EFFECT OF INSTITUTIONALIZATION ON CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR: EVIDENCE FROM JUVENILE OFFENDERS IN NIGERIAN BORSTAL INSTITUTIONS

By

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Abstract

The study determined the difference in criminal behaviour of students of Borstal Institutions due to reformation tools used on them and their indulgence in criminal activities. These were with the view to reducing the incidence of juvenile criminality in Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive survey design. There were 1,044 juvenile offenders who were housed at the Borstal Institutions. The sample comprised of 450 participants who were selected by stratified random sampling technique using their length of stay, reformation tools, and levels of education as strata. The selection was made from two Borstal Institutions in Kaduna and Abeokuta. A 2014 researcher-constructed instrument was used in the study namely: "Criminal Behaviour Questionnaire (CBQ). Data were analysed using independent t-test statistical method. The findings revealed that there existed no significant difference in criminal behaviour of students of Borstal Institutions due to reformation tools used on them. Also,students exhibited traits of indulging in criminal activities in the Borsal Instiution despite the reformation programme.It was concluded that institutionalization programmes which directly address the needs of the child are also pivotal, if child behavioural problems are to be effectively addressed, treated, and resolved.

Keywords: Criminal behaviour, reformation tools, juvenile offender, institutionalization, and Borstal Institutions.

Introduction

Over time, the inclination of the youth to crime may be hinged on negligence on the part of parents and unfavourable educational experience. It is unfortunate that some children lack adequate parental care and attention. A child who is deprived of basic needs may be susceptible to a life of crime. Equally disturbing is the negative school experience, such as unfavourable learning environment, inadequate guidance in school, sub-standard schools' infrastructure, poor teacher quality and lack of discipline. These may become negative motivation for youth, militating against their personal growth and spurring them to a life of crime and violence. Without effective mediation programme to achieve the desired goals at this stage of development, youth's crime will continue to escalate. These alarming and undesirable behaviours call for deep concern in the society (Fausta, 2014).

More worrisome is the fact that government seems not to have paid enough attention to crime control policies, which could be effective for treating juvenile offenders (Animasahun, 2014). If the level of crime among the youths is to be reduced the Borstal Institution will have to function effectively as correctional institution as well as parents living up to their responsibilities. This unfortunate situation requires concerted research efforts that will address the issue of crime among youths. Thus, it is in realization of prevalence of juvenile delinquent activities among the youths that this study investigates the extent to which

educational programmes and vocational training used in Borstal Institutions have achieved their intended outcomes of reducing criminality among the students in Borstal Institutions in Nigeria. Hence, a study like this would give the government research-based evidence on possible causes of crimes among the youths leading to policy review and update.Knowing the causes is a step towards identifying the strategies to employ in handling the situations when they occur in schools.This would no doubt help them to know how to contribute to government and school efforts in eradicating misbehaviour among adolescents.

Literature Review

In recent decades greater attention has been brought to the development of more rehabilitative programmes for juvenile delinquents. Some of these efforts, no doubt, have produced plausible results (Howell, 2003).

Lipsey and Wilson (2008) did a meta-analysis on 200 evaluations of programmes and found four types of treatment showing the most positive effects on non institutionalized offenders: interpersonal skills training, individual counselling, and behavioural programmes. The programmes with the most positive effects on institutionalized offenders were: teaching family homes (a residential group home program for troubled children and their families), behavioural programmes, community-residential interventions, and multiple services from different social institutions. Supervision and sanctions did not show visible effectiveness on recidivism prevention, while rehabilitation treatment consistently showed positive and large effectiveness (Lipsey& Cullen, 2007).

