

# **The Influence of Vocational Rehabilitation for Societal Re-integration of Inmates in Nigerian Prisons in Rivers State**

## **Abstract**

The study examines how vocational trades' acquisition rehabilitates inmates for reintegration in to the society. Inmates that are expose to vocational training during the period of incarceration easily gets rehabilitated and can reintegrate in to the society upon discharge as a result of possession of skills that can make him/her useful. The study adopted the descriptive research survey design. The population of the study consists of 4723 inmates and 509 prison officers. A sample of 593 respondents (369 convicted inmates and 224 officers) were selected which is a representative of the population. Inmates were purposively selected while simple random sampling technique was adopted for the selection of the officers from four Nigerian prisons in Rivers State. Three research questions were answered with two null hypotheses that were tested at 0.05 significant levels. Instrument for data collection was a self-constructed questionnaire titled "Vocational Rehabilitation of Inmates for Societal Reintegration Questionnaire" (VRISRQ) which was validated by two experts. The instrument was designed using a checklist and Likert-5 point rating scale of agreement. The instrument was subjected to reliability test through Kuder-Richardson formula 20 ( $KR_{20}$ ) and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). Reliability coefficients of 0.87, 0.82 and 0.86 were obtained for different sections of the instrument respectively. Frequency and percentage was used to answered research question 1 while research questions 2 and 3 were answered using mean with standard deviation. Hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significant using independent sample t-test. The findings of the study revealed that vocational trades that are available in Nigerian prisons in Rivers State can rehabilitate inmates if they are acquired. The study also found that acquisitions of vocational trades by inmates are marred with challenges such as poor training facilities, poor funding. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that prison authorities should expose the inmates to vocational trades that are available in the prison for acquisition to enhance their rehabilitation and reintegration and that Government, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) should assist in provision of training facilities in the prison as this will make acquisition of vocational trades realizable.

**Keywords:** Inmates, Prison, Rehabilitation, Reintegration, Vocational Trades

## **Introduction**

In order to meet up societal challenges and survive economically, politically, religiously, and culturally in the society today, many Nigerians have indulge themselves in anti-social activities that are regarded as crime. Crime according to Danbazau (as cited in Alapata, 2012) is anything which is contrary to the law of the society or those things that violates the divine law. Similarly, Adetunji and Amaraeze (2012) defined crime as the commission of an act or act of commission that violates the law and is punishable by the state. These crimes range from kidnapping, ritual killing, political killing, armed robbery, cybercrime, advanced fee fraud among others. In many places in Nigeria today, criminal activities and violence are now appearing in dangerous form which disturbs and threatens lives and property, the national sense of well-being and coherence,

peace, social order and security and also reducing the quality of life of the people (Agbola, 2000; Ahmed 2010).

For people to be deterring from committing heinous crimes and to reduce crime rate in the society, the state and federal government of any nation handle those that commits crime (law breakers) by putting them in prison (imprisonment). Imprisonment is a method of making someone who break the law to repent and observed the set rules and regulations guiding the acceptable conduct in a socialized environment (Oyinloye & Salami, 2010). Such person that is kept in an isolated place (imprisoned) from the entire society is known as prison inmates who are either male or female. Prison has been defined by Okwelle and Deebom (2018) as a place where defaulters are kept in isolation for correction, reformation, rehabilitation and to instill discipline through vocational education training programme to lead a better life upon discharge. In other words, the purpose of imprisonment is to train convicted prisoners to be better citizens on discharge through appropriate conditions.

The aim of establishing prison institutions all over the world according to Hadi and Azlinda (2015) is to provide a rehabilitation and correctional facility for the convict there by providing an effective environment that reduces the risk of recidivism (reoffending). Recidivism has been found common among inmates in Nigerian prisons in Rivers State as the offenders are not expose to vocational skills training that can enhance their rehabilitation and re-integration into the society upon discharge. The introduction of vocational education and training as part of the prisoner rehabilitation offers opportunities for offenders to increase the likely hood of successful reintegration in to the community and reducing the risk of reoffending. Providing offenders with Vocational education and training will provide significant benefit in addressing issues that caused offences as well as reduces their recidivism rate. Vocational Education training refers to various activities, skills and training programmes organized by Nigerian Prisons Service (NPS) authorities for prison inmates that will help them to be useful and meaningful to themselves and the general society at large upon discharge (Deebom, 2017). These vocational skills such as carpentry training, soap making, computer appreciation training, hair making, tailoring, bead-making, driving, bricklaying and mason, tiling, fish farming, welding, electrical installation, electronic repairs if acquired by inmates will enhance rehabilitation and re-integration in to the society. According to World Health Organization (WHO, 2005), rehabilitation may be generally

