



ABSTRACT

The ceaseless abuse of rights and privileges of the detention of awaiting trial female inmates in correctional facilities in Kuje and Suleja has necessitated the study. The study thus aimed to examine the rights and privileges of the detention of awaiting trials female inmates in Kuje and Suleja correctional facilities, in the federal capital territory (FCT) Abuja. In view of the foregoing the study employed the exploratory survey research design. Focus group discussion (FGD) and interview drawn from ten (10) research questions were used as instrument utilizing both primary and secondary sources of

RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGE OF DETENTION OF AWAITING TRIAL FEMALE INMATES IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES IN NIGERIA

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Introduction

All over the world, a custodial centre is indeed a deprivation of human rights and privileges. Usually, it means a violation and deprivation of many other human fundamental rights and privileges as well, including the right to adult education. Access to adult learning is not only a fundamental human right. Also, the rights to access to economic activities, social interaction, and cultural affiliation. A correctional center, which is basically regarded as correctional, is a physical structure within a specific geographical area which affords a unique social environment different from the larger society where people live according to specialized conditions, having been convicted of an offence through a due process of law Akpan, (2016).

Corrections are established to serve as rehabilitation and reformatory agencies with the ultimate goal of re-orienting and reforming inmates so that they can come out and serve as useful members of society all over the world (Dode, 2014).

Therefore, for the inmates to be successfully reintegrated fully into society, their rights and privileges must be maintained by the Nigerian Correctional Centers, which are the custodial of these inmates, whether awaiting trial or convicted (short or long term) in the custody of the facilities of the correctional service, which form the core of the establishment of the service.

However, considering the imperativeness of correctional centers for the safety of these inmates, their rights and privileges must be taken into consideration for the matter of human rights.



the data or information gathered. Result revealed that the rights and privileges of the detained female inmates awaiting trial are been abused by the Nigerian police force (prosecutors) and the correctional service personnel. The findings also revealed that inadequate accommodation, lack of operational vehicles, non-chillan attitudes of the Nigerian Police and the Correctional Personnel to produce the awaiting trial in Court, unfriendly manner by the Correctional personnel to the inmates to mention but a few of the findings were so revealed during the study. Among other, the study recommended that, government should for a matter of urgency increase the budgetary allocation to the Nigerian Correctional Service to build more accommodation space for adequate accommodation in the correction centers, operational vehicles should be urgently to rescue the current shortages encountered in the Kuje and Suleja correctional centers for the smooth conveyance of these female inmates awaiting trial to and from court.

Keywords: Rights and Privileges, awaiting trial, detention, inmates.

It was stressed that in many nations of the world, including industrialized ones, human rights abuse in correctional centers is still common. Awaiting trial, female inmates are denied access to the most basic services such as education, personal hygiene, health and nutrition. Advocacy for the education of inmates is thus cumbersome but vitally necessary. For the purpose of convenience and because of relatedness, corrections centers and prison service will be used interchangeably in this research to describe the service approach to Nigerian Correctional Services custodial centers. More than ever before, awaiting trial female inmates attract a great deal of attention in the correctional service area as they are used by the people and government. Thus, this study aimed at examining the rights and privileges of awaiting trial female inmates in the Kuje and Suleja Correctional Centers.

Literature Review

Rights and Privileges

Katuka (2013) viewed rights and those rights as basic for the realization of an individual's full human nature. Such rights enable an individual to live a full and complete life and to give adequate expression to their human person.

In this context, we shall view rights as certain basic conditions of happiness which an individual must enjoy in order to live a satisfactory social life. The sum total of all these rights is what we call civil liberty. The rights of citizens are divided into social rights, economic rights, and political and legal rights. Nwankwo, (1992).

On the other hand, privilege, on the other hand, means a special advantage or immunity or benefit not enjoyed by all or a right reserved exclusively for a particular person or group (especially a right to refuse to divulge information obtained in a confidential relationship or bestow a privilege upon).

Awaiting Trial

The awaiting trial female inmate means "a person arrested or imprisoned for a criminal charge against her/him, who is detained either in police or in correctional facilities (jail) but has not yet



been tried or sentenced, will be referred to as untried inmates hereinafter in these rules." A female inmate awaiting trial refers to a female detained or imprisoned for various offences, including stealing, assault, murder, default of debt, offences against public authority, and morality. For a female person to be detailed till the hearing of her matter, a remand warrant must be issued by the court of competent jurisdiction to the person to keep an offending female person whose case is pending in court. Usually, it contains the suit number, the offence committed name of the female offender, and the issuing court, as well as the adjournment date. It is a legal document that empowers the correctional centre to keep awaiting trial female inmates in the correctional facility, whereas a detention warrant is a type of warrant issued to the officer-in-charge of a correctional centre to keep a female inmate in custody on the orders of the inspector general of police or state governor on a matter relating to a breach of peace or for security reasons. A detainee could be brought to a correctional facility under the cover of a detention warrant.

