

SOCIETAL IMPLICATIONS OF SCARPER CORRECTIONAL CENTRE IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Correctional centers were established to rehabilitate offenders, and the reoccurrence of the correctional break in Nigeria is an impediment to its goal. Previous studies emphasized why the reoccurrence and the nature of correctional centres break in Nigeria. This paper examines the implications of prison break or correctional center escape in Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives of the study include examining the factors responsible for correctional centre break and inmates escape in Nigeria, validating the societal prison inmates in Nigeria, and suggesting ways to prevent reoccurrence of prison break/ inmates escape in Nigeria. A quantitative data collection/analysis method was adopted, 300 respondents participated through questionnaires, while simple percentages and frequent counts as well as statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) software version 27 was used to analyze the data. Frustration Aggression Theory is used as plausibility to the study. Major findings from the fieldwork revealed that factors responsible for prison breaks include the violation of the fundamental rights of prison inmates, corruption within the system as well and inadequate security intelligence from the system. The study therefore recommends that there is a need to organise intelligence seminars/workshops for correctional centre personnel. Also, there is a need to improve the welfare of prison staff to reduce corruption within the system, and there is a need for technological advancement in apprehending prison breakers to deter others with similar intentions, among others.

Keywords: Apprehend, Criminals, Prison break, correctional Centre, inmates, Insecurity.

Background to the study

Prisons are correctional facilities for law breakers or offenders, Prison facilities are meant for the rehabilitation of members of society whose attitudes contradict the law of the land. When lawbreakers are prosecuted and taken to prisons, the aim is to reform them by the societal patterns of behaviour and patterns for behaviour. Correctional centres hold awaiting trial persons (ATPs) and convicts who have been found guilty of crimes, to prevent them from committing crimes against the society, this is the view of Shajobi-Ibikunle (2022). Correctional Centres are regarded as the panel system. The Nigerian penal system is aimed at reforming and rehabilitating convicted persons so that they can come out of the penitentiary as useful citizens who will not be taken to crime again (Nkwocha, 2018). Different kinds of prisons are available in Nigeria, this includes Maximum Security Prisons, Medium security Prisons, and Minimum-security Prisons, the nature of the crime committed determines which the offender is sent to, and this is to ensure the treatment given to the lawbreaker is commensurable to the offence committed. With the reoccurrence of the correctional centers' break, it seems, the aim of prison centres in Nigeria becomes evident difficult to materialize. It is assumed that correctional centres vandalism has caused scarper inmates in Nigeria, thereby resulting in uncertainties. Shajobi-Ibikunle, (2022) opined that a correctional centre break is the act of an inmate leaving prison in unofficial or illegal ways. Escape from correctional centre is a criminal offence in most countries including Nigeria (Nkwocha, 2018). Correctional centre break is when the inmates are isolated from the larger society, subjected to discipline to make them better citizens find their way out of security custody without legal proceedings. Jailbreak also refers to the use of an illegal means or force to gain freedom from the correctional centre. Here prisoners attempt to escape and avoid punishment

The nature of correctional centre breaks may come in different forms, this could be through the external attack, illegal arrangement within the system, and or incompetency on the side of the officers, for example napping during the duty period, this could also be due to corruption and discrepancies within the prison facilities as it relates to the situation of Nigeria, Onah, Adenyi, and Eneh, (2019) supported this and were of the view that instead of correctional centres serve as rehabilitation centres, which should apply to every offender there exist inequalities within these facilities, wealthy prison inmates can live as much enjoyable life as they can afford within the walls of incarceration. Similarly, there are “apartments” in the correctional centre where inmates live like they are in their homes, with all the privileges attached (Falayi and Ajayi, 2018). These privileges do not just land on the laps of inmates. It is how officials make their money on the side, while inmates without the financial muscle rub shoulders in squalor. For Hilary, Okunowo, and Adedeji (2018) the reasons for correctional centres’ breaks include corruption among the prison staff, inadequate security and poorly trained security prison personnel; not forgetting the unhealthy, dirty and mosquito-infested correctional centres environment where the prisoners languish and therefore try to escape at every slightest opportunity that shows up. All these are some of the reasons correctional facilities experience periodic attacks resulting in breaks.