understood as the strategic use of medical, social, educational and vocational measures for training or re-training of rehabilitees (inmates) through certain components. These components include; psychological counseling, religious counseling, formal education and vocational training. According to Tinka (2012), reintegration may be defined as the safe transition to the community of a crime offender who has being rehabilitated to live a law-abiding life and to be productive to his/her society based on the skill acquired during the process of rehabilitation. In this study, rehabilitation is the act of restoring inmates to the society through necessary vocational skill training and education while reintegration is the process of vocational reformation of an inmate to be fit and accepted by the society.

Ugwuoke (2010) observed that Nigeria prison preaches reformation and rehabilitation, but in practice, advocates for retributive punishment. It was maintained that their punishment continues even after discharge from the prison due to public attitude towards the inmate, as they are branded and treated as ex-convicts (stigma) which however is the greatest obstacle to a discharged prisoner's re-integration. The ex-convicts as they are been stigmatize hinders their successful reintegration into the society. In Nigeria, from the year 2000-2010, the population of awaiting trial inmates was fluctuating around 62% of a total prison population of about 44,000. Between 2010 and 2011, out of a total prison population of 40,447, a total 25,380 (63%) persons are awaiting trial. It was however noted that more than half of awaiting trial persons as captured by the report have been convicted more than once (Orakwe, 2011). As at January –July, 2013, prison population stood at 53,816 inmates, out of whom 37,429 inmates are awaiting trial while 16,387 inmates are convicted (Prison Quarterly Statistics, 2013). Inferring from the above statistics, it is no longer gainsaying that overcrowding of the inmates is a syndrome that marred vocational rehabilitation of the inmates for societal reintegration.

### **Theoretical Review**

The reformatory theory was propounded by Bentham in 1830, modified by Ewing in 1929 and Hart in 1968. The move towards this theory began originally as a protest. It was a protest both against the physical conditions in prisons and against the moral and spiritual degeneration, which took place in prisons. According to the reformatory theory, the disagreement between the character of a person and the motive for which he/she commits a crime leads him/her to committing a crime. This means that if the temptation of committing a crime is so strong that it

out-weighs the resisting force in the person, the person can be involved in committing the crime. Therefore, crime can be controlled by changing the character of the offender to prevent him from committing a crime. According to Okonkwo (2009), the aim of reformatory theory is not to punish crime offenders by punishing them with some unpleasantness, but to deter them from further offending again by transforming their behaviours such that they voluntarily refrain from crime. The reformists consider punishment to be curative or to perform the function of a medicine.

The reformists believe that rehabilitation of an offender should be based on reforming the character of the offender through the mode of individualization. This should consider the fact that the criminal is human and should not be treated otherwise. It could be that the circumstances surrounding the crime made it impossible for the offender to resist. Therefore, it is expedient to reform the offender during his period of punishment. Punishment in this case should not be harsh- rather, it should be an instrument that can reform the moral of the offender. The crime offender should either be educated or taught some skills that can encourage him earn a living after serving his punishment (Tanu, 2014). To the followers of this theory, execution, solitary confinement and maiming should not be a way of rehabilitating crime offenders or fighting crime. Therefore, the ultimate aim of the reformatory theory is to bring about a change in the personality and character of crime offenders, so as to make them useful members of the society. Furthermore, the reformists argued that proper reformation of crime offenders can separate them from crime. Through this method, a hardened criminal can be converted to a good fellow in the society. Basically, the rehabilitation of ex-militants (inmates) is in line with the reformatory theory. The rehabilitation programme for inmates was a programme designed for a soft approach for a proper reintegration of ex-militants (inmates) into the mainstream of the society (Ochogba, 2017). Rehabilitation module for inmates in Nigerian prisons in Rivers State should include vocational training, such as repairing home appliances, carpentry, and electrical installation and so on; to equip the inmates with relevant skills that will enable them earn a living upon discharge and also to reduce recidivists. This is in line with the reformists' assertion that rehabilitating an offender should be handled with care and love in order to prevent the offender from going back to crime after rehabilitation.

