

Relationship Between Self-Esteem And Personal Development Of Prison Inmates In Jalingo, Taraba State Nigeria

Amuche¹ Chris Igomu Rev Mayange² Levi T.

1. Faculty of Education, Taraba State University, Jalingo, Taraba State, Nigeria
2. Faculty of Education, Nasarawa State University Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria

E-mail of correspondence author: ehcumch2000@yahoo.com

Abstract

This research highlights the relationship between self-esteem and personal development of prison inmates in the Jalingo prison in Taraba state. Additionally, it aimed to identify whether there are differences in self esteem between male and female inmates. The objectives of this study were achieved by sampling two hundred and fifty inmates from the Jalingo prison drawn for the study. The research instruments developed were a twenty- item questionnaire used for the pre-test and post-test. The instruments were tagged Self-Esteem Questionnaire (SEQ) and Personal Development Inventory (PDI). Inmates were randomly selected. The Pearson's correlation formula and t-test were used for data analyses. The results of the study showed that Self-Esteem and Personal Development of Inmates are positively correlated (0.417). There is a significant difference in the level of personal development between male and female inmates and, no significant difference exists between self-esteem among male and female inmates. The study however, concluded that self esteem of inmates has a direct relationship with inmates' personal development. Also, personal development of inmates differs according to gender but self esteem among inmates do not differ in terms of gender differential. It was recommended that government and especially, counsellors and prison officers should be aware of the link between self-esteem and personal development in inmates and should employ self esteem strategy as a rehabilitative technique among inmates.

Key words: Development, Counseling, inmates, Prison, Self-Esteem

Introduction

Today's self-esteem as one of the influential factor which affect student's personal development has received increasing attention. It has been declared that high self-esteem can lead to high academic achievement. The Self-esteem can be referred as person's global judgments of competency regarding one's self-worth (Harter, 1988). This construct emerges when learners compare their self-evaluation with actual performance on a variety of tasks. Moreover, this comparison between the perceived self and the ideal self is very crucial especially during adolescence because adolescents encounter with diversified job of developing and challenges of their own age. Hence, development of self-esteem is considered as one of the most important developmental processes of adolescence (Sirin and Rogers-Sirin, 2004).

In general, high self-esteem help individuals to view themselves as active and capable persons to promote changes through effort and set higher goals which cause learning new things. Intrestingly, numerous researchers have demonstrated that the best way to improve student achievement is to increase their self-esteem (Rubie *et al.*, 2004). Research has also documented that high self- esteem plays an important role in academic achievement, social and personal responsibility (Redenbach, 1991). Those who have higher personal development tend to feel more confident in contrast those who lack confidence in themselves achieve less.

Additionally, gender is the important factor which influence on the growth, emerges and demonstration of self-esteem. Numerous differences have been found between males and females in their level of self-esteem during adolescence because they tend to adapt to gender stereotypes. Specifically, male self-esteem are thought to be more impressed by goals characterized by independence and autonomy, while self-esteem in female is more influenced by goals related to interdependence and sensitivity (Cross and Slater, 1995). The difference in self-esteem can lead to difference in social as well as personal responsibilities between males and females. However, the present study revealed the important role of self-esteem in social and personal adjustment of inmates. In other words, the present study aimed to investigate the relationship between self-esteem and personal development as well as gain insight into the differences in self-esteem and social and personal development between male and female inmates. Self-esteem has become a matter of concern for rehabilitative counsellors in Nigeria due to the conditions of prison service.

