habe societies. Before the coming of the white to Nigeria, there exist correctional homes for the keeping or trial of suspects or offenders who are found wanting of breaching or deviating from customs laws (Aboki, 2007). Prison, according to Otti (2018), depicts an area kept aside in which people are forcefully housed and restricted from some fundamental human rights by the government of a state as a type of punishment. To Sorensen (2019), a prison is an apartment for law violators who are inhabiting the state for the purpose of the state. In a similar perspective, Omagbemi

and Odunewu (2008) state that detainees' amenities are set up and managed to monitor suspected lawbreakers lawfully so that they can be presented for trials. Going further, Conklin (2001) asserts that the growing need for imprisonment justifies the relevance of justice as a grounded philosophy and the rehabilitation of inmates back to society.

Another aim of establishing correctional facilities is to save and keep inmates remorse of their criminal acts when set free and so has to detach them from committing other crimes in the long run (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2001). According to the Wikipedia definition, a prison or correctional center is an apartment where suspected individuals or guilty individuals are forcefully and unwillingly detained and excluded hodge-podge from demanding flexibility due to the government's authority as a type of correction. (Otti, 2014). In a broader assertion, Omagbemi and Odunewu (2008), correctional homes are erected to control and ensure the safekeeping of suspects that are legally found wanting or anticipating trials. Prison facilities are the third leg in the triangular relationship of the criminal justice system. With the remaining two legs as police and court officials (Aboki, 2007). Bamigbose (2010) asserted that prison as a facility is the power bank of the justice dispensation system whereby suspected offenders or awaiting trial suspects are saved. They are tied with the activities of the final stage in the justice system among other functions (Nwolise, 2010). The prison is perceived to be the darkest region of the apparatus of the criminal justice system in Nigeria (Dambazau, 2007). The prisons service is also known for the safekeeping of the final product in the criminal justice process (Nwolise, 2010).

The Awaiting Trial

Like many other social and management science concepts, the term awaiting trial has no one generally accepted definition. This made the concept complex as it may look. The term awaiting trial is repeatedly exchanged alongside other phrases like "remand prisoners," "prison detainees," "untried prisoners," "un-convicted prisoners," and "un-sentenced prisoners" (Orjiakor et al., 2017). In the understanding of Schonteich (2011) views awaiting inmates as individuals who are barricaded from enjoying some fundamental human rights, more importantly, the right of movement and association, until they are proven not guilty or guilty by a court redress. In another view, Walmsley (2017) he stressed that the concept of un-convicted inmates as become a general discourse among states. However, awaiting trial inmates connote individuals who are yet to be tried in court or those whose judgments are yet to be delivered by the court to prove they are wanting of such an alleged crime. The awaiting trial process describes a stage of the criminal justice system in which a person reported to have committed an offense is yet to be convicted because the prosecutor is still on an investigation to verify if the alleged person has contravened the law of the land. However, remained in custody to ease the interrogation process and avoid absconding of the suspect.

Walmsley (2017) also posed that remanding prisoner entails engaging an accused person under a watch after a preliminary examination. The upsurge in the number of inmates across correctional homes globally has propels the United Nations to inculcate the move for scaling down the ratio of awaiting trial inmates under goal 16 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals 2015 - 2030 toward encouraging peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable (UN, 2016).

According to the Institute for Criminal Policy Research asserted that,

“Almost in all countries of the world the majority of individuals in correctional homes are yet to be convicted of any crime but are remanded in order to be proven guilty or not by the court of law. Majority are latter proven not guilty of such alleged crime however the period

the use or are hold in captivity usually accounted to months or years. Their conditions are usually disturbing than those of the convicted and condemned criminals and in most countries inmates on awaiting trials are mostly banned from visitation by family or close ones due to investigations and security reasons”

In the word of a senior British probation officer, he put forth that:

“In a situation where an individual is remanded in custody for over 24 hours, the gradually lose their accommodation, and job, open to different health hazards and the shame of being imprisoned. Going further, he points out that awaiting trial inmates usually find it hard to get access to legal representation, and the suicide rate is usually high among remanded prisoners due to frustrations (ICPR)”