## **Statement of the Problem**

The unpalatable and unpleasant nature of Nigerian prisons leaves one in doubt with too many questions and fewer answers why Nigerian inmates become more hardened than when they never went behind the bars and commit more outrageous crimes (Ayuk, Emeka & Omono, 2013). Worse still, Prisons are assumed to be a place for rehabilitation to enhance reintegration in to the society, but Nigerian Prisons have become training ground for inmates to become hardened criminals (Tenibiaje, 2010).

There is an increasing rate of which prison inmates get discharged from prison and within a short time they are rearrested and remanded in prisons for another crime committed and it becomes pathetic that prisoners see recidivism as a status symbol with the conviction that the more you go in and out of prison, the more popular you become amongst prisoners and prison officials. Recidivism is mostly found among Nigerian prison inmates since most of them are not engaged in any vocational education and training for rehabilitation and reintegration (Ogunleye, 2014). Today's prison system needs to be in a more progressive and humane manner, to enable inmates have ultimate rehabilitation through training in vocational skills. This will enhance effective and proper inmates' reintegration into the society.

Finally, if these vocational training are effective in Nigeria Prisons to be efficiently utilize by the inmates, it will enhance their reintegration into the society, and reduces recidivism by empowering them. Based on these facts, Obioha (2002) in a study on challenges and reforms in the Nigeria prisons system found that poor vocational training programme for prison inmates is one of the major problems confronting inmates in the country to be recidivist. It is against these backdrops that this study seeks to find out whether vocational education and training given to inmates of Nigerian prisons in Rivers State will enhance their rehabilitation for societal reintegration.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this is to examine the influence of vocational rehabilitation for societal reintegration of inmates in Nigerian prisons in Rivers State. Specifically, the study tends to:

1. Identify vocational trades that are available and if acquired will rehabilitate inmates in Nigerian prisons for societal reintegration in Rivers State.

2. Examine the benefits of acquisition of vocational trades to inmates in Nigerian prisons in Rivers State.
3. Describe the challenges facing the acquisition of vocational trades by inmates of Nigerian prisons in Rivers State.

### **Research Questions**

The following questions were answered to guide the study.

1. What are the vocational trades that are available and if acquired will rehabilitate inmates in Nigerian prisons for societal reintegration in Rivers State?
2. What are the benefits of acquisition of vocational trades to inmates in Nigerian prisons in Rivers State?
3. What are the challenges facing the acquisition of vocational trades by inmates of Nigerian prisons in Rivers State?

### **Hypotheses**

Two null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 significant level.

1. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of Inmates and Prison Officials on the benefits of acquisition of vocational trades to inmates in Nigerian prisons in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of Inmates and Prison Officials on the challenges facing the acquisition of vocational trades by inmates of Nigerian prisons in Rivers State.

### **Methodology**

The study adopted the descriptive research survey design. This study was carried out in Nigerian prisons in Rivers State. The population of the study consists of all the inmates and prison officials in Nigerian prisons in Rivers State. As at the time of this study, Nigerian prisons in Rivers State have 4723 inmates and 509 prison Officials (Source; Department of Statistic, Nigerian Prisons Service, Rivers State Command, 2018). Taro Yamen's Formula was used to determine the sample size. A sample of 593 respondents (369 convicted inmates and 224 officers) were selected which is a representative of the population. Inmates were purposively selected while simple random sampling technique was adopted for the selection of the instructors

from four Nigerian prisons in Rivers State which include Port Harcourt prison, Elele, Ahoada and Degema prison. The instrument for the data collection was a self-constructed questionnaire titled “Vocational Rehabilitation of Inmates for Societal Reintegration Questionnaire” (VRISRQ). The instrument (VRISRQ) was divided into different sections based on the purpose of the study and was given to both inmates and instructors. Section A was design in a checklist format while Section was design after Likert-5 point rating scale of agreement [Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (DA) and Strongly Disagree (SD)] with numerical values of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. For reliability test, the instrument was given to 14 inmates and 8 instructors who were not part of the sample. Research question 1 yields a reliability of 0.87 through Kuder-Richardson formula 20 ( $KR_{20}$ ) while 0.82 and 0.86 were obtained for research question 2 and 3 respectively through Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) coefficient. Out of 593 copies of the instrument that was distributed, 498 were completely filled and retrieved which was used for the analysis. This gives 83% rate of return. Research question 1 was analysed using frequency and percentage while research questions 2 and 3 were analysed using mean with standard deviation. Real limit of numbers were used to decide research question 2 and 3 such that mean values between 4.50 – 5.00 was considered as Strongly Agree, 3.50 – 4.49 (Agree), 2.50 – 3.49 (Undecided), 1.50 – 2.49 (Disagree) and between 0.00 – 1.49 were considered as Strongly Disagree. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 significant levels using the t-test. The t-test was adopted in this analysis to test large samples because as the sample size becomes sufficiently large, the t-distribution coincides with the z-distribution (Nworgu, 2015; Nwankwo, 2013). Hence, if the calculated value of t ( $t_{cal}$ ) is less than the critical value of t ( $t_{crit}$ ), the hypothesis was accepted but if the calculated value of t ( $t_{cal}$ ) is greater than or equal to the critical value of t ( $t_{crit}$ ), the hypothesis is rejected. The data were analysed with Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 22.10.