Types of inmates (Prisoners)

There are four (4) major types of inmates/prisoner namely;

- i. First offenders (FO)
- ii. Recidivist (R)
- iii. Young offender (YO)
- iv. Awaiting Trial Persons (ATP)

a. First offender

They are people who have been sentenced to correctional facilities for the first time in their lives. Many of these inmates may have been law-abiding citizens for most of their lives but may have been sentenced to a correctional facility for an act not likely to occur again or as a result of technical or procedural error. These prisoners or inmates are generally referred to as "START" inmates or prisoners.

- b. Recidivists (R):** they are simply repeaters. What they have in common is a record of previous imprisonment, with some having been to prison for as many as three or four times. They are often called jail birds or customers of the correctional centers because they come and go as many times as possible.

- c. Young Offenders (YO):** Young offenders are young people under the age of 16–17 years who are generally unruly and anti-social or nonconformist who commit crimes. There is an absolute need to rescue these young offenders from life crime from an early age. The young offenders are often called "juvenile delinquents." They are tried by Juvenile Court in the magistrate's chamber and are committed to Bovstal training for a period of three years. They are not adult correctional materials.

- d. Awaiting Trial Person (ATP):** There are those awaiting their trial process, usually granted bail except otherwise stated in the warrant (reminder or detention). They are not involved in correctional labor, workshop duties outside gangs, or the school.

Types of Correctional Service

There are significantly four types of Correctional Services in Nigeria which includes:

1. Divisional Prison: These are correctional centers located in the formal divisional headquarters of the colonial and immediate post-colonial administrations in Nigeria. They



are generally designed for offenders serving prison terms of not more than two (2) years and with a capacity of not more than 150 inmates. Most of the divisional correctional centers can now be reformed to be medium-security correctional centers.

2. Provincial Prisons: These are prisons designed to accommodate between 150 and 200 inmates serving sentences of two years and above. Many of these provisional correctional centers have been upgraded to convict correctional centers, particularly with the creation of more states, e.g. Owerri, Benin, Onitsha, Makurdi Correctional Centers etc.
3. Convict Correctional Centers: These are the highest categories of correctional centers in Nigeria. They accommodate all types of inmates regardless of their length of sentence, whether short or long, or awaiting trial inmates, including those serving life sentences. Convict correctional centers are generally regarded as maximum security correctional centers. Most of them have gallows for the execution of death sentences. Examples are Port-Harcourt, Agodi, Enugu, Kaduna, Kirikiri, Ikoyi, Jos, Abeokuta Correctional Centers etc.
4. Open Correctional Centers: An open correctional center is one in which there is minimal security. As the name implies, it is open and there are no perimeter walls to restrict the free movement of the inmates. An open correctional center is usually meant for first offenders. There is only one open correctional center in Nigeria and it is located in Kakuri, on the outskirts of Kaduna. In some cases, reform and well-behaved inmates are referred to the Open Correctional Center.

Rights and Privilege of Female Inmates under Arrest or Awaiting Trial

Section 84 – 93 of the United Nations Standard minimum rules for the treatment of inmates or prisoners stipulates that:

- a. Persons arrested or imprisoned by reason of a criminal charge against them, who are detained either in police or in correctional custody (jail) but have not yet been tried (sentenced) or are awaiting trial, will be referred to as untried prisoners or inmates hereinafter in these rules.
- b. Unconverted inmates or prisoners are presumed to be innocent and shall be treated as such
- c. Without prejudice to legal rules for the protection of individual liberty or prescribing the procedure to be observed in respect of untried inmates or prisoners, these inmates or prisoners shall benefit from a special regime which is described in the following rules in its essential requirements.
 - i. Untried or awaiting, prisoners or inmate shall be kept separate from convicted prisoners or inmates.
 - ii. Young untried prisoners or inmates shall be kept separate from adult and shall be detained in separate institutions.
- d. Untried (awaited inmates) shall sleep singly in separate rooms, with the reservation of different local custom in respect of the climate.
- e. Within the limit compatible with the good order of the institution, untried inmates (prisoners) may if they so desire, have their food procured at their own expenses from the



outside, either through the administration or through their family or friends. Otherwise, the administration shall provide their food.