Notwithstanding, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), has stipulated a framework that serves as blueprint for individuals undergoing trial process and that are not been proved guilty of any crime or judgment are not been passed on them. Article 9.3 of the ICCPR stipulated that:

“In general rulings, un-sentenced inmates should not be remanded in custody. However, he or she should be released on the ground that he will be available any time is need for questioning or interrogation in the process of investigation and in times were the final judgment is to be made”

It is imperative to voice that individuals not categorized under awaiting trial inmates are arrested persons or suspects who have not yet appeared in front of a judicial officer to determine whether they should be released or detained awaiting trial. Globally, almost one-third (32 percent) of the world’s 10 million incarcerated persons were in pre-trial detention in 2012 (WPB, 2017). This proportion varies considerably by region. The region with the highest proportion of pre-trial detainees was Asia (40.6 percent) followed by Africa (34.7 percent). In the Americas somewhat over a quarter and in Europe, about one in five, of all prisoners were pre-trial detainees in 2012 (ICCPS, 2017). Holding charge practices by magistrate courts is one of the causative factors responsible for the unusually high pre-trial inmate population in Nigerian prisons. Holding charge refers to the practice of arranging a person accused of a crime before a court that cannot try him/her to secure a remand order (Ali, 2016).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Structural Functional Theory

Social structure theory is traced to the work of social scientist Emile Durkheim 1858-1917. According to him, he postulated that society exists as a system with different interdependent components and parts that make up the system. However, the theory of structural functionalism was popularized by Talcott Parsons. He identified four major drivers of the theory: adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and latency. Adaption refers to the corollary nexus between the system and its environments. The ability of the structures to maintain social changes within society for performing its functions is termed adaption. Societies are established for goal realizations, which also correlate with the aims of any established institution. Integration refers to sustaining friendly interactions with other subparts of the system. The idea of latency refers to the means of sustaining and maintaining stability in the system. The theory

posits that correctional services are created to perform a specific function as the structure of the system. Among the functions are housing inmates and keeping proper records to take care of the inmates and provide rehabilitation, correction, and reintegration of inmates back into society.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in research implies a procedure most suitable for the authentication of phenomena or data. Inmates awaiting trial are the most exposed people to the effects of the criminal justice system in Nigeria. Therefore, to examine the conditions of inmates awaiting trial, it is important to pose some questions to inmates awaiting trial. It's also important to note that the stakeholders involved in the criminal justice system comprise the police, the court system, and correctional services. The question to assess the perception of awaiting trial inmates was presented in tabular form and simple percentage due to the large number and complexity of interviewing the inmates. However, secondary documents were used to buttress their responses. The research design adopted for this research was the descriptive survey design method, as it was found suitable for this research purpose. According to Oniye (1997), the descriptive method deals with a systematic description of an event in a very factual and accurate manner.

Research Population and Sampling Method

Table 1

Names of Correctional Centers, Population of the Respective Numbers of Awaiting Trial Inmates, and Percentage Distribution of Awaiting Trial Inmates to be Administered Questionnaires in the (4) Correctional Facilities in Kwara State

Names of Correctional Centers	Population of Awaiting Trials	Number of Selected Respondents
Oke-Kura	317	136
Mandala	177	77
Lafiagi	6	2
Omu-Aran	34	14
Totals	534	229

Source. Fieldwork, 2023.

Based on Table 1, the total population of the study is 534 awaiting trial inmates: 317 from Oke Kura Correctional Center, 177 from Mandala Correctional Center, 6 from Lafiagi Correctional Center, and 34 from Omu-Aran Correctional Center. However, it will be ambiguous and unrealistic to administer questionnaires to all the 534 awaiting inmates' trials across the four correctional facilities in Kwara state. The Taro Yamane sample size was adopted to get a representative that will reflect the larger population sample.

However, a total of 229 were selected as the sample size after using the formula shown below.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n = Sample size
N = Population
e = allowable degree of error (%) n = 534

$$n = \frac{534}{1 + 534(0.05)^2}$$
$$n = \frac{534}{2.3335}$$
$$n = 228.69$$
$$n = 229 \text{ (Rounded up)}$$

A total of two hundred and twenty-nine (229) inmates awaiting trial will be administered the questionnaire. Nonetheless, out of the 229 distributed, only two hundred and twenty-one (221) were returned, and only two hundred (200) were valid.

