

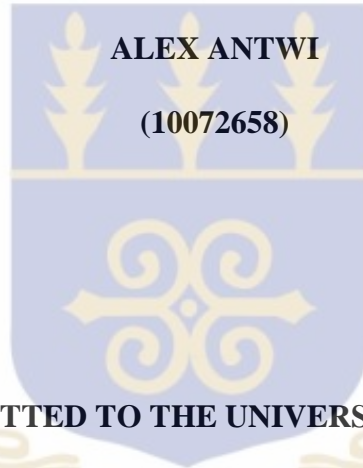
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

SOCIAL REINTEGRATION OF OFFENDERS AND RECIDIVISM IN GHANA

BY

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**THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON IN
PARTIAL FULLFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF
PHD SOCIOLOGY DEGREE**

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is as a product of my own research work carried out in the Department of Sociology, University of Ghana, Legon, under the supervision of Professor Chris Abotchie, Professor Steve Tonah and Dr, Dan-Bright Dzorgbo. References cited in this work have been fully acknowledged.

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DEDICATION

In the first place, I dedicate this dissertation to the Almighty God for seeing me through the period of my education and secondly to my parents Mr. Asiamah Antwi and Mrs. Comfort Frimpongmaa Antwi and other members of my family including Mrs. Esther Barfo, Clifford Antwi, Ernestina Antwi, Seth Antwi, Kingsley Antwi, Adeline Antwi, Kwame Frimpong, Godfred Nyamekye and others too numerous to mention.



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Finally, I am also grateful to the Ghana Prisons Service for giving me the permission to carry out the data collection at Nsawam Medium Security Prison.

ABSTRACT

In Ghana, the issue of offenders returning home safely to lead law-abiding lives has been a daunting task. Every year, hundreds of offenders leave the prison but relapse into criminal behaviour sooner or later after their release. It is on record that 24% of ex-offenders recidivate again and again. This implies that secondary crime prevention strategies in Ghana are ineffective in reforming, rehabilitating and reintegrating the offenders. The question this study sought to address is: what is the nature of the transition of offenders in Ghana? In addressing this question, a sample of offenders who were recidivists, case managers, social workers, prison evangelists and family members of the recidivists were purposively engaged in in-depth interviews. The findings suggest that most ex-offenders re-offend because of individual characteristics, family relationships, community context and penal policies which have been categorized into the institutional push and pull factors as well as social and community push factors. The institutional push factors stem from the fact that penal policies in Ghana mainly focus on custody, deterrence and retribution rather than rehabilitation. Consequently, prison-based interventions are ineffective in transforming the inmates into law-abiding citizens because governments are not obliged to finance rehabilitation programmes. The social and community push factors find expression in social rejection. The social system outside the prison is coercive and non-supportive. Although most ex-prisoners go back to their families, they face coercive interpersonal relationships. In addition, most of them do not get the needed support from the larger society due to the stigma of prison record. The negative perceptions of the public on prisoners have remained static and these reinforce the stigmatized identities of ex-offenders in Ghana. As a consequence, most ex-offenders lack legitimate support from micro and macro sources. The lack of civic engagement in conventional activities prevents ex-offenders from having a meaningful interactions with

pro-social others and build new identities. The weak ties to conventional society also imply that informal controls which are critical in criminal desistence also become weak. This produces anger, strain, low self-esteem, lack of self-control and a sense of social rejection. Thus most ex-offenders in Ghana tend to seek support from illegitimate sources by developing the criminal capital, leading to re-offending behaviours. The study recommended a shift of emphasis in penal policy reforms from punitive to rehabilitative measures so as to hold governments responsible for financing rehabilitation in Ghana prisons. Further, ex-offenders should be re-engaged in civic activities to enhance their acceptance back into their communities in Ghana.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AG -	Attorney General
ASCP -	Agricultural Settlement Camp Prisons
BCA –	Bureau of Criminal Apprehension
BJS –	Bureau of Justice Statistics
CBO –	Charity-Based Organization
CBT –	Cognitive Behavioural Treatment
CDP –	Contagious Disease Prisons
CJA –	Criminal Justice System
CNDLOS –	Centre for National Distance Learning and Open Schooling
COMS –	Correctional Operations Management System
COPE –	Coalition of Prisons Evangelists
COSPAS –	Correctional Offender Management Profiling for Alternative Sanction
CP –	Central Prisons
CPC-	Criminal Procedure Code
CPP –	Convention People’s Party
CRF –	Community Re-entry Fund
CRSR –	Congressional Research Service Report
CSA –	Community Sentencing Act
DGP –	Director General of Prisons
DICP –	Defence and Interior Committee of Parliament
DOC –	Department of Corrections
DSW –	Department of Social Welfare
EVP –	Educational and Vocational Programme
FBA –	Faith- Based Approach
FE –	Formal Education

FP –	Female Prisons
GBA –	Ghana Bar Association
GBI –	Ghana Borstal Institute
GCPO –	Gold Coast Prisons Ordinance
GCS -	Ghana Correctional Service
GES –	Ghana Education Service
GET fund –	Ghana Education Trust Fund
GIS –	Girls Industrial School
GLM –	Good Life Model
GMA –	Ghana Medical Association
GPS –	Ghana Prisons Service
GPSAR –	Ghana Prisons Service Annual Report
HIPC –	Highly Indebted Poor Country
HISAP –	High Intensive Substance Abuse Programme
ICFI –	Inter-Change Freedom Initiative
ICPS –	International Centre for Prisons Studies
ICT –	Information and Communication Technology
IEU –	Inmate Education Unit
JBIS –	Juniour Boys Industrial School
JHS –	Junior High School
JHSM –	John Howard Society of Manitoba
LP –	Local Prisons
LSI-R –	List of Service Inventory- Revised
MCORP –	Minnesota Comprehensive Offender Re-entry Plan
MDRI –	Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative
MMT –	Methadone Maintenance Treatment
MOI –	Ministry of Interior

MRP –	Missouri Re-entry Process
MRT –	Moral Reconciliation Therapy
MSM –	Multisystem Model
NACRO –	National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offender
NCCHC –	National Commission on Correctional Health Care
ND –	National Database
NFDME –	Non-formal Division of Ministry of Education
NGO –	Non-governmental Organization
NHCD –	New Horizons Chemical Dependency Treatment
NIC –	National Institute of Corrections
NMSP –	Nsawam Medium Security Prison
NORP –	National Offender Reintegration Plan
NOTraPS –	National Offender Transitional Partnership System
NRCD –	National Redemption Council Decree
NVTI –	National Vocational Training Institute
OIC –	Officer In-Charge
OSAP –	Offender Substance Abuse Programme
PCL-R –	Psychopathy Checklist – Revised
PD –	Prisons Department
PIECP –	Prison Industry Employment Certification Programme
POTS –	Prison Officer' Training School
PSC –	Prisons Service Council
PSIDL –	Presidential Special Initiative on Distance Learning
PWR –	Prisons Welfare Reform
R & R –	Reasoning and Rehabilitation
RNR –	Risk, Need and Responsivity
ROA –	Rehabilitation of Offenders Act

RPT –	Relapse Prevention Therapy
SAP –	Substance Abuse Programme
SBIS –	Senior Boys Industrial School
SBM –	Strength-Based Model
SHS –	Senior High School
SOP –	Sex Offender Treatment
SSC –	Strategies for Self-improvement and Change
SVORI –	Serious Violent Offender Re-entry Initiative
T 4 C –	Thinking for Change
TAP –	Transitional Accountability Plan
TC –	Therapeutic Community
THU –	Transitional Housing Unit
TPCI –	Transition from Prison to Community Initiative
UNDP –	United Nations Development Programme
UNSMRTP –	United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners
VPP –	Violent Prevention Programme
WAEC –	West Africa Examination Council
WASSCE –	West Africa Senior Secondary Certificate Examination
WPPL –	World Prisons Population list

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CHAPTER ONE

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Prison sentences in Ghana and the rest of the world are administered in response to the broad objectives of deterrence, incapacitation, retribution, and moral education, forestalling personal vengeance by victims, reformation and rehabilitation (Sechrest, White & Brown, 1979) for individuals convicted of crime in the society. The overarching goal is to provide a safe space for offenders to learn to live subsequently as law-abiding citizens after they are released. Although criminology as a body of knowledge has largely been focused on the process of law making, law breaking and societal reaction to law breakers (Sutherland, 1939), little remains known about the extent to which offenders are rehabilitated and reintegrated and how important stakeholders describe the outcomes of the institutional, social and community support services. This study seeks to fill this gap by using a qualitative research approach to analyse the perspectives of recidivists, correctional service providers, and key family members of the recidivists and prison evangelists who provide support to them to understand the nature of services and its impacts on reintegration in Ghana.

The International Centre for Prison Studies (ICPS) estimates that as at November 2013, over 10.2m people were held in prison custody throughout the world. Owens (2009) finds that prisoners account for 5% of the world population. In spite of prison-based interventions to enable offenders to live crime-free lives, ex-convicts come into contact with the criminal justice system (re-arrest, re-conviction or re-incarceration) again and again, suggesting that the treatments and support systems they receive in and out of prison are either ineffective or non-existent. Travis, Solomon & Waul, (2001) observe that since the establishment of prisons, there have been problems with prisoners moving

to and from prisons. Every year, hundreds of jailed criminals leave the prisons environment and return to prisons once again. The act of offenders coming into contact with the criminal justice system after their release, whether through technical violations or new offences finds expression in the concept of “recidivism” (Duwe, 2010).

Studies have been undertaken with the view to understand the transitional processes of offenders into the society. These studies have shown that static and dynamic risk factors are responsible for the likelihood of an offender to recidivate after release from prison (Andrews & Bonta, 2003; Gendrea, Little & Goggin, 1996). Studies have revealed that most offenders who are about to return home have serious social, psychological and medical challenges (Petersilia, 2003). There is evidence to suggest that only few inmates get the opportunity to participate in rehabilitation programmes and receive social and community support services (Petersilia, 2003, 2005; Travis et al., 2001). Most Ghanaian prisoner returnees do not have education, job experience and lack vocational and technical skills. As a consequence, many inmates who are about to be released typically present with low internal motivation to succeed in post-incarceration life because they lack the needed skills to obtain employment and live quality civil and social lives consequently. This is consistent with recent studies that indicate that “structural factors have the capacity to facilitate or hinder ex-offenders’ successful reintegration into the community, thereby impacting on their chances of re-offending” (Bratton, Morani, Wikoff & Linhorst 2011, p. 348).

Most returning inmates lack the access to stable housing and employment which are core requirements for successful community-reintegration and effective transition from prison to civil life (Chung, Little & Steinberg, 2005). The worrisome indication is that, these returning prisoners are not fully prepared for the life awaiting them in the social world and lack the needed assistance and encouragement to succeed (Petersilia, 2003).

Therefore, when these offenders get released, they often leave with the same criminogenic needs and deficiencies with which they first arrived and leave even in a worse state. As will be expected, most of the released prisoners have a relatively low success rate in terms of re-entry into the community (Langan & Levin, 2002). In Ghana, the recidivism rate is about 24% (Ghana Prisons Service Annual Report, 2010). This data may not represent the objective frequency of recidivism in Ghana because some of the criminal activities of ex-offenders go unrecorded as a result of the absence of modern technologies such as biometric data, fingerprinting, computer control or lie-detector to differentiate first offenders from recidivists. In South Africa, recidivism rate is 47% (South Africa Catholic Bishop Conference, 2012) In United States of America, the average national recidivism rate is estimated at 66.7% (Re-entry Policy Council, 2008). In Finland, the recidivism rate is 30% (Ekunwe & Jones, 2011) and in Japan, recidivism rate is 46.7%¹

Therefore, managing offender re-entry is important not only to the offenders and their families but also to the government and the communities as a whole. This is because public safety makes it necessary for effective crime prevention strategies to be designed to help offenders to be successfully re-integrated into the society. This would also reduce government expenditure on corrections. It also reduces “collateral effects (Travis et al, 2001, p.1) or “collateral consequences” (Borzychi, 2005, p. 6) including loss of accommodation, the loss of jobs, personal belongings, important personalities and social linkages, experiences of mental illness or bad habit and weak family and community ties. Therefore, research which contributes insight that will enable a better understanding of the underlying processes related to offender recidivism in Ghana is crucial at the present. Interrogation of these processes at specific systematic levels including institutional,

¹ www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2014/11/24/editorials/lowering recidivism rate, retrieved on the 4th

social and community is an urgent place to start if effective crime prevention strategies which would mitigate recidivism and ensure successful offender reintegration will be established in Ghana.

1.2 Problem Statement

The rate of recidivism is currently 24% in Ghana. Predictably, this rate will increase with pervasive effects on individuals and society. This problem is yet to receive commensurate governmental and systematic response in Ghana. Ex-offenders who are supposed to lead a good and useful life after their release from prison continue to be at a high risk for criminal behaviours and re-imprisonment following release from prison. Re-offending is a major source of concern in Ghana because it creates public insecurity, increases victimization, increases government expenditure on crime prevention strategies and leads to problems in the families of the offenders. According to the 2010 publication of the Ghana Prison Service Annual Report (GPSAR), about 24% of those incarcerated in 2010 were re-offenders.

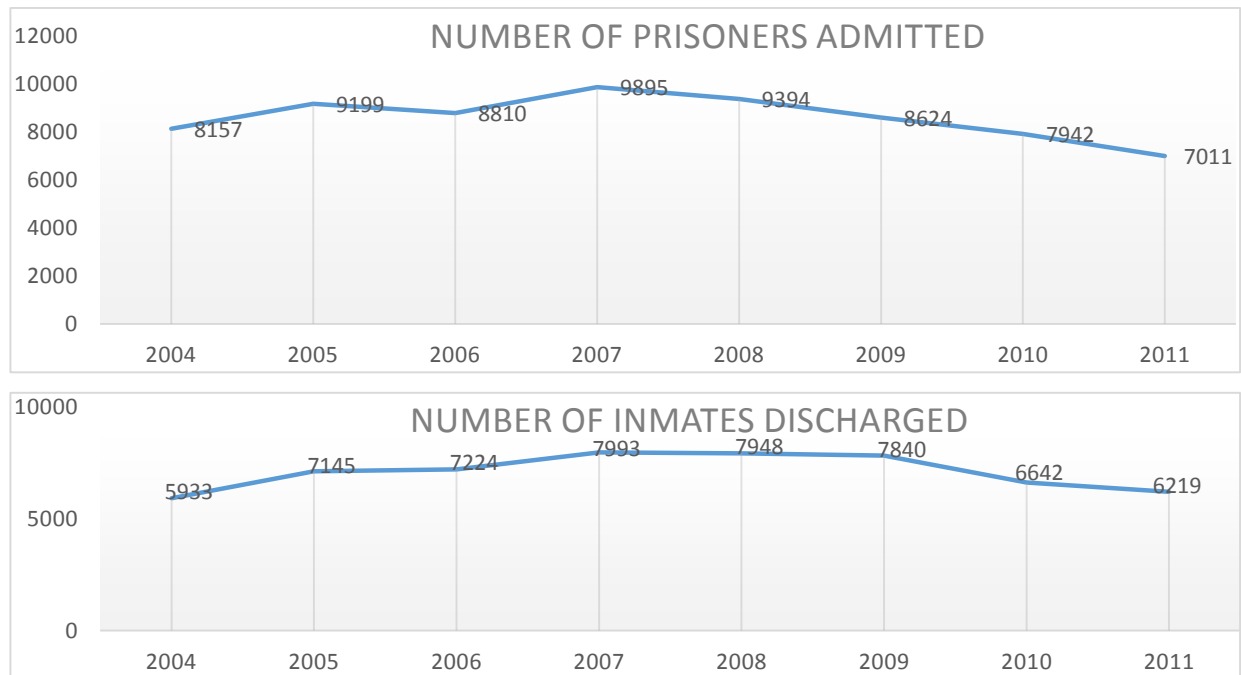
This high rate in re-offending stems from the fact that over the past few decades, prisons in Ghana have experienced a population explosion. The Nsawam Medium Security Prisons (NMSP), for instance, was built to accommodate 717 inmates but from this study, it was revealed that, the current population is approximately 4,000 inmates, a figure which is over five times the size of its original intake.

The ICPS (2014) estimates that Ghana is ranked in the 76th by the World Prison Population List (WPPL) and in the 20th in Africa with a total of 14,416 populations as at January 2014. According to the same publications, Ghana's per capita imprisonment is 55 per 100, 000 population. This high rate of incarceration population actually confirms reports by the GPSAR (2008) that the prison population has increased by 5.9% between

the years 2007-2008. The average daily convict population increased from 9,124 in 2007 to 9,845 in 2008 and 10,355 in 2011. This increment in the prison population is as a result of the increase in the general population which according to the Population and Housing Census (2010) is estimated at about 25m as well as the increase in criminal activities currently going on in the country. The spike in the frequency of prison-bound criminals seems to have influenced penal policy in favour of custody, deterrence and retribution. Tougher stance and cracking down on criminals is evident in the Ghanaian society. Consequently, more suspects are arrested and convicted to serve prison terms for their offenses in Ghana. This criminal population is heterogeneous in that they include felons and misdemeanants, first offenders and recidivists, those who have committed offenses against the person, offenses against property and public order offenses.

However, with the exception of those serving life sentences, the rest of all the prisoners will be released after serving their sentences (see Figure 2). Although incarceration has crime prevention effects, an increase in the prison population and the inevitable release has implications for their reintegration into the communities. Below is an illustration of offenders admitted and discharged in Ghana prisons from 2004 – 2011.

Figure 1: Number of offenders admitted and discharged in Ghana prisons from 2004-2011



Source: Ghana Prisons Service Annual Report, 2004-2011

The observation in figure 1 indicates that in 2004, 2005 and 2011, 73%, 82% and 88% of the offenders who were admitted into various prisons in Ghana were released. In spite of the inevitability of the return of most prisoners into the communities, little or nothing is known about the integrated offender management processes or structures in Ghana. Although there has been few studies about offender rehabilitation and reintegration in Ghana (Abrah; 2014; Acquah, 2000; Amenyendzie,1998; Asare 2009; Asiedu 1999; Hagan, 2013) however, these studies did not address the transitional challenges of offenders in a continuum to ensure continuity of care and a successful reintegration. Therefore, the perspectives about the existence or implementation of correctional sentence plan that stipulates offenders' rehabilitation path in and out of prison in a continuum are yet to be analyzed and documented in Ghana. The role of the community, including the family and social system, faith-based and non-governmental organizations to ensure continuity of care for the offenders remain undocumented. The dynamics of

partnership between the criminal justice system and community-based social service providers which have been known to hold important protective factors need to be better understood.

