

Tendency for Recidivism Among Juvenile Offenders: A Case for Quality Assurance in the Correctional Programs of Nigerian Borstal Institutions

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Abstract

The researchers find out tendencies for recidivism in the behaviours of juveniles offenders at Nigerian Borstal Training Institutions. From these they inferred the effectiveness of the correctional programs at the institutions. A total of 207 juveniles were purposively sampled and stratified across the institutions on the basis of their lengths of stay. A researcher-made questionnaire titled: Domains of Recidivism Assessment Questionnaire (DRAQ) was utilized to obtain data. The domains were basically aspects of misbehaviors. The Section B of DRAQ has 20 structured-item adapted from Hare's Domains of Psychopathic Traits and Behaviour (DPTB). The instrument was face validated and a reliability coefficient of $r=0.82$ was derived through a test-re-test. Data were analyzed using percentages and t-test statistics. Scoring decisions were set at: less than 5 points (≤ 5) on DRAQ = Effective Correctional Program (ECP). A point (score) higher than 5 (≥ 5) but less from 29 (≤ 29) = Fairly Effective Correctional Program (FECP) and a point higher than 29 (≥ 29) = Ineffective Correctional Program (ICP) or high tendency for recidivism. Findings showed a reduction in tendency for recidivism in the juveniles as their length of stay increased. Specifically, while 51.7% of juveniles with short length of stay (i.e. less than one year) scored above 29 points on DRAQ only 12.1% of those with longer length of stay (i.e. above two years) scored above 29 points. Yet, this could not be interpreted to mean highly effective correctional programs as many of the juveniles across the lengths of stay still indicated some misbehavior (Domains of Recidivism). For example, despite varied period of exposure to correctional programs, 60% of them still indicated lack of self control, 58.7% indicated aimlessness or lacking direction; and 55.7% showed habit of not taking responsibility of wrongdoings. It was therefore recommended that the Borstal Institutions still have more to do to adjust juvenile behaviours.

Key words: recidivism, tendency, juveniles and effectiveness

Introduction

Everybody, irrespective of age, is presumably capable of offending. Series of criminal records indicate that violent crimes, property crimes, and victimless crimes are no longer in the privies of adults. They are crimes now committed by adults and youths (Conklin, 2007;

Siegel, Welsh & Senna, 2003; Ugwuoke & Ojonugwa, 2014). However, in line with international practices regarding Child Rights and crime adjudication, the Section 77, Paragraph 30 of the Nigerian 1990 Penal Code, preferentially handles child offenders differently. The Code states that:

A child under the age of seven does not have criminal responsibility (criminal intent). A child between seven and twelve years can only be found responsible for an offense if it can be proved that the child has mental capacity to know that the offenses should not have been committed and a person above age 12 is deemed fully responsible for the criminal act or omission (The Criminal Code Act, The Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 1990. Chapter 77 paragraph 30).

This preferential handling of young offenders is global. In some American and European countries, offenders below statutory age, i.e. sometimes below age 17 or 18 are classified as *minors or child offenders*. Except in situations of very serious violent crimes, their offences are handled by juvenile court and not by criminal court (Macionis, 2005; Siegel, Welsh & Senna, 2003). Most time they are referred to rehabilitation homes, such as the one located at Gamon Town in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Many nations take this preferential legal stance because children are believed to be too young to account for their deeds. They assume that delinquents behave the way they do because of parental negligence (Macionis, 2005). So, treating them as criminals would mean punishing them for lack of knowledge and for not being taken care of by their parents (Siegel, Welsh & Senna, 2003). In legal practices, this preferential treatment is anchored on the philosophy of *parens patriae*. This philosophy idealizes government as the 'father' of the nation. It maintains that government can have the custody right of any abused and/or neglected child and guide him from becoming menace in society. In many nations, the ideology of *parens patriae* forms the base of why governments provide correctional homes rather than prisons for delinquents (Robin & David, 1993, Giddens, 2001). In Nigeria for example, juvenile delinquencies are not considered to be crimes and the delinquents are not taken to be criminals. It is only in situations of heinous crimes such as murder that the country applies the policy of *waiver* or what is called *bindover*. In this case, government's preferential protection for an underage offender is waived and the case is handled in adult court with the application of criminal law (Shajobi-Ibikunle, 2014). Notwithstanding, Nigeria judicial system hardly imprison an offender below age 18 (Ugwuoke & Ojonugwa, 2014). Rather, such offenders are put in correctional facilities, popularly called Borstal Training Institutions; to be orientated, rehabilitated and reintegrated into society.