Nigeria had witnessed serious crimes over the years. Criminal behaviours and delinquency are common occurrence in Nigeria. This high rate of occurrence is of great concern to the society and behaviour modifiers. The increase in crime has also increased the inmates in Nigerian prisons and the capacities of prisons remain as it was in 1800 when it initially built. In recent time, armed robbery, kidnapping, drug trafficking, fraud, traffic offence, rape, murder and theft have become more serious to tackle as they have manifested with new methods and techniques (Omisakin 1998). Tenibiaje (2000) also pointed out that delinquency and criminal behaviours are common phenomena in our society, and the high rate of occurrence in recent time is of greater concern to the society. Historical evidence and information gathered indicated that crime in Nigeria has now reached a great height. The high rate of crime is not peculiar to the male, but also female has taken crime as in a new dimension. There has been an enormous surge in the number of women incarcerated in Nigeria. The number women have almost quadrupled in crime. According to Ajibola (1990) in 1960, immediately after independence 66,766 cases of crime were reported to the Nigeria Police, in 1961, 75,409 cases were reported while with an increase of 12.9% vehicle in 1965, the rate of crime increased rapidly to 105,314 cases of crime which is 71.4% increase over 1961. The increase continues yearly and the Prisons continue to admit criminals daily. Despite the fact that the number of criminals is increasing in Nigerian Prisons the structures and capacities of prisons remain as it was in 1800.

Report on statistical open out of inmates as of 23 November, 2011 showed that the population has trippled. According to Jarma (2002) the total inmate population of the prison system is 45,500 out of which 696 or 1.5% are females, 27,959 unconvicted while 16,491 are convicted inmates. All these inmates are housed in 146 convict prisons and 83 satellite prison camps. These inmates are overcrowded in the cells. (Tenibiaje 2003). In view of this situation in Nigerian prisons, personal development of inmates seems to be stifled. This study endeavoured to provide information for educators, counselors and prison attendants to apply strategies to prevent imbalance in self-esteem between male and female inmates in prisons.

Overview of Prisons in Nigeria

The concept of prison has been addressed through many perspectives, which include structural functional and social dimensions. For example, McCauley & Icon (1954) described a prison as a physical structure in a geographical location where a number of people living under highly specialized condition adjust to the alternatives presented to them, by the unique kind of social environment. Moreso, Sykes (1958), Goffman, (1961) and Okunola, (1986) conceived prison as where people are highly secluded from the rest of the world with entirely new order of control. The above definitions are seen limited toward an understanding that a prison is a physical environment and could be described, geographically or spatial. Other than the physical conception, other schools of thought are based on function, framework and label. From the functional perspective, a prison is perceived as a place to punish offenders, where criminals that are removed from the society are dumped to protect the society from further criminal activities of the offenders and a place to rehabilitate, and teach offenders to be law abiding and productive after the release. Prisons are also perceived as a total institution, from the perspective of framework.

However, Okunola, (1986) and Goffman, (1961) defined the concept in this manner where people who are socially rejected in same or mentally retard are housed. Goffman, saw it as an institution where people housed and as restricted contact with outside world and stereotypical behavioural pattern where social mobility is also restricted. The social structure is an abstraction based on social relationship with which the society can be analyzed into three main levels of individuals, institutions and sub-system. In applying this assumption to the prisons the prison system is seen as a functional structural whole with different parts. As such it implies that aspects of the prison life ways such as norm, values, and folkways form integral parts of the institutional system of form integral parts of the institutional system of social control, and other behavioural patterns.

The Nigerian prison system was established in accordance with three forms of penal legislation which operate alongside each other in the country; the Penal Code and the accompanying Criminal Procedure Code Cap 81 Laws of the Federation 1990 (CPC); the Criminal Code and the accompanying Criminal Procedure Act Cap 80 Laws of the Federation 1990 (CPA) and the *Sharia* penal legislation in 12 northern states (which applies to only Muslim members of these states). By its establishment philosophy, the Nigerian prison service is an institution meant to administer penal treatment to adult offenders. Its importance is in the bid to reduce crime in the society. On the basis

of imprisonment policy, the prison service was established to manage criminals in prison yards. This constitutional function empowers the Nigerian prison operatives to:

- i. keep convicted offenders (prisoners) for safe custody,
- ii. keep awaiting trial inmates in custody, until law courts ask for their production
- iii. punish offenders as instructed by the law courts
- iv. reform the convicted prisoners
- v. rehabilitate and to re-integrate prisoners who have completed the sentences in the prison (extract from prison training manual) (cited in Adetula et al. 2010)

Inferring from the above, the main aim of establishing the prison institution in all parts of the world including Nigeria is to provide a rehabilitation and correctional facility for those who have violated the rules and regulations of their society. However, the extent to which this maxim is true in practice has been a subject of controversy. Instances abound where the prisons have become a training ground for criminals instead of rehabilitation home in Nigeria (Obioha 1995).