Consistent with Sykes (1958) observation in his study of “Society of Captives” in the Maximun Security Prison in Prenton in the U.S., it could well be that custody demands in Ghana is continuing to take priority over treatment considerations. In spite of the fact that Article 65 and 66 of the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners 1955 or the prisons’ rule which stipulates that the purpose of training and treatment of convicted persons shall be to establish in them the will to lead a good and useful life upon discharge and to fit them to do so. Treatment shall be such that it will encourage their self-respect and develop their sense of responsibility. Article 71 (3) and (4) further states that sufficient work be provided to keep the prisoners actively employed for a normal working day. The work provided should increase the prisoners’ ability to earn an honest living after release.²

This notwithstanding, Section 1 of the Ghana Prison Service Decree, 1972 requires “custody and welfare of prisoners and whenever practicable undertake reformation and rehabilitation”. The implication is that, inmates who are expected to have access to correctional interventions such as formal education, vocational and technical training and craftsmanship to equip them with employable skills may not be able to do so. Like in Canadian societies where rehabilitation is observed as the central goal of federal prisoners (Griffiths, 2007), offenders should be entitled to professional counseling to mitigate specific risk factors such as substance abuse, anger, violence, sexual offences to

²

https://www.unodc.org/pdf/criminal_justice/UN_Standard_Minimum_Rules_for_the_Treatment_of_Prisoners.pdf

reduce the criminogenic needs, ensure attitudinal transformation and the motivation of offenders to succeed. Incidentally, data from few existing research (Amenyendzie, 1998; Asare, 2009; Hagan, 2013) and anecdotal from individuals who have come into contact with offenders or ex-offenders seem to indicate that these support services are typically absent or ineffective in Ghana's corrections. Post-release social and community support services such as the assistance from family members, faith and charity-based organizations to ensure through care is either inadequate or non-existent (Asiedu, 1999). Thus the issue of ex-offenders relapse into further criminal offences suggests that some deficiencies or the multiple criminogenic needs are not addressed in a holistic manner. This is mirrored by the current 24% post-incarceration recidivism (measured by the re-incarceration rate) in Ghana (Ghana Prisons Service Annual Report, 2010). This figure does not include re-arrest and re-incarceration data from the police and the courts. Therefore, the figure does not represent the true picture of re-offending persons in Ghana because some of the re-offenders cannot be identified. As a result, second time offenders go to different prisons as first time offenders. Thus some re-offending cases in Ghana go into the dark figures. In United States of America, the average national recidivism rate is estimated at 66.7% (Re-entry Policy Council, 2008). In Finland, the recidivism rate is 30% (Ekunwe & Jones, 2011). In England, recidivism rate is 55% (Abotchie, 2008). In South Africa, recidivism rate is 47% (South Africa Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2012)

Although the theory of differential social support and coercion talked about social-psychological processes and relationships that lead to offending behaviours, however, it fails to identify specifically the social and psychological elements that bring about this phenomenon. This study fills this gap by identifying these processes and relationships leading the criminal behavior. The explanation is that, most Ghanaians have negative or stereotypical perceptions on prisoners. This world view has influenced punitive penal

policy in the country. As a result, most governments in Ghana do not adequately fund rehabilitation programmes while post-release social and community support services are virtually absent or insufficient. These situations or circumstances increases the anger and frustration of ex-offenders, weakens and alienates social bonds and enhances the reliance on the illegitimate opportunity structure to be able to satisfy their expressive and instrumental needs leading to re-offending behaviours.

Overall, most ex-offenders in Ghana are faced with low education and low employment prospects, accommodation problems, physical and mental challenges, substance abuse problems coupled with the stigma of prison record and dysfunctional family relations and lack of community support which have negative psychological implications on them. They remain at a high risk for the inability to reintegrate into the society after release.

1.3 Research Questions

This study is guided by the following research questions:

- i. What are the predominant formal institutional, social and community support services available to offenders in Ghana?
- ii. To what extent do offenders in Ghana have adequate access to these support systems?
- iii. From the perspectives of the re-offenders, their family members and correctional service providers and prison evangelists, how do these institutional, social and community support services impact on:
 - a. Offenders' attitudes?
 - b. Offenders' reintegration?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to understand the transitional challenges of offenders in Ghana. The specific objectives of the study include the following:

- i. To identify and analyse the predominant formal institutional, social and community support services available to offenders in Nawam Medium Security Prison in Ghana.
- ii. To examine the adequacy and effectiveness of these support services from the perspectives of the offenders, their family members, correctional service providers and prison evangelists.
- iii. To ascertain the impacts of these support services on the attitudes and reintegration of the offenders in Ghana.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The issue of ex-offenders committing further criminal offences and returning to prison suggests that the treatment and social support they receive are insufficient. This study will complement the efforts of criminological theories by suggesting proper mechanisms of offender reintegration.

In addition, despite the importance of the research based on the through care system of offender management (Borzychi, 2005) which provides transitional services to offenders and ensure their re-integration as evident in North America (Duwe, 2012; MCORP, 2010; Missouri Re-entry Project, 2002), little is known about social reintegration in Ghana's correctional system.

While there are institutions like parliament, the judiciary, Ghana Prisons Service, the Prison Service Council, the police, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare, District Assemblies and faith-based organizations, there should be

research whose findings would inform policy makers, correctional managers and government departments on crime statistics and crime prevention strategies in Ghana. Considering the fact that institutional interventions ensure attitudinal changes, provide the needed human capital by transforming offenders to productive beings and motivate them to succeed while social and community support systems also provides the bonding and bridging social capital through informal social control and increase the networks of ex-offenders, it remains an assumption that knowledge gained from empirical studies abroad regarding “what works” in corrections can be extrapolated into Ghana’s correctional system to promote social re-integration. It is therefore imperative that the transitional process be managed so that offenders, their family members and the community benefit in terms of public safety, a reduction in victimization and high public expenditure on corrections.

As an academic study, it is generally expected that the findings will lead to the discovery of something new, confirm existing theories or refute them. The insights obtained from this study will contribute to the development of a theoretical framework for the explanation of re-offending and policy formulation on crime prevention strategies in Ghana. Such a framework will enhance the ability of social sciences to provide scientific approaches to the problem of recidivism not only in Ghana but also in other parts of the world. The study would also contribute to the recidivism literature based on its findings from the perspective of the recidivists, their family members, prison evangelists and correctional service providers through the use of a qualitative approach. Finally, further research interests will be generated from the findings for further studies in the area of offender rehabilitation and reintegration.

1.6 The Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study focused on the formal institutional, social and community support services and their impact on the attitudes and reintegration of offenders in Ghana. It is focused on the transitions of adult offenders during and after release from prison. This study will not cover the pre criminal life history of the offenders.

1.7 Definition of Key Concepts

Every scientific study requires the definition of concepts to help in the comprehension of its findings. The concepts used in this study are derived from the problem and research question. These concepts are (i) social reintegration and (ii) recidivism.

1.7.1 Social Reintegration of Offenders

The concept of social reintegration of offenders can be used interchangeably to imply offender reentry. In the United States of America for instance, 're-entry' is the discourse used to describe the transition from prison to the community whereas 'resettlement' is preferred in the U.K. (Moore, 2011). According to Maruna and LeBel (2002), re-entry has less policy implications than resettlement because re-entry presumes the absence of social support which is implicit in words like care or settle (cited in Moore, 2011).

According to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, (2006), the concept can be defined from two main perspectives. On one hand, it refers to the support and opportunities given to offenders in the course of their reentry into the society to enable them lead law-abiding lives. It includes pre and post release interventions. On the other hand, social reintegration also refers to community-based sanctions aimed at diverting a convicted person from being imprisoned including restorative justice and other treatment options.

Travis et al, (2001, p. 1) defined offender re-entry as “the process of leaving prison and returning to society.” Petersilia (2003, p. 3) defined offender re-entry or an inmate’s transition into the society as “all activities and programmes conducted to prepare convicts to return safely to the community and live as law-abiding citizens”. Social reintegration of offenders is a process. It begins with prison-based interventions and continues after the release of the offender into the community to ensure post-release adjustment (Griffiths, 2007). “Social reintegration of offenders is the coming back of prisoners into the community to continue normal life” (Ajala & Oguntuase, 2011, p. 187). Social re-integration in the context of this study can be defined as the formal institutional, social and community support systems given to offenders to ensure that they lead conforming lives after release whether the release is designed as re-entry or settlement. It can be measured by the reformation, rehabilitation, gradual release with supervision as well as post-release support from the family and faith or charity-based organizations.

1.7.2 Recidivism

Recidivism is an act of repeating an undesirable act after that individual has been negatively sanctioned for that behavior or treated/trained to avoid that behavior. However, like many other concepts in the social sciences, recidivism faces definitional problems. This is because the conceptual definition is simple but the operational definition is complex. What one includes in the definition of recidivism has a substantial impact on the rate of recidivism reported (CRS Report, 2007). This comes as a result of the fact that the concept can be measured using re-arrest, reconviction, re-incarceration or technical violation/revocation data. Thus estimating the recidivism rate is influenced by how re-offending is measured. Besides, recidivism may be measured at different

points of a known offender's contacts with the criminal justice system (Lievore, 2004). Some criminologists argue that any new contact with the criminal justice system, no matter how minor the case may be should be considered recidivism on the part of an ex-offender.

According to Maltz (2001, p.1) recidivism can be defined as “the reversion of an individual to criminal behavior after he or she has been convicted of a prior offence, sentenced and presumably corrected”. Thus recidivism is a relapse into criminal behavior after being released from custody. Studies conducted by Minnesota Comprehensive Offender Re-entry Plan MCORP (2010) measured recidivism in relation to re-arrest, reconviction and re-incarceration with a new offence or a re-incarceration following technical violation or revocation of conditional release.

These definitions of recidivism are broad because they include technical violations of parole or probation (such as failing a drug test or not showing up for a meeting) within the general recidivism statistics. Thus technical violations are really an extension of an offender's original prison term and not a newly committed crime. The other shortcoming as a measure of recidivism is that re-arrest statistics also include individuals who are found innocent of the charges. As a legal principle, a suspect should not be assumed guilty unless he/she has been convicted by a court of competent jurisdiction.

Therefore, for the purpose of this study, recidivism should be more narrowly defined as a relapse into criminal behavior leading to re-arrest, reconviction and re-incarceration. The focus on re-incarceration with a new prison sentence is a more accurate measure of recidivism. This is because unlike re-arrest, reconviction requires a plea by a defendant, reduces the likelihood of charging a wrong person and the means to ensure that the ex-offender has committed a new offence.

1.8 Organisation of the Study

The first chapter is devoted to the introduction, the problem statement, and the objectives of the study. The second chapter explains references on the relevant literature from which a theoretical framework is derived. The third chapter provides a review of the history of global incarceration and the criminal justice system in Ghana. It further describes the trend of recidivism in Ghana. The objective is to ascertain whether re-offending in Ghana is increasing or decreasing, which type of offence is normally committed by ex-offenders and what can be done to reduce it. The fourth chapter presents the research methodology with emphasis on qualitative data collection. The fifth chapter discusses the data analysis beginning with some major characteristics of recidivists in Ghana, followed by the analysis of the predominant formal institutional support system. The sixth chapter elaborates on the social and community support services available in Ghana. It further discusses the implications of the inadequate formal institutional, social and community support on the attitudes and reintegration of offenders in Ghana. The seventh chapter is devoted to the discussion and interpretation of findings on the formal institutional, social and community and their implications on the attitude of the offenders to literature. Finally, chapter eight deals with the summary, conclusions, policy implications and contributions to knowledge and practice as well as implications for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at the risk and protective factors associated with the propensity of offending. It also examines the theoretical framework within which this study can be explained. Factors relating to individual characteristics, family, peers, neighbourhood, health and mental conditions as well as the community and situational influences that affect the probability of offending were routed through earlier theories like strain, social learning, labelling and social control to explain the complex phenomenon of re-offending in Ghana. The static risk factor include the criminal record and the dynamic risk factors such as unemployment, lack of accommodation, lack of family ties or dysfunctional family relations, mental illness, substance abuse, pro-criminal associates and characterological defects were examined. Moreover, protective factors include employment, family ties, accommodation and education were also considered. Besides, prison-based treatment interventions such as assessment and classification, case management, types of social reintegration, correctional education, debates on correctional programmes, gradual release and supervision and aftercare system were also examined as formal institutional interventions aimed at altering the attitudes of offenders and assist in their reintegration. This was followed by community-based interventions that take into consideration the broader social context of the offenders to ensure their successful social reintegration.

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

2.2 The Risk Factors of Offending

Studies have shown that the majority of ex-offenders are unable to overcome the transitional problems (Lipsey, 1999). This is because, after serving time in prison, most offenders coming home have serious social, mental and psychological challenges (Petersilia, 2003). Some of these challenges according to Visher, Winterfield & Coggeshall, (2005) are due to (a) personal factors such as low self-esteem, low motivation, skills deficit, lack of job training, mental illness and substance abuse and (b) social factors including lack of accommodation, erratic family support and poor employment record (cited in Ajala & Oguntuase, 2011). As a consequence of these transitional challenges, released prisoners have a relatively low success rate in terms of reintegration into the community. Analyzing data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), a study regarding offenders released from prison in 1994 in the US, Langan & Levin (2002) found that about 67.5% of ex-offenders had been rearrested, 46.9% reconvicted and 25.4% re-incarcerated within three years after their release either for new offences or technical violation.

Recidivism studies typically focus on identifying the predisposing factors (Travis & Visher, 2003). According to Maltz (2001), recidivism is a function of the interconnectedness of failures at micro and macro levels. The micro level of failures deals with the individual and it includes the following:

- i. Failure of the individual to live up to social expectations
- ii. Failure of the individual to stay out of trouble
- iii. Failure of the individual to escape arrest and conviction
- iv. Failure of an inmate to take advantage of correctional programmes such as reformation and rehabilitation.

While the macro level of failure is the inability of society to cater for the needs of that person. Although prisoners are made up of people who have committed different types of offenses, a variety of criminogenic needs are always present among this population. These represent the risk factors which predispose them to re-offend. Criminological research has established that the risk factors are both static and dynamic in nature and include criminal records, pro-criminal attitudes, pro-criminal associations, poor self-control, lack of problem-solving skills, substance abuse, lack of education, unemployment, homelessness and lack of family ties or dysfunctional family relations. Although some of these variables interrelate, the general acceptance of these static and dynamic risk factors as criminogenic is based on a body of research (Andrews, Bonta & Hoge, 1990; Gendreau & Goggin, 1996). These criminogenic needs when left unattended to can have a significant impact on re-offending (Gendreau, 1996; Inciardi, Martin & Butson, 2004).

The static factor as the name implies do not change and are usually used to determine the custody level of the offenders. It includes criminal records (age at first conviction, number and severity of prior convictions). The dynamic risk factors are key issues in understanding and identifying those characteristics and situations of the offender which when effectively treated can result in a reduction in criminal behaviour (Chamberlain, 2012). They include unemployment, educational deficiencies, mental illness, substance abuse, antisocial personality (characterological defects/impulsivity), lack of support structures or problematic circumstances at home such as marital problems/dysfunctional family relations, homelessness, pro-criminal associate and personal distress (anxiety and depression) have been identified as the predisposing factors of recidivism (Andrews & Bonta, 2003; Chamberlain, 2012; Gendreau, Little & Goggin, 1996). I have no doubt that

the above mentioned factors are well known predisposing factors of global recidivism. The explanation can be seen below.

2.3.1 Criminal Record and Recidivism

Prior prison records significantly differentiate ex-offenders from the general population. An offender's past criminal record is often used to predict the probability of recidivating in all the measures of recidivism from re-arrest, reconviction and re-incarceration (Blumstein, Cohen, Roth, & Visher, 1986). Prior criminal records help in committing new offenses in the future. Petersilia (2003) reveals that 54% of offenders returning home were on conditional release when they were arrested for their recent crime.

Goffman (1963) observes that stigmatized persons are those who do not have full social acceptance because their identities have spoiled. They include those with blemish character such as prisoners, drug addicts, physically deformed persons and so on. According to Uggen, Manza and Thomson (2006), having the stigma of prison record constitutes a "unique status of dishonour" (p. 302). Uggen, Manza and Behens, (2004) maintain that once a person receives the label "ex-convict", such a person faces a life-long stigma even after the offender has been punished. As the labelling theory rightly postulates, the application of formal and informal labels by the criminal justice system bring about the continuation of criminal behaviour.

In his work on "Looking Glass Self", Cooley (1902) reveals that the self-concept is a reflection of others' attitudes towards a person concerned. If others interact with a person as if he/she exhibits particular characteristics, then a self-fulfilling prophecy is established. Thus if other people think that we are this type of person (smart, intelligent, good, humble or criminal), then we act on that accordingly. Therefore, our self-concept and actions are shaped by the label. The application of the tag on individuals as "criminals" or "bad" persons are meant to prevent crime but ironically, the unanticipated

consequence of the label is the persistence in offending. Therefore, the more a person is labelled negatively, the greater the predisposition to commit further crime (Akers, 1997). It is important to note that these labels constitute what Braithwaite (1989) called disintegrative shame because they aimed at stigmatizing and denouncing the actor as unworthy member of the society. This stigma of having been incarcerated prevents inmates from multiples resources and opportunities they may need to prevent re-offending (Malott & Fromader, 2010). The background checks constitute the “gate keeping” mechanism used by employers to sort out applicants with or without criminal records. According to Petersilia (2003), employment opportunities that are legally restricted to ex-offenders in America include child care, education, security, nursing and home health care. She adds that in a State like California, parolees are legally barred from certain professions like law, real estate, medicine, nursing, physical therapy and education. Even when employers are willing to employ ex-offenders, they are restricted from certain positions of responsibility. Petersilia (2003) added that with regard to formal employment, ex-offenders are excluded because they lack the required documents and assistance in identification like driver’s licenses.

In the study of “Mass Incarceration and Economic Inequality”, Western (2007) reveals that mass incarceration especially during the last decades of the twentieth century has influenced the institutionalization of poverty and inequality among the minority in America. To begin with, incarceration brings about economic inequality because employers are unwilling to hire the services of ex-offenders. Secondly, incarceration reduces the life chances of ex-offenders. Thus the stigma of a prison record reduces human capital and puts ex-offenders out of the labour force, weakens the social network to legitimate employment opportunities and also reduce wages. “Not only does incarceration reduces pay and employment, it also limits the kind of jobs that are

available to formerly incarcerated workers. Career jobs requiring a high level of trust, skills and credentials or well-placed social connections are largely out of reach for those with prison records”(Western, 2007, p. 510). Thus incarceration places ex-prisoners in the secondary labour market where limited prospects for social mobility exist.

All these restrictions as a result of the status of “ex-offender” present collateral consequences (Borzycki, 2005; Travis et al., 2001) and limit ex-offenders from participating in conventional activities of society. Individuals with official criminal records often encounter barriers in obtaining employment, housing, certificates, student loans as well as adopting children or voting during elections (Kurlychek, Brame & Bushway, 2006). For further reading see (Holzer, 2006, 1996; Pager, 2003; Uggen & Manza, 2002). These civil restrictions represent invisible punishment (Travis et al, 2001) because they go beyond the sanctions imposed by the criminal justice system although they constitute a means of protecting the public from further harm (Buckler & Travis, 2003). Besides, invisible punishment is a means of social exclusion and offers a permanent status of offenders (Travis et al., 2001).