Trevo, Yalena and Farhan (2018) asserted that in Africa many cases of escaping prison inmates recorded, in Tunisia for instance, on January 14, 2011, there was a political revolution that led to a change in government, upon the defeat of the then President, President Zine El Abidine, there was panic and uncertainty following the riot, prisoners managed to break the walls of the prison as in the case of Mornag prison (north-east Tunisia) at least Nine Hundred (900) prison inmates , similarly on January 15, 2011, the riot persisted, most of the facilitates were destroyed, and all the detainees ran, except a young prisoner who had only two (2) Months to serve (Yasmine, 2020).

Similarly, regarding correctional centres break in Nigeria, Onah, Adenyi, and Eneh, (2019) conducted a study on the increasing cases of prison breaks in Nigeria: A theoretical explanation, the study discovered that the Nigerian correctional system has been captured by two high-stake-interest groups: one, wealthy prison inmates who live like kings within the prison walls; and two, a powerful cabal within the Nigerian Prison service authority who are involved in selling prison jobs and promotion to the highest bidders. Aluko, and Okolie-Osemene, (2017) were interested in Jailbreak recurrence as a new security threat in Nigeria, their study found nature of criminal offences such as cases of awaiting trials in prisons, neglecting the welfare of the inmates as enshrined by the constitution, conspiracy in the criminal justice system as core factors responsible for correctional centres’ break in Nigeria over the years. However, there has never been any positive response probably because the successive governments have not given attention to the recommendations on ways by which the issues can be addressed. Therefore, this study is set to examine societal implications of scarper correctional centre inmates in Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

This paper is interested in the societal implications of scarper correctional inmates in Nigeria. Specifically, the paper will consider the following objectives:

1. Examine the factors responsible for correctional centres’ break and inmate escape in Nigeria
2. Explore the societal implications of the escaped correctional centres’ inmates in Nigeria
3. Suggest ways to prevent the reoccurrence of correctional center’s break/inmate escape in Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

Based on the foregoing, the study adopts the Frustration aggression theory. The Frustration aggression theory is sometimes referred to as the frustration aggressive displacement paradigm, the theory was proposed by Dollard, Miller, Doob, Mowrer, and Sears (1939), and further expanded by Miller (1941), and Berkowitz (1969). The theory is generally informed by the psychodynamic approach, the theory first presents those individuals who experience a drive to be aggressive towards an objective but when often impossible or inappropriate, thus the aggression metamorphosed to frustration on someone else or another object.

The Frustration aggression hypothesis states that aggression is a result of frustration; frustration is any event or stimulus that prevents an individual from attaining a goal and its accompanying reinforcement quality (Dollard, Miller Doobn, Mowrer, and Sears, 1939). This implies that when set goals are not

Societal Implications of Scarper Correctional Centre in Nigeria

attainable there is frustration that leads to aggression in behaviour. When this occurs, the aggression does not always face the causative object or person directly, this is probably because of the risk involved, and consequently, the reaction in behaviour that is described as aggressive could turn to any available object and or person. For Breuer and Elson (2017), frustration is an event instead of an effective state. While Dollard further contended that frustration is an unexpected blockage of a goal that someone anticipated attaining, this implies a reaction or response to an unattainable envisaged goal(s).

Frustration aggression theory explains aggressive behaviour in different situations. The theory contends that aggression is the result of blocking, or frustrating, a person's efforts to attain a goal. Frustration is the "condition which exists when a goal-response suffers interference," while aggression is defined as "an act whose goal-response is injury to an organism (or person). The theory explains the cause(s) of societal violence, it is a path to the understanding of why individuals, groups and societies act or respond aggressively, The theory contends that frustration can create aggressive inclinations even when they are not arbitrary or aimed at the subject personally, interpretations and attributions can be understood partly in terms of the original analysis but they can as influence unpleasant of the thwarting (Leonard, 1989). The frustration-aggression theory is not just relevant to this study but applicable, because it has been able to explain the prevalence factors responsible for prison

Data Presentation, Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings

Presentation of Data

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of the Respondents

Variable	Category	N	Percent (%)
Age	18-25	53	17.7
	26-30	40	13.3
	31-40	51	17
	41-50	70	23.3
	51-69	52	17.3
	70-years and above	34	11.3
Gender	Male	162	54
	Female	138	46
Educational qualification	Primary	77	22.3
	Secondary	93	25.6
	Tertiary	110	36.6
	Others	20	6.6
Occupation	Farming	92	30.6
	Trading	78	26
	Civil Service	107	35.6
	Student	19	6.3
	Others	4	1.3
Marital Status	Married	130	43.3
	Single	122	40.6
	Divorced/Separated	32	10.6
	Widowed/widower	16	5.3