In Nigerian contexts, the significance of sending offenders to the prisons are not yet met because the offenders are likely to be more hardened than they were, before imprisonment. Emeka, (2011). Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) is a theory of human motivation that attempts to account for the energy and direction of behavior. It is organismic theory which states that individuals do not passively react to the environment but rather continually explore and adapt their environment or surrounding. According to this theory there are three primary psychological needs: Autonomy, competence and relatedness. In summary these are feelings to choose one's own behavior interacting affectively in the environment and meaningfully connecting to others that fuel exploration and adoption of life. The earliest psychoanalytic interest in coping centered on its role in psychopathology as a characteristic style for managing stress or threat. This is in line with the Freudian theory of psychosexual stage of childhood development at which trauma occurs, the primary impulses and conflict of each particular stage, finally the child cognitive characteristics at each stage which shaped in the defensive style.

Concept of Self-Esteem

The term "self" is generally used in reference to the conscious reflection of one's own being or identity, as an object separate from other or from the environment. There are a variety of ways to think about the self with self-concept and self-esteem as two of the most widely used. Self-concept is often considered as the cognitive or thinking aspect of self (related to one's self-image) and generally refers to "the totality of a complex, organized, and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person holds to be true about his or her personal existence" (Purkey, 1988).

Self-esteem more often is used to refer to the affective or emotional aspect of self and generally alludes to how one feels about or how values him- or herself (one's self-worth). Self-concept can also refer to the general idea we have of ourselves and self-esteem can refer to particular measures about components of self-concept. Self-esteem, rather than being something that you know about yourself, is your general attitude toward yourself. It is mostly measured on a scale from positive to negative, and your self-esteem is typically based on whether you think you are successful, a good person, smart, and so on. It can vary depending on the situation and what have been going on lately, and any feedback you have gotten recently from your environment and people around you.

Additionally, Franken (1994) suggests that self-concept is related to self-esteem in that people who have good self-esteem have a clearly differentiated self-concept. When people know themselves they can maximize outcomes because they know what they can and cannot do. People develop and maintain their self-concepts through the process of taking action and then reflecting on what they have done and what others tell them about what they have done (Brigham, 1986). That is, self-concept is not innate, but is constructed and developed by the individual through interaction with the environment and reflecting on that interaction. This reflection is based on actual and possible actions in comparison to one's own expectations and the expectations of others and to the characteristics and accomplishments of others. The key difference between self-concept and self-esteem is that the addition of feelings. Self-concept is simply the informational side of things, where you know facts about what you are like. Self-esteem is how you feel about those things you know, like whether you enjoy the fact that you are talkative at parties (high self-esteem) or you think that you are annoying and need to learn to shut up sometimes (low self-esteem). There are a variety of self-esteem effects that can come from the self-concept. Self-concept and self-esteem also have a lot in

common though, mostly that they are reflective processes. They can be influenced not only by observing one's own self and behaviour objectively, but also by observing the reactions that other people have to you and your behaviour, or imagining what other people might think of you, or what you would think of yourself if you saw yourself from outside.

Roles of Counselors in Prisons.

According to Ipaye (2004), counseling is a molding, reconstruction and a rehabilitation process. Counseling is a process that involves rehabilitating, reintegrating, and behaviour modification of inmates. Rehabilitation Counselors give assistance to inmates in securing a job through specific training received and find job through direct contact or connection by the rehabilitation counselors with employers. Rehabilitation are required to provide counseling, psychotherapy training, career counseling, relationship issues, creative training, planning and practice employer attitude, job development skills and counseling in financial management to the prison inmates. Also, counselors assist the prison inmates, so as to achieve optimal adjustment to living and working within their chosen environment. Reintegration is the act of rejoining the community. Reintegration cannot be implemented without proper transformation of the prison inmates. All these can be achieved by a counselor who employs different strategies to boost inmates' self esteem.