The Nigerian Borstal Training Institutions were created and operated under the Borstal Institutions and Remand Centers Act of 1960. The Act was reviewed in 1990. Three of such institutions were established and one each located in Kaduna, Kwara and Ogun States. By the Act, a Nigerian Borstal Training Institution means a place in which offenders who were 16 years and below 21 years on the day of their conviction may be detained and exposed to vocational trainings and/or academic instructions that can contribute to their reformation and that can prevent them from further engaging in crime. The institutions are administered by the Nigerian Prison Service (NPS). In most cases, they are secured environment of residential buildings for young offenders and their monitoring prison officers. The environment often restricts movement through presence of security personnel, locked exits, programmed activities, interior fence control and barrage of rules and regulations (NPS, 2014). In most cases, provisions, distributions and utilizations of facilities, programs and discipline at the institutions are on the declarations of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, though sometimes, this power of declaration is delegated to the Minister of Interior (FRN, 1990; Shajobi-Ibikunle, 2014).

Admission to the Institutions is only by a warrant of committal addressed by a court of committal to the Superintendent of the Borstal House nearest to the court. Inferably, every juvenile must have been legally assessed by a capable court of law and found to be in need of custody for behavioral modification before being referred. The admitted juvenile stays a minimum of 9 months and maximum of 3 years at the Borstal (FRN, 1990). During this period, the juvenile is expected to be between age 16 and 21. This age limit may have been placed on the empirical conclusion that offending reduces as offenders aged (David, 1986; Swanson, Chamelin & Territo, 2003). The Borstals house only male juveniles perhaps because of the assumption that male youth offends more than female youths (Meda, 1980; Micheal, Travis & Joseph 1981, Shajobi-ibikunle 2014).

Behavioural modifications at the Borstal houses are programmed as education, vocation, counseling and monitoring instructions and activities and are delivered to the inmates by trained academic and security personnel. The main objective of the trainings is to prevent juveniles from further committing criminal offenses. To achieve this, the institutions provide the offenders with rehabilitation programs in the category of reorientation (such as counseling and modeling), vocational training such as tailoring, photography, welding, electrical work and bricklaying. The Borstal Institutions also provide school education activities through which offenders who were on school programs before being referred can continue their education even to the level of writing national examinations such as Junior Secondary School Certificate Examination (JSSCE) and General Certificate of Education (GCE) examination. On completion of 3 years, the offender is expected to be released and

placed under surveillance for another period of one year within which monthly reports are provided on him (FRN, 1990).

Generally, the Borstal Training Institutions are operated to provide quality guidance and counseling that will make crime unattractive to offenders. At the institution, emphasis is laid on moral development and conscious deterrence. Juveniles are drilled, orientated and counseled by resident Guidance and Counselors. Some are placed on apprenticeship and all are allowed to interact and build relationship with staff and other inmates. In addition to these, their parents are allowed to visit (Ajiboye, Yusuf, Issa, Adegunloye & Buhari, 2009). In the Borstal Institutions and Remand Centers Act 1960, it is stated that through these exposures, Nigerian government intends to

“... bring to bear every good influence which may establish in the inmates the will to lead a good and useful life on release and to fit them to do so by the fullest possible development of their character, capacities and sense of personal responsibility” (FRN, 1990: 4). The institutions are said to aim at developing the inmates physically, morally and mentally.

But can these be achieved through confinement in a high-security facility such as Borstal homes? Can there be positive changes in the character of the inmates when confined in a place where their movements are restricted and where they have ample opportunities to associate with co-juveniles from whom they can further learn antisocial behaviour? Banking on findings of past researches, Siegel, Welsh & Senna (2003: 466) assert that:

“...institutionalization of even the most serious delinquent youths is a mistake....Confinement in a high security institution usually cannot solve the problems that brought a youth into a delinquent way of life, and the experience may actually amplify delinquency once the youth returns to the community.... Warehousing juveniles without attention to their treatment needs does little to prevent their return to criminal behaviour (Siegel, et. al, 2003: p. 466).