The Comprehensive Strategy (Howell, 2003) applies the public health approach to justice system involvement for the multipurpose of prevention, rehabilitation, and aftercare. This model targets youths at different risk levels: general youths, at-risk youths, delinquent youths, and offenders who are released from the justice system back to the community, using different strategies according to their risk levels. It was based on the following six principles: strengthening the family; supporting core social institutions, including schools; promoting community-based prevention as the most cost-effective approach; intervening immediately and effectively to stop progression to more serious crimes (Zigler, Taussig, & Black, 2002); establishing a system of graduated sanctions for juvenile offenders; and identifying and controlling the small but disproportionally influential group of serious, violent, and chronic offenders (Coolbaugh & Hansel, 2000). Its dual objectives are to promote the healthy development of youths and ensure the safety of the community. Through an effective rehabilitation programme, child well-being will be improved, as well as the security of the wider society (Burns et al., 2003; Howell, 2003).

Graduated sanctions as a component of the Comprehensive Strategy (Juvenile Sanctions Center, 2003) are integrated intervention strategies targeting youth offenders at different risk levels. The model provides several level of severity of sanctions: immediate interventions for first-time offenders; intermediate sanctions for first-time serious or violent offenders, and for the habitual minor offenders; community confinement for serious offenders; incarceration for the most violent youths, and aftercare for those who are released from the residential programmes (Juvenile Sanctions Center, 2003). The framework includes a risk-needs assessment based on the structured assessment, a disposition matrix linking offenders with appropriate programmes for them, and a protocol for evaluating programmes. The programmes assess the risk-needs of juvenile delinquents, place them into proper programmes to match their risk level and developmental needs, and offer services focused on their personal characteristics with skills training and behavioural learning.

However, programmes, in particular, that replies on immediate or severe punishment or psychological panic, such as —shock therapy, have not demonstrated effectiveness (Cottle, Lee, &Heibrun, 2001; Gendreau, Little & Goggin, 1996; Lipsey, 1992). As punishment-oriented delinquency interventions have failed to demonstrate effectiveness (Bazemore, Stinchcomb, & Leip, 2004; Howell, 1995; Perelman & Clements, 2009), a shift to non-traditional approaches to crime, such as is embodied in the public health approach, has been recognized as increasingly promising for interventions for young offenders (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001). The public health approach targets three major levels of

prevention: universal populations (universal approaches), those under great risk (selected approaches), and those already demonstrated symptoms (indicated approaches). This approach identifies the causes of the problem and the group at-risk, first, and then emphasizes prevention, testing the effectiveness of intervention, dissemination of findings, and finally, applications under different circumstances (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001).

Reynolds, Ou, and Topitzes (2004) investigated the contributions of 5 mechanisms to the effects of preschool participation in the Child-Parent Centers for 1,404 low-income children in the Chicago Longitudinal Study. Based on a matched-group design, preschool participation was associated with significantly higher rates of educational attainment and lower rates of juvenile arrest. Other findings were that (a) preschool participation in the federally funded Child-Parent Centers (CPCs) was associated with significantly higher rates of high school completion and lower rates of juvenile delinquency, (b) the cognitive boost at the end of the program and the school support and family support experiences during the intervening years were most responsible for the transmission of long-term effects, and (c) the model that included all five hypotheses of mediation fit the data better than the tested alternatives. These findings were consistent across a range of analyses. The school support hypothesis, primarily school quality, accounted for the largest share of the mediated effects, especially for juvenile arrest. The family support, school support, and cognitive advantage hypotheses contributed about equally to high school completion.

Further, Preschool participation was associated with significantly higher rates of high school completion by age 20 and with significantly lower rates of juvenile arrest by age 18. No differences were found between 1 and 2 years of participation. This pattern of findings was the same for both unadjusted and adjusted rates. Controlling for the influence of gender, race/ethnicity, family risk status, school-age intervention, and program sites, 55.9% of CPC participants completed high school by age 20 compared with 46.7% for the comparison group. This is a difference of 9.2 percentage points, a 20% increase over the comparison group. This finding is similar to that of an earlier measure reported by Reynolds et al., (2001) in which preschool participants experienced a 10.2 percentage point higher rate of school completion than did the comparison group. In further support of the robustness of findings, preschool participation was significantly associated with a higher rate of high school completion by age 21 (61.8% vs. 51.3%, respectively) and with a greater number of years of completed education at age 21 (11.27 vs. 10.88, respectively) and age 20 (11.1 vs. 10.7, respectively). These higher levels of educational attainment have practical significance. The estimated group difference translates into a net economic benefit in 1998 dollars of $28,000 per participant in expected lifetime earnings and government tax revenues alone (Reynolds, Temple, Robertson, & Mann, 2002).