Research Instrument

A research instrument is a tool used to collect, measure, and analyze data related to research interest. One research instrument, the questionnaire, was employed to gather information. The selection of these tools was guided by the nature of the data collected, the time available, and the study's objectives, as they were found to be most befitting for the survey.

Validation of the Instrument

In the opinion of Bolarinwa (2018), validity denotes the degree to which the questionnaire, as an instrument of measurement, measures what it is supposed to measure. The instruments used for data collection were objectively constructed and submitted to an expert for validation. The validity of the instrument, which was the questionnaire, was measured. In this study, the validity of the instruments was measured by a panel of experts through an assessment of selected items in the instruments that ensured that the instruments were measuring what they were expected to measure. Corrections were made after identifying the vague and ambiguous questions, and a final instrument was prepared.

Sources of Data Collection

Data collection is a key component in research design. The data used in this research was sourced from different sources. This ranged from questionnaires to library searches. Thus, data generated for the study were from primary and secondary sources. Primary data are obtained directly through the main source. Collecting them is to obtain first-hand information about the subject being studied. The bulk of the primary data was obtained through questionnaires designed using information generated from the primary survey after taking due cognizance of the purpose and objectives of the study. Secondary

sources include the internet, textbooks, government publications, non-governmental organization publications, and published articles.

Section A: Demographic Data of Respondents

Table 2

Demographic Data of Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	167	83.5%
Female	33	16.5%
Total	200	100%
Age		
23-27	57	28.5%
28-32	97	48.5%
33- Above	46	23%
Total	200	100%
Qualifications		
O Level	99	49.5%
ND/HND	79	39.5%
Degree	20	10%
Others	2	1%
Total	200	100%

Source. Fieldwork, 2023.

Section B: Questionnaire Responses

Table 3

Question One: How long have you been on awaiting trial?

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Four months	57	28.5%
Five months	27	13.5%
Six months and above	97	48.5%
One year above	19	9.5%
Total	200	100%

Source. Fieldwork, 2023.

From Table 3, 57, 28.5% of inmates awaiting trial, have spent four months on trial, 27(13.5%) of respondents agree that they have used five months on awaiting trial, 97(48.5%) of respondents have used six months above. In comparison, 19, 9.5% of respondents, have spent more than one-year

awaiting trial. Therefore, most respondents use six months and above to await trial inmates. Buttressing this point, Ojo (2017) and Orekewa (2005) asserted that Inmates still spent up to six months in the trial, which there are not expected to last more than one week or two weeks, as equally submitted by Ukwayi & Okpa (2017).

Table 4

Question Two: What is your opinion on the objective of the criminal justice system in terms of correction, investigation, rehabilitation, and deterrence?

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	17	8.5%
Good	27	13.5%
Average	87	43.5%
Poor	69	34.5%
Total	200	100%

Source. Fieldwork, 2023.

Based on Table 4, it shows that 17, of which 8.5% of the respondents selected excellent, were by 27(13.5%) picked good, 87(43.5%) selected average, and 69 which is (34.5%) ticked poor. Therefore, most awaiting trial inmates accepted that the criminal justice system is poor. Echoing the above, Alemika (2005) posits that there is little concern for the right of suspects at all three levels of criminal justice administration starting from the police, and judicial to the correctional service. Accordingly, Okogbule (2004) pointed out that the justice dispensation process has been abused, from the arrest of the suspect for the investigation process to arraignment to court rulings, case hearings, and passing verdicts.

Table 5

Question Three: What is the condition of correctional facilities e.g. bed space, feeding, health care, and clothing?

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	-	-
Good	28	14%
Average	37	18.5%
Poor	135	67.5%
Total	200	100%

Source. Fieldwork, 2023.