This is the problems. This is the concern that sprouted this research. Many researches already fault organization, population and clustering of juveniles in correctional institution. Many have queried the essence and effectiveness of correctional facilities in averting misbehaviour among juveniles. Peter (1994) confirmed that correctional facilities that would pass quality assurance must be those that provide individualized services for smaller participants such as could be obtained through the *foster care program*. In foster care program, juveniles are placed with families who provide the attention, guidance and care they were denied by their parents. Unfortunately, Nigerian Borstal Institutions are not foster care homes. Rather, they are similar to what Siegel; Welsh & Senna (2003) called *group homes*. Group homes are

structured residences that provide counseling, education, job training and interaction with staff and community to relatively large number of inmates.

Another concern is whether housing a number of juveniles together and making them receive programmed education, restricting them from attending conventional schools with non-delinquents is going to ensure that they do not return to crime. The tendency to relapse into a previous undesirable behaviour particularly after being treated to abstain is called recidivism. Past researches and discourses suggest that one way to determine effectiveness of a correctional program is to measure the rate of recidivism among the treated offenders i.e. to measure tendencies to relapse among the offenders that have been exposed to correctional programs (Conklin 2000; Siegel, Welsh, Senna, 2003). One other means is to carry out a risk assessment of the beneficiaries, particularly when they have not completed a correctional treatment (Wrightsmann & Fulero, 2005). Risk assessment can be a sort of prediction of violence. The objective of the assessment is often to find out whether there is tendency for someone to be violent towards others. Measures of recidivism and risk assessment are often the same thing in behavioural studies. They tend to seek presence of violent traits in subjects. With them, the objective is to predict possibility of engaging in crime or misbehaviour (Wrightsmann & Fulero, 2005). Definitely, presence of domains of recidivism in a treated offender or in one undergoing treatment will mean the treatment is ineffective. It will mean the treatment cannot pass for quality assurance.

Past researchers have identified 20 behavioural variables as reliable predictors of violence. The variables constitute *domains of violence* (scope of violent attitudes). This is synonymous to the *domains of recidivism* used in this study. To determine presence of domain of recidivism in offenders or to determine human capability of violence, some researchers have developed risk assessment checklists using the 20 domains. The popular Psychopathy Checklist Revised (PCL-R) of Hare Robert was structured on the 20 variables (domains). They were structured to predict risk behaviour or psychopathy tendencies in subjects (Hare, 1991). The domains include: *sense of glibness and superficial charm, grandiose estimation of self, need for stimulation, pathological lying, cunning and manipulateness, lack of remorse or guilt and shallow affect*. Others are *callousness and lack of empathy, parasitic lifestyle, poor behavioural control, sexual promiscuity, early behaviour problems, lack of realistic long-term goals, impulsivity, irresponsibility and failure to accept responsibility of own actions*. Others include *record of array of juvenile delinquency, revocation of conditional releases, many short term marital relationships and criminal versatility*. The belief is that presence of these variables in humans can be an indication of their ability to commit crime or relapse into crime. Domains of recidivism or violence can be components of attitude which sometimes be very subliminal but which can also sometimes manifest as the offenders' behaviours (Norwitz, 2009; Conklin, 2007).

Manifestations of the domains of recidivism in offenders are observable via behaviours display that suggest capability of violence or relapsing into crime. It would not be enough to just find out presence of domains of recidivism in juvenile offenders without finding out how such domains manifest in their behaviours. Finding such out will serve as confirmation of the proneness of the offenders to crime and violence. Thus, in this study, the researchers investigated tendency for recidivism among juvenile offenders by using the *Domain of Recidivism Assessment Questionnaire* (DRAQ) to test for presence of the domains of recidivism in the juveniles' behaviour. Also, the researchers studied misbehaviours that still manifest among the juvenile offenders. From these, opinions on the effectiveness of the correctional programs at the Nigerian Borstal Training Institutions were inferred. The motive of the study is to find out whether offenders at the institutions were capable of relapsing into crime even after treated, at least for sometime at the institutions. It was believed that the findings would indirectly be indications of the effectiveness of the correctional programs at the institutions.