Statement of the Problem

The issue of good prison conditions in Nigeria should be of primary concern to any government. Two major challenges are associated with prisons particularly in the Jalingo: These are overcrowded prison due to the increase in the rate of crime and decline in productivity among inmates due to low self-esteem.

A casual observation of the population that goes in and out of the prisons in Nigeria presupposes that there are some problems in the system, hence the prisons system has not been able to live up to its expected role in Nigeria. The worry about the manifestation that Nigerian prisons have not lived up to expectations in terms of impacting positively on lives and vocations of inmates has raised several questions that have not yet been completely addressed on the system's functions and existence in terms of rehabilitative counselling.

This situation has made the tasks of rehabilitative counsellors daunting. The implication of overcrowded prisons results in improper counselling exercise. This has seemingly affected the self esteem of most inmates. In view of the above, one wonders whether there is any relationship between self esteem and social and personal development of inmates? Also, could there be any differences in self esteem between male and female inmates. Seeking answers to these posers form the problem of the study.

Objectives of the study

The objective of this study are as follows:

- (i) determine the relationship between self esteem personal development of inmates.
- (ii) determine the differences in the personal development between male and female inmates.
- (ii) determine the level of self-esteem between male and female inmates

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were framed to guide the study:

1. There is no significant relationship between self-esteem and personal development of inmates.
2. There is no significant difference in the personal development between male and female inmates.
3. There is no significant difference in the level of self esteem between male and female inmates.

Materials and Methods

The population of the study comprised all the five hundred and twenty-nine inmates of the Jalingo prison. The population comprised of four hundred and fifteen male inmates and one hundred and fourteen female inmates. Purposive sampling technique was adopted and used to select inmates for the study. Inmates selected for the study have jail sentences not less than ten years. Five cells each accommodating 50 inmates were selected and classified as 2 experimental and one control group. The Coopersmith's standardized questionnaire of self-esteem was utilized which involved 30 questions and each question ranged from 1 (low self-esteem) to 5 (high self-esteem) based on the Likert Scale. Total self-esteem scores range from 30 to 150 (Coopersmith, 1967). The questions were scored in the following way: firstly, the items 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 22, 25, 27, and 30 were coded from 5 to 1; however, it has been given the opposite rates from 1 to 5 for the rest of the questions. The PDI instrument was also rated on a scale of 4, 3, 2 and 1 for Very High, High, Moderate, and Low.

The instruments were validated using experts' judgment. Experts in Guidance and Counseling and experts in educational psychology in the Faculty of Education, Taraba state University, Jalingo were consulted. Their criticisms, suggestions and recommendations were affected on the instruments. Suggested modifications on the test items were affected. The reliability of the instruments was determined by administering the instrument to the same inmates in Wukari prisons which is within the same population area. A reliability co-efficient of 0.73 was obtained using Pearson Product Movement Correlation Co-efficient Formula.

Results

Hypothesis testing: The first hypothesis stated that there is no significant relationship between self-esteem and personal development of inmates. Pearson correlation was performed to determine if the relationship was statistically significant.

Table 1: Correlation between Self-Esteem and Personal Development of Inmates

Test	Self-esteem	Personal development
Self-Esteem		
Pearson correlation	1	0.417
Sig (2- tailed)		0.000
Personal Development		
Pearson correlation	0.417	1
Sig (2- tailed)	0.000	

Table 1 above shows the Correlation between Self-Esteem and Personal Development of Inmates. The result reveals that there was positive relationship between self-esteem and personal development ($p < 0.01$) and as a consequence, H_1 was supported. In other words, significant findings revealed that inmates' level of self-esteem was a significant determinant in their personal development. If inmates develop higher levels of self-esteem, they would exhibit higher social and personal responsibilities (development).

