



# EVALUATION OF THE CORRECTIONAL SERVICE'S EQUAL TREATMENT POLICY'S MECHANISMS IN BORNO STATE, NIGERIA

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## ABSTRACT

*The aim is to guarantee that prisoners are treated equitably within the criminal justice system. By investigating the elements that result in the same crime being treated equally for gender reasons, this study seeks to fill the gap left by the previous research. Prisoners are held there for crimes that are either proven or are just claims. The latter are those who have been held in custody pending trial, whereas the former have adhered to the rules of the legal system. Those already incarcerated are referred to as inmates in both scenarios. The detainees may be male or female, and though the social compact requires that they be treated differently, they are all accused of being imprisoned in the same prison under the same laws. The study therefore intend to explore the mechanism to ensure equal treatment of inmates in the correctional service of Borno State, Nigeria.*

## INTRODUCTION

Over time, every society has developed methods for dealing with members who violate institutional norms and arrangements. Champion (2006) notes, for instance, that in ancient times, societies treated offenders with a form of corporal (harsh, physical) punishment that called for retaliation—"an eye for an eye"—and that in modern industrialized societies, contemporary punishments are either fines or terms of incarceration. Modern imprisonment is intended to work on a criminal's mind and body to remove them from a position where they may continue their criminal behavior, place them into an institution that satisfies the masses who desire some form of retribution, and persuade other would-be criminals that such activities are not acceptable.

Positive psychological conditioning can help shape them into productive and law-abiding citizens who can be reintegrated into society (Krestev, Prokpidis, & Sicamniyas, 2008). Imprisonment is the state's power to protect the public, reduce crime, improve convicts' educational and vocational skills, and promote law-abiding behavior after release from custody. It is a deprivation of liberty, legal detention, and an enterprise solely for reforming individuals. Thus, prisons are used not only as a punishment practice but also as a form of strict school meant for the technical transformation of social misfits.

Conventionally, *crime* is defined as acts forbidden by law that can be punishable by imprisonment or otherwise. Murder, robbery, burglary, rape, drunken driving, child neglect, and failure to pay your taxes are all examples of crime. The behavioral definition of

crime centres on criminality, a personality profile encouraging all crimes. Criminal behaviors include using force, fraud, or stealth to obtain material or symbolic resources. Furthermore, criminality is a style of strategic behavior characterized by self-centeredness, selfishness, indifference to the suffering and needs of others, the feeling that "I cannot achieve it on my own," and low self-control. (Braithwaite 1989)

Gender crimes in Nigeria have reduced gender studies to simply understanding women and men's roles and responsibilities. Gender-based inmate treatment involves a comparison of male and female inmates; this will also shed light on gender inequalities in society and how they encourage criminality in Nigerian prisons.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

### The Study Area

Maiduguri is the capital city of Borno State, situated between 11°N and 13°N. Its establishment started when the British, under the leadership of Sir Luggard, shifted the capital of Borno from Kukawa because of the inaccessibility and unhealthy nature of the place. Yerwa stood on a low ridge about 100 feet above sea level and was a good center for trade across the desert and into the French territories. Originally, Maiduguri was bounded on all sides by the Kukawa Local Government Area. It has a high population and a long history as an urban site. The principal ethnic group is Kanuri, but they now account for only about half of the total population of the city. As in every state of the country, English is



the official language, though Hausa, Shuwa, and Kanuri are widely spoken.

Maiduguri is also referred to as the town or city in which the state governor and other government functionaries reside; thus, all policies pertaining to the administration of the state are made in the city (Maiduguri). Maiduguri is made up of districts and has an area of about 53 km<sup>2</sup> with a total population of about 689,212 (NPC, 2011). The climate of Maiduguri is hot and dry for most of the year; the period of rainfall lasts to an average of 120 days; the annual rainfall ranges from June to September; and the majority of the inhabitants of the city are farmers, civil servants, and businessmen and women. The state is facilitated with amenities including universities, polytechnics, colleges, and secondary and primary schools. It also has a teaching hospital, general hospitals, and many clinics, both from the government and private owners. The study will comprise Maiduguri Maximum Prison as the "Maximum Security Custodial Center" and Maiduguri New Prison as the "Medium Security Custodial Center," all situated within the state capital.

### RESEARCH DESIGN

The nature of the research problem and its objectives influenced the research design used in this study. As the study focused on the analysis of gender-based treatment of inmates in the Maiduguri custodial center, simple random sampling techniques were adopted to collect the sample. The research design functions as a systematic plan to outline the study and the research method of computation details on how the study will arrive at the conclusion and the research design's limitations, which include both qualitative and quantitative methods.