Theoretical Framework

The study is theoretically framed on *Differential Association Theory* propounded in 1939 by Edwin Sutherland (Edwin, 1939). The theory maintains that through socialization, children are exposed to and made to learn prosocial and antisocial attitudes and behaviours. However, what determine their future character is the overriding impacts of the differences in the prosocial and the antisocial behavioral scripts they are exposed to. If they are exposed to and learn more of antisocial attributes than prosocial attributes they tend to grow to be antisocial but if otherwise, they tend to be disciplined.

This theory creates a background to assume that juveniles at Borstal institutions will have domains of recidivism as long as they have opportunities to learn more antisocial behaviours from other juveniles at the institutions. Parts of Conklin's (2007) writings suggest that before an offender can withdraw from offending he needs opportunity to interact with non-offenders who should be models that are not favourable to continuity of criminal life. In addition to this, some past researches and scholastic discourses like those of Loeber et al. (1991); William, (1982) and Howard & Hiroshi (1992) maintain that consistent interactions with fellow offenders in a place like Borstal Institutions will not likely prevent recidivism. Differential Association Theory is in the category of Learning Theory which holds that delinquency increases through learning the values and behaviours that associate with criminal activities. Certainly, learning to misbehave requires sources to learn from and such sources are often more impactful if they are significant others such as parents and peers. Thus, it is hypothetically expected that juveniles in Nigerian Borstal Institutions will have domains of recidivism or tendencies to relapse into crime as long as they are housed together with other

juveniles who provide them with definitions or character models and learning opportunities that are favourable to continuity of criminal life.

Research Questions:

The following research questions were raised and answered descriptively in the study:

RQ 1: What did juvenile offenders' scores on Domains of Recidivism Assessment Questionnaire (DRAQ) indicate about their tendencies for recidivism?

RQ 2: What did juvenile offenders' scores on Domains of Recidivism Assessment Questionnaire (DRAQ) indicate about the effectiveness of correctional programs in Nigerian Borstal Institutions?

RQ 3: What attributes of recidivism still manifested in the behaviours of juvenile offenders after being housed for at least 9 months in Nigerian Borstal Institutions?

RQ 4: Does tendency for recidivism among juvenile offenders in Nigerian Borstal institutions significantly vary on the basis of their lengths of stay?

Hypothesis:

H0₁: Tendency for recidivism among juvenile offenders in Nigerian Borstal Institutions will not significantly vary on the basis of the offenders' lengths of stay

Methodology

The researcher applied descriptive survey in the study. At the time of the study, the Borstal institutions housed juvenile offenders aged between 16 and 20 years. Two hundred and seven (207) juvenile offenders were purposively sampled among the housed juveniles. They were all male, and had all served the statutory minimum period of 9 months at the institutions. They were further stratified on the basis of their lengths of stay. Specifically, 58 of them had stayed one year, 83 had stayed more than 1 year but less than 2 years and the remaining 66 offenders had stayed above 2 years. A researcher-made questionnaire titled: *Domains of Recidivism Assessment Questionnaire (DRAQ)* was utilized to elicit the needed data. DRAQ has three sections. Section 'A' elicited respondents' biographical data. The Section 'B' is a structured 20-item segment of the questionnaire. This section provides complete coverage of the Hare's Domain of Psychopathic Traits and Behaviour (DPTB) which had formed the bases of past psychopathic research checklists such as the *HCR-20*, *VRAG* and *PCL-R*. Specifically, the Hare' DPTB are here adapted as Domains of Recidivism (DR). Thus, each of the 20 items in the Section 'B' is framed on each of Hare's Domain of Psychopathic Traits and Behaviour (DPTB). Items in the Section test respondents' tendency for selfish and unfeeling victimization of others. It also tests their unstable and antisocial lifestyles which are the basics of domains of recidivism and indicators of tendencies for recidivism. Section 'C' of the questionnaire consists of another 20 items, each indicating possible ways through which each of the domains can manifest as behaviour. Each of the 20