## Result

The results of the study were presented as follows.

**Research Question 1:** What are the vocational trades available and that if acquired will rehabilitate inmates in Nigerian prisons for societal reintegration in Rivers State?

**Table 1: Frequency and Percentage Response on Availability of Vocational Trades for Inmates Rehabilitation**

S/NO	TRADES AVAILABLE	Officers ( $N_1=224$ )		Inmates ( $N_2=369$ )	
		YES (%)	NO (%)	YES (%)	NO (%)

1	Soap Making	198 (88.39)	26 (11.61)	271 (16.53)	98 (26.56)
2	Toilet Roll Making	72 (32.14)	152 (67.86)	61 (73.44)	308 (83.47)
3	Gold Smitten	52 (23.21)	172 (76.79)	22 (16.53)	347 (94.04)
4	Furniture Making	163 (72.77)	61 (27.23)	338 (5.96)	31 (8.40)
5	Tailoring	205 (91.52)	19 (8.48)	257 (91.60)	112 (30.35)
6	Shoe Making	216 (96.43)	8 (3.57)	358 (69.65)	11 (2.98)
7	Bricks/Cement Molding	210 (93.75)	14 (6.25)	348 (97.02)	21 (5.69)
8	Bead Making	42 (18.75)	182 (81.25)	112 (94.31)	257 (69.65)
9	Food/Catering Services	82 (36.61)	142 (63.39)	54 (30.35)	315 (85.37)
10	Fashion Designing	23 (10.27)	201 (89.73)	83 (14.63)	286 (77.51)
11	Net Making	165 (73.66)	59 (26.34)	207 (22.49)	162 (43.90)
12	Textile Services	33 (14.73)	191 (85.27)	26 (56.10)	343 (92.95)
13	Information Communication Technology (ICT)	171 (76.34)	53 (23.66)	161 (43.63)	208 (7.05)
14	Laundry/Dry Cleaning Services	206 (91.96)	18 (8.04)	327 (56.37)	42 (11.38)
15	Hair Styling and Cosmetology (Barbing, Dressing)	219 (97.77)	5 (2.23)	361(88.62)	8 (2.17)
16	Photography	104 (46.43)	120 (53.57)	218 (97.83)	151 (40.92)
17	Driving	186 (83.04)	38 (16.96)	310 (59.08)	59 (15.99)
18	Music	44 (19.64)	180 (80.36)	153 (84.01)	216 (58.54)
19	Instrumentation	29 (12.95)	195 (87.05)	38 (41.46)	331 (89.70)
20	Arts/Printing and Graphics	33 (14.73)	191 (85.27)	159 (10.30)	210 (56.91)
21	Electrical Installation	200 (89.29)	24 (10.71)	321 (43.09)	48 (13.01)
22	Bricklaying and Masonry	189 (84.38)	35 (15.63)	336 (86.99)	33 (8.94)
23	Tilling	65(29.02)	159 (70.98)	106 (91.06)	263 (71.27)



24	Carpentry and Joinery	211(94.20)	13 (5.80)	304 (28.73)	65 (17.62)
25	Welding and Fabrication	173 (77.23)	51 (22.77)	128 (82.38)	241 (65.31)
26	GSM Repairs	58 (25.89)	166 (74.11)	237 (34.69)	132 (35.77)
27	Electronic Repairs	155 (69.20)	69 (30.80)	194 (64.23)	175 (47.43)
28	Painting	190 (84.82)	34 (15.18)	273 (52.57)	96 (26.02)
29	Plumbing	173 (77.23)	51 (22.77)	295 (73.98)	74 (20.05)
30	Iron/Aluminum Bending	149 (66.52)	75 (33.48)	209 (79.95)	160 (43.36)