Table 5 represents the respondents' perception of the state of correctional facilities. 28, which 14% of the respondents believed was in good condition, 37 which is 18.5% of the respondents selected the average conditions of the facilities. In comparison, 135(67.5%) respondents argued that the condition of the correctional facilities is poor. Therefore, the majority of the awaiting trial inmates believed that correctional facilities are in poor condition. Validating the above point, Oke (2017) posits that the working conditions of some of these judges, particularly the judges of the inferior courts, are deplorable and pathetic, making them vulnerable to receiving bribes. Prisoners are kept in surroundings that are kept untidy due to lack of constant sanitations, shortages of meals rations, poor health care facilities,

over congestion, shattered clothing, and struggle for sleeping space among inmates on concrete floors (Ayodele & Alabi, 2011).

Table 6

Question Four: Is Nigeria's prison congestion due to the increased number of prisoners awaiting trials?

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	167	83.5%
Disagree	33	16.5%
Total	200	100%

Source. Fieldwork, 2023.

Table 6 represents the respondents' responses to the reason for the congestion of correctional facilities. 167(83.5%) of respondents agree that awaiting trial inmates is the reason for prison congestion, while 33(16.5%) disagree. Therefore, most respondents agree that the reason behind prison congestion is the large number of inmates awaiting trial. Attesting to the above, In Nigeria specifically, data provided that about 73% of Nigeria's prison population is on awaiting trial (WPB, 2021). Going further, according to the Institute for Criminal Policy Research (ICPR), one-third of the world's prison population consists of those not convicted of any crime.

Table 7

Question Five: Were you assigned any work in the facilities as an awaiting trial?

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	141	70.5%
No	59	29.5%
Total	200	100%

Source. Fieldwork, 2023.

From Table 7, 141(70.5%) of respondents agree that they were assigned work as awaiting trial inmates. In comparison, 59(29.5%) said they were not assigned any assignments as inmates awaiting trial at the correctional facilities. Therefore, most inmates awaiting trial were assigned duties at the facilities.

Table 8

Question Six: Do your people often visit you?

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	87	43.5%
No	113	56.5%
Total	200	100%

Source. Fieldwork, 2023.

Table 8 shows that 68(43.5%) of the respondents agree that their people often visit them, while 113(56.5%) disagree that their people often visit them. Therefore, the majority of the awaiting trial inmates are often visited at correctional centers.

Table 9

Question Seven: Is there biased treatment in correctional facilities?

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	186	93%
No	14	7%
Total	200	100%

Source. Fieldwork, 2023.

Table 9 shows that 186(93%) of the respondents accepted that there is biased treatment of inmates, while 14(7%) of respondents disagreed with that. Therefore, the majority of awaiting trial inmates agreed that there is biased treatment of awaiting trial inmates. According to Penal Reform International (2013), African awaiting trial inmates may be worse compared to convicted inmates as prison systems have very limited resources budgeted for them. Correctional centers are not a classless society. Class structures, status groups, and inmate party affiliations influence how prison warders treat them (Ahamdu, 2012).

Table 10

Question Eight: Does prison congestion pose a challenge to the administration of correctional facilities?

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	177	88.5%
No	23	11.5%
Total	200	100%

Source. Fieldwork, 2023.

Table 10 shows that 177(88.5%) of respondents agree that prison congestion poses a challenge to the administration of correctional facilities. In comparison, 23(11.5%) of respondents disagree that prison congestion poses a challenge to the administration of prison facilities. Therefore, most respondents believe that prison congestion poses a challenge to the administration of correctional facilities. In research conducted by Osondi (2008), he discovered that there is a rise in the issues attributed to poor administration within the justice system; he started issues like inadequate budgetary allocation, congestion problems, and failure of the existing laws and reforms to tackle the primary objectives behind the creation of correctional centers and correctional procedures for inmates.

Table 11

Question Nine: Are there signs of integrity and incorruptibility among correctional officials?

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	55	27.5%
No	145	72.5%
Total	200	100%

Source. Fieldwork, 2023.

From Table 11, 55(27.5%) of the respondents agree that there are signs of integrity and incorruptibility among correctional officials, while 145(72.5%) of respondents disagree. Therefore, most correctional officials lack integrity and are corrupt. Ewelukwa (2004) buttressed that one of the major hindrances that has impeded the realization of the objectives of the correctional service system in Nigeria is the menace of corrupt practice among correctional officers.