Source: Fieldwork 2022

The data presented in the table 1 shows that largest of the sampled population (23.3%) fall under the age category 41-50 years, 17.7% of the total population were in the age 18-25, similarly, 17.3% were between 51-69 years of age, while 17% of the sampled respondents were between 31-40 years, in the same vein 13.3% of the respondents fall between age range 26-30 while the rest of the sampled respondents (11.3%) were between the ages of 70 years and above

For the respondents' gender, the data shows that the accidental sample got the majority of the respondents (54%) to be males while 46% were females. The accidental sample technique favours males and this made

the study more interesting as security issues are sensitive and males should have more knowledge. The compartment of the educational level of the respondents. The result from the analysis shows that the largest of the sampled respondents (36.6%) have attained the status of high education academic qualifications, that is, they hold an Ordinary National Diploma (OND), National Certificate in Education (NCE), Higher National Diploma (HND), Bachelors of Science and Arts (B.sc and B.A) degrees, Masters of Science and Arts, and Doctors of Philosophy (M.Sc. and PhDs) In different fields, while 25.6% of the respondents are holders of Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSCE), 22.3% of the sampled respondents hold First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC). Similarly, 6.6. % of the respondents belong to others.

The fourth compartment is respondents' rating on occupation the data revealed that the largest number of the respondents 36.5.% were civil servants, 26% of the respondents were traders, while 3.6% were farmers, in a similar vein 6.3% of the respondents were students and others constituting 4%. This implies that civil servants dominated the research. The fifth compartment is that of marital status of the respondents, the data revealed that 43.3% of the respondents constituting the largest of the compartment were married men and women, 40.6% of the respondents were single, 10.6% of the respondents were either divorced or separated men and women, and 5.3 of the sampled respondents were married but loss their spouses, they belong to widowed/widower hood.

Table 2: The Quest to Validate if the Respondents Were Informed About the Societal Implications of Correctional Centres Break in Nigeria.

Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)
Yes	300	100
No	00	00%
Total	300	100

Source fieldwork 2024

Table 2 presents data on the quest to understand if the sampled respondents knew the societal implications of correctional centres' break in Nigeria, all the sampled respondents (100%) accepted they were aware. This validates the data obtained about obtained about the topic of investigation.

Table 3: Response on Factors Responsible for Prison Break/Inmates Escape in Nigeria,

Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)
Negligence to Prison inmates in correctional centres	87	29
Corruption within the Prison System	101	33.7
Poor Security Strength	40	13.3
Inadequate Security Intelligence	72	24
Total	300	100

Source fieldwork 2024

The data presented in able 3 is on the factors responsible for correctional centres' break in Nigeria. The data revealed that it is caused by corrupt practices within the prison system, this was responses from majority of the sampled population (33.7%), while 29% of the sampled respondents submitted that negligence to prison inmates while in correctional facilities is another reason for it break in Nigeria, in the same vein 24% of the respondents were of the view that inadequate security intelligence isequally a precursor to Nigerian correctional centres' break, while 13,3% of the respondents opined that poor security strength within the facilities has been found responsible for prison break in the country.

Table 4: Response on Societal Implications of the Escaped correctional Centers Inmates in Nigeria,

Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)
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Societal Implications of Scarper Correctional Centre in Nigeria

Increase in Crime Rate	170	56.6
Lack of Confidence on the Criminal Justice System	104	34.6
High level of Uncertainties	26	8.6
Total	400	100

Source fieldwork 2024

Table 4 presents data on the implications accompanied by correctional centres' break in Nigeria, majority of the sampled respondents (56.6%) averred that the implication of it breaks on the society is that, the society experience increase in crime rate, a significant number of the respondents (34.6%) said it creates an impression that there is no confidence in the Nigerian criminal justice system, similarly, 8.6% of the sampled respondents agreed that it brings uncertainties in the society.

Table 5: Response on Ways to Prevent Reoccurrence of Correctional Centres' Break and Inmates Escape in Nigeria.

Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)
Checkmate of daily activities of the Prison System	112	37.3
Policy/Law makers Should Ensure the rights of Prison Inmates are Guarantee	31	10.3
Recruitment of personnel to Boost the Security Strength	55	18.3
Organization of Security Intelligence Workshop/Seminars for Security personnel	102	34
Total	300	100

Source fieldwork 2024

Table 6 presents the response rate on ways to prevent the reoccurrence of correctional centre breaks in Nigeria. The data had it that a significant number of the sampled respondents (37.3%) submitted that the Government, as well as policymakers, should set a committee for the checkmate of daily activities of the Nigerian correctional system, some of the respondents (34%) opined that it is important to organize security intelligence workshop/seminars for the security personnel to equip them with knowledge on security challenges. Again, 18.3% of the sampled respondents were of the view that there is poor security strength in the correctional facilities therefore, it is imperative to recruit personnel adequately to meet the prison space, 10.3% of the respondents said the rights of the prison inmates have not been protected efforts should be made on it.

Discussion of Findings

Factors Responsible For Correctional Centres Break and Inmate Escape in Nigeria

Data on the factors responsible for correctional centres break/inmate escapes in Nigeria revealed that prison inmates' escape in Nigeria is caused by the corrupt practices within the prison system, this was found from responses of the majority of the respondents (33.7%) that prison facilities that ordinarily should be correctional facilities for all social vices including corruption rather perpetuates it, this shows that without the support of the staff of the correctional system, correctional centres' must have been difficult, a good number of people within the system have become black sheep, they collect bribe from inmates, from

relatives of inmates and from un-apprehended crime partners of inmates to give them information about how and when they can escape from the correctional custody, as well as when terrorist can freely attack correctional centre. This can be validated with the July 6, 2022 attack on Abuja Kuje correctional centre where all security agencies were withdrawn at the prison entrance checkpoint some hours before the attack. This finding tallies with that of Ogadimma, Asamu and Adejumo,(2015); Ogu, Akaose, and Nwokocha, (2022) that politicization of insecurity and efficient management of the Nigerian correctional service as well as the consequential government negligence on the corrupt practices in the entire judicial system are causes of correctional centres' break in Nigeria.

Furthermore, findings revealed Negligence to inmates at correctional centres is another factor responsible for its breaks, this is because the rights of the inmates in Nigeria are not guaranteed, the correctional centres are overpopulated, there is no good sanitary condition, there is a lack of good water and food for them, the skills and training that should be given them to make them better citizens are nowhere feasible, they are exposed to diseases due to poor weather as such they becomes very aggressive, thus think of nothing else rather opportunities to escape. This finding shares commonalities with that of Shajobi-Ibiku (2022) that prison inmates are in jeopardy, there is a violation of inmates' liberty, and they live in depilated and overcrowded cells.

Furthermore, findings agreed that inadequate security intelligence is another factor for correctional centre inmates' escape in Nigeria, this is because dealing with criminals requires a high level of security intelligence as a good number of these criminals are well trained in the criminal palace, which security intelligence has been found lacking within the correctional system, often inmates escape from correctional centres without the knowledge of the personnel. This finding has found commonalities with the work of Abiodun, Akinlade, Onyi, and Daramola (2021) that ineffective correctional services arms squad and lack of prison intelligence and dynamic security have weakened the Nigerian correctional facilities and resulted in jailbreaks. More so, findings opined that Nigerian correctional centres have poor security strength, and the ratio of personnel to inmates does not in any way demonstrate seriousness on the side of the system.

Societal Implications of the Escaped Correctional Centres Inmates in Nigeria

Data on responses on societal implications of the escaped correctional centre inmates in Nigeria, the majority of the respondents (56.6%) submitted the implications of escaped correctional centres inmates; the society is an increase in the level of criminality, this is because these criminals were apprehended to be rehabilitated, however, they left unofficially and spread in societies, they were together and made contact to each other, they influenced each other and reinforce to crime worse than they were. There is no doubt that as correctional centre breaks increase in Nigeria, the level of crime increases, there is no single day passed in Nigeria without hearing sad news such as kidnapping, killings by the so-called unknown gunmen, robbery, rape and other brutality among others. This finding tallies with that of Hassan, and Langa (2019) that jailbreak leads to recidivism and damages reformation/rehabilitation.

Findings further established that correctional centre inmates' escape brought about a lack of confidence within the criminal justice system, this is because correctional centres should be a source of justice rather than gross incompetency, where criminals should be used to deter leaves freely without any implications, victims no longer see the need to report perpetrators as there is no hope for them to be punished due to the crime committed.