**Source:** *Researchers' Field Result, 2019*

Table 1 shows vocational trades that are available and if they are acquired can rehabilitate inmate in Nigerian prisons in Rivers State for societal reintegration. The result revealed that officers of Nigerian prisons in Rivers State affirmed that vocational trades that are available for rehabilitation of inmates include Soap Making, Furniture Making, Tailoring, Shoe Making, Bricks/Cement Molding, Net Making, Information Communication Technology (ICT), Laundry/Dry Cleaning Services, Hair Styling and Cosmetology (Barbing, Dressing), Driving , Electrical Installation, Bricklaying and Masonry, Carpentry and Joinery, Welding and Fabrication, Electronic Repairs, Painting, Plumbing and Iron/Aluminum Bending. Also, officers asserted that vocational trades such as Toilet Roll Making, Gold Smitten, Bead Making, Food/Catering Services, Fashion Designing, Textile Services, Photography, Music, Instrumentation, Arts/Printing and Graphics, Tilling and GSM repairs were not available in Nigerian prisons in Rivers State.

Furthermore, inmates' result of Table 1 revealed that Soap Making, Furniture Making, Tailoring, Shoe Making, Bricks/Cement Molding, Net Making, Laundry/Dry Cleaning Services, Hair Styling and Cosmetology (Barbing, Dressing), Driving , Electrical Installation, Bricklaying and Masonry, Carpentry and Joinery, Welding and Fabrication, GSM Repairs, Electronic Repairs, Painting, Plumbing and Iron/Aluminum Bending are vocational trades that are available in Nigerian prisons in Rivers State and that if acquired will enhance rehabilitation for societal reintegration. More so, inmates also orated that vocational trades such as Toilet Roll Making, Gold Smitten, Bead Making, Food/Catering Services, Fashion Designing, Textile Services,

Information Communication Technology (ICT), Music, Instrumentation, Arts/Printing and Graphics, Tilling and Welding and Fabrication were not available in Nigerian prisons in Rivers State.

**Research Question 2:** What are the benefits of acquisition of vocational trades to inmates in Nigerian prisons in Rivers State?

**Table 2: Mean Scores on Benefits of Vocational Trades to Inmates of Nigerian Prisons in Rivers State**

S/NO	Vocational Training Helps:	Officers			Inmates		
		X	SD	Rmk	X	SD	Rmk
31	Inmates to be entrepreneur after discharge.	3.28	0.62	A	3.46	0.74	A
32	To reduce recidivism among inmates.	3.57	0.80	SA	3.53	1.21	SA
33	To give future hope to the inmates upon discharge from the prison.	3.09	1.21	A	3.47	0.59	A
34	In the reduction of crime.	3.96	1.11	SA	3.25	0.74	A
35	The inmate to discover their individual talents, skills and potentials.	3.98	0.60	SA	3.79	0.92	SA
36	To encourages individual inmate to developed positive attitude towards the general society.	3.33	0.54	A	3.86	0.61	SA
37	It enhances inmates' self-reliance and independency.	4.00	1.00	SA	3.77	0.71	SA
38	To promote the inmates' individual creativity and innovations.	3.79	0.96	SA	3.96	1.05	SA
39	Inmates to be useful the society after their jail term.	3.86	1.05	SA	3.89	0.80	SA
40	To encourage the inmates to develop positive attitudes towards work and labour.	3.04	0.89	A	3.11	0.76	A
<b>Grand Mean/SD</b>		<b>3.59</b>	<b>0.88</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>3.61</b>	<b>0.81</b>	<b>SA</b>

**Source:** *Researchers' Field Result, 2019*

Table 2 revealed that the respondents (Officers and Inmates) agreed that all the listed statements are benefits of vocational trades to inmates in Nigerian prisons in Rivers State. The officers had their mean response ranging between 3.04 and 4.00. The standard deviation which ranges between 0.54 - 1.00 implies that the respondents (officers) were homogenous in the responses. Also, the inmates had mean scores between 3.11 and 3.96 with a standard deviation between 0.59 - 1.05. The value of standard deviation of 1.05 which is greater than 1.00 implies that the

inmates were far from each other in their responses. The grand mean and standard deviation of Table 2 revealed that the officers had a score of 3.59 and 0.88 while inmates' scores were 3.61 and 0.81 respectively.