Table 12

Question Ten: Is every prison supposed to accommodate a stipulated number of prison inmates?

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	200	100%
No	-	-
Total	200	100%

Source. Fieldwork, 2023.

Table 12 shows that 200(100%) respondents agree that every prison has stipulated the number of inmates to accommodate, while none disagree. Therefore, all the respondents agree that each prison has a stipulated number of inmates. Grace (2014) is of the opinion that the continuous rise in the number of unsentenced inmates across correctional centers in the country is a fundamental problem for the administration of the justice system in Nigeria. He went further to state that prisoners who are detained in correctional facilities have outgrown the original number of inmates that was in the original plan to occupy those spaces. However, it was debated that correctional homes in Nigeria are not overpopulated and has been emphasized that the original capacity can suitably house the total inmate size. It is contended that it can house twice the population of its capacity (Ogundipe, 2011).

HYPOTHESIS FINDINGS

Hypothesis one: It was discovered that there is a relationship between the increase in awaiting trial and the conditions of inmates awaiting trials. Therefore, we accept H1.

Hypothesis two: It was discovered that the increase in awaiting trial inmates has effects on correctional services and correctional facilities. Therefore, we accept H1.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Based on the findings, the summary regarding the length of time inmates wait to be tried reveals that most inmates wait more than six months. In response to the question about the objectives of the criminal justice system concerning correction, investigation, rehabilitation, and deterrence, most inmates perceived its efficiency and effectiveness, in terms of its activities, as poor. When asked about the conditions of correctional facilities, such as bed space, food, healthcare, and clothing, all the inmates lamented the poor state of the prison facilities. Regarding prison congestion due to the large number of inmates awaiting trials, it was discovered that most of the prison population consists of inmates awaiting trials. Concerning whether inmates awaiting trials were assigned any work in the facilities, most inmates acknowledged that they were allocated tasks in the correctional facilities. In response to the question about whether inmates awaiting trials are often visited by their families, most of them said that they are not frequently visited in correctional facilities. On the question of preferential treatment of inmates awaiting trial in correctional facilities, most inmates affirmed that there is preferential treatment among them by correctional officers. In answer to whether prison congestion poses a challenge to the administration of correctional facilities, most inmates admitted to this claim, stating that the increase in awaiting trials has made correctional officer tasks complex and overwhelming. Regarding signs of integrity and incorruptibility among correctional officials in correctional facilities, most inmates awaiting trial denied these claims, starting with the assertion that most warders are corrupt. Lastly, when asked if prisons are supposed to accommodate a specific number of inmates, the inmates affirmed that every room has a designated number of bed spaces.

CONCLUSION

Nigeria's correctional service aims to rehabilitate, correct, and punish offenders who breach the law of the land. Awaiting trial, on the other hand, are suspect but still undergoing process to be found wanting of the alleged crime or offence. They are expected to be kept different and treated with care and respect regarding the time investigations are ongoing. Nonetheless, the conditions of their life status have been negatively affected before being pronounced guilty or not due to the system of operations in correctional facilities. The expectations and knowledge of inmates awaiting trial about the correctional service were totally different from their experience during their waiting period in correctional facilities. However, the study conducted explicitly discovered the reality of the happenings in the correctional facilities as what is obtainable is different from formal practices in other countries. From the study, it was clear that the ideal differs from the reality of events in correctional facilities across Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study recommends increasing budgetary allocation to improve the conditions of service and facilities in correctional centers. New correctional services will be built, and improved staff remuneration will reduce corruption in the long run. A building should be built separately for housing inmates' trials. NGOs, s, and other faith-based organizations should constantly visit to assess the conditions of inmates and provide necessary assistance. The system of home arrest should be implemented instead of incurring expenses for the care and other needs of inmates awaiting trial. The system is widely practiced in various countries to alleviate congestion and reduce government expenditure. The prosecution and sentencing of suspected criminals should be speedy, and special courts, employing exceptional lawyers, along with a swift investigation process, should be established.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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