items in the Section 'B' has response options indicated as *Not Applicable (NA)*, *Sometime Applicable (SA)* and *Always Applicable (AP)*. The response options were scored in accordance to Hare's suggested scoring decisions. The score pattern is as following: NA=0, SA=1 and AP=2. Thus, the highest score a respondent can have on DRAQ is 40 ($2 \times 20 = 40$) and the lowest is 0 ($0 \times 20 = 0$). The scoring cut-off point is also in line with Hare's 1991 original psychopathy checklist. Hare (2002:3) maintains that: "A score of 30 or above qualifies a person for a diagnosis of psychopathy or violent disposition which can suggest tendency for recidivism in offenders undergoing reformation. Hare also asserts that people with no criminal backgrounds normally score around 5. Many non-psychopathic criminal offenders score around 22". Decisions on whether a respondent has low or high domains of recidivism were reached on these suggestions. Thus, a 'DR' scores less than 5 (≤ 5) means absence of recidivism or tendencies for violence – a sort of proof of effective correctional program. A 'DR' score that is higher than 5 (≥ 5) but less than 29 (≤ 29) was taken to mean low presence of recidivism and proof of fairly effective correctional program. On the other hand, a 'DR' higher than 29 (≥ 29) was taken to mean high presence of Domains of Recidivism (DR) which also means high recidivism tendencies and ineffective correctional program. A respondent's score of above 29 points indicates that the respondent is *recidivism-positive*. On the other hand, each of the items in the Section C has scoring options which include *Applicable* and *Not Applicable*. Respondents' choices of these options yielded nominal data. The respondents were asked to respond to each item based on their attitudinal dispositions within the duration of the time they were admitted into the institution and not before they were admitted.

The validity of the instrument was derived through face-validity procedure. Copies of the instrument were given to psychologists in the Professorial cadre of behavioral sciences at the University of Nigeria, Nnsuka. They were asked to determine the content adequacy and relevance of the items to the intended purpose. These they adjudged adequate and relevant. A test-re-test exercise was carried out using some selected juveniles at a Borstal Institution to determine the reliability of the instrument. Conducting the test-re-test at an interval of 2 weeks and using Person Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) statistic, a reliability coefficient of $r=0.82$ was derived for DRAQ. This was believed adequate for the study. The instrument was administered individually on the sampled 207 juveniles. This was after due permission had been obtained from the institutions' authority. Some of the teachers at the institutions helped in explaining the objectives, procedures of the research and the meanings of the items in the instrument to the juvenile offenders, particularly to very few of them ($n = 29$) who displayed academic deficiencies in comprehending some of the items in the questionnaire. However, a large number of the respondents were helped to fill responses to the items by the researcher strictly based on their verbal responses to each of the items. The collected data relating to R1

and R2 were analyzed using percentages, a descriptive statistics. The t-test statistics was used to test hypothesis.

Data Analysis

RQ 1: What did juvenile offenders’ scores on Domains of Recidivism Assessment Questionnaire (DRAQ) indicate about their tendencies for recidivism?

RQ 2: What did juvenile offenders’ scores on Domains of Recidivism Assessment Questionnaire (DRAQ) indicate about the effectiveness of correctional programs in Nigerian Borstal Institutions?

**Data on Table 1 provide answer to both Research Question 1 and 2.

Table 1: Indications of tendency for recidivism among juvenile offenders in Nigerian Borstal Institutions

| Score on DR | Juvenile offenders’ length of stay | | | | | | Total | |
|-------------|------------------------------------|------|--------------|------|--------------|------|-------|------|
| | < 1 year | | 1 to 2 years | | above 2years | | n | % |
| | n | % | n | % | n | % | | |
| ≤ 5 | 2 | 3.4 | 18 | 21.6 | 22 | 33.3 | 42 | 20.2 |
| ≥ 5 to ≤ 29 | 26 | 44.8 | 51 | 61.4 | 36 | 54.5 | 113 | 54.5 |
| ≥ 29 | 30 | 51.7 | 14 | 16.8 | 8 | 12.1 | 52 | 25.1 |

NOTE: Scores less than 5 (≤ 5) = Effective Correctional Program (ECP), Scores higher than 5 (≥ 5) but less from 29 (≤ 29) = Fairly Effective Correctional Program (FECP) and Scores higher than 29 (≥ 29) = Ineffective Correctional Program (ICP)