The stigma of a prison record results in an invisible inequality due to the high rates of unemployment among former prisoners and restrictions from certain types of employment (Western, 2007) in spite of the fact that employment is a crucial variable in criminal desistance (Bushway & Reuter, 2002; Sampson & Laub, 2003, 1993). The issue is that contact with the criminal justice system at a point in time poses the risk of a long-term criminal career but the problem lies in how to distinguish between temporary and persistent offenders (Kurlychek et al., 2006). Studies examining the effects of time since arrest on the risk of future offending have found that persons with prior contact with the criminal justice system have a high probability of re-offending. The re-offending rate is high in the initial period after contact with the criminal justice system, but decreases

thereafter. Raskin (1987) finds that the hazard rate of re-offending decreases steadily with time since the last event. For instance the rate was high for a new arrest during the first six months following a prior arrest and decreases thereafter. He concludes, that the longer a person survives without committing a new offense, the greater the chance of criminal desistance. In a study conducted by Schmidt and Witte (1988) in a North Carolina prison, it was found that recidivism rate was high in the ten months after the offenders had returned to the community but the rate reduced to about half when those returnees had spent twenty months in the community.

The question then is does this consistent decrease in the risk of re-offending imply that the risk ever becomes smaller so as to be indistinguishable from the risk of a person with no prior criminal record? Kurlychek et al. (2006) finds that a person with prior police contact does not at any time in a given follow-up period become completely indistinguishable from those without prior contact with regard to the risk of offending. They gave the reasons why those who offended in the distance past are less likely to recidivate than those who have offended in the recent past. They believe that more a person lives crime-free life, the greater that person sees the importance of criminal desistance. Moreover, offenders with high criminogenic needs recidivate quicker than those who try to avoid new offenses. In spite of this, it is an open secret that persons with criminal record find it difficult to secure employment

2.3.2 Unemployment and Recidivism

Closely related to the stigma of a prison record is unemployment. Research shows that unemployment has a significant impact on offending and that a reduction in unemployment will be accompanied by a corresponding reduction in crime. Economists believe that unemployment is associated with crime because the lack of opportunity to legitimate work increases the opportunity costs of illegitimate work (Becker, 1968). Thus

the loss of income resulting from unemployment increases the opportunity cost of engaging in crime.

Sociocultural theorists believe that unemployment is associated with crime because it makes individuals powerless, non-conformists, poor and low social class. Merton (1938) found that crime is the result of frustration and anger (strain) that produces anomic conditions among those who have been blocked from a legitimate opportunity structure. This situation makes individuals to adapt to criminal behaviours to achieve the cultural goals. According to Kleck and Chiricos (as cited in Siegel, 1995), unemployment may affect crime rates in terms of the type of offence, time period, gender and age. Unemployment increases crime because it reduces the opportunity to live a conforming life and be attached to pro-social others. More importantly, unemployment is a consistent factor in recidivism and having a criminal record limits employment opportunities and decreases income (Holzer, 1996).

Research shows that most offenders return to the disadvantaged neighborhoods (Petersilia, 2005; Lynch & Sabol 2001; Travis et al, 2001). Neighbourhoods with high unemployment rates have high crime rates (Chiricos, 1987; Shaw & McKay, 1969). Studies have shown that offenders coming home face transitional challenges including lack of access to housing, education or employment conditions to support a stable transition (Chung, Little, & Steinberg, 2005).

Petersilia, (2003) finds that immediately after release, ex-offenders face a lot of challenges such as finding accommodation, employment and meeting other needs. This problem of securing employment originates from factors such as low self-esteem, low motivation, skills deficit, lack of training, mental illness, and substance abuse; a lack of stable accommodation; absence of family support and a poor employment record (Petersilia, 2003; Graffam, Shinkfield, Lavelle & McPherson, 2004). In addition,

because the criminal record is a major barrier, released offenders often find it difficult to secure steady employment and suitable housing (Bushway & Reuter, 2002; Pager, 2003; Pager, Western & Sugie, 2009; Uggen, 2000). Berg and Huebner (2011) find that most ex-offenders lack a competitive resumé, employment credentials, have low skills and the stigma of prison record. All these serve as employment barrier.

Examining the impact of offender status on individuals entering the job market, Pager (2003) finds that whites without criminal history receive twice as many employer callbacks than whites with criminal history. Analyzing how crime affects the demand and supply of labour, Bushway & Reuter, (2002) observe that a criminal history affects the employability of individuals and that crime prone area become unattractive for investment. This is because employers fear that if ex-offenders are employed, both crime against property and persons will go up. However, the unavailability of jobs makes crime attractive to people who could otherwise be working.

In a survey of 3,000 companies, Holzer, Raphael and Stoll (2002) find that employers are more reluctant to hire ex-offenders than other groups of persons such as welfare beneficiaries, those without experience and those with low educational background. The reasons for not hiring ex-offenders include legal restrictions, concerns about their integrity and work ethics, lack of trust in ex-offenders and the fear of being accused in case of a relapse into criminal behaviour while working. Recent studies by Berg & Huebner (2011) also confirms that most employers are unwilling to employ ex-offenders. Unemployment brings about apathy and hopelessness among ex-offenders leading to substance abuse, antisocial associations and domestic violence. Sampson & Wilson (1995) observe that joblessness and poverty bring about family disruptions particularly among black males in the U.S. and this leads to violent crime. Joblessness brings about frustration and anger, leading to violent behaviour (Agnew 1992).

However, in order to reformulate the theory of unemployment and crime, Land, Cantor & Russell (1995) observe that unemployment has both positive and negative effects on crime. This is because unemployment increases criminal motivations and at the same time reduces criminal opportunities. In a study that tested the effect of race and previous incarceration on employer responses to female applicants, Galgano (2009) finds that a criminal history is not as universally stigmatizing for women though the results are specific to time and place. Thus women with criminal history face less discrimination from potential employers than men.

Although changes in unemployment may not necessarily lead to crime in the urban communities, long term unemployment leads to a loss of income and job-skills and can result in criminal behaviour (Chamberlain, 2011, p. 187). I must admit, however, that sometime the reason why most ex-offenders don't get employment is due to lack of skills.

2.3.3 Educational Deficiencies and Recidivism

Studies by Petersilia (2003; Travis et al., 2001) reveal that most returning offenders are less educated than the general population. Recidivism as a social problem cannot be reduced without prison-based interventions to reduce the criminogenic needs of offenders. Yet research shows that only a few inmates get the opportunity to participate in rehabilitation programmes with the rest leaving the prison environment without any form of treatment and training.

Most inmates coming home do not have the job skills and experience and are less likely to be given the needed social support (Lynch & Sabol, 2001; Petersilia, 2003; Social Exclusion Unit, 2002; Travis et al, 2001). As a result, returning prisoners are less

prepared for post-release life and will be given less assistance and encouragement to succeed (Petersilia, 2003).

Sometime, some of the inmates do not feel responsible or have no motivation to participate in these programmes because of the assignment of dull work, obsolete tools and the absence of programmes that ensures post-release employment to ex-offenders (Griffiths, 2012). This lack of institutional training has negative implications on parole because inmates may not have the required skills and training needed to be considered by the parole board for this conditional release (Griffiths, 2007). Therefore, most inmates are released into the community without supervision and aftercare. In addition to that, many of them have a history of substance abuse and are more likely to suffer from mental health problems, lack of family support and pro-social associates (Petersilia, 2003; Travis et al, 2001).. Therefore, when these offenders get released from prison, they often leave with the same criminogenic needs and deficiencies with which they arrived. However, it should be clear that one of the reasons why some offenders are unable to participate in rehabilitation is due to mental illness.

2.3.4 Mental Illness and Recidivism

The view that criminal behaviour is a function of mental illness owes its explanation from the psychiatric theories. Beginning from the 19th century, these theories stress that mental illness is the main cause of crime and they have gained full acceptance in psychiatric theories. In his work on “Addressing Inmates’ Mental Health Problems” Adams (1985) outline the “medical model” of crime which views crime as “disease of the mind” that must be cured (Yablonsky, 1990, p. 133). Thus viewed from a social psychological perspective, socio-cultural forces influence a personality and lead to criminal behaviour.

A psychological factor such as emotional pathology or emotional disorder is associated with crime. Emotional disturbance affects crime in three ways. In the first place, criminal behaviour is a manifestation of emotional disturbance. Secondly, emotional disturbance is likely to increase when a person is convicted of criminal behaviour. Finally, incarceration experiences can cause emotional disorder. Moreover, “normal” criminals can be placed in a carceral facility where the stressful conditions produce personality problems which are not related to their former criminal behaviour (Yablonsky, 1990, p.134). Inmate populations and released inmates are less healthy, both physically and mentally than the general population. James and Blaze (2006) report that the publication by the BJS on Medical Problems of Inmates indicates that more than half of prison and jail inmates have mental health problems. This problem arises during the period of incarceration because of the pain of imprisonment.

Although physiological theories of crime claim that some offenders are born with traits that promote criminal behaviour, however, for other criminological theories, living a dangerous lifestyle, lack of access to health care and having problems with substance abuse cause crime. Petersilia (2003) observes that by all indicators, prisoners and ex-prisoners are less healthy compared to the general population. She adds that substance abuse and mental illness go hand-in-hand, especially among carceral population like prison. Haney (2002), observes that penal discipline poses disastrous consequences to inmates. These negative effects include boredom and sensory deprivation which cause brain activities to slow down, lack of self-control, loss of self-reliance and dysfunctional social relations after release. Thus long-term incarceration, especially in solitary confinement or supermax conditions without recreational activities, leads to depression, stress and cause that part of the brain used in memory and decision-making (hippocampus) to shrink. The National Commission on Correctional Health Care

NCCHC (2002) in the US established that there is the prevalence of psychiatric disorders in prison facilities. These mental illnesses include schizophrenia, major depression, anxiety disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder and dysthymia.

As suggested by differential social support and coercion theory, consistent coercion leads to high propensity for mental health problems. The pains of imprisonment negatively affect both the physical and the psychological state of offenders and these further affect their transition into the community. Thus penal harm may result in emotional or personal distortions, including neurosis and psychosis which in turn leads to the vulnerability of offenders to commit criminal behaviour. For instance anxiety is a direct evidence of neurosis and it involves a sense of fear and personal distress. In some severe cases according to Yablonsky (1990, p.142), “a neurotic person may appear to be in a state of panic”. In some cases, anxiety may be expressed indirectly in exhaustion, inexplicable fear of objects or specific situations and offenses such as kleptomania, pyromania and shoplifting. Even some burglars exhibit neurotic tendencies in their criminal operations.³ On the other hand, psychosis is a severe form of emotional or personality disorder. Psychotics cannot connect their thinking to reality. Psychiatrists believe that psychosis results from brain damage, hereditary malfunctions or chemical imbalance in the person’s system. Schizophrenia is an example of this mental illness. People who are called psychopaths may be subjected to serious deprivations of liberty (Edens & Petria, 2006) and denied treatment (D’Silva, Duggen & McCarthy, 2004) partly because they may be seen as more dangerous compared to other offenders.

³ Eric was a neurotic criminal whose mental illness reflected in the method he used in committing criminal activities. He was a house burglar and as at the time he was arrested, he had committed over 60 burglaries in three months. He looked for houses whose owners were on holidays and broke into their houses. As he entered the houses, he made himself comfortable. He would cook for himself, read newspapers and took a brief sleep. After the sleep, he robbed the houses of certain valuables and defecated on the bed before he left.

Research has shown that there is a relationship between psychopathic traits and criminal recidivism (Edens, Campbell & Weir, 2007; Gendreau, Goggin & Smith, 2002; Hemphil, Hare & Wong, 1998) although there is also a relationship between these traits and crime among the general population. However, there is a controversy regarding the association between psychopathy and recidivism. Some studies have revealed that psychopathy in females have not been significant as in males (Campbell, 2003; Odgers, Repucci & Moretti, 2005). Another issue which needs to be mentioned as far as psychopathy and recidivism is concerned is the measure of the risk factors. In a study by Gendreau, Little & Goggin (1996), which sought to compare the predictive validity of the risk measures and personality factors, it was found that the Level of Service Inventory Revised (LSI-R) was superior to the Psychopathy Checklist-Revised (PCL-R). However, a study by Gendreau, Goggin & Smith, (2002) found that PCL-R was not an unparalleled measure of risk and that its predictive validity is comparable to other instruments that do not have the stigma of psychopath.

A study by Edens, Campbell and Weir (2007) find that psychopathy is significantly associated with general and violent recidivism. This finding is consistent with the findings of (Gendreau, Goggin & Smith, 2002; Hemphil, Hare and Wong, 1998). In conclusion, most people get mental illness as a result of substance abuse such as drugs and alcohol

2.3.5 Substance Abuse and Recidivism

The drug-crime relationship encompasses a range of offenses connected with the use, transportation, purchase, and sale of illegal drugs. Illicit drugs affect the users and create opportunity for producers and dealers. It is an undisputed fact that substance abuse problems are associated with the prevalence of offending.

Monaham (1996) observes that those who are mentally ill and abuse drugs have a higher probability of committing violent and serious crimes. According to Goldstein (1985), drug may affect crime in three different ways. In the first place, an individual engages in crime as a result of psychopharmacological effects of drugs. Thus committing crime under the influence of drugs. Secondly, drug users may obtain money illegally to buy drugs and finally, individuals may become aggressive in connection with the use and distribution of drugs.

In a study conducted by Goldstein et al., (1986) describes the behaviour of heroin users with reference to the purchase and sale of drugs, income from criminal and non-criminal sources and the expenditure on legal and illegal purposes. The findings of this research reveal a criminal lifestyle of these drug users through hustling to get money for drugs, of violence, victimization and poverty. More importantly, there are well established links between drug use or misuse and re-offending with particular reference to the use of opiates and acquisitive offending. The link between drug use and re-offending is more pronounced for “poly-drug use” and class A drugs such as cocaine and crack (Ministry of Justice Analytical Series in UK, 2013).

In the study by Ministry of Justice Analytical Series in UK, called “Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction Survey”, (2013), it was revealed that 64% had used drugs four weeks before incarceration. Specifically, 30% used heroin, 28% used crack cocaine and almost half of the prisoners had used cannabis. Most of them said they needed help with the drug problem. Drug use before custody was responsible for re-offending after release from prison. About 71% of the prisoners reported having used drug categorized as class A, B or C in four weeks before their reconviction as compared to 30% who did not use drugs in one year after release. Besides, 22% of the re-offenders reported having drunk daily in four weeks before their reconviction.

Harper and Chitty (2004) suggest that severely addicted persons are often prolific offenders and therefore policy-makers should focus on drug-related rather than alcohol-related offending. Burrows, Clark, Davidson, Tarling & Webb (2001) observe that:

Drug dependent offenders are caught in a vicious circle. Unless the treatment they receive in prison for their addiction is maintained on their return to the community, the chances are that they will relapse and begin offending again to support their drug use. Failure to access appropriate support services in the community can result in offenders returning to prison time and time again, as the cycle of offending is perpetuated (p.1).

A study by Dowden & Brown, (2002) reveals that drug and alcohol dependency and misuse are associated with criminal recidivism. The relationship between substance abuse and crime is known as “drug-defined offenses” (those having to do with the violation of drug laws and illicit drugs) or “drug-related offenses” (those offenses committed while under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol). Persons with mental illness and substance abuse problems and re-entering the communities face the challenge of “triple stigma” (Hartwell, 2004, p. 84-85). I strongly agree with the views of the above scholars that the use and misuse of illicit drugs correlate positively with re-offending.

2.3.6 Anti-social Personality and Recidivism

There is a relationship between an anti-social personality or anti-social traits and violent or sexual recidivism. For instance research shows that sexual recidivism is a function of deviant sexual interest and antisocial orientation/lifestyle instability (Hanson & Bussiere, 1998). Deviant sexual interests refer to enduring attractions, to illegal sexual acts such as rape and defilement. Hanson and Morton-Bourgon (2005) find that anti-social orientation is a major predictor of violent, non-sexual and general recidivism. Anti-social orientation refers to anti-social traits including impulsivity, characterological defects and substance abuse. Research shows that certain factors are responsible for sexual offending. These include adverse family environments, lack of nurturance and guidance. These factors

lead to mistrust, hostility and insecure attachments which further lead to social rejection, loneliness, anti-social associates and deviant behaviour (Malamuth, 2003). In addition to sexual interest and anti-social orientation, Beech, Fisher & Thornton, (2003) report that there are extra characteristics of persistent sexual offenders namely negative family background, problems of forming affectionate bonds with friends and lovers and attitudes tolerant of sexual assault.

2.3.7 Dysfunctional Family Relations and Recidivism

Using differential support and coercion as a framework, Colvin, Cullen and Vander Ven (2002) explain that social support prevents crime but coercion is the main causal explanation of criminal behaviour. For Colvin (2000) erratic social support or the lack of these support systems means that individuals do not receive support from significant others and are left to provide for their basic needs by themselves. Such erratic social support produces anger and low self-esteem making the individual manipulating potential sources of support. This makes the individual's social bond not based on trust or moral commitment to conventional society but based on calculated self-interest.

Adopting the differential opportunity structure as advanced by (Cloward & Ohlin 1960; Cullen, 1994) Cullen observes that differential sources of social support are the main explanation of criminal behaviour. He notes that a social support system may originate from both legitimate and illegitimate sources. Support from legitimate sources such as the family leads to conformity while illegitimate sources of support bring about criminal behaviour.

This is because "social support appeals to people's sense of what is right and wrong in society" (Martinez & Abrams, 2013, p. 171). Juvenile delinquency stems from a lack of social support from the family (Hirschi, 1969). This is because if an individual is denied support from legitimate sources, that individual may find support from illegitimate

sources. Consequently, illegitimate sources of support allow for the development of “criminal capital” through the development of skills, knowledge, networks, role models and status that promote criminal behaviour (Hagan & McCarthy, 1997). This encourages persistent involvement in a more advanced criminal behaviour.

According to Colvin, Cullen and Vander Ven (2002) coercion also causes crime because it brings about strain (Agnew, 1985; Merton, 1938). According to Patterson (1995), aversive family interchanges and disciplinary patterns (which constitute coercion) are the main sources of juvenile delinquency. These coercive interchanges include the use of physical and non-physical attacks such as negative comments, critical remarks, teasing, humiliation and threats. For instance physical abuse and coercive environment bring about criminal behaviour (Straus, 1994). Colvin & Pauly (1983) note that a coercive control weakens and alienates the social bond leading to persistent delinquent behaviour.