- f. i. An untried inmates (prisoners) shall be allowed to wear their own clothing if it is clean and suitable
- ii. if they wear correctional dress, it shall be different from that supplied to convicted prisoners (inmates).
- g. An untried prisoner (inmates) shall always be offered opportunity to work, but shall not be required to work. If he or she chooses to work, he/she shall be paid for it.
- h. An untried prisoner (inmates) shall be allowed to procure at his or her own expense of a third party such books, newspaper, writing materials and other means of occupation as are compatible with the interests of the administration of justice and the security and good order of the institution.
- i. An untried prisoner (inmates) shall be allowed to be visited and treated by his own doctor or dentist if there is reasonable ground for his application and he or she is able to pay any expenses incurred.
- j. An untried prisoner (inmate) shall be allowed to inform his or her family of his or her detention and shall be given all reasonable facilities for communication with his or her family and friends and for receiving visits from them, subject only to restriction and supervision as are necessary in the interest of the administration of justice and of the security and good order of the institution for the purposes of his or her defense. An untried prisoner (inmate) shall be allowed to apply for free legal aid where such aid is available and to receive visits from his or her legal aid where such aid is available and to receive visits from his or her legal adviser with a view to his defense and to prepare and hand to him confidential instruction. For these purposes, he/she shall, if he/she so desires, be supplied with writing materials. Interviews between the prisoner (inmate) and his legal adviser may be within sight but not within the hearing of a police or institution official.

Above are the rights and privileges to be enjoyed by untried or awaiting trial inmates or prisoner which the female inmates are not exception to.

Classification of offenders in Correctional Facilities

Inmates' population consists of un-convicted females, detained persons, civil and criminal lunatics, convicted female persons, condemned criminals and female inmates.

1. **Un-convicted or Awaiting Trial Persons:** These are suspects remanded in correctional facilities or custody pending further investigation or trial for their alleged offences. In the end, some may be discharged and acquitted while those found guilty are left behind to serve their sentence as prescribed by the Court.
2. **Detained inmates:** These are persons reasonably believed to have breached or about to breach state security either politically, economically, socially etc. Many of these inmates are politicians and public servants.
3. **Civil and Criminal Lunatics:** These are persons believed to be mentally unstable, and they are thought to constitute either a nuisance to public order or potential or actual dangers to life and property. A good number of them are detained pending medical reports on the state of their health or for treatment.



4. **Convicted Person:** These are persons tried and convicted for various offences which range from relatively minor offences e.g debtors, traffic offenders to more serious offences like stealing, assault, manslaughter and rape.
5. **Condemned Criminals:** These are persons sentenced to death for serious crimes or offences such as murder and armed robbery. Some condemned criminals are executed swiftly while others stay for several years in correctional facilities or custody. Condemned criminals are generally regarded as dangerous criminals who can spring surprises at the slightest opportunity. Consequently, they are usually secluded from the correctional inmates and are closely monitored by the correctional personnel.
6. **Female Inmates:** These are females detained or imprisoned for various offences including stealing, assault, murder, default of debt, offences against public authority and morality.

Empirical Literature Review

A couple of empirical investigations have been conducted in respect of the conditions of the Nigerian correctional system and how they are faring in correcting, rehabilitating, reforming, and reintegrating inmates back into society as useful and reformed citizens in Nigeria. In this session, some of the empirical studies done on the correctional service of inmates were reviewed and discussed.

Chukwuemeka (2010) examined institutional reforms and the development of the Nigerian Correctional Service. The study focused on reforms centered on administrative reforms, logistics, and convenience with complete disregard for structural changes, inmate's conditions, international standards, and the rights of awaiting trial inmates. The study revealed that the reforms failed because of the class character of the inmates and the objectives for the establishment of the correctional service in Nigeria. A secondary method of data collection was used to carry out the study. The study recommended that Nigeria Correctional Services should pursue structured pro-inmate International Standard Reforms as a negation to the interest of the ruling class.

Emeka (2011) examined the challenges and reforms in the Nigerian Correctional System. The study focused on the aim of establishing the Correctional Service, which is to provide a rehabilitation and correctional facility for those who have violated the rules and regulations of their society. The research used both primary and secondary methods of data collection for the elicitation of information for the work. It reveals that the correctional system has not been able to live up to its expected role in Nigeria. The paper recommended that the decongestion committee should be strengthened. It also recommended that more correctional centers should be established. Finally, more NGOs should be encouraged and allowed to visit correctional facilities and monitor their activities so as to be able to provide their input.

Ajayi (2012) conducted research on the Nigerian Correctional Services and the dispensation of justice. The research placed emphasis on punishment and deterrence, contradicting the main objective of setting up the correctional service, which is to correct and reform, rehabilitate, and reintegrate inmates to become better citizens. A secondary method of data collection was adopted for the research. The research shows that poverty, socio-economic and other constraints constitute bottlenecks to reformative effort. It thus advocated that proper funding for reformation, rehabilitation, and reintegration be addressed effectively.