For juvenile arrest, the adjusted rate of petitions to the juvenile court was 13.1% for the preschool group and 22.0% for the comparison group. This difference of 8.9 percentage points is a 40% reduction over the comparison group. This finding was consistent with other measures of juvenile delinquency including incidence of arrest for violent offenses and the number of arrests. The rate of juvenile arrest for violent offenses, for example, was 6.9% for the preschool group and 14.1% for the comparison group (a rate reduction of 51%). Given the high costs of crime to society, this link between preschool participation and delinquency prevention is practically significant. A one-third reduction in the rate of juvenile arrest translates into a net economic benefit in 1998 dollars of $21,000 per participant in savings in the criminal justice system and averted tangible and intangible crime victim costs (Reynolds et al., 2002).

Research Hypotheses

In carrying out this study, the following research hypotheses were postulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

i. There is no significant difference in criminal behaviour of students of Borstal Institutions due to reformation tools used on them.

ii. There is no significant difference in the criminal behaviour of students in Borstal Institutions due to their level of education.

Methodology

The research design adopted was the descriptive survey of the correlation type.According to Upadhya and Singh (2008), correlation study is concerned with studying the relationship between two or more variables for the purpose of making predictions about relationship.The design enabled the researcher to measure the variablesof reformation tools and level of educationthat the sample of the study experiencedin their Borstal Institutions and the relationship that exist between the two variables.There was no conscious manipulation of the variables since the interaction among them has been completed.

All juvenile offenders who are staying and residing in the Borstal Institutions located in Kaduna, Kaduna State, and Abeokuta in Ogun State, Nigeria, respectively constituted the target population for the study. There were 1,044 juvenile offenders who were housed at the Borstal Institutions. To determine the sample size for the study, Yamane (1967) sample size formula was applied. In choosing the final sample used for the study from the two Borstal Institutions (Kaduna and Abeokuta), the students were selected by stratified random sampling technique using their length of stay, reformation tools, and levels of education as strata. The selection was made from two Borstal Institutions in Kaduna and Abeokuta.

The sample consisted of 1,044 juvenile offenders housed in Borstal Institutions in Kaduna and Abeokuta. Out of this number, 240 and 210 participants were randomly selected respectively. Thus, a total of 450 participants were randomly selected using balloting (hat and draw) method of simple random sampling procedure for the study. Table 1 shows the distribution of the participants across Institutions, length of stay, reformation tools, and level of education.

Table 1: Distribution of the Participants across Institutions, Length of Stay, Reformation Tools and Level of Education

	Description	*Borstal Institutions*				*Total*
		Kaduna	**%**	**Abeokuta**	**%**	
Length of Stay	1 month to 12 months	130	54.2	87	41.4	217
	Above 12 Months	110	45.8	123	58.6	233
		240	**100**	**210**	**100**	**450**
Reformation tools	Academic	135	56.2	107	50.9	242
	Vocational	105	43.8	103	49.1	208
		240	**100**	**210**	**100**	**450**
Level of Education	JSS 1	18	7.5	16	7.6	34
	JSS 2	22	9.2	21	10	43
	JSS 3	38	15.8	34	16.2	72
	SS 1	56	23.3	52	24.8	108
	SS 2	65	27.1	57	27.1	122
	SS 3	41	17.1	30	14.3	71
		240	**100**	**210**	**100**	**450**