While Merton (1938) believes that societal coercion produces strain causing an individual to adapt conforming or innovative means to achieve the cultural goals, Agnew (1992, 1985) believes that negative stimuli produce strain leading to criminal behaviour. Negative stimuli are characterized by a coercive environment such as putting a person in prison, parental rejection, unfair discipline, parental conflict, negative school experience and unsatisfactory relations with peers. Agnew observes that interpersonal coercive relations constitute aversive or negative forces that produce strain or anger. The more intensified the anger, the greater the recipient sees such coercive treatment as unjust leading to the repudiation of authority (Sherman, 1993). In addition, impersonal coercive relations such as unemployment produce strain leading to criminal behaviour (Merton, 1938). Tittle (1995) indicates that repression bring about control deficit leading to defiant behaviour.

The distinction between interpersonal and impersonal coercion is such that the former is concerned with micro level control through the use of actual or a threat of physical force or a threat of removal of social support. On the other hand, impersonal coercion originates from structural arrangement and circumstances beyond the individual's control that create anger leading to criminal behaviour. Some of the structural arrangements and circumstances include unemployment and poverty (Colvin, 2000). Incarceration prevents employment and marriage, making it possible for ex-offenders to come back to crime (Western, 2007). Ex-offenders are less likely to be married or cohabiting with mothers of their children (Loppo & Western, 2005). Wilson & Neckerman (1986) suggest that incarceration reduces marriage rates by removing men from poor, urban areas and marriage markets. Ex-offenders become undesirable marriage partners as compared to men without prison record. In addition, husbands who are serving time in prison risk being divorced as a result of their confinement.

As a part of the explanation of "collateral consequences" of imprisonment, ex-offenders are confronted with the problems of acquiring social statuses and assuming their social roles (Hagan & Dinovitzer, 1999). Imprisonment reduces the probability of men getting married in several dimensions. In the first place, imprisonment reduces the opportunity to form marital union. Secondly, the stigma attached to prison discourages potential partners. Finally, imprisonment reduces employment and income and place ex-offenders at disadvantageous positions (Loppo & Western, 2005). In conclusion, the geographical distance, the stigmatizing label which negative affect the employment prospect thereby making it difficult for ex-offenders to form marital union and desist from crime.

2.3.8 Homelessness and Recidivism

Metraux and Culhane (2004) revealed that there is a relationship between homelessness and incarceration. Securing accommodation after release from prison is critical in the transitional process of offenders. However, homelessness is a key factor in unsuccessful transition of offenders into the community (Baldry, McDonnel, Maplestone & Peeters, 2002; Lewis, Vennard, Maguire, Raynor, Vanstone, Raybould & Rix, 2003). Most ex-offenders face the problem of homelessness and are more likely to be reconvicted than those with housing facilities (Nilsson, 2003). Homelessness, in particular, may place the youth at risk of offending (Arnull, Eagle, Gammampila, Patel & Sadler, 2007). Homelessness is a feature of most ex-offenders. This is because of the “collateral consequences” of imprisonment. Most ex-offenders are faced with the problem of unemployment because of the difficulties in raising the needed finance to secure accommodation. Moreover, because of the stigma of the prison record, most landlords are unwilling to rent their rooms or apartments to ex-offenders. This has contributed to the concentration of most ex-prisoners in the most problematic parts of the communities where there are high rates of crime and disorder, making them highly vulnerable to repeat offending. Sometimes, due to the problematic circumstances at home or homelessness, some ex-offenders develop the criminal capital and get linked to other criminal and re-offend.

2.3.9 Pro-criminal Associates and Recidivism

The issue of some offenders being socialized to commit further crime is very common, especially among inmate populations. The fact is that, some offenders become hardened and chronic criminals because of the situational or social context within which they find themselves. Inmates learn the criminal culture including the knowledge, values, attitudes,

beliefs, habits, customs and techniques that make law deviation a more desirable way of life rather than a law-abiding life.

Just as there is a culture among citizens in the free world, a separate culture also exists within prison walls. Clemmer (1940) calls it prisonization, and it is the process of assimilation where inmates get socialised within the culture of prison. He observes that every prisoner undergoes universal prisonization where inmates assimilate the culture and existing patterns of prison life where new prisoners begin to share the sentiments, memories and traditions of the group.

However, there is a negative aspect of prisonization which produces or worsens criminality and makes inmates assume characteristic of a criminalistics ideology. The extent to which prisonization occurs depends on the personality, the crime committed, the age, home or residence, intelligence, situation in which the prisoner is placed or institutional factors and less obvious influences (Johnston, Savitz & Wolfgang, 1970). Other factors that contribute to prisonization include the extent of social relationships, work involvement and the role of a person in prison. Clemmer (1940) believes that in treatment-oriented prisons, the degree of prisonization tends to be lower than in custody-oriented facilities. Moreover, inmates serving long sentences, those with unstable personalities and conditions that are not suitable to proper adjustment are most influenced by prison life. However, because of different characteristics and experiences between and within inmates, the extent of prisonization would occur at different rates for different inmates.⁴ However, Clemmer's work fails to account for that aspect of prison culture where prisonization originated. This has given rise to the deprivation and the importation explanations of prison culture.

⁴ Encyclopaedia of prison and correctional facilities, retrieved from <http://www.sagepub.com/hanserintro/study/materials/reference/ref2.2.pdf>

According to Hayner and Ash (1939), the prison environment by its very structure is an example of a conflict situation between the custodians and the inmates. The perception of the custodians is that the offenders deserve to be punished while the offenders see the custodians as screws. This clearly demonstrates the antagonistic relationship between the custodians and the offenders in the prison environment (cited in Abotchie, 2012). As Sykes (1958) rightly observes, legitimate force is inadequate means of maintaining law and order in prison. Order is maintained through a struggle between the officials and offenders. Although inmates recognize the authority of the officials, they do not feel morally bound to obey them. Besides, the nerve-racking conditions of penal confinement or the pain of imprisonment, including the multiple deprivations such as deprivation of liberty, autonomy, goods and services, heterosexual relations and security make the inmates adopt strategies to relieve themselves. Consequently, the inmates go underground and adopt the inmate subculture as a mechanism for the relief of themselves of the harsh conditions of imprisonment. As a criminal society, the interactions between these offenders as a relief mechanism are deleterious. Criminal contacts and values are shared by members of this community. As Hayner and Ash (1939) observe in a study in Washington State Reformatory at Monroe:

It has long been recognised that our reformatories do not actually reform. Inmates learn new and improved techniques in our prisons. Conversations are between fellow convicts. Talks commonly turn to shop as each inmate describes those varieties of techniques with which he is best acquainted. The forger talks of forgery, the embezzler talks of embezzlement, burglar on methods for entering homes and stores...Whether he wishes to or not, he assimilates new crime techniques (p. 369).

Therefore, the culture of a prison originates from within the walls prison walls. This behaviour is exemplified by the learning theories of offending with the tenet that offending behaviour is learnt in the same way as other behaviours. They lay much emphasis on the family and peer group as a potential sources of criminal behaviour.

For instance, in the theory of “Differential Association”, Sutherland (1939) suggests that criminal behaviour is learnt through the interaction with others, especially within the inmate population. The learning process occurs during the verbal and non-verbal communication and it includes the techniques for committing those crimes, the specific direction, motives, drives, rationalization and attitudes which are learnt through the definition of the legal code as favourable or unfavourable to the violation of the law. Thus if a person inculcates more attitudes that are favourable to the commission of crime than unfavourable ones, then that person perceives criminal behaviour as acceptable. Finally, differential association may differ depending on the frequency, duration and intensity, the nature of the attitude learnt (for instance a person may perceive rape as unacceptable but robbery as acceptable) and how early it starts in the life of individuals (cited in Abotchie, 2012).

Penal confinement leads to the seduction of a criminal lifestyle and ultimately to becoming persistent offenders. Within the prisoner community, first-time offenders see hardened criminals as their role models. They become attracted, corrupted and contaminated by the influences of these hardened criminals who socialise them with these pro-criminal attitudes and values.

Bandura (1977) in his social learning theory suggests that behaviours are learnt through the observation of models. For Bandura, models are selected based on certain features like attractiveness, status and perceived similarity with the observer. As to whether the behaviour of a model will be imitated or not depends on the observed consequences of their actions. In other words, the higher a model is observed through reinforcement (where reinforcement bring cherish values to the observer), the greater the likelihood of imitation. On the other hand, the more a model is observed through punishment, the lesser the likelihood of imitation. Such models reshape the pro-criminal attitudes and

values of inmates relating to their possibility of furthering the criminal behaviour after release.

In reaction to Sykes' observation that prisonization originates from within the prison walls, Irwin & Cressey (1962) believe that inmate culture develops from outside the prison environment particularly from offenders characteristics and experiences before the incarceration. Thus the offenders import those criminal values and attitude from outside the prison into prison. This importation model rejects the explanation that the prison is a closed system organized around common values. Rather, a subculture is developed outside and brought to the prison together with socio-demographic characteristics and criminal career variables, such as the length of the sentence and criminal record. They developed a typology of inmate subcultures such as thief, convict and straight subcultures. The thief subculture corresponds to the norms and values developed and adopted in the criminal world. They trust each other and refer to fellow thieves as a primary reference group. The code of the group is much more respected than the general inmate code. The convict subculture is the general inmate code developed from outside the prison while the straight subculture is characterized by offenders who side with prison officials than with more the inmates for the purpose of receiving rehabilitation.

Generally, custodial sentences are associated with frequent and serious post-release criminal behaviours than non-custodial sentences. Scholars have established that short-term and long-term imprisonment are both damaging. This is because short-term sentences do not permit any meaningful rehabilitation, while long-term sentences bring about contamination and more criminal propensities through contact with other prisoners (Villettaz, Gillieron & Killars, 2006). Bonneville de Marsangy (1847) observed that "crime is a disease which if not thoroughly treated, will worsen and ultimately contaminate others especially if offenders are brought to prison where they will live in

proximity with other criminals” (cited in Villettaz et al., 2006, p. 14). Imprisonment increases the risk of re-offending among ex-offenders as compared to those who benefited from non-custodial sanction (Villettaz et al., 2006). Prisonization brings about re-socialization of values, cultures, standards and behavioural patterns of other prisoners thereby allowing inmates to assume criminal identities (Zingraft, 1975).

In conclusion, the static and dynamic risk factors are responsible for the probability of re-offending. These factors interrelate to each other. The static factor which is the criminal record negatively affects the dynamic factors especially employment. The label accorded ex-offenders prevent them from multiple resources including employment and other opportunities making it difficult for them to lead crime free lives. Sometimes, because of skills deficiency, most ex-offenders do not get the needed employment. Besides, as a result of the pain of imprisonment, some offenders experience mental disorder which is responsible for their post-release recidivism. Some ex-offenders re-offend because of the reliance of substance abuse. Sometimes also, ex-offenders re-offend because of dysfunctional family relations, homelessness anti-social personality and personal distress such as depression.

The Protective Factors of Offending

2.4 Introduction

Sampson & Laub (2001) in their study on “Understanding Desistance from Crime” explain that desistance which is the causal process of terminating crime come about as a result of a lot of factors, ranging from maturation and aging, rational choice, social learning, developmental and life-course factors. However, the life-course perspective provides the best framework for understanding criminal desistance.

Life-course theorists explain that life events such as employment and marriage or family formations are the “pathways and turning points of crime” (Sampson & Laub, 1993).

Therefore, understanding these predisposing factors of desistance is crucial in the consideration of policy interventions to reduce re-offending. According to Lab (2007), programmes aimed at preventing unemployment, poor education, poverty and other social problems may reduce crime. These and other primary and secondary crime prevention mechanisms when implemented will prevent both the onset and persistent of criminal behavior.

2.4.1 Employment and Social Reintegration

Researchers in offender rehabilitation and re-entry believe that securing employment is a critical factor in offender re-integration. Lipsey (1995) finds that getting employment is the single most effective means of reducing re-offending. Obtaining legal employment is one of the best predictors of post-release success of offenders (Visher, Sara, Sherril & Haner, 2005). Studies have shown that high quality jobs reduce the probability of re-offending. Research shows that ex-offenders who maintain steady jobs and close ties with their families are less likely to renew their offenses (Berg & Huebner, 2011). There are several reasons to support the view that connecting ex-offenders with the various services such as housing, employment and supervision is important in their transition to the society. Accordingly, Graffam, Shinkfield, Lavelle & McPherson, (2004) note that:

Employment provides more than the income necessary to support adequate material conditions. It also provides structure and routine, while filling time. It provides opportunities to expand one's social network to include other productive members of society. In addition to all this, employment can contribute to enhanced self-esteem and other psychological health (p.1).

Petersilia (2003) observes that obtaining employment after release from prison is an important component in the transitional trajectories of offenders because it helps ex-offenders to be productive members of the community, cater for the family, develop job experience, and enhance self-esteem, social networks and to lead a conforming life.

Empirical research shows that providing ex-offenders with employment opportunities significantly lower their involvement in criminal behaviour (Duwe, 2012; Mackenzie, 2006; MCORP, 2010; Sampson & Laub, 2003, 1993). Thus desistance depends critically on employment, specifically finding and holding a good job (Sampson & Laub, 1993, 1990; Hagan, 1993; Uggen, 2000; Bushway & Reuter, 2002).

Life-course theorists believe that employment and marriage constitute turning points in the lives of offenders and the pathway out of crime (Sampson & Laub, 1993). This is because work enables an offender to develop pro-social attitudes with conventional others (Warr, 1998). Moreover, the informal social control mechanism at a workplace brings about a law-abiding life. Thus the role associated with employment reduces the possibility of offending because criminal behaviour is inconsistent with such status (Sampson & Laub, 1993). Analyzing a longitudinal data on 500 men, Sampson & Laub (2003) found that during the periods of employment, ex-offenders were less likely to commit crime and engage in drug and alcohol abuse. This is because steady job gives offenders a sense of identity and meaning to their lives and place restrictions on their routine activities, thereby decreasing their exposure to an environment conducive to criminal behavior. For them, “it is not the employment per se” that reduces crime, rather stability and commitment associated with work (Sampson & Laub, 1990, p. 611). The meaning is that, for life-course theorists, employment is crucial in the explanation of criminal desistance. Employment also enables individuals to live a law abiding life by affording the basic needs such as housing, utilities and develop a social network of ties to conventional society (Petersilia, 2003; Visher & Travis, 2003).

Providing an economic analysis of crime, Bushway & Reuter (2002) made the assumption that people commit crime because the benefits outweigh the cost. If work opportunities exist, the risk of incarceration reduces. Therefore, crime prevention

strategies should aim at increasing job opportunities especially for the young offender. Bushway and Reuter (2002) emphasize that there is the need for an employment-based policy intervention that can help low-income areas. Economic expansion reduces crime through the increase in legitimate job opportunities. Evaluating the Minnesota Comprehensive Offender Re-entry Plan (MCORP, 2010) using a random experimental design, it was found that MCORP lowered the risk of re-arrest for new offense by 37%, reduced reconviction for new offense by 43% and reduced re-incarceration by 57%. This is because MCORP increased the support for offenders by providing them with employment, housing and community services. Uggen (2000) in his study on “Work as a Turning Point in the Life-course of Criminals” found that a work programme decreases recidivism among the experimental group compared to a control group.

However, research has shown that there is a complex relationship between employment and crime. According to Hagan (1993), employment is the cause of crime and conformity. This is due to different interpretations of the relationship between age and crime. For instance, Gottfredson and Hirshi (1990, p. 139) argue that the relationship between employment and crime is positive for juveniles. They maintain that “employment does not explain the reduction in crime with age”. Thus, according to there is a spurious relationship between employment and crime.

On the other hand, (Hagan & McCarthy, 1997; Sampson & Laub, 1990) also argue that the relationship is negative for adults. Thus life-course theorists suggest “age-graded correctional programmes reduce the social harm associated with recidivism” (Uggen, 2000, p. 3). From a life-course perspective, employment programmes are a crucial turning point in the criminal trajectories of older offenders. For instance in their work on the age-graded theory of informal social control, Sampson and Laub (1990) found that it is “not employment per se” that reduces crime but rather the stability and commitment

associated with employment (p. 611). Writing on “Social Embeddedness of Crime and Unemployment”, Hagan (1993) suggests that juvenile delinquency prevents adolescents from accessing education and employment networks that help in adult employment. However, at age 26 when crime rates start to fall, the transitions to employment and marriage help in criminal desistance.

2.4.2 Family Ties and Social Reintegration

In order to ensure continuity of support for offenders, institutional programmes such as rehabilitation and reformation should be complemented with social and community support systems especially from the family and faith-based groups. Petersilia (2003) has indicated that because of the challenges facing most offenders returning to the communities, providing re-entry services to support them would have favourable implications for them. This is because post-release support services are aimed at bonding the former offender to conventional society, reducing unemployment and homelessness, prevent substance abuse, mental illness and domestic violence. The re-entry services are seen as “what works” because it provides vocational training and employment, drug rehabilitation and halfway homes (Holliday et al, 2012).

Social support is the assistance from the community, social network and confiding partners in meeting the expressive or emotional and instrumental or material needs of a person (Cullen, 1994). The support system may originate from micro or macro sources and according to Reis and Collins (2000), occurs in the context of social interactions and relationships.

The micro support is derived from an interpersonal relationship between a person and the family members. Rutter (1987) observes that social support is an expression of a personal relationship characterised by a sense of attachment, intimacy, mutuality, and

solidarity. Some researchers have suggested that offender re-entry initiatives should include informal support (Altschuler & Armstrong, 1994; Altschuler & Brash, 2004; Mears & Travis, 2004).

Scholars have also suggested that informal support is crucial to a successful offender re-integration (La Vigne, Visser, & Castro, 2004; Wilkinson, 2005). Studies have shown that offenders coming home have serious social, psychological and mental problems such as low education and employment skills, drug and alcohol abuse and mental illness (Petersilia, 2003, Travis et al, 2001). Therefore, family ties provide the needed social capital which helps to make the transition successful. Inmates who maintain family ties have high rates of post-release success than inmates who do not (Bales & Mears, 2008; Hairston, 1988, 1991; Holt & Miller, 1972).

Studies have shown that a majority of former prisoners eventually return to their family members and rely on them for support (Altschuler & Brash, 2004; Ekland-Olson, Supanic, Campbell, & Lenihan, 1983; La Vigne et al., 2004; Naser & La Vigne, 2006; Naser & Visser, 2006; Nelson, Deess, & Allen, 1999). Criminological research finds that upon release from prison, offenders commonly rely on parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts, and uncles. Family members represent offenders' social networks (Shapiro & Schwartz, 2001). Literature further suggests that returning offenders can benefit from the informal support both tangible and intangible from family members, friends, and neighbourhood social networks (Martinez & Abrams, 2013). The psychological bonds such as love, awe, respect and affection would help the family function as an effective social system.

Moore (2011) postulates that there are three stages of any successful offender re-integration. The first stage is when the offender relocates into society. This is the starting

point of the social-psychological transition from prison life into the free world. This is a critical stage because it signifies the first test of their carceral experience. In this sense, the role of the family members is so crucial because they constitute a social network or capital for the offender. These social support services reduce strain and provide the needed bonding, bridging and linking social capital to help them meet their material and emotional needs.