Ugwuoke & Ojonugwa (2014) investigated the rehabilitation of convicts in Nigeria's correctional centers. The research was carried out in Kogi State and its focus was the rehabilitation of convicts. The researcher made use of primary and secondary methods of data collection for the study. Findings from the study show that despite the official claims that correctional centers are operating on the principles of rehabilitation and reformation, it was revealed that correctional



centers are still largely retributive in nature. The researchers recommended that the government should take action and not just lip service to address correctional rehabilitation.

Otu (2015) carried out a study on the causes and effects of recidivism in the Nigerian Correctional Service System. The study focused on the enormous increase in people relapsing into crime and criminality, which is the direct opposite of rehabilitation programmes in the Nigerian Correctional Services. The study identified the major causes of criminal recidivism as discrimination, stigmatization, and lack of care after serving in or reintegrating support programs. The study used both primary and secondary methods of data collection for the research. The study recommended qualitative treatment of inmates and provision of education and vocational programs as possible panaceas for reducing recidivism.

Ajiboye (2020) conducted a study for the Nigerian Correctional Service. The unavoidable adjustment from deterrence to rehabilitation. The study discussed how the name of the Prison Service was changed to Correctional Service in 2019 reforms. The research made use of secondary sources for collecting the needed information. The work, however, shows the shortcoming of the institution in the aspect of rehabilitation and recommends that the Nigerian Criminal Justice System deserves reformation and overhaul as well as to guide against the congestion of various correctional centers.

Gap in Literature and contribution of the study to existing knowledge

Because effective research is based on prior knowledge, the study was able to review literature and works of other scholars that are related to this study, and the gap established in this step aids in eliminating duplication of what has been done by other scholars. Thus, the researchers were able to identify the following gap from previous studies done by other researchers as: There is no study work carried out on the rights and privileges of detention of awaiting trial female inmates in correctional facilities in Nigeria.

Challenges militating against the effectiveness of the Kuje and Suleja Custodial Centers

- i. Nigeria Correctional services are statutorily charged with the task or responsibility of ensuring the safe custody of offenders as well as their reformation and rehabilitation. The correctional service appears to have done their best within the constraints posed by the mirage of challenges. According to the Kuje and Suleja custodial centers' annual reports (2021), these challenges include
- ii. Inadequate funding for the maintenance of existing infrastructure and equipments
- iii. Continued usage of bucket latrines which constitutes health hazards
- iv. Lack of vehicles to convey staff and inmates as well as materials to where they are badly needed for efficient administration and analog operational services.
- v. Acute shortage of drugs and ambulances in correctional clinic leading to high incident of epidemic and high mortality rates among inmates (prisoners).
- vi. Abandonment of capital project mainstream, thus aggravating prison congestion
- vii. Acute shortage of personnel resulting from dismissal, retirements, resignations, death, embargo on recruitment etc. is serious challenges controlling the service.
- viii. Lack of staff motivation in term of promotion for eligible staff with the result and low morale and frustration and by extension, low productivity which result to unfriendly manner to inmates.
- ix. Gross inadequacy of essentials such as blanket, beds, soaps, disinfectants, prisons uniforms, etc



Theoretical Framework

The deterrence theory of punishment is associated with the works of classical philosophers like Thomas Hobbes, Casare Baccaria, and Jeremy Bentham. As the name of the theory implies, offenders wouldn't choose to break the law after thoughtfully considering the punishment that goes with their actions. In essence, the idea of punishment must have its cause whenever criminal acts are committed. According to Anzaku et al. (2015), by sentencing criminals to extremely harsh penalties, other people who might be considering criminal activities will be so terrified of the consequences that they will choose not to commit crimes out of fear. Onwudiwe et al. (2011) asserted in a similar vein that, because people are rationally self-interested, they will not commit crimes if the costs of committing crimes outweigh the benefits of engaging in unwanted acts. Reasoning from the above views as expressed by these scholars, it could be deduced that the idea of incarceration or imprisonment and the swift punishment that accompanies it is not only a measure to deter criminals or dissuade would-be offenders, but also to keep society going at the expense of both convicted/awaiting trial and potential lawbreakers. However, due to the non-encompassing nature of the theory, that is, it could only accommodate the penal aspect without provision for the psychotherapy aspect, and the changing trends in penal administration, which in the 21st century have centered more on rehabilitation than chastisement, hence the need for a rehabilitation theory of punishment.