**Research Question 3:** What are the challenges facing the acquisition of vocational trades by inmates of Nigerian prisons in Rivers State?

**Table 3: Mean Response on Challenges Facing the Acquisition of Vocational Trades by Inmates of Nigerian Prisons in Rivers State**

S/NO	Item Statement	Officers			Inmates		
		X	SD	Rmk	X	SD	Rmk
41	Poor training facilities.	3.21	1.04	A	3.87	1.19	SA
42	Over population of the inmates.	3.75	0.65	SA	3.63	0.76	SA
43	Unqualified instructors.	2.19	0.80	D	3.56	0.62	SA
44	Inmates are not ready to learn any skill.	3.65	0.71	SA	2.31	0.80	D
45	Lack of relationship between officers and inmates.	2.10	0.63	D	3.05	1.02	A
46	Improper care of the inmates by the prison authority.	2.47	0.77	D	3.87	0.59	SA
47	No counselor to guide the inmates on vocational choice.	3.08	1.21	A	2.53	0.77	A
48	Poor content of the curriculum.	3.03	1.11	A	2.01	0.82	D
49	Excessive punishment.	2.11	0.60	D	2.31	1.04	D
50	Inmates' choice of vocation are not available	2.04	0.93	D	1.32	0.60	SD
	<b>Grand Mean/SD</b>	<b>2.76</b>	<b>0.85</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>2.85</b>	<b>0.82</b>	<b>A</b>

**Source:** Researchers' Field Result, 2019

Table 3 shows that the officers and inmates agreed that all the listed statements are challenges facing the acquisition of vocational trades by inmates in Nigerian prisons in Rivers State for rehabilitation and societal reintegration. The officers had their mean response ranging between 2.04 and 3.75. The standard deviation that ranges between 0.60 - 1.21 implies that the officers were far in their responses. Also, the inmates had mean scores between 1.32 and 3.87 with a standard deviation between 0.60 - 1.19. The value of standard deviation of 1.19 which is greater than 1.00 implies that the inmates were far from each other in their responses. The grand mean and standard deviation of Table 3 revealed that the officers had a score of 2.76 and 0.85 while inmates' scores were 2.85 and 0.82 respectively.

## Statistical Test of Hypotheses

Two null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 significant level.

**HO1:** There is no significant difference in the mean scores of Inmates and Prison Officials on the benefits of acquisition of vocational trades to inmates in Nigerian prisons in Rivers State.

**Table 4: t-Test Analysis on Benefits of Acquisition of Vocational Trades**

Group	X	SD	N	$\alpha$	tcal	tcrit	Remark
Officers	3.59	0.88	224	0.05	-0.28	1.96	Accepted
Inmates	3.61	0.81	369				

**Source:** *Researchers' Field Result, 2019* Accept Ho if tcal < tcrit; Otherwise, reject Ho.

Since the calculated value of t (tcal = -0.28) is less than the critical value of t (tcrit = 1.96) at 0.05 significant level, the stated null hypothesis of no significance difference was accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of Inmates and Prison Officials on the benefits of acquisition of vocational trades to inmates in Nigerian prisons in Rivers State.

**HO2:** There is no significant difference in the mean scores of Inmates and Prison Officials on the challenges facing the acquisition of vocational trades by inmates of Nigerian prisons in Rivers State.

**Table 5: t-Test Analysis on Challenges Facing Inmates' Acquisition of Vocational Trades in Nigerian Prisons in Rivers State**

Group	X	SD	N	$\alpha$	tcal	tcrit	Remark
Officers	2.76	0.85	224	0.05	-1.26	1.96	Accepted
Inmates	2.85	0.82	369				

**Source:** *Researchers' Field Result, 2019* Accept Ho if tcal < tcrit; Otherwise, reject Ho.

Since the calculated value of t (tcal = -1.26) is less than the critical value of t (tcrit = 1.96) at 0.05 significant level, the stated null hypothesis of no significance difference was accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of Inmates and Prison Officials on the challenges facing the acquisition of vocational trades by inmates of Nigerian prisons in Rivers State.