Many of the criminological theories have established the importance of social support as a mechanism of criminal desistance. The social control theory postulates that a reduction in crime is a function of attachment to the family (Hirschi, 1969). He finds that attachment to parents reduces the likelihood of antisocial behaviour. Social support reduces recidivism (Berg & Huebner, 2011; Visher & Travis, 2003) and act as a social control mechanism (Laub & Sampson, 2003). According to Berg and Huebner (2011), social ties to family involve three social and psychological components that affect a reduction in criminal behaviour. Social ties have a controlling effect on returning offenders' behavior, provide a provision of emotional support and facilitate identity transformation. In a study by Martinez and Abrams (2013), it was revealed that family provided for young offender returnees' expressive and instrumental support and at the same time through high expectations of the ex-offenders had the opportunity to restrict their movement to a non-offending identity. They describe this as "the ties that bind" (181).

Farrall (2004) finds that positive family ties indirectly help re-entering offenders in attaining employment. During individual crises such as unemployment, illness, divorce, death, and other problems, family members provide social, psychological, material, spiritual and financial support (Cattell, 2001; Umberson, 1987; Wellman & Wortley, 1990).

Life-course theories postulate that life events such as marriage, employment, moving to a better neighborhood or house and recruitment into the army help ex-offenders to desist from crime (Catalano, Park, Harachi, Haggerty, Abbott, & Hawkins, 2005; Farrington, 2005; Sampson & Laub, 2005, 2001, 1993). For instance Sampson and Laub (2005) proposed that desistance depends on increasing social controls and structured routine activities that are caused by life events such as getting married, getting a steady job, or getting enlisted into the military. Sampson and Laub (1993) argue that behavioral change is a function of the individual's involvement in conventional social roles such as being a stable worker or good husband. According to Giordano, Cernkovich, & Rudolph (2002), openness or motivation to change is a first step in the process of desistance however this depends on factors such as the social environment and opportunities. They also observe that the influence of social processes, social interactions, social experiences, social relationships, originating from informal social bonds and attachments influence the openness to change and ensure self-development. Relationships with conventional society and primarily with intimate partners constitute the social aspect of desistance. Farrington (2005) suggests that desistance depends on a reduction in antisocial potential resulting from life events such as getting married, getting a stable employment and accommodation. Catalano et al. (2005) found that desistance depends on changes in opportunities, costs and benefits as well as bonding relationships that are influenced by life events. Le Blanc (2005) suggests that desistance depends on increasing internal and external constraints, bonding, pro social models, and maturation. Research shows that proper marriage can provide an ex-offender with emotional support after release, provide accommodation and the needed motivation to succeed and the financial assistance even before the offender secures a job (Petersilia, 2003).

From my personal opinion, I agree to the view that desistence should begin with formal institutional treatment and training aimed altering the criminal attitudes and increase the motivation to succeed while social relations from the family, faith-based organization and employmen ensure informal social control.

Successful re-integration efforts must ensure that ex-offenders receive the necessary support by participating fully in the social institutions. The implication is that ex-offenders must be provided with job skills, employment and support from family and friends and neighbours such as social acceptance, love, care, counselling, and encouragement, financial and spiritual care. These serve to increase the bond to conventional society and reduce the likelihood of relapse into criminal activities.

Through the theory of differential support and coercion, Colvin, Cullen and Vander Ven (2002) explain that social support prevent crime but coercion is the main causal explanation of criminal behaviour. Social support can be more consistent or erratic with differential social-psychological effects. Consistent social support bring about trust and this sense of trust strengthens the social bonding leading to commitment to others and social institutions. Thus support systems promote pro-social behaviour rather than self-interest and prevent crime.

In conclusion, connecting ex-offenders with the various services such as housing, employment and the family are important in their transition to the society. This is because employment provides the income, routine activities fill time, expand their social network and make them productive members of the society. Moreover, family ties bond them to the society, reduce unemployment, homelessness, prevent substance abuse and domestic thereby making them lead conforming lives.

2.5 Types of Social Reintegration

Social re-integration of offenders has institutional and community phases (CRSR, 2007; Holiday et al, 2012). The institutional phase is aimed at transforming the offender before his/her gradual release followed by long-term support aimed at permanently settling the offender into the community. Borzychi (2005) reveals that there are two main approaches in corrections. These are the offender-oriented and the community-oriented approaches. The offender-oriented approach is aimed at changing the attitudes of the offender which usually occurs in an institutional setting like a prison. The community-oriented approach takes into consideration the broader social context and builds capacity for the offender through the organization of community resources to assist in offender reintegration. This community-oriented approach can be looked at from the perspective of post-release support services from the family, employment opportunities as well as support from faith and charity based organizations within their respective communities to ensure bonding relationship and informal control. Nevertheless, facilitating offender reintegration is a complex task and the impact of specific interventions is sometimes difficult to measure.

There is the evidence to suggest that positive reintegration outcomes are attainable when predisposing factors of criminal behaviour are addressed in a holistic fashion and in a manner that the physical and social needs of offenders are supported both within the prison and after the offenders' release (Travis, Solomon, & Waul, 2001). Holliday et al, (2012) state that the re-entry of offenders into the community goes through three phases namely institutional, structured re-entry and re-integration into the community. The institutional phase is concerned with risk assessment, classification, placement and a sentence/treatment plan. The structured re-entry begins a few months before release and early the months after release often involve specific sentence plan and community

corrections. Finally, community re-integration interventions include community supervision and aftercare. This involves the provision of human services providers, and the ex-offender's network of community support, linkages, and mentors to continue the relevant aspects of the transitional process during the period of aftercare.

It is important to note that the primary criminogenic needs of the offenders must be addressed by institutional and community based interventions relating to education, employment, accommodation, drugs and alcohol, mental health, social networks, cognitive skills, and attitudes (Harper and Chitty, 2004). These programmes become effective if they are based on the risk assessment of the offenders (Hirschi, 2002). Therefore, an effective strategy in reducing recidivism is the prison-based and community-based interventions (MacKenzie, 1997).

2.5.1 Prison-Based Rehabilitation

Prison is that part of the penal system where criminals are held in custody for a considerable period of time as determined by the courts as punishment for criminals' offenses. Prison can also be defined as that part of the penal system where convicts and those on remand are confined, deprived of their personal liberty, provide penal labour and perhaps given treatment and training to ensure re-integration. Traditionally, offenders are treated through case management which is usually focussed on addressing these dynamic risk factors. Based on the prison's rule, convicts are expected to undergo rehabilitation and reformation to enable them lead law-abiding life after release.

Some of the prison-based rehabilitation programmes include the risk assessment, formal education (both basic and secondary) and vocational training as well as specific treatments or Cognitive Behavioural Treatments (CBT) such as life skills/problem

solving skills, anger management, violent prevention, substance abuse and sex offender treatment. According to Koehler et al. (2010), cognitive behavioural skills will ensure a cognitive transformation so as to desist from crime. These interventions should be based on programme integrity and efficiency. Programme integrity is the degree to which the programme is implemented in practice as determined by the underlying theory and design while programme effectiveness is the extent to which the specified objective is achieved (Lior & Sung, 2011). Prison-based rehabilitation programmes are usually carried out through case management.

2.5.1.1 Case Management

Offender re-entry programmes are usually based on case-management with certain interventions designed to help the offenders to access treatment and training to prepare them for release. According to Griffiths (2012), case management is “the process by which the needs and abilities of offenders are matched with correctional programmes and services” (p. 257). Its main objectives include monitoring the offender during confinement, the gradual release of offenders into the community and the prevention of recidivism. Case management ensures a structured supervision while addressing the needs for a successful reintegration.

According to scholars such as (Herbig & Hesselink, 2012; Griffiths, 2012), the offender re-entry processes generally entail chronologically-based stages in theoretical and practical case-management involving the following:

1. Early assessment and placement is the first stage in the offender re-entry processes where the offender gets admitted into the carceral institution. This stage usually involves identifying and recording personal information, welcoming

and assessing immediate risks and needs and referral to the actual assessment unit. The assessment unit then conducts a comprehensive health assessment, risk/needs assessment, analysis of assessment outcome, classification, developing sentence plan and allocation of housing unit or transfer to another correctional facility. Admission to a housing unit involves orientation and allocation of the offender to a case officer. This marks the beginning of institutional treatment and training as well as supervision.

2. The second stage is the institutional interventions and supervision often involving the implementation of correctional sentence plan and case review (progress, updating of correction sentence plan and offender profile).
3. Monitoring and evaluation stage involves assessing and making decisions on the progress or lack of progress of the offender. Feedback report and reclassification, institutional transfer, institutional release (temporal absence, work release) but still under supervision.

This is the stage where offenders get prepared for release. This seeks to reassess and recommend institutional progress and community assessment.

4. The fourth stage is the decision to gradually release the offender back into the society. It involves temporal absence, partial or full parole and statutory or conditional release.
5. The final stage is the community supervision involving transferring the offenders to a half-way home or own house and reporting to parole officers in a correctional facility close to the offender beginning from the last few months before full release and even continue in the first month after the offender is

released. There is evidence to show that a proper offender risk assessment and case management can ensure relapse prevention⁵.

A critical look at the stages of case management especially in Ghana shows that some of the stages are not being practiced. For instance the parole and supervision are virtually absent in Ghana's corrections, making it difficult to ensure post-release adjustment.

2.5.1.2 Risk Assessment and Classification

According to Herbig & Hesselink (2012), re-entry processes of offenders begin with risk and needs assessments involving a profile of each offender, summarizing the dynamic and static risk factors, classification of risk level (maximum, medium or low) and intervention strategies by professionals and supervisors. Thus risk assessment is important in offender classification and case management.

Over the past decade or so, offender risk assessment instruments have to a large extent been used in correctional programmes. The literature suggests that these risk assessment instruments are based on a high degree of success in reducing recidivism (Flores, Lowenkamp, Smith & Latessa, 2006). The risk assessment depends on the subjective skills and a structured clinical assessment instrument for the purpose of case-management and to ensure effective crime prevention (van der Knaap, Leenarts, Born & Oosterveld, 2012). Usually, different assessment tools are used in measuring different aspects of offenders' strengths or needs. In the U.S., the risk assessment instrument is

⁵ Peter, a 36 year-old male, is arrested for domestic violence. Peter, who has no criminal record, is a chartered accountant. After his arrest Peter is referred to the Centre for Restorative Justice (CRJ) at Pretoria for possible consideration of sentence diversion and restorative justice process initiation. The CRJ is known to assist in diversion with first offenders in domestic violence cases, especially where the perpetrator is the only breadwinner. He undergoes several restorative justice assessments and completes various restorative justice programs and as such a positive recommendation is made to prevent a possible imprisonment sentence. Since his arrest Peter has complied with all restorative justice criteria, is currently involved in community-based anger management and self-esteem programmes, and participates in regular risk monitoring processes instituted for restorative justice candidates (Herbig and Hesselink, 2012).

known as Correctional Offender Management Profiling for Alternative Sanction COSPAS, in Canada, it is called Level of Service/Case Management Inventory –Revised (LS/CMI-R) and in Britain, it is also known as Offender Assessment System (van der Knaap et al, 2012). The Psychopathy Checklist – Revised (PCL-R) is also used to determine the level of mental illness in offenders.

Proper assessment is done through gathering information from different sources including the family, the police, the courts, the victim as well as the offender. Through the assessment, an appropriate custody and security level will be determined including the mental health status, assignment to a housing unit and a programme placement within the institution. These decisions strongly affect the transition process. This is known as classification and it is the process through which information about offenders is used to make decisions about the conditions under which they will be confined (Griffiths, 2012). In Ghana for instance, the assessment is conducted at the diagnose centre where first time offenders undergo the observation, counselling and allocation of blocks for the purpose of case management. Based on the classification, then treatment and training intervention can now begin. It is important to note that the assessment continues from the admission into the carceral institution until the sentence expires. Offenders are periodically re-assessed and reclassified based on their progress reports on the treatment and training support services, work assignment and their overall behaviour in the institution. The early and later classifications are decided based on security and risk concerns, offender's ability and programme need. The risk, need and responsivity model are used in modern corrections to ensure successful institutional support for the offenders.

2.5.1.3 Explanation of the Risk, Need and Responsivity Model

Research has shown that a number of principles are associated with offender treatment namely Risk, Need and Responsivity Principle (RNR) (Andrews, Bonta & Hoge, 1990). The RNR model involves interventions designed to help offenders learn and change their criminal behaviour. According to Andrews et al (1990) as cited in Andrews, Bonta & Wormith, (2011), effective offender rehabilitation is based on three principles namely:

- a. Risk Principle states that the programme intensity should correspond to the risk level. Therefore, the higher the risk, the greater the intensity of the programme. Thus high risk offenders should receive intensive treatment than low risk offenders.
- b. The Need Principle states that programme interventions should target criminogenic needs/offender deficiencies that are functionally related to criminal behavior.
- c. The Responsivity Principle also states that the style or a mode of intervention should match with the offender's style of learning and abilities. Thus for the programme to be more beneficial, it must be based on the personality, motivation and ability of the offender (van der Knaap et al, 2012).

There is evidence to suggest that the RNR model is more effective than intense supervision or deterrence (Andrews, Zinger, et al, 1990; French & Gendreau, 2006). Therefore, for offender rehabilitation to be consistent with the RNR model, there is the need to know the risk level of the offender and the criminogenic needs as well as the motivation and ability of the offender (Andrews, 2006; Andrews & Bonta, 2010). The criminogenic factors include educational level, employment status, family relations/marital status, housing, pro-criminal attitude and anti-social patterns.

However, RNR model has been criticised on the grounds that the criminogenic needs ignores personal fulfilment, including friendship, enjoyable work, loving relationships, creative pursuit, sexual satisfaction, positive self-regard and an intellectually challenging environment which are important variables because they reduce criminogenic factors. Ward and Eccleston (2004) argue that the RNR model lacks conceptual resources. Specifically, the model does not incorporate individual strength and does not also address the relationship between risk management and good lives. It does not treat the readiness and motivation and address therapists' attitudes towards the offender (cited in Blanchette & Brown, 2006). Based on the short-comings of the RNR model, Ward & Eccleston (2004) provide an alternative model of rehabilitation based on good lives. This is a strength-based approach based on the realization that the reduction in recidivism is a result of interventions aimed at addressing the strength and needs of the offender. The RNR is a model of offender rehabilitation in my view has proofed successful in offender reintegration.

2.5.2 Correctional Education (Reformation and Rehabilitation)

Correctional education is a crime prevention strategy that focuses on providing offenders with rehabilitation and reformation thereby ensuring their re-socialization and reintegration. The main purposes of imprisonment according to Foucault (1977), include pedagogical, spiritual and penitentiary techniques. Imprisonment performed functions such as putting fear in inmates, as an instrument of conversion and as a condition for apprenticeship. Pedagogy is structured around the need to renew the mind, learn a trade, work and earn money. Work in prison should be compulsory for prisoners to earn money and guarantee sustenance and not be idle because the devil finds work for the lazy ones. Reformation, rehabilitation and prison industry would transform the offenders and

increase their motivation to succeed after release. Revisiting the records of successful rehabilitation in Canada, Duguid (2000) argues that “through education programmes, prisons can provide a more natural, organic or authentic process of self-transformation through empowerment, communication of values and the formation of new interests.” (p. xi). Correctional education would thus ensure a significant personal improvement in the lives of the offenders and successful re-integration into the community.

Rehabilitation is the psychosocial programmes designed to address the criminogenic needs relating to the offenders’ offending behaviour so as to lead a law-abiding life after release from prisons. Thus programme interventions in prison are supposed to assist inmates to ensure a successful re-integration after release as stipulated in the prisons’ rule. Griffiths (2007) believes that a therapeutic model of rehabilitation should be based on the needs and personal development of the offender to ensure a successful social reintegration.

Approaches to Prison-based Rehabilitation

2.5.2.1 Introduction

There are several approaches to prison-based rehabilitation. These include the Cognitive Behavioural Approach (CBA), Formal Education and Vocational Training and Faith-based Approach.

a. Cognitive Behavioural Approach (CBA)

Cognitive Behavioral Approach is a prison-based intervention designed to change the criminogenic attitudes of the offenders. It is a therapy that enables offenders to have self-control and be responsible to other people. According to Prendergast (2004), CBA is an approach to treating offenders with the objectives of changing the distorted thinking

processes and patterns otherwise called “criminal thinking” that promotes criminal behaviour (p.4).

It includes anger management, substance abuse prevention, mental health care, alternative to violence programme, guidance and counseling, living skills, problem solving approach, reinforcement of behavioral change and other crime prevention initiative. These programmes ensure cognitive transformation and criminal desistence (Koehler et al, 2010).

Although environmental factors such as family relations influence a person’s criminal behaviour, (Sampson & Laub, 2001, 1993), it is believed that criminal behaviour is a function of the cognition. Thus the way we think, control our moods and feelings ultimately influence our behaviour. Self-defeating habits and hopelessness is a function of unproductive thoughts relating to past experiences. Psychologists believe that human behaviour is shaped by sensory cues. Social learning theorists believe that just as behaviour is learned, this same behaviour can be unlearned. It is believed that majority of the offenders lack self-control, problem solving skills, critical thinking and planning skills. Criminal thoughts correlate with maladjusted and criminal behaviour.

The objectives of this programme is to identify the thought process that lead to negative feelings and maladaptive behaviours and replace them with processes that lead to positive feelings and behaviours. Through cognitive restructuring (cognitive self-change), thought processes are modified to reduce patterns that are conducive to criminal behaviour. Problem-solving skills, particularly when interacting with others, are taught in order to increase rational thinking and lead to pro-social interactions and behaviours. The method requires the use of social learning techniques, which employs role-playing and modelling (Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, 2010).