Data on Table 1 indicate reductions in the tendency for recidivism among juvenile offenders as their length of stay increased. Specifically, among juvenile offenders who had not stay more than 1 year, only 3.4% scored less than 5 (<5) on Domain of Recidivism (DR) to indicate complete absence of tendency for recidivism. Similarly, another 44.8% of juveniles in this category scored above 5 but less than 29 (≥ 5 to ≤ 29) to indicate low presence of tendency for recidivism. But a substantial 51.7% of the offenders in this category of length of stay scored above 29; meaning that there was high level of tendency for recidivism among juveniles who had stayed for only a year. Comparatively however, tendencies for recidivism decreased among those who had stayed from 1 to 2 years as only 16.8% of them scored above 29 (≥ 29) on DR. Above all, among offenders who had stayed more than 2 years, 20.2% scored less than 5, to indicate complete absence of tendency for recidivism. Impressively too, only 12.1% of the juveniles who had stayed above 2 years scored above 29 point on DRAQ. This means that very few of them (12.1%) compared to 51.7% of those who had not stayed more than a year had tendency for recidivism. The implication of this is that the correctional programs at the Borstal Institutions show signs of being effective as the length of stay of the juveniles increased.

RQ 3: What attributes of recidivism still manifested in the behaviours of juvenile offenders after being housed for at least 9 months in Nigerian Borstal Institutions?

Table 2: Manifested attributes of recidivism among juvenile offenders at Borstal Institutions

| Areas of Manifestation | *Applicable Academic | | *Applicable Vocational | | *Applicable Total | | Ranking |
|---|----------------------|------|------------------------|------|-------------------|------|---------|
| | n | % | n | % | n | % | |
| 1. Offending but not taking responsibility | 73 | 51.4 | 19 | 82.6 | 92 | 55.7 | 3rd |
| 2. Pretending in situations | 48 | 33.8 | 11 | 47.8 | 59 | 35.7 | 9th |
| 3. Bragging and out valuing self | | 31 | 21.8 | 09 | 39.1 | 40 | 24.4 |
| 13th | | | | | | | |
| 4. Craving for stimulation | 14 | 9.8 | 10 | 43.4 | 24 | 14.5 | 14th |
| 5. Lying habitually | 62 | 43.6 | 21 | 91.3 | 83 | 50.3 | 6th |
| 6. Deceiving friends and care givers | | 69 | 48.5 | 19 | 82.6 | 88 | 53.3 |
| 4th | | | | | | | |
| 7. Manipulating situations for self-gains | | 58 | 40.8 | 16 | 69.5 | 74 | 44.8 |
| 8th | | | | | | | |
| 8. Feeling unremorseful of wrong doings | 64 | 45.1 | 20 | 86.9 | 84 | 50.9 | 5th |
| 9. Displaying hardheartedness | | 71 | 50 | 17 | 73.9 | 88 | 53.3 |
| 4th | | | | | | | |
| 10. Enjoying parasitic lifestyle | | 49 | 34.5 | 06 | 26.0 | 55 | 33.3 |
| 11th | | | | | | | |
| 11. Incapable of self-control | | 77 | 54.2 | 22 | 95.6 | 99 | 60 |
| 1st | | | | | | | |
| 12. Desiring sexual pleasure, | | 16 | 11.2 | 04 | 17.3 | 20 | 0.1 |
| 16th | | | | | | | |
| 13. Appreciating being young and offending | | 51 | 35.9 | 04 | 17.3 | 55 | 33.3 |
| 11th | | | | | | | |
| 14. Displaying aimlessness | 84 | 59.1 | 13 | 56.5 | 97 | 58.7 | 2nd |
| 15. Acting impulsively | | 39 | 27.4 | 09 | 39.1 | 48 | 29.0 |
| 12th | | | | | | | |
| 16. Not always accepting being wrong | | 71 | 50 | 11 | 47.8 | 82 | 49.6 |
| 7th | | | | | | | |
| 17. Striving to increase my record of delinquency | 21 | 14.7 | 03 | 13.4 | 24 | 14.5 | 14th |
| 18. Wished to escape from the institution | 63 | 44.3 | 11 | 47.8 | 74 | 44.8 | 8th |
| 19 Appreciating short term sexual relationships | | 06 | 4.2 | 02 | 8.6 | 08 | 4.8 |
| 15th | | | | | | | |
| 20. Displaying sense of criminal versatility | 52 | 36.6 | 06 | 26.0 | 58 | 35.1 | 10th |