### Population of the Study

The target populations of this research are female and male inmates of the Maiduguri Maximum Custodial Center and the Maiduguri Medium Custodial Center, comprising a total of 50 female convicts and 700 male convicts which gives the total population to 750 inmates. (Maiduguri Correction Service Officials 2016)

### Sampling Technique

This study utilizes both random and purposeful methods in determining the sample size. The sample size of 254 is adequate for this study. Random selection was intended in order to give equal proportion and purposeful technique because of the special needs to select more of the female inmates. Respondents were reached through the assistance of the official of the custodial center. As a result of restriction on security ground. The questionnaires were distributed by the officials. A total of one hundred and fifty questionnaires were given to the prison officials

at Maiduguri's new prison, and another hundred and four were given to officials at the Maiduguri maximum prison. The prison officials were informed to give more questionnaires to female inmates so as to achieve the objectives of the study.

### Sample Size

The population of this study is 750, which was obtained from the Nigerian Prison Service Officials (2016); therefore, Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size determination was used to determine the sample size. Using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table for sample size determination, a population of seven hundred and fifty (750) will have two hundred and fifty-four (254) respondents as the sample. Therefore, a sample size of 254 was adequate for this study based on Krejcie & Morgan's table for sample size determination.

$$n = N \times \frac{Z^2 \times P \times (1-P)}{e^2}$$

$$[N = 1 + \frac{Z^2 \times P \times (1 - P)}{e^2}]$$

- N = Propulation size
- Z = Critical value of the normal distribution at the required confidence level
- P = Sample proportion

### Source of Data

The survey method was employed in this study. The data for this study was obtained from primary and secondary sources. The primary data came from a questionnaire and an in-depth interview with prison officials, ex-convicts, and members of the general public. Secondary data were also obtained from the review of relevant literature, such as books, newsletters, journals, articles, etc.

### Data Collection Methods

The research instrument used was the quantitative method. The questionnaires were used as the quantitative method. These were administered to the respondents in person. The questionnaires were utilized only by the educated respondents. Relevant journals, books, reports, and seminar papers were used in generating secondary data.

### Data Analysis Methods

The responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics presented in tables as percentages. The responses of the inmates were analyzed using the SPSS package version 20 to deduce the findings of the research.



**DATA ANALYSIS**

**Table 4.4: Mechanisms to ensure equal treatment of inmates in the correctional service**

S/N	Variables	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Frequency/percentage
1.	Equal treatment should be given to both male and female inmates.	152 58.0%	33 16.0%	58 22.0%	0 0.0%	11 4.0%	100%
2.	Female inmates should not be treated differently than male inmates while serving time in prison.	97 39.0%	0 0.0%	140 55.0%	0 0.0%	17 6.0%	100%
3.	Punishments should be based on the crime committed by either the male or female inmate.	125 49.0%	48 20.0%	69 26.0%	4 2.0%	8 3.0%	100%

**Source: Fieldwork 2021**

In table 4, a significant number of the respondents (152, 58.0%) strongly agree that equal treatment should be given to both male and female inmates, while 11 (4.0%) of them disagree. The majority of respondents (140, 55.0%) are neutral and believe that female inmates should not be treated differently when serving time in prison. While a few of them (17, 6.0%) disagree, the respondents are clear that punishments should be based on the crime committed by either the male or female inmate, with (125, 49.0%) strongly agreeing, while (4, 2.0%) strongly disagreeing.

**DISCUSSION**

The goal is to ensure that inmates in the correctional system are treated equally. The study showed that 58% of the respondents strongly agreed that equal treatment should be given to both male and female inmates. The study further revealed that 55% of the respondents were neutral about the idea that female inmates should not receive different treatment while serving punishment in the correctional service. Another 59% of the respondents strongly agreed that punishment should be based on the crime committed by either a male or female inmate. This research supports Feldon's (2002) finding that the motivations for female and male inmates' crimes are similar. Farrington and Morris (1983) conducted a study of sentencing in magistrate court, noting that some official figures did imply more leniency toward women. Rotimi (1993) also revealed that in cases where people are found to have committed certain offenses, extrajudicial measures, such as the use of radicles, may be used to punish them.

**CONCLUSION**

According to the study, there is generally little variation in how prisoners are treated by correctional institution staff. Additionally, it showed that the criminal justice system treated male and female inmates equally. Furthermore, the survey showed that compared to their male colleagues, who make up a bigger fraction of the inmates in the study area, female inmates are the minority in terms of numbers. Additionally, it showed that females have lower crime rates than males, which may not be

unrelated to the study area and type of people the researcher looked at.

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