## Discussion of Findings

Result from Table 1 shows vocational trades that are available for acquisition by inmates in Nigerian prisons in Rivers State for their rehabilitation. From the finding of this study, it was revealed that vocational trades such as soap making, furniture making, tailoring, shoe making, bricks/cement molding, net making, Information Communication Technology (ICT), laundry/dry Cleaning services, hair styling and cosmetology (barbing, dressing), driving , electrical installation, bricklaying and masonry, carpentry and joinery, welding and fabrication, electronic repairs, painting, plumbing and iron/aluminum bending if acquired by inmates will enhance their rehabilitation for societal reintegration. This finding agrees with Okwelle and Deebom (2018) that occupational trades that are available in Nigerian prisons in Rivers State include soap making, furniture making, tailoring, shoe making, painting and plumbing among others.

The result in Table 2 revealed benefits of inmates through acquisition of vocational skills which can enhance their rehabilitation for societal re-integration upon discharge. These benefits include; promotion of inmates' individual creativity and innovations reduces recidivism, encourages the inmates to develop positive attitudes towards work and labour, help inmates to discover individual skills and talents and so on. This finding support that of Curtis (2005) that ex-convicts will continue to re-offend unless they are given more vocational training and formal education for their rehabilitation. This finding was buttressed by Adesowo (2010) as asserted that, to learn a skill, you have to invest effort and energy, and by the time you come out, you become refined ... refined items are better and more expensive than crude items. Vocational skills acquisition programme for the inmates will therefore serve as a source of empowerment, which will later make them not to be idle after serving their jail terms or being exonerated from the offence. It was also discovered from the result that vocational skills acquisition will help in the prison inmates' reintegration into the society. This confirms the words of the 19<sup>th</sup> century prison commissioner, Sir Edward Ducane, cited by Hanson (2004) that, ... moral and vocational instruction are the most potent of the educational influences in prisoners' reformation.

Result in Table 3 revealed challenges facing the acquisition of vocational trades by inmates in Nigerian prisons in Rivers State ranges from lack of counselor to guide the inmates on vocational choice, poor training facilities, over population of the inmates, unqualified vocational instructors among others. These findings upholds that of Rabbi (2008) as equally identified poor

funding, shortage of qualified staff among others as major challenges facing effective utilization of prison farm centres for prisoners' reformation. Corroborating with the findings of this study, the Amnesty International (2008:1) noted that the living conditions in the prisons are appalling. They are demanding to the physical and mental well-being of inmates and in many cases constitute clear threats to health. Conditions such as overcrowding, poor sanitation, lack of food and medicine and denial of contact with families and friends fall short of UN standards for the treatment of prisoners. Also, lack of professional educators and administrators, lack of staff training has been identified by The Nation (2010) as challenges facing inmates' rehabilitation, hence affirmed that Nigeria prisons are "living hells" where twenty to thirty inmates arrive at the prison every day, thus over-crowding the reformatory structure which do not even exist in the true sense, often times tripling the original carrying capacity.

## **Conclusion**

The prison is a secluded place where inmates are trained for rehabilitation for reintegration in to the society upon discharge. Vocational training available for inmates' rehabilitation include soap making, shoe making, tailoring, laundry/dry cleaning and so no. The acquired vocational skill by inmates in Nigerian prisons in Rivers State had a positive effect on the rehabilitation and reintegration of any inmate who genuinely participated in the vocational training during their period of imprisonment. However, challenges facing the acquisition of these trades include lack of counselor to guide the inmates on vocational choice, poor training facilities, over population of the inmates, unqualified vocational instructors among others.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made.

1. Prison authorities should expose the inmates to vocational trades that are available in the prison for acquisition to enhance their rehabilitation and reintegration.
2. Inmates should be allowed to market their product in any of the vocational trades. This will enhance their source of income in the prison.
3. Government, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) should assist in provision of training facilities in the prison. This will make acquisition of vocational trades realizable.