Table 1 indicates that in Kaduna, 130 respondents had stayed between 1 month and 12 months, while in Abeokuta 87 respondents stayed within the same range. In Kaduna Borstal Institution, 110 respondents had spent above 12 months while in Abeokuta 123 respondents had also spent over 12 months. In Kaduna and Abeokuta Borstal Institutions, 135 and 107 respondents had academic programme respectively. In Kaduna and Abeokuta 105 and 103 respondents had vocational training respectively. In Kaduna Borstal Institution, 18 respondents were in JSS 1, while in Abeokuta 16 were in the same level. In Kaduna 22 respondents were in JSS 2, while 21 were in the same level in Abeokuta. In Kaduna 38 respondents were in JSS 3, while Abeokuta had 34. In Kaduna 56 respondents were in SS 1, while Abeokuta had 52 respondents. In Kaduna 65 respondents were in SS 2, while Abeokuta had 57. In Kaduna 41 respondents were in SS 3, while Abeokuta had 30 respondents.

Instrumentation

Two research instruments were used in the study namely: "Criminal Behaviour Questionnaire (CBQ)" "Parental Attention & Educational Experience Questionnaire (PAEEQ)" (Fausta, 2014). The "Criminal Behaviour Questionnaire (CBQ)", is a 20-item self-developed Likert format with four grade responses ranging from Strongly Agree (SA) to Strongly Disagree (SD). Respondents were instructed to tick (√) the key in front of each item to indicate the extent of their agreement or disagreement with each statement. This instrument has two sections. Section "A" contained items eliciting respondents' biographical data such as length of stay of students in Borstal Institutions, reformation tools (academic and vocational) and level of education. The section 'B' consisted of 20-items developed to elicit information about the intensity of respondents' criminal behaviour. Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD).

The second research instrument "Parental Attention & Educational Experience Questionnaire (PAEEQ)", is a 30-item questionnaire developed to access the level of parental care and parents' responsibilities to their children. It consists of two Parts – Parts One and Two. Part One measured Bio-data of the respondents including Borstal Institution, level of education, types of reformation tools, and length of stay. Part Two consists of two Sections A and B. Section A of this questionnaire consisted of 20 items which measured educational experience such as the pattern of their access to educational programmes, facilities and guidance as may be presented formally or informally in and out of school environment. Furthermore, Section B consisted of 10-item which measured the pattern of respondents' access to educational programmes, facilities and guidance as may be presented formally or informally in and out of school environment. The purpose of the instrument was to assess information on respondents' experience on attention received from their parents or guardians. The responses to these items were also ranked on a four point scale.

Content validity of the two instruments was achieved through submitting items to Measurement and Evaluation, and Sociology of Education experts for vetting and approval. The modifications and suggestions from these experts led to the refinement of the instruments. Thereafter, a pilot study was done to establish how reliable the instruments are. This involves the double administration (with a two-week interval) of the instruments on thirty (30) participants, who were randomly selected from Ilorin Borstal Institution, as one of the Borstal Institutions not involved in the main study. Ilorin Borstal Institution in Kwara State was used for the pilot study because of the State's strategic location as a gateway between the Northern and the Southern part of Nigeria. A Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistical method was used for data analysis, yielding a test-retest reliability coefficient of 0.80 and 0.78 for the instruments, indicating a high internal consistency.

Consequently, the instruments were accepted as being stable over time hence their usage in this study. The hard copies of the questionnaires were administered on the respondents by the researcher with the assistance of the research assistants who were recruited for the purpose of this study. They are prison officials, social workers and community health officers, employed by the government in each of the Borstal institutions. Each has spent 5 years as prison official. However for the purpose of this study, they were trained at their different locations on the purpose and logistics of this study. Also, adequate time was provided for respondents to respond to all the items. By this method, 450 questionnaires administered were returned correctly filled and used for analysis.