In spite of Martinson's (1974) claim that nothing works in corrections, other studies found that therapeutic community and cognitive behavioural programme such as substance abuse interventions in prison works to reduce re-offending (Lior and Hung-En, 2011). Studies that evaluate correctional treatments have shown that cognitive behavioural treatments are effective in reducing recidivism (Wilson, Bouuffard, & MacKenzie, 2005). Some of the specific programmes to prepare offenders for social reintegration include the following:

b. Violence Prevention Programme (VPP)

These programmes include the creation of violent awareness, anger control, problem solving skills, positive relationships, conflict resolution and self-control. It is a pro-social technique that helps offenders in stressful and hostile situations conducive to aggression. Family violence programme is also directed at inmates with a history of family violence or at risk of being a victim.

c. Substance Abuse Prevention (SAP)

Because of the high prevalence of substance abuse among prisoners (Mumola, 1999), the continuous use of these substances contribute to re-offending (Petersilia, 2003). Substance-abuse treatment programmes may be a common form of prison-based rehabilitation. These approaches include drug rehabilitation and techniques of relapse prevention. In Canada, Computerized Lifestyle Assessment Instrument is used to identify problems associated with substance abuse and to recommend suitable treatment needs. Substance abuse training and treatment is believed to have reduced re-offending rates in Canada especially when they are followed by community support services in the period of aftercare (Griffiths, 2007). The most commonly used and researched prison-based, psychosocial treatment is the therapeutic community (TC). Research on prison-based

drug treatment found that TC was effective in reducing recidivism for incarcerated substance-abuse offenders (Lipton, Pearson, Cleland, & Yee, 2002). Outcome studies conducted for prison-based therapeutic community (TC) in Delaware (Martin, Butzin, Saum and Incardi, 1999), Texas (Knight, Simpson, and Hiller, 1999) found that participants of TC treatment and aftercare in the community had a significant reduction in recidivism as compared to the control group. According to Lior and Sung (2011:76-77), Strategies for Self-improvement and Change (SSC) is a major rehabilitative approach to substance abuse offenders. The duration of the programme is one year and comprises 12 treatment modules and organised in 3 phases namely challenges to change, commitment to change and ownership to change. The challenge to change phase covers the process of reflecting on experiences and develop the motivation to change, commitment to change enables the offender to acquire new pro-social attitudes while ownership to change strengthens the already acquired pro-social attitudes. Some of the treatment modules of SSC include:

- i. *Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT)* This programme targets drunk drivers and offenders who commit offense against women and it is aimed at evaluating and adjusting to normative patterns of behaviour.
- ii. *Reasoning and Rehabilitation (R&R)* Here, offenders are socialized with specific reasoning skills including thinking before acting, anticipating consequences of actions and considering alternative behaviour. These are aimed at improving self-control, conflict solving and communitarian attitudes.
- iii. *Relapse Prevention Therapy (RPT)* This is aimed at preventing and managing substance abuse relapse after addiction therapy. This helps offenders to monitor and manage their own thoughts and behaviour. This makes a person to be alert and aware of cues and avoid high-risk situations.

- iv. *Thinking for Change* (T4C) This is designed for the general offender population and it includes cognitive reorganization, interpersonal skills and conflict resolution. It begins with reflecting on the ways of thinking and feeling followed by problem-solving skills to ensure alternative to antisocial behaviour.

According to Heseltine, Day & Sarre (2009), drug and alcohol programmes in Australia include the following:

- i. Harm reduction programme aimed at enhancing the awareness of high-risk behaviour and physiological effects of substance abuse.
- ii. Psycho-education programme to understand and be aware of the link between substance use and offence.
- iii. Therapeutic programme where group participants focus on understanding substance use and offending, develop a mechanism to cope with craving and withdrawal, develop alternative behaviour, managing emotions, enhancing problem-solving skills and communication, as well as developing relapse prevention plan.
- iv. Prison-based therapeutic community to separate participants from contamination and enhance pro-social behaviour.

These drug rehabilitation programmes are relevant in Ghana's corrections because most of offenders have history of substance abuse prior to their incarceration. Evaluating the New Horizons Chemical Dependency Treatment (NHCDT) in Washington, Mosher and Phillips (2002) observe that this pre-release therapeutic community intervention for women offenders based on the view that addiction is bio-psychosocial reduced reconviction rates among the experimental group than the control group. The programme assisted women offenders to develop pro-social cognitive, behavioural and affective skills. It includes behavioural modification and therapy such as peer encounter groups,

problem solving skills, rational emotive, cognitive and assertiveness training, educational training and anger/aggression management.

Grant et al. (2003) found that the High Intensive Substance Abuse Programme (HISAP) aimed at addressing federal offenders with substantial to severe substance abuse problems in Canada found that pre and post-test measures indicated positive attitudinal changes among participants.

Evaluating the Offender Substance Abuse Pre-release Programme (OSAP) in Canada, a multi-faceted cognitive-behavioural substance abuse intervention to address substance abuse needs of offenders with intermediate to substantial substance abuse problems, Millson, Weekes and Lightfoot (1995) found lower rates of re-admission (19.9% of technical violation and 13.6% new conviction) among those who completed the programme than non-participants into the federal custody. Johnson, Van de Ven & Grant (2001) found that the Methadone Maintenance Treatment (MMT) reduces re-admission rate among participants than the non-MMT.

d. Sex Offender Treatment (SOP)

Research shows that the two predisposing factors of sexual recidivism is sexual deviancy and lifestyle instability (Hanson and Morton-Bourgon, 2004). According to Griffiths (2007) in Canada, the correctional service operates two main programmes to assist sex offenders in their reintegration. These are high risk offender programme and maintenance. The high risk offender programme is cognitive-behaviour oriented and offers individual and group counselling, in area structured around the four "F's" namely feelings, fantasy, future, and follow through. The maintenance programme on the other hand is offered to sex offenders who are not considered high risk sex offenders to ensure relapse prevention intervention (Wilson et al., 2000).

Most sex offender interventions are interdisciplinary in team approach involving psychiatrists, social workers, physicians, nurse, chaplains, recreational staff and volunteers working together to reduce re-offending. Programmes must first identify the nature and patterns of offender's behaviour and providing skills in self-control. The objective is to ensure relapse prevention.

e. Educational and Vocational Approach (EVP)

Existing research has generally shown that prison-based educational and vocational programmes reduce recidivism and increase the probability of obtaining post-release employment (Holley and Brewster, 1998; Nuttall, Hollmen, & Staley, 2003; Saylor & Gaes, 1997; Wilson, Gallagher, & Mackenzie, 2000). Owens (2009) hypothesises that the higher the educational level of offenders, the greater the reduction in re-offending. This is because skills acquisition ensures higher social capital and greater access to legitimate job opportunities which help ex-offenders to success after release. Inmates who participate in education programmes are less likely to return to prison (Petersilia, 2003).

Pre-release employment programmes provide inmates with employable skills which can lead to a career and economic self-sufficiency and create entrepreneurial training for individuals who want to open their own small business (Truesdale, 2001). The objectives of prison industry include the fact that it enables inmates to make a contribution to society, help offset the cost of their incarceration, compensate crime victims and support themselves and their families. It also reduces prison idleness, increases the inmate's job skills, and improves the prospects for inmate's transition to the community upon release. In the United States for instance, there is the Prison Industry Employment Certification Programme (PIECP) which encourage states and units of local government to establish

employment opportunities for inmates. The programme is designed to place inmates in a realistic work environment, pay them the prevailing local wage for similar work and thus enable them to acquire marketable skills to increase their potential for a successful rehabilitation and meaningful employment upon release.

f. Faith-Based Approach (FBA)

Spiritual rehabilitation is an approach which is oriented towards reforming or renewing the minds of the offenders so as to lead a good and useful life upon discharge. Ross (1921) observes that religion rather than the laws guide people's behaviour and serve as a means of social control. Studies by Johnson and Larson (2003) finds that participants of Inner-Change Freedom Initiative (ICFI) a pre-release faith-based programme between this private organisation and Texas Department of Criminal Justice. The programme aimed at providing participants with education, work, life skills, value reconstruction and one-on-one monitoring through bible teachings. It covers a 16 to 24 months pre-release bible programme and a 6 to 12 months aftercare during parole. Spiritual rehabilitation is focussed on themes consistent with physical rehabilitation. Some of these themes include I'm not who I used to be, spiritual growth, God versus the prison code, positive outlook on life; and the need to give back to society. Spiritual transformation is seen as a development process aimed at turning the lives in offenders around. The finding indicates that full participation in ICFI both pre and post-release programmes were accompanied with lower re-arrest and re-incarceration rates than offenders in the control group. On the other hand, those who voluntarily quit the programme or removed for disciplinary were associated with high re-offending rates. The implications of these findings are that prison facilities without pre and post-release religious instructions may render offenders highly vulnerable to re-offending.

2.5.3 Debate on Correctional Programmes

Recidivism has been used to measure the effectiveness of correctional programmes (Maltz, 2001). This suggests that the high rate of re-offending is an indication that correctional goals are not focused on effective rehabilitation. Rehabilitation implies that the offenders have problems which directly bring about their criminal behaviour and that correctional service providers can diagnose these problems accurately and apply the appropriate treatments to correct them. Thus participation in education, vocational, technical and specific treatments to transform the inmates and increase their probability to succeed after release from prison is ineffective. The high rates of recidivism imply that correctional goals are focused on general deterrence, forestalling vengeance, moral education, retribution, specific deterrence and incapacitation. Studies that evaluated these correctional programmes have come to conclusions that question their effectiveness. While some researchers are of the view that nothing works, others believe getting tough on crime works and yet others are of the opinion that offender rehabilitation works best to reduce future criminality of offenders.

a. Nothing Works

While some criminological researchers (Duguid, 2000; Foucault 1977; Martinson 1974) believe that “nothing works” in corrections, others have a contrary view. Even with rehabilitation in mind, prisons still do not effectively establish in prisoners the will to lead a good and useful life upon discharge and to fit them to do so as stipulated by the prisons rule. The high rates of recidivism are an indication that the existing correctional interventions are ineffective in addressing the criminogenic needs of the offenders.

Martinson (1974) for instance has noted that the various forms of treatment or interventions in prisons have little impact on reducing re-offending and assisting the post release behaviour of ex-offenders. For him, prison as a carceral space, has a lot of

problems and therefore operates to negate the intervention intended to bring changes in the behavior of offenders. He believes that 'nothing works' in corrections and indicate that there are a lot of wastage within the treatment efforts. His conclusion is that prison programmes are not effective in reducing re-offending. Thus prisons cannot effectively rehabilitate offenders when its major objective is to punish offenders. According to Duguid (2000), rehabilitation cannot be effective in a "coercive environment" (p. 72). The nature of the prison environment undermines treatment of rehabilitation efforts. Foucault (1977) also criticises the medical model of corrections and concludes that the criminal justice system is unfair and produces criminals rather than transforming them. This is because the correctional goal is to cure the offender who is believed to have problems directly linking to the criminal behavior. Just as scientific medicine is used to cure diseases and illness, correctional treatments are also used to diagnose the problems that cause the criminal behaviour and then followed by the treatment.

Societal expectations are that the offender will reform instantaneously, and that the offender will lead a life that society will consider law-abiding. This assumption does not take into consideration a process of change or the different pathways that offenders go through to become part of society. After the treatments, the choice of ex-offenders committing further crime is above the jurisdiction of correctional institutions (Maltz, 2001).

The prisionalization process that prisoners experience during their incarceration prevents them from effective rehabilitation (Ortmann, 2000). The probability of prison to harden offenders and make them worse is an established fact in criminology. Prisons contaminate offenders because they are schools of crime. It is not surprising to find that little or no rehabilitation can be found in these facilities (Currie, 2002). The psycho-social environment of prisons is such that prison culture and its deleterious effects render

rehabilitation ineffective. Prison-based programmes have low “ecological validity” in that life in the “real-world” cannot be replicated in a prison setting (Howells, 2000, p. 2). From my person point of view, I am in agreement with nothing works in corrections because of the high rates of recidivism not only in Ghana but other parts of the world.

b. What Works

The evaluation of prison-based interventions have taken the correctional community beyond Martinson’s (1974) perspective of “nothing works” in corrections. Research works involving various correctional programmes have moved beyond the paradigm of ‘nothing works’ to the analysis of ‘what works’ with the objective of reducing re-offending outside the jurisdiction of the criminal justice system. Recidivism reflects the degree to which released inmates have been rehabilitated and the role correctional programmes play in reintegrating prisoners into society. Over the past decade, scholarly studies have shown that programmes focusing on proper risk assessment, skills training and placement, cognitive behavioural skills, housing assistance, post-release family and community support have proven to be effective in reducing re-offending (CRS Report to Congress 2007). Many researchers have shown that prisoners’ re-entry initiatives that combine work training and placement with counseling and housing assistance can reduce the recidivism rate (CRS Report for Congress 2007). Rehabilitation programmes provide opportunities for prisoners to change behaviours associated with criminal activity and learn more positive and productive ones. The reduction in recidivism can be translated into improvements in public safety and reintegration of former prisoners into the labour force, families, communities, schools, and religious organizations (Petersilia, 2003; Travis et al., 2001).

It is believed that correctional education would rather motivate them to stay out of prison than to obtain higher educational credentials (Owens, 2009). Giordano et al., (2002) postulate that cognitive transformation ensures motivation or openness to change which is a necessary condition for criminal desistance. Owens (2009) hypothesises that the higher the educational level of offenders, the greater the reduction in re-offending. This is because skills acquisition ensures higher social capital and greater access to legitimate job opportunities which help ex-offenders to success after release.

Crime prevention strategies that work focus on addressing the risk factors. Studies have shown that programmes such as cognitive behavioural treatment, therapeutic community are more effective than punishment based programmes such as deterrence, intensive supervision and surveillance (Koehler et al., 2012). Andrews, Bonta & Wormith (2011) find that offender treatment consistent with RNR principle is accompanied with a significant reduction in recidivism. Holliday et al., (2012) find that the overall risk level of offenders significantly reduced during treatment programme and that participants in the high risk level showed significant progress consistent with RNR principle.

However, Ward & Steward (2003) have criticized the RNR model by saying that the criminogenic needs ignores the human need of personal fulfillment including friendship, enjoyable work, loving relationships, creative pursuit, sexual satisfaction, positive self-regard and an intellectually challenging environment which are important variables because they reduce criminogenic factors. They argue that the “Good Life Model” is a framework of the offender rehabilitation which given its holistic nature, addresses the limitations of the RNR model. It is a strength-based approach based on the assumption that offenders have interest, abilities and aspirations to achieve and through the assistance parents and the general society, we can build capacity for the offender to

reduce the risk of offending. It is based on adding values to the life of the offenders rather than just removing the problems. Criminal behaviour is a function of the lack of internal and external assistance to ensure pro-social behaviour.

In spite of Martinson's claim that "nothing works" in corrections, other studies find that substance abuse training in the prison environment, namely, therapeutic community and cognitive behavioural programmes works to reduce re-offending (Lior & Sung, 2011). They report that although substance abuse programmes are highly needed in most prison facilities because 68% of jailed persons in America depend on drugs or alcohol. However, only 15-18% of inmates found guilty of substance abuse offence participate in substance abuse programmes in jails (La Vigne, Solomon, Beckman & Dedel, 2006). The lack of adequate substance abuse treatment in most facilities may contribute to the high rate of recidivism.

Studies by Allen, MacKenzie & Hickman (2001) shows that participation in cognitive-behavioural treatments lead to a reduction in recidivism. Studies have revealed that prison-based treatments can be effective in reducing re-offending (Duwe, 2010; Incardi, Martin & Butzin, 2004). Inmates who participate in education programmes are less likely to return to prison (Petersilia, 2003). Existing research has generally shown that prison-based educational and vocational programmes reduce recidivism and increase the probability of obtaining post-release employment (Holley and Brewster, 1998; Nuttall, Hollmen, & Staley, 2003; Saylor & Gaes, 1997; Wilson, Gallagher, & Mackenzie, 2000). According to Basoz and Hausman (2004), "correctional education is almost twice as cost effective as incarceration" (p. 9). Correctional education reduces crime because it increases the cognitive behavioural skills and equip participates to lead conforming life (Tyler, Murnane and Willett, 2000). "The risk associated with crime is lower when

getting employment is easier” (Basoz and Hausman, 2004, p. 4) In addition, prison education programmes socialize inmates with pro-social behaviour and help inmates to distance themselves from being contaminated.

In conclusion, I believe that reintegration efforts that begin with proper risk assessment, training and treatment, post-release employment and accommodation as well as family and community support can reduce the rate of re-offending.

2.5.4 Community-Based Rehabilitation

2.5.4.1 The Through Care Model

Some penologists believe that crime prevention strategies should focus on designing comprehensive interventions based on continuity of care to be able to provide a consistent assistance to offenders not only within the prison but also outside the prison. Post-release interventions should support the immediate transition from the prison to the community so as to reinforce the gains achieved during prison treatment and continue until a successful reintegration is completed (Fox, 2002).

In his work “Interventions for Prisoners Returning to the Community”, Borzychi (2005) indicates that correctional interventions have three main objectives namely, protecting the community, managing the offender and then helping the offenders to reintegrate after release from prison. In view of the fact that most of the offenders will eventually return home, it is prudent that correctional goals be focussed on rehabilitation and community support to prevent the likelihood of re-offending. Borzychi notes that there are two main approaches to corrections namely an offender-oriented approach and a community oriented approach. The former one is aimed at changing the attitudes of the offender while the latter takes into consideration the offender’s broader social context, by building

capacity and mobilizing community resources to support offenders' reintegration. This is because it is a system-wide mode of intervention aimed at preventing re-offending. All these pre and post interventions are a part of an integrated programme designed to address the offender's needs and challenges. Given the complex and intertwined nature of challenges of returning offenders, there is the need to collaborate efforts between government agencies, Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community organizations like faith-based organizations and family members of the offenders to ensure successful reintegration.

2.5.4.2 The Strength-Based Model (SBM)

In recent times, a new model of social reintegration has been identified by Maruna and LeBel (2002) as the strength-based approach which emphasises the use of personal and community resources to meet the needs and challenges of ex-offenders. It views offenders as resources to be managed rather than liabilities to be supervised. It assumes that the stigma of a prison record makes offenders predisposed to repeat offending. The strength-based approach is aimed at building capacity for ex-offenders to make them assistance providers rather than beneficiaries of assistance. This will lead to de-stigmatization by the community, because ex-offenders have something to offer the community.

According to Ward and Steward (2003), the "Good Life Model" is a framework of the offender rehabilitation which given its holistic nature, addresses the dynamic risk factors of offending. It is a strength-based approach based on the assumption that offenders have interest, abilities and aspirations to achieve and through the assistance of parents and the general society, resources can be mobilised to build capacity for the offender to reduce the risk of offending. It is based on adding values to the life of the offenders rather than

just removing the problems. Criminal behaviour is a function of the lack of internal and external assistance to ensure pro-social behaviour.

2.5.4.3 Multisystem Model (MSM)

This approach was developed in response to the need for family therapy and family-based services for offenders. It is based on the theory of human ecology and family, individual and community services. It lays emphasis on flexibility because of the uniqueness of the challenges faced by each family (Lior & Sung, 2011). The MSM is based on the proposition that human behaviour is determined by multiple factors such as the family, peers, school, neighbourhood and community. Criminogenic factors such as substance abuse, aggression, sexual promiscuity develop within a dysfunctional social system. Antisocial behaviour is a function of a deficit in any of these systems. At the individual level acceptance of deviant values, hostile intentions towards others make individuals highly vulnerable to antisocial behaviour. At the family level, lack of control, ineffective discipline, parental deviances are some of the predisposing factors. Association with bad friends, poor social skills while at the school level, academic failure, school dropout, low commitment to education and a poor school environment. At the neighbourhood level, low community cohesion in a socially dysfunctional system leads to antisocial behaviour.

It is important to note that the through-care, strength-based and the multisystem imply that offenders get released in a gradual manner and receive aftercare services.