Methodology

The methodology deployed in this study is an exploratory research survey designed to Bhat (ND) defined exploratory research as "research used to investigate exploratory samples because the researchers seek to know the rights and privileges of detention of awaiting trial female inmates in the Kuje and Suleja Correctional facilities in FCT Abuja, Nigeria, which are the study areas."

Population of the Study

The population of the study consists of two correctional centers in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja (Kuje and Suleja). The total number of awaiting trial female inmates detained in the Kuje (160) and the sample size is 64 awaiting trial female inmates, representing 40%, while the total number of awaiting trial female inmates detained in the Suleja custodial facility is 180 and the sample size is 108, representing 60% of the inmates. The total number of inmates awaiting trials in both Kuje and Suleja is 340, representing 100% of the two correctional facilities.

Table 1: Population for the Study

S/No	Awaiting trial female inmates	Total no. of inmates	Total no. of sample size	Percentage of sampled population
1.	Kuje	160	64	40
2.	Suleja	180	108	60
	Total	340	172	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample and sampling technique used in this work is the non-probability sampling technique in selecting the sample size. The non-probability sampling is a process that does not give all the female inmates awaiting trial in the Kuje and Suleja correctional facilities the same chance of being



chosen. The sampling techniques used are purposive and convenience selection. The purposive sampling was utilized because the researchers needed to survey a group of the female inmates awaiting trials in the Kuje and Suleja correctional facilities with certain characteristics appropriate for the study. For example, the entire inmate population was not used because of their circumstances. Secondly, a convenience sample was utilized by the researchers to obtain data from the available inmates at the moment.

Instrument for Data Collection

The study used structured focus group discussion (FGD) and face-to-face interrogation (interview) with the inmates to obtain the needed information. The focus group discussion (FGD) consists of ten (10) questions in total. Six (6) questions were closed-ended questions, while four (4) were open-ended questions. The face-to-face interview was used to obtain information from inmates and then analyzed using a qualitative approach based on their responses.

Method of Data Collection

The researchers, with the assistance of the warders, were involved in the conduct of interviews and orderliness in the interpretation of language. The questions were screened by the officials in the correctional centers and approved by higher authority (the superintendent). The inmates were called out one after the other, and the researchers conducted the interviews. After the collation of data, the information was screened by the superintendent (officer-in-charge) of the correctional centers before leaving the premises.

Discussion of Findings

In order to investigate whether the rights and privileges of the detained female inmates awaiting trials in the Kuje and Suleja correctional facilities were observed by the officials of the correctional centers, it was revealed in the affirmative by the inmates "not at all."

It was also found out that most of the inmates are detained for minor or no offenses at all. because about 90% of the respondents said they did not know why they were arrested and brought to the correctional facilities.

The study found out that most of the inmates were brought to the correctional facilities without trials or the hearing of their cases because the correctional officials kept complaining of lack of fuel even if there were operational vehicles to convey them to and from the correctional centers.

The study also revealed that there is flagrant abuse of their rights and privileges as a result of unfriendliness by the personnel of the correctional centre; inadequate accommodation space for them as required by law; and fragrant denial of access to their family, friends, and legal representatives. It was also shown that the inmates do not have adequate feeding and medical care. These findings are in agreement with the study conducted by Sylvanus, Dance, and Sani (2021), which found that these awaiting trial female inmates can have a negative impact on these behaviors directly or indirectly.

In addition, over 90% of these awaiting trial female inmates accepted that they are not treated fairly as it is enshrined in the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the treatment of inmates or prisoners.

Conclusion

This study indicated that it is important to continue to provide the awaiting trial female inmates with the rights and privileges as stipulated in the United Nation Standard Minimum Rules for the treatment of inmates or prisoners because the negation can affect their mental alertness and disorderliness, which the aftermath of may have an immense negative change in their personality.



As a result of the findings and conclusion drawn from the research, the following recommendations are proffered;

- i. As a matter of global practice, the government should make adequate budgetary provisions for correctional services in order to adequately build more accommodation space for the detention of awaiting inmates.
- ii. Correctional personnel should be trained and tested on how to handle inmates, particularly those awaiting trials in their respective facilities, as soon as possible.
- iii. As a matter of urgent need, the government and NGOs should procure and donate to the correctional centers operational vehicles to convey to and from courts.
- iv. The police (prosecutors) and the judiciary should exercise caution when dispensing cases of those who are awaiting trial.
- v. A special unit be set up in all correctional centers to checkmate the fragrant abuse of the rights and privileges of awaiting trial inmates in order to avoid abuse of these rights and privileges of the inmates awaiting trial and that any correctional officer found guilty should be prosecuted as required by law.

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