***Applicable:** In this segment, only the responses indicating applicability of the listed behavioral manifestations are analyzed

Data on Table 2 show the aspects of juveniles’ behaviours where domains of recidivism (misbehaviours) still manifested even after being exposed to correctional programs at the institutions. As indicated on the table, misbehaviours among the juveniles manifested mostly in form of lack of self control, 60% of the juvenile attested to this. On the other hand, 58.7% said they acted aimlessly or lack direction, while 55.7% of the juvenile said they had habit of not taking responsibility of their wrongdoings. Also, 53.3% said they can be very stubborn (hardheartedness) and 50.3% said they engaged in deception. However, acts of sexual immorality are not prominent among the juveniles. For example, only 0.1% of them said they craved sexual pleasure and 4.8% said they would prefer short term to long term sexual relationships. Good enough, only 14.5% of the juvenile said they wished to increase their record of delinquency.

Hypothesis Testing

H0 1: Tendency for recidivism among juvenile offenders in Nigerian Borstal Institutions will not significantly vary on the basis of the offenders’ length of stay

Table 3a: Chi-square test of significance of difference in domains of recidivism among juvenile offenders

| LENGTH OF STAY | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid 1 YEAR | 58 | 28.0 | 28.0 | 28.0 |
| 1 - 2 YEARS | 83 | 40.1 | 40.1 | 68.1 |
| 2 YEAR AND ABOVE | 66 | 31.9 | 31.9 | 100.0 |
| Total | 207 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Table 3b: Further Chi-square test of data on Table 3a

| Length of Stay | RECIDIVISM TENDENCIES | | | | df. | X ² Cal. V | Asym. Sig. |
|----------------------|-----------------------|----------|----------|-------|-----|-----------------------|------------|
| | LOW | MODERATE | HIGH | Total | | | |
| Below 1year | 2(9.7) | 26(19.3) | 30(29.0) | 58 | 2 | 8.4 | 0.015 |
| 1yr – 2year | 18(13.8) | 51(27.7) | 14(41.5) | 83 | | 39.1 | .000 |
| Above 2 years | 22(11.0) | 36(22.0) | 8(33.0) | 66 | | 38.8 | .000 |

As indicated on Table 3b, hypothesis 1 was rejected and it was concluded that presence of domains of recidivism among juvenile offenders at the Borstal Institution significantly varied on the basis of the juveniles’ length of stay. The decision was reached because of the statistical variances indicated on Table 3b.

Discussion

The importance of quality assurance in any educational program, particularly those established to correct behaviour cannot be underestimated. Borstal institutions are no doubt established with the motive of adjusting young offenders towards crime free life. Thus, it is expected that activities at such institutions are qualitative enough to assure and ensure productive life among the reformed offenders while on the programs and when out in the public sphere. It is expected that the programs at the institutions are able to avert recidivism. Recidivism is relapsing into life of crime. Thus, an occurrence of it would mean the correctional programs being exposed to are not effective. Certainly, recidivism would undermine the objectives of a Borstal Institution; it has been proved to be a proof of ineffectiveness in programs of crime control and punishment (Giddens, 2001).

The objectives of Nigerian Borstal Institutions are clear. Based on the Borstal Institutions and Remand Centers Act of 1960, it is stated that through programs at the institutions, Nigerian government intends to "... Bring to bear every good influence which may establish in inmates the will to lead a good and useful life on release and to fit them to do so by the fullest possible development of their character, capacities and sense of personal responsibility" (FRN, 1990: 4). The institutions are said to aim at developing the inmates physically, morally and mentally.