The second hypothesis concerned whether there is significant differences in the level of personal development between male and female inmates. To test this hypothesis, independent samples t-test was employed. As it has been shown in table 2 below, Levene's test which is related to the assumption of equality of variance was met. Additionally the significant differences were found in the level of personal development between males and females.

Table 2: The difference the level of in personal development between male and female inmates

Test	Levene's Test for Equality of variance		t-Test for equality of Means	
	F-value	Sig.	Mean Difference	Sig.
Personal Development				
Equal variances assumed	0.371	0.534	-2.225	0.000
Equal variances not assumed			-2.225	0.000

The last hypothesis considered whether there significant difference existed in the levels of self-esteem between males and females inmates. To test this hypothesis, independent samples t-test was employed. Table 3 below shows that no significant difference was found in the level of self-esteem between males and females inmates.

Table 3: the Difference in Self-esteem between male and female inmates

Test	Levene's Test for Equality of variance		t-Test for equality of Means	
	F-value	Sig.	Mean Difference	Sig.
Personal Development Equal variances assumed Equal variances not assumed				
	1.845	0.118	0.881	0.433
			0.881	0.433

Discussion

The current study demonstrated that there is significant relationship between self-esteem and personal development in inmates and this result is correspondent with the research results of Fathi-Ashtiani *et al.* (2007). Furthermore the finding is consistent with Walter (2003) who indicated that a positive sense of self esteem has been related to the personal development. On the other hand, the results have been supported by Emeka (2009) who assessed the influence of personal development on self-esteem amongst 100 inmates in Enugu prison.

The results revealed that those inmates who get higher ratings in personal development tends to develop higher levels of self-esteem. Additionally, the results supported the findings of Bello (2005) who found that increases in self-esteem are positively correlated with increases in personal and social responsibility. The study showed that inmates' ratings on personal development boost when they acquired more points on a self-esteem questionnaire. Similarly, the other study demonstrated that experiencing success or failure consistently is extremely important as it affects one's self-esteem and self-concept (Kifer, 1973).

In contradiction with our results, recent studies have shown that the association between these two variables was modest (Pullmann and Allikk, 2008; Nagar *et al.*, 2008). Moreover, an earlier meta-analysis indicated a modest relation of 0.08 between self-esteem and academic achievement (Valentine *et al.*, 2004).

The current study also found that there is no significant difference in the level of self-esteem between males and females. However, a significant difference found for personal development between male and female inmates. Stress and poor conditions of the prison may be the cause of the difference in personal development. This is consistent with previous research which found that gender difference was significant when the influence of motivation on personal development was evaluated in male and female inmates (Tella, 2007). Hence, it can be said that self-esteem of inmates plays an important role in determining their soial and personal development. But the differences in personal development can be rooted from possible rehabilitative counselling instead of their self-esteem between male and females.

Conclusion

It could be concluded that self esteem of inmates has a direct relationship with inmates' personal development. Also, personal development of inmates differs according to gender but self esteem among inmates do not differ in terms of gender differential. Government and especially, counsellors and prison officers should be aware of the link between self-esteem and personal development in inmates. When the inmates understand that their failures are a result of effort rather than ability, they will probably exhibit a greater persistence to overcome their failures rather than developing an attitude of helplessness. Counsellors must be trained about the strategies which are related to the self-esteem building and have to observe inmates and their interactions with peers carefully to meet the needs of them.

Additional research needs to be conducted to confirm these findings and to investigate whether they have any implications for working inmates of other Nigerian prisons to improve on their personal development and rehabilitation. Finally, practical research needs to be done to develop and assess programs for counsellors in the use of self esteem as strategies for rehabilitative counselling for inmates.

Recommendations

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

Counselling for effective rehabilitation should be tailored towards:

- i. Education in Prison that increases literacy and personal development of inmates

- ii. Vocational Education with “live work” projects and apprenticeship certificate should be consolidated
- iii. Correctional rehabilitative programme employing self esteem strategy should be carried out in prisons to improve on personal development of inmates.

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