Data Analysis

The data obtained for this study to test the hypotheses were analysed with the use of Independent t-test and One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistical methods using updated SPSS version 17.0. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance

Results

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in criminal behaviour of students of Borstal Institutions due to reformation tools used on them.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics and t-test analysis of Criminal Behaviour due to reformation tool

Reformation Tools	*N*	*Mean*	*Std. dev*	*df*	*t*	*p-value*	*Decision*
Academic Programme	242	30.59	7.37	448	1.42 (ns)	0.05	not significant
Vocational Training	208	31.67	8.73				

NS = Not Significant, p<0.05

Table 2 shows that the 242 students who had academic programme in Borstal Institutions had mean and standard deviation scores of 30.59 and7.37 respectively, while 208 students who had vocational training had mean and standard deviation scores of 31.67 and 8.73 respectively. Furthermore, it was observed that the t-calculated value of -1.42 is lower than t-critical value of 1.960, given 448 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. However, this difference in mean score is statistically not significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected which implied that there was no significant difference in Criminal Behaviour of Students in Borstal Institutions due to reformation tools.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the criminal behaviour of students in Borstal Institutions due to their level of education.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics of Criminal Behaviour of Students due to level of Education

Level of Education	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
JSS1	34	36.53	10.09
JSS2	43	32.21	7.49
JSS3	72	32.58	8.96
SSS1	108	31.97	9.30
SSS2	122	29.31	5.93
SS3	71	28.00	4.92
Total	**450**	**31.77**	**7.78**

Table 3 shows that of the 450 students that participated in the study, 34 were from JSS1 had a mean and standard deviation score of 36.53 and 10.09, 43 from JSS 2 had mean and standard deviation scores of 32.21 and 7.49, 72 from JSS 3 and had mean and standard deviation scores of 32.58 and 8.96, 108 from SSS 1 had mean and standard deviation scores of 31.97 and 9.30. Also, 122 were from SS 2 had mean and standard deviation scores of 29.31 and 5.93. Furthermore, 71 students were from SSS 3 and had mean and standard deviation scores of 28.00 and 4.92 respectively. In order to determine the difference in Criminal behaviour tendency of Borstal students due to educational level, the One–way ANOVA was carried out and the result was presented in Table 4.

Table 4: One-Way ANOVA on Difference in the Criminal Behaviour of Students due to Their Level of Education

Sources of Variance	*Sum of squares*	*Degrees of freedom*	*Mean of squares*	*F-ratio*
Between Groups	2368.27	5	473. 65	
Within groups (Error)	26624.17	444	59.96	7.89*
Total	28992.44	449		

***Significant, p<0.05**

Table 4 shows that the calculated F-valueis significant since it is greater than the critical F-value of 2.23 given 5 and 444 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that there is a significant difference in the criminal behaviour of students in Borstal Institutions due to their level of education($f(4, 444) = 7.89$, $p<0.05$). Since there was significant difference between level of education and Criminal Behavior tendency of Students of Borstal Institutions, further Post-Hoc analysis of data was done to determine which level of education had higher significant impact on Criminal Behavior tendency of Students of Borstal Institutions. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Post–Hoc Analysis of Criminal Behaviour of students due to Level of Education

(I) Level of Education ***(J) Level of Education***	***JSS1***	***JSS2***	***JSS3***	***SS1***	***SS2***	***SS3***
JSS1	-	4.32*	3.95*	4.56*	7.22*	8.53*
JSS2	-4.32	-	-.37	.24	2.90*	4.21*
JSS3	-3.95	-.37	-	.61	3.27*	4.58*
SS1	-4.56*	-.24	-.61	-	2.66*	3.97*
SS2	-7.22	-2.90*	-3.27*	-2.66*	-	1.31
SS3	-8.53*	-4.21*	-4.58*	-3.97*	-1.31	-