No doubt, many offenders in Nigerian Borstal institutions must have displayed some sort of behavioral and educational maladjustment before being referred. Their experiences at the institutions are expected to correct this. Earlier before this study, a study conducted by Ajiboye, Yusuf, Issa, Adegunloye & Buhari, in 2009 at the Borstal Institution located in Ganmo, Kwara State, shows that substantial percentage (67.9%) of the juveniles at the institution displayed at least one behavioral problem or the other. Apart from this, Siegel, Welsh & Senna (2003) had maintained that characteristically, youths in correctional homes often have behavioral challenges and learning disabilities. They are very likely to be behind their grade levels. They are very likely to have frustrated educational experiences that would make them dislike any form of educational program designed to correct their behaviour even in Borstal Institutions. Thus, juveniles at Borstal institutions are certainly offenders who need to be reformed through exposure to academic, vocational and counseling programs. Ability of these programs to adjust the offenders is a pointer to the effectiveness of the institution.

Based on the findings of this study, such programs were found to be partially effective at the studied Borstal institutions. For example, analyzed data from the study show reduction in presence of domains of recidivism in the attitude of the studied juvenile offenders only as their length of stay increased. Specifically, among juvenile offenders who had not stay more than 1 year, only 3.4% of them show no sign of tendency for recidivism. However, a large percentage (51.7%) of those who had not stayed more than a year at the institutions indicated

a high presence of recidivism by scoring 29 points and above on DRAQ. However, the tendency for recidivism reduced drastically among offenders who had stayed above 2 years. In fact, 20.2% of them scored less than 5 points compared to 3.4% of juveniles with lesser length of stay. The 20.2% is substantial because it means the subjects were completely free of tendency for recidivism. To further buttress the fact that lengths of stay determine level of recidivism among the studied juveniles, only 12.1% of them scored above 29 point on DRAQ.

Inferably, the academic, vocational and counseling programs at the Borstal Institutions can be effective when juveniles are exposed to them for a long time. Just as in many behavioral modification programs, there is need for longer exposure. It is believed that human experiences changed and improved for better in behavioral terms when they are opportune to relate with stimulus meant for their improvement within a longer period of time and within a favourable environment (Siegel, Welsh & Senna, 2003). Certainly, improved behaviours among the juvenile offenders housed at the institutions would ensure a safer society for the entire nation.

Data on Table 2 show the manifestations of the various domains of recidivism in the behaviours of the studied juvenile offenders. Identifying these areas of misbehaviour can help care givers and concerned stakeholders to know where to focus their reformatory or rehabilitation efforts. As indicated on the table, the most common misbehavior among the juveniles, even after being exposed to correction, are: lack of self control, which 60% of the juvenile attested to. On the other hand, 58.7% said they acted aimlessly or lacked direction, while 55.7% of the juvenile said they had habit of not taking responsibility for their wrongdoings. Also, 53.3% said they can be very stubborn (hardheartedness) and 50.3% said they engaged in deception. However, acts of sexual immorality are not prominent among the juvenile misbehaviours. For example, only 0.1% of them said they craved sexual pleasure and 4.8% said they would prefer short term to long term sexual relationships. Good enough, only 14.5% of the juvenile said they wished to increase their record of delinquency.

These indications justified the need for more efforts in the part of the stakeholders at the various Borstal Institutions. Perhaps, the correctional officers would have to intensify their efforts to achieve the objectives for which the institutions were created. Certainly, it is not easy to adjust criminal behaviour (Conklin, 2007); but every behaviour can be adjusted under given favorable related circumstances (Giddens, 2001). The likely favourable circumstances in this situation could be institutions equipped with adequate human and non-human resources.

Conclusion

Borstal institutions are integral part of crime control in any society. It is one that reduces crime at adulthood if properly operated. However, based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that correctional programs at Nigerian Borstal institutions are effective in

adjusting juvenile offenders' behaviours most importantly when the juveniles are made to stay for longer period at the institutions. Specifically, the correctional programs can be very effective when the juveniles are made to stay for minimum of two years rather than stay for shorter period. Certainly then, the Nigerian Borstal Institutions can achieve when juvenile's length of stay are put into consideration.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. There should be policy inputs that will emphasize the importance of juvenile's length of stay at Nigerian Borstal Institutions.
2. The correctional programs at the Nigerian Borstal Institutions should be structured in a way to focus more on the entry periods or preliminary classes at the institutions; so much that juveniles who had shorter period to stay will benefit.
3. More researches should be conducted at the various Borstal Institutions in the country to establish more factors that can help the institutions achieve their core objectives.

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