## References

- Adesowo, O. (2010). The Punch Newspaper, Wednesday July 2010. Appointment and management column. *Women must acquire skills*. P. 28.
- Adetunji, S. O. & Amaraeze, A. F (2012). Effects of Creativity Training in Improving the Creativity Motivation of some Male Prison Inmates: *European Journal of Educational Studies*, 4(2), 309-318.
- Agbola, T. (2000). Urban Violence, Urban Insecurity and the Challenge of Good Urban Governance; The Evolving Disturbing Scenario from Abuja, Nigeria. *Journal of the Nigerian Institute of Town Planners (JNITP)*, 1(12), 59-78.
- Alapata, A. Y. (2012). The Pattern and Distribution of Crime Incidence in an Urban Environment: A Case Study of Osun State, Southwestern Nigeria. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 2 (5), 178-188.
- Ahmed, Y.A. (2010). Trend and Pattern of Urban Crime in Southwestern Nigeria, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Department of Sociology, University of Ilorin, Nigeria.
- Amnesty International (2008). *Spare 736 Condemned Prisoners*. The Punch p.9. July 16.
- Ayuk, A. A, Emeka, J. O. & Omono, C. E. (2013). The Impact of Prison Reforms on the Welfare of the Inmates: A Case Study of Afokang Prison, Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria. *Global Journal of Human Social Science Sociology & Culture*, 13 (2), 1-6.
- Curtis, P. (2005). MPS condemn prison education. Available at [www.guardian.co.uk/print/0.5100078-1080100.html](http://www.guardian.co.uk/print/0.5100078-1080100.html) and accessed on 12/12/2018.
- Deebom, M. T. (2017). *Assessment of vocational education and training programmes given to inmates of Nigerian prisons in Rivers State*. Unpublished M.Sc dissertation submitted to the Department of Vocational/Technology Education, Rivers State University, Port Harcourt.
- Hadi, M. & Wan Azlinda, W. M. (2015). Reducing recidivism rates through vocational education and training
- Hanson, C. (2004). Prison Education – A gateway to nowhere? Retrieved from <http://www.mojuk.org.uk/cahrlesaugust27.html>. on 16/01/2019.
- Nigerian Prisons Service (2018). Statistic of Inmates and Officers in Nigerian Prisons in Rivers State, Department of Statistic, Rivers State Command.
- Nwankwo, O. C. (2013). *A Practical Guide to Research Writing*. Port Harcourt: University of Port Harcourt Press Ltd.
- Nworgu, B. G. (2015). *Educational Research: Basic Issues and Methodology*. Nsukka: University Trust Publishers.

- Obioha, E. E, (2002). *Punishment in Society and Perspectives in Sociology*. Lagos: Malthouse Press Limited.
- Ochogba, C. O. (2017). *The role of technical and vocational education and training in the rehabilitation of repentant militants in Rivers State*. Unpublished M.Sc theses submitted to the Department of Vocational/Technology Education, Rivers State University, Port Harcourt.
- Ogunleye, D. (2014). Perceived Contribution of Vocational Skills Acquisition to Prison Inmates' Reintegration into the Society. *American International Journal of Social Science*, 3(2), 241-245.
- Okonkwo, C.O. (2009). *Criminal law in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited.
- Okwelle, P. C., & Deebom, M. T. (2018). Status of training facilities in vocational education training programmes in Nigerian prisons in Rivers State. *Asian Journal of Science and Technology*, 9 (1), 7430-7436.
- Orakwe, I. W. (2011). The transformation digest. *A Journal of Nigerian Corrections*, 1 (16); 6-12,
- Oyinloye, O. A & Salami, A. O. (2010). The Effect of Cognitive Behavior Therapy in Improving the Post Adjustment of Inmates. *The Counsellor*, 2 (8), 5-12.
- Prison Quarterly Statistics (2013). *Statistics of convicted and awaiting trial inmates in Nigerian prisons*. Prison Headquarters, Abuja: Office of Prison Statistics.
- Rabbi, F. B. (2008). The challenges of prison agricultural officers in the transformation of prison inmates through prisons farm centres and agricultural projects. *The Reformer*, 3(2); 36-39.
- Tanu, P. (2014). Reformatory theory of punishment. Retrieved 18<sup>th</sup> December, 2018 from <http://www.reformativetheoryofpunishment-academike.html>.
- Tenibiaje, D. J. (2010). Counselling for Productive Employment of Prisons Inmate. *European Journal of Educational Studies*, 2 (3), 193-202.
- The Nation (2010). *Nigerian Prisons are living hell fire*. Saturday, August, 21. P.23
- Tinka, V. (2012). Designing rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for violent extremist offenders: A realist approach. Retrieved 4<sup>th</sup> January, 2019 from; <http://www.icct.nl/dpwnload/file/icct-veldhuin-Design-Rehabilitation-programme-.pdf>.
- Ugwuoke, C. U. (2010). *Criminology: Explaining crime in the Nigerian Context*, Nsukka: Great AP Publishers LTD., February 2010, pp. 169-180.
- World Health Organization (WHO) (2005). Strengthening Mental Health Promotion. Geneva, World Health Organization 2005: Fact sheet 220. Retrieved 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2019 from <http://www.strengtheningmentalhealthpromotion.../1097..gen.org>