Furthermore, findings revealed that there is a high level of uncertainty in the society, particularly around the surroundings as well as border towns/villages where there are correctional centres' breaks as no one knows the next line of action of these criminals, the Kuje prison for instance, a good number of Boko-Haram escaped, this created panic at Abuja and borders such as Nasarawa State, Kaduna State among others.

Ways to Prevent the Reoccurrence of Correctional Centre break/inmate escape in Nigeria

Data on ways to prevent the reoccurrence of correctional centre breaks and inmate escape in Nigeria; The Majority of the respondents (37.3%) averred that Government/ Policymakers should set up a committee for the checkmate of daily activities of the prison system, this is because prison breaks are as a result of corruption within the system, as such if there is a panel that checkmates the activities, the level of

Societal Implications of Scarper Correctional Centre in Nigeria

corruption will be reduced to the barest minimal hence significance reduction in the rate of correctional centres break.

Findings also stressed that; sometimes the inmates escape without the knowledge of the personnel due to a lack of professional intelligence, therefore, it is imperative to organize security intelligence workshops/seminars for the prison officers, as this will help prevent the reoccurrence of correctional centres' prison break in Nigeria. This finding shares commonalities with the work of Arisukwu, Adejumo, and Asamu, (2015) that both the government and the prison management must take their responsibilities seriously. Prison officials must be trained adequately on how to prevent and manage correctional centres' violence constructively.

Furthermore, findings revealed that the incumbent Government needs to recruit more personnel to boost security strength in the system. Findings further suggested that policy/lawmakers should ensure the rights of the inmates are guaranteed, this will go a long way in reducing the aggressiveness of the criminals in the correctional facilities, because most of the correctional centres' breaks are evidenced by the maltreatment given to the inmates. Data on ways to prevent reoccurrence of correctional centres breaks and inmate escape in Nigeria; Majority of the respondents (37.3%) averred that Government/ Policymakers should set up a committee for the checkmate of daily activities of the prison system, this is because prison breaks are as a result of corruption within the system, as such if there is a panel that checkmates the activities, the level of corruption will be reduced to the barest minimal hence significance reduction in the rate of correctional centres break.

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Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, we conclude that the essence of the establishment of the correctional system in Nigeria has not been achieved over the years because of the corrupt practices within the system such as bribery has taken over the system, inadequate intelligence on the side of the personnel, and neglect to inmates or violation of rights of the inmates, this conforms the frustration-aggression theory presented above, that due to violation of the rights of the inmates results to aggressiveness. We also conclude that there is no more confidence in the judicial system of the government due to periodic correctional breaks. Furthermore, the study concludes that inmates' escape results in high insecurity rates in Nigeria and equally creates the impression of uncertainties. On the way forward, we conclude that there should be a checkmate in the correctional system, and there will be security intelligence workshops/seminars for the prison personnel.

Recommendations

Based on the study conclusions, we have the following way forward on the issues of correctional centres break in Nigeria.

1. The fundamental rights of the inmates should be protected. The inability to protect the rights of these inmates' frustration and aggression will perpetuate, and efforts to break prison will remain the target. This includes a clean environment with well-spaced cells to enable good ventilation for

the inmates and provision for good meals. To achieve this, the Government needs to set up an external committee independent of the prison system to checkmate the rights of prison inmates.

2. There is a need to focus on training the correctional centres personnel to ensure they are well equipped before deployment to duties; in other to achieve this, there should be security intelligence workshops/seminars for the correctional centres personnel at least every three (3) Months, this will boost their skills and improve their thinking abilities in handling inmates while at duty post. This should be accompanied by;
 - i. Improve in the provision of arms and ammunition to the personnel as this will help resist external attacks on the correctional system.
 - ii. There is an urgent need to advance in technology in the area of security, to this effect, the installation of closed-circuit television (CCTV) across all the correctional facilities has become necessary, also forensic approaches be adopted such as gunshots and footprints to arrest criminals that have already attacked correctional facilities, this will deter others planning to do same.
3. There is a need to do more in the area of recruitment to boost the security strength of the correctional system, the employment patterns should be devoid of sentiment of religion, ethnicity, and or personal affiliations.
4. There is a need to do more about the wages/salaries, and other welfare of the correctional service staff as this will help in reducing bribery/corruption within the system.

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Societal Implications of Scarper Correctional Centre in Nigeria

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