2.5.4.4 The Parole System

Parole is part of the formal institutional support designed to assist offenders reintegrate into the mainstream society. In this regard, offenders, who have served part of their

maximum sentences and have been of good behavior, are released to serve the rest of their sentences under the supervision of an agency or an institution (Abotchie, 2012).

Ideally, as offenders are about to be released into the communities, it is advisable that reintegration planning should focus on connecting the offenders to the community resources to ensure their effective supervision. In this way, reintegration must begin with parole as part of the graduate release processes. As mentioned by Holliday, King and Heilbrun (2012) transitional processes have three phases, namely, the institutional, the structured re-entry, and the community phases. The structured re-entry phase (parole) begins approximately six months before the offender is released and continues until the adjustment to community supervision has stabilized (six months after release). It is important to note that with parole in the criminal justice system, offenders who are about to be released get supervised and connected to resources such as accommodation and employment opportunities. This is because the criteria to be considered before the parole status is given especially in England according to Abotchie (2008) include the following:

- i. The offender must possess employable skills.
- ii. The offender must have a house to reside in.
- iii. Availability of job opportunities.

In addition to the above, the parole board would also consider whether the offender has clothing, tools, the bus fare and capital to start a business. The supervisors submit quarterly reports on the parolee to the court. If the parolee makes good of his conditional discharge, then s/he is set free at the end of the term but if s/he does not, s/he will be brought back to serve the social term in prison. As a conditional discharge, parolees are generally expected to conform to the following conditions:

- i. A parolee should lead a law abiding life/not committing crime

- ii. He/she is to keep away from intoxicating liquor and drugs
- iii. He/she is to keep away from bad company
- iv. He/she is required to spend the evenings at home and refrain from gambling
- v. He is required to have a permanent address and be fully employed
- vi. He cannot change his address or employment without permission from the supervisor
- vii. He is to report regularly to his supervisor as and when required,
- viii. A female parolee cannot marry without permission from her supervisor.

These conditions of parole just as probation are often tailor measured to suit the needs of the parolee are to ensure their successful re-integration (Abotchie, 2012). In a study conducted by Alajo & Oguntuase (2011) in Nigeria, it was found that supervised programmes helped ex-offenders to get employed and remain at work, a finding which is consistent with the report of Pappozzi & Gendreau, (2005).

However, according to Maruna and LeBel, (2002), there are four main types of parole supervisions. These are risk-based, need-based, middle-ground and strength-based. The risk-based operates on the notion that offenders are dangerous and need to be monitored. The need-based supervision focuses on the criminogenic needs of the offenders. The middle-ground supervision combines both risk-based and need-based models while the strength-based model views offenders as assets to be managed rather than mere liabilities to be supervised. It is based on the premise that prisoners are stigmatized and it is this stigma rather than inherent forces that make them more likely to re-offend.

2.5.4.5 Aftercare Model

Offender rehabilitation becomes effective correctional treatment when it is accompanied with post release aftercare. The after care system is part of community supervision where

aftercare officers who are social workers attached to particular prison render essential services to the offenders. These services are so crucial in the re-integration of that offender into the communities. This is because through the services, social workers assist in case management, post-release adjustment and the full resettlement of offenders after release. This post-release programme can reduce recidivism provided it is properly designed, well implemented and well-targeted. In a study to assess the effects of a therapeutic community for substance abuse offenders accompanied with work release or aftercare, it was concluded that treatment intervention decrease re-arrest as a measure of recidivism (Inciardi, Martin, Butzin, Hooper, & Harrison (1997). Wexler, Melnick, Lowe. & Peters, (1999) find that participants of a three year in-prison and community aftercare had 27% re-incarceration rate, compared to 82% and 79% for prisoners who failed to participate in the programme and those in the control group respectively.

2.6 Evaluations of Offender Reintegration Programmes

The following offender reintegration programmes have been selected as a case study to assess their impacts on re-offending.

2.6.1 A Case of Minnesota Comprehensive Offender Reentry Plan Phase One

In order to ensure public safety and reduce government expenditure on crime prevention strategies, the Minnesota Comprehensive Offender Reentry Plan (MCORP) was launched on a pilot project in 2008. This project went through the institutional, social and community support systems. MCORP was design to ensure a comprehensive system based on continuity of care because it focused on the relationship between case management and community supervision to address the criminogenic needs of the offenders. Case workers relied on evidence-based strategies such as Level of Service

Inventory-Revised (LSI-R) as a risk and need assessment instrument. The evaluations were aimed at addressing questions such as:

1. Did MCORP reduce recidivism?
2. Did MCORP increase offenders' access to desired services such as employment, accommodation, education and faith-based programming?
3. Was MCORP effective?
4. What is the impact of community programming on recidivism?

In order to answer these questions, a randomised experimental design was used to assess the impact of MCORP on recidivism. Offenders were assigned to the experimental or control group 60 days prior to their release. The Department of Corrections had five counties for the experiment and the experimental group received institutional and community services for nine months beginning from January-September 2008. The study population was divided into 175 experimental and 94 control groups. Participants in the experimental group were assigned institutional case workers and supervising agents who worked closely to ensure proper planning, support and direction to address their strengths and needs in and outside prisons. Institutional case workers established a Transitional Accountability Plan (TAP) based on the model developed by the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) under the Transition from Prison to Community Initiative (TPCI).

Case workers reviewed information relating to the profile of offenders, administered LSI-R and interviewed offenders to ascertain their motivation on interventions that targeted their risks and needs. Information of offenders prior to and during imprisonment as well as six months after their release were obtained. Thus socio-demographic and pre-incarceration data including education level, sentencing county, type of offence, type of admission and criminal history were obtained from the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension

(BCA), Correctional Operations Management System (COMS) and Department of Corrections (DOC).

Multivariate statistical models were used to estimate the effect of MCORP on service delivery and re-offending. Multivariate logistic regression was used to estimate the impact of MCORP on service delivery. Least square regression was used to estimate the impact of MCORP on social support since it is measured on ratio-level. Survival analysis models were used to determine whether offender recidivated and how long it takes to re-offend or survive in the community.

The findings indicate that participation in MCORP significantly increased access to community programming and reentry services. It was revealed that 55% of MCORP offenders found employment as compared to 39% of the control group. MCORP offenders were less likely to be homeless or live with their parents after release from prison and were more likely to rent their apartment as compared to the control group who were more likely to reside in a single-family residence.

Although most participants for both groups were single, 35% of MCORP offenders were more likely to be involved in a committed relationship as compared to 24% in the control group. Most MCORP offenders were more likely to identify friends and social service professionals as a source of support. MCORP offenders received income support and were less likely to report having debts as compared to the control group. MCORP offenders were 48% participation in mentoring, restorative justice and faith-based activities as compared to 20% in the control group. Most MCORP offenders were more likely to participate in educational programmes in the community.

Studies that have either used process or outcome evaluation indicate that the implementations of the programmes are consistent with the design (Holl, Kolovich, Grady & Coffey, 2009; Sample and Spohn, 2008). For instance outcome evaluations which measure the effects of service delivery on behaviour found that implementation is associated with a reduction in recidivism. Evaluating Serious Violent Offender Reentry Initiative (SVORI), Winterfield, Lattimore, Steffey, Brumbaugh, Lindquist, (2006) observed that participating in SVORI increased transitional services relating to education, family, health and employment thereby reducing recidivism. However, there have been controversies in relations to outcome evaluations. While some studies have concluded that service delivery is accompanied with a reduction in re-offending (evaluations from Nebraska, Sample & Spohn, 2008) other results show the contrary.

For instance evaluation from New York (Wilson & Davis, 2006) shows that these programmes are not accompanied with a reduction in recidivism. The main reasons for this failure include design problems, short programme duration, lack of administrative oversight, poor implementation and the absence of aftercare (Wilson & Davis, 2006).

In short, research shows that correctional programmes that address the criminogenic factors such as education, vocational training, employment, accommodation, substance abuse and social support have been effective in offenders' transition into the community. The results of these evaluations show that offender reentry programmes that focus on service delivery are effective in reducing recidivism.

2.6.2 Missouri Reentry Process (MRP)

In 2002, acknowledging the increasing number of inmates coming home after the expiry of their sentences and the challenges they face, the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) established the Transition from Prison to Community Initiative (TPCI). This

initiative guides the Department of Corrections (DOC) to formulate crime prevention strategies to ensure successful offender reintegration.

The main objective of MRP was to ensure that reentry principles and practices in the state agencies and communities are harmonized to bring about enhanced self-sufficiency, reduce incarceration and improve public safety. The MRP had two main units namely the Transitional Housing Unit (THU) and the Transition Accountability Plans (TAP). The THU ensures that offenders are housed in a special arrangement in the correctional facility for 180 days during which period they had access to prison-based programmes such as job skills, life skills, cognitive behavioural training, parenting skills, substance abuse education and long-distance programmes. Besides other additional programmes including mental health assistance, personal identification assistance and faith-based support were also enlisted

The TAP also identifies the challenges and opportunities for offenders and work for their achievement.

The results indicated that THU were implemented to provide community reentry support. The main challenge was that Community Reentry Fund (CRF) was initiated to generate funds but those who could not pay were prevented from support services making them vulnerable to re-offence.

However, policy implications of this study are that collaboration among agencies is key to a successful offender reentry programme. Moreover, providing reentry support services such as education, employment, housing and substance abuse treatment reduce the likelihood of re-offending. Thus pre and post-release support services are important to offender reintegration.

2.6.3 Need-Based Rehabilitation of Offenders in South Africa

One of the countries that has a high crime and recidivism rates is South Africa. According to Herbig and Hesselink, (2012), this can be explained by the historical, socio-political circumstances, poverty, unemployment and ineffective rehabilitation and treatment of offenders. Most often, offenders are blamed for re-offending and labelled as incorrigible without first considering the efficiency of prison programmes. It is on this ground that accurate assessment of the risk factors provides the basis for effective reintegration programmes.

Consequently, most convicts in South African prisons are accurately assessed thereby paving the way for treatment interventions. The Department of Correctional Services (DCS) ensures the introduction of individual assessment and treatment, coordinate and facilitates effective rehabilitation efforts. However, this objective is hindered by the inadequacy of professionals such as psychologists and social workers. Nevertheless, the DCS ensures one-on-one, in-depth and personal assessment to determine the risk and needs of the offenders. Criminologists also assist in the risk prediction, case management and pre-parole evaluations on a one-on-one basis. Criminogenic needs relating to educational and vocational training substance abuse, violence, sexual impulsivity, problems with parenting skills and morality are addressed. However, awaiting trial detainees are excluded from participating in these programmes. It is important to note that the need-based rehabilitation programmes are aimed at maintaining the well-being of the prisoners and ensure their successful reintegration into the society.

In conclusion, my impression about these selected projects is that reintegration initiatives that are comprehensive enough to combine both formal institutional and community support are effective in reducing post-release recidivism.

2.7 Social Reintegration

The process of social re-integration usually begins immediately when the offender enters the prison and continues after release. The process includes institutional, parole and long-term support (CRS Report to Congress, 2007; Holliday et al, 2012). The aim of social re-integration is to ensure that offenders receive the required institutional training, supervision and permanent resettlement into the community.

Thus after the prison-based treatment interventions aimed at training, influencing and transforming the offenders, then social/community reintegration begins. The aim of social/community reintegration is to identify the problems within the social environment that constitute the risk factors and address them. Some of the problems include accommodation, employment and income, relational issues, positive community support, the prevention of victim-related problems and the achievement of post-release health care (Workman, 2011)

The community supervision can be administered by the aftercare officers. The officers work to improve the welfare of the prisoners as soon as the offender is sent to the prison. These officers establish contact or link family members to the offender. They also help the offender to draw up a suitable rehabilitation programme. They offer advice and guide the release of the offender and provide supervision during the re-entry (Abotchie, 2008). The aim of the aftercare is to ensure public safety by supporting ex-offender to lead a crime free life. According to Griffiths (2007), the concept of social reintegration specifically refers to the post-release, community-based interventions variously known by different terminologies as aftercare, transitional care, re-entry, reintegration, or resettlement are aimed at preventing recidivism. Griffiths notes that in recent times,

social reintegration begins while the offender is still in prison and continues until the offender is fully settled so as to ensure post-release adjustment.

2.7.1 Social and Community Support

The social reintegration of offenders according to Travis and Visher (2003), depends on the personal and situational characteristics of the offenders. These include:

- i. Prior to prison circumstances (e.g., demographic profile, work history and job skills, criminal history, substance abuse involvement, family characteristics),
- ii. In-prison experiences (e.g., length of stay, participation in treatment programmes, contact with family and friends, pre-release preparation).
- iii. Immediate post-prison experiences (e.g., moment of release, initial housing needs, transition assistance, family support), and
- iv. Post-release integration experiences (e.g., employment experiences, influence of peers, family connections, social service support, criminal justice supervision).

It entails efforts by the criminal justice system and community agents to ensure that offenders lead subsequently law-abiding lives. The involvement of informal social control partners provide interpersonal bonds that link ex-prisoner to employment, good neighbours, families, churches and the community. The family, charity and faith-based community organizations help in the re-integration of offenders. Community involvement has become a critical component of crime prevention in the form of partnerships involving municipalities, the police, schools, family, health and social services, and the private sector.

a. The Role of the Family in Offender Reintegration

The role of the family members is so crucial because they constitute a social network to the offender. The reason being that as a consequence of the vulnerability of offenders coming home (Petersilia, 2003; Social Exclusion Unit, 2002; Travis et al, 2001), the family, kinship and friendship ties provide the needed social capital which helps to make the transition successful. This social capital from the family together with the human capital namely the skills, knowledge and other adaptive capacities of the ex-offender ensure a smooth transition because they aim at providing ex-offenders with emotional relationships and material support. The social capital helps to achieve certain ends in which the absence pose serious challenges in the transition processes (Moore, 2011).

b. The Role of Charity-Based Organization (CBO) in Offender Reintegration

Introduction

The role of charity organizations includes oversight and advocacy, visiting prisoners and helping convicts before and after their release. The advocacy issues relate to influencing the parole board, advocating for pardoning of those sentenced to life imprisonment, repealing mandatory sentencing code, promoting legislation that allowed ex-offender to have access to employment, housing and public welfare benefits, advocating for the abolition of death sentences, meeting with top correction officials to promote reforms, establishing newspapers and journals where they publish prison news, organize correctional forum, providing testimony on criminal justice issues, community speakers, present papers in seminars and conferences and providing programmes to prisoners, ex-offenders and their families.

These programmes should include re-entry services to empower ex-offenders to be productive, law abiding members of society and be equipped with skills, job search preparation and readiness. They should provide frequent and periodic visits to prisons to discourage some of the abuses and improve the prisoners' welfare. CBO should also provide restorative justice services to help offenders to find meaningful accounts for their crime and build relationships with the community and victims. The informal social control system adopts different approaches in dealing with offenders in a manner which is different from the criminal justice system.⁶

c. John Howard Society of Manitoba (JHSM) Canada

The John Howard Society of Manitoba, Canada is a charity organization. The aim of the organization is to campaign for less crime, safer communities and fewer people in prison. The organization works with men who have committed an offence before, during and after imprisonment. They also work with victims, offenders and communities to respond to the causes and consequences of crime. The organization provides restorative justice and empowers individuals to live conforming life. They advocate for a criminal justice system that emphasizes on healing and restoring relationship for victims and offenders in the community. They promote active community participation in the criminal justice system.

In addition to the above, the organization also facilitates public negotiations on issues relating to community safety and promotes crime prevention strategies. This is done through community development and secures all the necessary resources and ensures the efficient and effective stewardship of these resources to support and ensure successful offender re-integration. The underlying causes of crime and the cycle of incarceration

⁶ The prison society from <http://www.prisonsociety.org/about/history.shtml>

and release are best tackled through investment in public services be it the criminal justice system, be it health, education or welfare.

The belief is that the criminal justice system alone cannot work effectively to reduce crime. The penal system should offer those who offend the chance to make amends. In order to achieve this belief, the organization gathers information on the offenders including their name, date of birth, address, phone number, intake location, reason for intake, contact person's name and relationship, contact person's number and address. Legal information include previous and current charges, incarceration date, release date, upcoming court date, court location, name and phone/address of lawyer. Others include ethnicity, home community, marital status, physical health concerns, mental health concerns, addiction issues, interested in parenting program, community sports, spiritual sports, current/previous employment, interested in addiction treatment, anger management, literacy, level of education, language spoken, gang affiliation and other comment. After the intake, the organization also links ex-convicts to other organizations that provide needed resources such as free meals, accommodation, employment, clothes etc. All these services are aimed at helping ex-convicts to live law abiding lives.

d. National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders

(NACRO)

The NACRO is a criminal justice-based charity organization dedicated with the responsibility of crime reduction and the prevention of re-offending in England and Wales. Crime reduction is achieved through designing and implementing rehabilitation and reintegration programmes. Some of these programmes include education, housing, offender management, resettlement advice, substance misuse advice and working in partnership to influence policy. For instance with respect to education, they provide people with skills, to get back to education, training or employment through pre-

vocational and vocational programmes, problem-solving skill and employment preparation.

NACRO also provide housing and wellbeing services, outreach services and information, guidance and counselling to help people change their lives, feel safer and be connected with their communities. With reference to offender management, they work with offenders in the courts, prisons and in the community and managing the transitional process to prevent offender relapse into criminal behaviour. They also work in the communities to give people the best chance of reintegrating into the society. With resettlement advice, they have national phone numbers and online service advice and support on resettlement matters to offenders and their families for instance finding somewhere to live, getting a job and the disclosure of criminal record. They also directly support employers and other organizations on matters relating to criminal record and allegations. With substance misuse, they also offer individuals and communities interventions, information, advice and guidance as to recover from drug and alcohol dependency and contribute to community development. Finally, they use the knowledge of what works to reduce crime and re-offending to inform policy decisions and shape practice by working with the government and public organizations. They also use their experience to pilot best ways of reducing crime. The government also consult them on issues relating to the criminal justice system.

e. Faith-Based Organisations (FBO)

Religion is one of the coping mechanisms of inmates to the pain of imprisonment (Kerley, Mathews & Schulz 2005). Faith-based community organizations play a crucial role in offender reintegration. In recent times, faith-based programmes have proved useful to correctional service providers. Religion provides emotional and spiritual support for prisoners. In their study of faith-based prison programmes in Mississippi,

Kerley et al, (2005) observe that participation in these programmes are associated with a reduction in experiencing negative emotions and the less likelihood to fight co-offenders and officials. In addition, they find that in prison participation in religious activities is also associated with a reduction in the feeling of anger, bitterness and coldness.

Re-entry services provided by charity and faith-based organizations have favourable implications for offender reintegration because they aimed at reducing unemployment and homelessness, prevent substance abuse, mental health and domestic violence. The re-entry services are seen as “what works” because they provides vocational training and employment, drug rehabilitation and halfway houses (Holliday et al., 2012, p. 436). In Ghana, the Coalition of Prison Evangelists (COPE), an amalgamation of Christian churches, provide re-entry services to offenders both within and outside the prison. However, the performance of these functions is impeded by lack of finance.