Table 5 shows that significant difference was found in the criminal behavior tendency between students who were in JSS1 and those that were in JSS2, JSS3, SS1, SS2 and SS3 with mean differences of 4.32, 3.95,4.567.22 and 8.53 respectively ($p < 0.05$). Also, significant difference was found in criminal behaviour tendency between students who were in JSS2 and those who were in JSS1, JSS3, SS1, SS2 and SS3 with mean differences of -4.32, -3.74, 0.24, 2.90 and 4.21 respectively, ($p<0.05$). Significant difference exists in criminal behaviour tendency between students who were in JSS3 and those that were in JSS1, JSS2, SS1, SS2 and SS3 with mean differences of -3.95, 0.37, 0.61, 3.27, and 4.58 respectively ($p<0.05$). A significant difference was also found in criminal behaviour tendency between students who were in SS1 and those who were in JSS1, JSS2, JSS3, SS2 and SS3 with mean differences of -4.56, -0.24, -0.61, 2.66, and 3.97 ($p<0.05$). A significant difference exists in criminal behaviour tendency between students who were in SS2 and those in JSS1, JSS2, JSS3, SS1 and SS3 with mean differences of -7.22, -2.90, -3.27, -2.66 and 1.31 ($p<0.05$). Finally, significant difference was found to exist in criminal behaviour tendency between students who were in SS3 and those who were in JSS1, JSS2, JSS3, and SS2 with mean differences of -8.53, -4.21, -4.58, -3.97, -1.31. Based on the figures above, the result shows that students who were in JSS1 had a higher criminal behavior tendency than those who were in JSS2, JSS3, SS1, SS2 and SS3.

Discussion

The results of this study show that there is no significant difference in criminal behaviour of students of Borstal Institutions due to reformation tools used on them. The plausible reason for this could be that both academics and vocational orientation equip the child positively. The result is in agreement with research results from Conlon, Harris, Nagel, Hillman and Hanson (2008), that education is a significant factor in reducing recidivism. The research has demonstrated that reduced recidivism rates are secondary outcomes of successful educational programmes in youth correctional facilities. Education is a crucial component of an overall plan for rehabilitation of juvenile offenders. Siegel, Welsh and Senna (2003) posited that even though educational programmes are essential parts of treatment programmes, most of them are inadequate. Many of the youths coming into these institutions are mentally challenged, have learning disabilities and are far behind their grades in basic academics. Most have become frustrated with their educational experiences, dislike school and become bored with any type of educational programme. However they added that programmes alone are not panacea. Youths need to acquire the kinds of skills that will give them hope for advancement. A study by the National Youth Employment Coalition (NYEC) found that employment and career-focused programmes can do a great deal to prepare youth involvement in the juvenile justice system for a successful transition to the work force (Siegel et al, 2003).

The results of the second hypothesis revealed that level of education has effect on criminal behaviour tendency of students in Borstal Institution. The probable explanation may be that as an adolescent grows older; his inclination to criminal behaviour reduces due to the fact that he is more engaged in educational pursuit. The result was in consonance with Kasen, Cohen and Brook (1998), which in their longitudinal study looked at number of factors and found academic achievements, academic aspirations, and learning-focused school settings to be related to a decline in deviant outcomes independent of the effects of disadvantaged socio-economic background, low intelligence, childhood conduct problems and having deviant friends during adolescence. In contrast to this view, Wiesner and Windle (2003) were of the opinion that school failure alone might not be enough to predict delinquency. They found out that along with poor academic achievement, having an unsupportive family environment, traumatic life events and substance abuse also strongly correlated with delinquent behaviour (WiesnerandWindle, 2003).

Conclusion

Based on the findings in this study, it can be concluded that there existed a non significant difference in criminal behaviour of students of Borstal Institutions owing to reformation tools used on them. However, level of education has effect on criminal behaviour tendency of students in Borstal Institution.

Recommendations

In the light of the above findings, the following recommendations are hereby proffered: services which directly address the needs of the child are also pivotal, if child behaviouralproblems are to be effectively addressed, treated, and resolved.Intervention programmes should be put in place tocheckmate family chaos. These may perhaps facilitate family adjustment, family stability and family cohesion thatcan forestall the incidence of marital breakdown and separation, especially for the sake ofthe young ones so as to reduce the rate of incidence of antisocial behaviours among theadolescents.

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