Theoretical Explanation of Social Reintegration

2.8 Introduction

According to Moore (2011), there are three stages in offender re-entry namely, societal re-entry, re-entry as emergent social integration and re-entry as social integration.

2.8.1 Societal Re-entry

This is the first stage where the offender gets relocated into the society. It is the starting point of the social-psychological transition from prison life into the free world. Many ex-offenders perceive this stage as critical because it signifies the first test of carceral experience. Prior to the release, most of the offenders have a strong desire not to re-offend (Burnett & Maruna, 2004). However, as to whether this will be achieved or not

depends on a number of factors including the personal commitment, the response from family and community members. The role of the family members is so crucial because they constitute the social network to the offender. This is because, ex-offenders face a lot of challenges such as poor education, lack of job experience, accommodation problems, and lack of a social network, they have problems with drug and alcohol abuse and mental health problems (Petersilia, 2003; Social Exclusion Unit, 2002; Travis et al, 2001), family, kinship and friendship ties provide the needed social capital which helps to make the transition successful.

2.8.2 Re-entry as Emergent Social Integration

This stage of the re-entry process goes beyond physical re-entry into the society into an improved personal and social transformation. It is a process where ex-offenders get assimilated into emotional relationships and obtain material support to ensure social integration. In this stage, the social capital from the family, together with the human capital, namely the skills, knowledge and other adaptive capacities of the ex-offender make the transition a success. The social capital helps to achieve certain ends in which the absence pose serious challenges in the transition processes. For Farrall (2004), social capital is a feature which enables individuals to achieve their basic needs. The main features of social capital include bonding, bridging and linking the individual to the needed resources. Bonding ensures that there are connections and interactions between intimate groups such as the family and friends or lineage. Bridging deals with the connections with friends and other institutions. For Putnam (2000), bonding social capital is good for 'getting by' in life but bridging social capital is crucial for 'getting ahead'. Linking social capital is the relationship between individuals and groups in a system of heterogeneous, stratified and inequitable power. Woolcock (2002), linking

social capital as ‘the capacity to leverage resources, ideas and information from formal institutions beyond the community’. It is important to note that the relationships between human and social capital are interactive in that human capital changes through the interaction with social capital. For instance, bonding social capital is fundamental but bridging social capital ensures access to employment opportunities while linking social capital.

However, some offenders especially those serving long term sentences may risk damaging their social capital (Sapsford, Moore & Watson, 2005). For instance, long separation may affect a marriage relationship and the roles previously performed will have to be re-negotiated.

2.8.3 Re-entry as Social Integration

This stage signifies the actual settlement of ex-offenders into the community. It is usually seen in term of the ex-offender finally settled or socially integrated. This stage is usually characterized with a deeper sense of a “we” feeling, togetherness and permanence in relationship involving emotional and social attachment and thereby helping ex-offenders to desist from crime.

Bazemore & Stinchcomb (2004) observe that communities can be both a major stumbling block and a facilitator to offender reintegration. According to them, community actors serve as the primary agents in designing reintegration approaches. Reintegration programmes for returning offenders help to acquire new identities by intermingling with pro-social others and performing important services. They advocate for a social-psychological way of engaging ex-offenders in a “new pro-social roles” (p. 3). This helps to change the criminal capital and establish informal social control. By balancing community support for ex-offenders and accountability, reintegration aims at changing the stigmatized identity by enhancing ex-offenders’ sense of identity and

changing community's perspective on the offender. The re-attachment of ex-offenders to their communities reduces the stigma of criminal label (Maruna, 2001) and helps them to be better equipped to lead law-abiding lives.

The applicability of theoretical stages of social reintegration in Ghana's corrections is that efforts should be made to rehabilitate offenders to ensure their motivation to succeed after release from prison. This should be followed by support from the family and community so as to survive the first test of carceral experience. Moreover, ex-offender should be assimilated into emotional relations and obtain material support from the family and community members. Finally, ex-offenders should be socially accepted and perform their role as law-abiding citizens.

2.9 Differential Social Support and Coercion Theory

Differential social support and coercion theory is a new integrated theory of crime propounded by Colvin, Cullen and Vander Ven (2002). It is based on two main themes, namely, social support and coercion. "Social support is an organised network of human relationships that provide assistance to others in meeting their expressive and instrumental needs which prevents crime" (Colvin et al., 2002, p. 24). Social support can also be seen as the assistance from members of the communities, social networks and confiding partners (wife or husband) in meeting the expressive and instrumental needs of that person (Cullen, 1994). Expressive support includes emotions, self-worth and dignity while instrumental support involves the material and financial assistance, advice and connections for positive social advancement in legitimate society. It can be found at the various levels of society such as the interactions within the family, among friends, and within the larger social networks of neighbours, communities and nations. Expressive and instrumental social support systems are typically provided during informal social

relations among families and friends and also within the formal institutions such as schools, workplaces and government agencies involved in welfare and criminal justice.

However, the extent of social support varies across families, neighbourhoods, communities and nations. Social support reduces strain by providing the needed resources to help cope with the situation and prevent crime (Cullen and Wright, 1997). Social support strengthens social bonds because providing assistance ensures mutual trust between the giver and the receiver (Cullen, 1994) and prevents crime.

On the other hand, coercion is the force that compels or intimidates a person to comply with specific instructions due to the fear it creates. Coercion can be interpersonal as it happens within the family settings or impersonal involving invisible forces such as unemployment. Coercion can also involve the actual or threat to remove social support (Colvin, 2000). It is important to note that coercion produces strain thereby predisposing a person to commit crime. Just as social support, coercion can occur at the micro and macro levels. The micro level coercion according to Patterson (1989, 1990) includes aversive family interchanges and coercive disciplinary patterns. It also includes physical attacks and non-physical coercive exchanges including teasing, humiliation, critical comments, suspicions and ostracism. Coercion produces alienated bonds while weak social bonds bring about juvenile delinquency (Hirschi, 1969). Agnew (1985, 1992) explains that negative stimuli such as being in an inescapable space and parental rejection are the sources of strain. For instance, coercive interpersonal relations produce anger and the intensification of these relations lead to defiance to authority (Sherman, 1993). Moreover, impersonal coercive forces such as in a period of unemployment produce strain thereby leading to crime.

This theory postulates that social support prevents crime but coercion predisposes a person to commit crime. However, social support and coercion have an inverse relationship. The implication is that the more the support, the lower the coercion and the opposite is true. The premise of this theory is based on the observation by Athens (1994) that:

Social experience emerges from the interaction between an individual as a human organism and the social environment. What makes this interaction so unique is that they generate thoughts and emotions. Actions by one person towards another can be supportive or coercive and occurs on a more or less consistent or erratic basis. Differential social support and coercion can generate social psychological responses that are differentially related to criminal and noncriminal outcomes. Individuals are embedded in socially coercive or supportive relationship at various points in the life course (p.15).

If the individual is embedded in a consistent social support from legitimate sources, the individual experiences low anger, a high sense of self control and a strong social bond based on moral commitment to others. Consistent social support leads to pro-social behaviour which in return elicits support from others, thereby building social capital. If support from legitimate source is erratic, it produces a moderate level of anger, low self-control and a social bond based on calculated interest. The social psychological effects are that it makes the individual prone to exploratory deviance through illegitimate sources to supplement the inadequate support. If access to illegitimate sources is blocked, the individual gets embedded in a moderate level of unskilled and disorganized crime. However, if access is given, the individual engages in a chronic level of skilled and organized crime.

If coercion is erratic, the individual is embedded in a strong other-directed anger, low self-control, and weak and alienated social bonds leading to predatory crime. This is because erratic coercion increases the sense of injustice created by arbitrary treatment. This leads to the propensity for chronic criminal behaviour. If access is blocked, the

individual engages in chronic levels of unskilled and disorganised crime. Both erratic social support and erratic coercion seek out illegitimate support because it remains the only dependable source of assistance in meeting both the expressive and instrumental needs of a person. If the individual is embedded in consistent coercion, the individual feels a strong sense of anger directed towards the self. This is because outward expression may be met by repression. The self-control is based on the fear of punishment and weak and calculated social bonds. Consistent coercion leads to low pro-social behaviour and the propensity for mental health problems.

Using the above mentioned theory to explain recidivism in Ghana, it is clear from the findings that offenders in Ghana prisons experience consistent coercion because of the constant monitoring, the pain of imprisonment and the penal labour the prison provide as a form of punishment. The coercive interpersonal relationship between the prison officials and the offenders implies that offenders receive erratic formal institutional support in meeting their expressive and instrumental needs. This finds expression in poor and ineffective rehabilitation as most governments in Ghana do not want to invest in correctional education. As a consequence, the majority of offenders leave the prison environment without receiving the vocational and educational skills to transform them into productive and law-abiding citizens.

This consistent coercion means that custody requirements take priority over treatment consideration. The implication is that most returning inmates in Ghana have high criminogenic needs because of the lack of educational, vocational and specific training to enhance their human capital. Consequently, majority of these returning inmates get discharged without a strong motivation to succeed. Some of them blame themselves for their helpless situation. The lack of rehabilitation coupled with the lack of gradual release, apprenticeship or midway home and supervision and weak aftercare systems

means that most returning offenders find it difficult to readjust into normal life. Thus prison is used as a form of structural arrangement mainly to isolate, stigmatize and punish or coerce the offenders without proper rehabilitation. These factors contribute to their inability to reintegrate into the communities after the release.

Besides, most offenders leave prison with barely anything in their hands. Although the majority of them finally return to their families, they face erratic coercion and lack the necessary social and community support especially from the family, neighbours and faith-based groups. This prevents ex-offenders from satisfying their expressive and instrumental needs. The erratic coercion manifests in a form of aversive family relations between ex-offenders and their families. Most ex-offenders face humiliation, suspicion, critique, insults, discriminations and ostracism from their families. Most of them do not receive the needed assistance from family members to enable them satisfy their expressive and instrumental needs. Moreover, the stereotypical perception of most Ghanaians that ex-offenders are dangerous persons also implies that neighbours, churches/mosques and the general public are unwilling to support these disadvantaged persons in society. In addition, the stigma of a prison record also prevents them from getting steady employment. Consequently, most ex-offenders lack emotional, material, moral and spiritual support from informal social control agents which are crucial in the transitional process. The lack of support from legitimate sources, both micro and macro, has negative social psychological effects on ex-offenders. This is because it produces negative stimuli and strains on them and further weakens the bonding and bridging social capital. This creates a sense of hopelessness and reduces the self-esteem of ex-offenders making them resort to illegitimate sources of support by developing the criminal capital leading to the relapse into moderately unskilled and disorganised criminal behaviour and a chronic level of unskilled and disorganised crime. In other words, the inadequacy or

absence of institutional, social and community support services constitutes the risk factors responsible for exploratory deviance and chronic criminal activities leading to re-arrest, reconviction and re-incarceration again and again in Ghana.

CHAPTER THREE

A REVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF GLOBAL INCARCERATION AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM IN GHANA

3.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews at the history of global incarceration in Africa and examines the criminal justice system in Ghana with a particular emphasis on the prisons. It further looks at the trend of recidivism in Ghana using published annual reports of the Ghana Prisons Service from 2004 to 2011.

3.2 The History of Global Incarceration

Although the exact origin of prisons is not easy to ascertain, it is on record that some primitive form of prisons was in existence in early times and also the medieval era in a form of dungeons wherein condemned persons were held awaiting execution. The history of imprisonment as a legal form of punishment can be traced from the third century AD when a Roman emperor by name Justinian in his Digest AD 533 referred to some principles introduced earlier by a Roman Jurist Called Ulpian who gave account that “prison ought to be used for detention only but not for punishment” (cite in Abotchie, 2012, p. 64). One of the earliest forms of prisons were in the form of workhouses and Bridewells in England in the late 1500s where vagrants, drunkards and beggars were kept and provided with employment and accommodation (Cole, 1979).

The idea of modern imprisonment came during the period of enlightenment in 1750. The enlightenment brought a lot of reforms to the criminal law leading to changes in the penal policy from physical punishment to psychological punishment (cited in Abotchie, 2012). Modern corrections owe its origin to the penal reforms in America. Until the mid-18th century, crime was seen as sin and not a social problem, consequently, offenders

were physically tortured. There were jails for suspects awaiting trial and debtors but because of their deplorable conditions, a Quaker by name William Penn proposed a penal reform involving imprisonment, hard labour, fine, reformation and rehabilitation. Consequently, Walnut Street Jails were introduced to provide the prisoners with education, religion, health services and work. Auburn Prison was subsequently established for economic ventures such as producing clothing, shoes, barrels, carpets, engines, boilers and furniture for American consumers while the rest were exported to Canada and Latin America⁷.

3.3 Incarceration in Africa

According to Jeremy Sarlin (2008), incarceration as a form of punishment was unknown to Africa until the arrival of the European colonial powers in 1800s. Before then, wrongdoing in African societies was rectified through restitution rather than punishment as the local criminal justice systems were victim-oriented rather than perpetrator-oriented with the aim of compensation rather than incarceration. In rare cases, imprisonment and capital punishment were used as the last resort in cases involving recidivism and witchcraft that were seen as a threat to local communities. Imprisonment only began in Africa in the 1800s. In spite of the absence of prisons in the pre-colonial era in African societies, prisons were used in the Atlantic Slave Trade and South Africa's apartheid era in the early 19th century. The colonialists used imprisonment as a means of punishing offenders and also as an instrument of political repression against African opponents. Thus imprisonment was aimed at deterrence and retribution rather than reformation, rehabilitation and reintegration of the offenders into the society. In other words, imprisonment was a means of economic, political and social subjugation of the African

⁷ Factories with fences retrieved from <https://www.unicor.gov/information> on 18th June, 2015.

people. For instance, petty offenders were physically tortured and used as cheap labourers. Imprisonment was an instrument of racial superiority and Africans were seen as sub-human beings or uncivilized.

3.4 The Criminal Justice System (CJS) in Ghana

This section of the chapter looks at the criminal justice system in Ghana with a particular emphasis on the Ghana Prisons Service (GPS). The origin of the criminal justice system in Ghana can be traced from the social contract signed by some coastal chiefs and England popularly known as the Bond of 1844 (Danquah, 1957; Metcalfe, 1964). The sources of Ghana law include the 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution, legislation, orders, rules and regulations by persons or authorities under the power conferred by the constitution, existing laws and the common law (1992 Constitution, Chapter 4, Article 11). This Constitution shall be the supreme law of Ghana (1992 Constitution). Existing laws are those laws that were in existence before the constitution and include the Criminal Code, 1960 (Act 29) and the Criminal Procedure Code (Act 30). It is important to note that the Criminal Procedure Code stipulates the procedures for arrest, investigation, the type of court with jurisdiction over the case and sanctions prescribed by the court (Appiah-hene Gamfi, 2009).

Ghana laws uphold the fundamental principles of justice such as fairness, natural justice, equity, due process, rule of law and human rights (1992 Constitution, Chapter 4-5). The law requires that the police shall inform suspected criminals of the reasons for their arrest or detention and their right to an attorney at public expense. Based on the principle of justice delayed is justice denied, the law requires that such suspects must be arraigned before a court of competent jurisdiction within 48 hours of the arrest. The Attorney General's Department and the Ghana Police Service prosecute all criminal cases in

Ghana. Criminal sanctions may include the death penalty, imprisonment, and a fine, removal from the office or the disqualification to hold and enjoy any office in Ghana.

Therefore, the criminal justice system in Ghana is made up of the police, the judicial and prison services. These institutions constitute the foundation of the social control mechanisms of the state because they help in the interrogation, investigation, arrest, trial, conviction, punishment and rehabilitation of offenders. Thus, the police arrest suspects, the courts adjudicate and prescribe sanctions and the prisons keep custody of convicts and even suspects (Appiahene-Gyamfi, 2011).

3.5 The History of Prisons in Ghana

The penal system in Gold Coast started on an irregular basis from the early 1800s when the management of the forts on the coastal areas were placed in the care of a committee of merchants under the leadership of Captain George Maclean. By the year 1841, a form of prison had been established in the Cape Coast Castle to confine debtors. By 1850, there were prisons in James Fort, Ussher Fort, Cape Coast Castle and Anomabo Castle where 129 prisoners were held⁸. Therefore, the criminal justice system in Ghana is a product of colonialism. According to Seidman (1969), several ordinances were passed to regulate the conduct of the prisoners and guards after 1844. Some of these ordinances defined prisons as a separate system requiring confinement at night, penal labour by day and a minimum diet. By 1875, the Gold Coast was formally known as a colony and the British criminal jurisdiction was gradually extended to the rest of the southern part of Ghana. By 1876, the Gold Coast Prison Ordinance (GCPO) which was modelled after the English Prison Act of 1865 was introduced⁹. Under the ordinance, prison regulation

⁸ <http://www.ghanaprison.gov.gh/brief.html> retrieved on 22th June 2015

⁹ <http://www.ghanaprison.gov.gh/brief.html> retrieved on 22th June 2015

and standing orders were adopted (Appiah-hene-Gyamfi, 2011). The Prisons Department (PD) became separate from Police Administration due to some problems and was placed under the Director General of Prisons. In 1964, the Prisons Department became autonomous from the Civil Service and renamed Ghana Prisons Service. Therefore, prisons in Ghana owe its origin to the British colonial masters.

The Ghana Prisons Service is a partner in the criminal justice system responsible for ensuring the safe custody of convicts and also ensures their reformation and rehabilitation. The treatment of offenders is such that adult offenders are sent to the prisons but that of juveniles are under the control of the Department of Social Welfare (DSW).

The DSW controls Industrial Schools as well as Remand and Probation Homes. There are three types of industrial schools namely Junior and Senior Boys Industrial Schools and Girls Industrial School. The placement of juveniles in any of these institutions depends on age and sex. The Junior Boys Industrial School is at Sekondi and caters for young offenders who are below 14 years of age. The Senoir Boys' Industrial School is at Agona Swedru and caters for boys between 15 and 17 years of age. The Girls Industrial School is at Osu in Accra and caters for girls below 17. However, boys between 17 and 21 are detained at the Ghana Borstal Institution (GBI) which is run by the Ghana Prisons Service. Incurrigible juveniles between 8-16 years may be transferred from Industrial Schools to the Borstal Institute at Mamobi in Accra (Abotchie, 2012). The main objectives of the institutional treatment are to ensure efficient, humane and safe custody of convicted persons from the courts, as well as their reformation, rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

The Prisons Service is governed by the Prisons Service Council (PSC) which is charged with the responsibility of advising the President on policy issues relating to the organization and maintenance of the prison system in Ghana. The PSC also supervises the operations of prisons and the promotion of senior officers up to the rank of Assistant Directors of Prisons. According to the 1992 constitution, membership of PSC includes a chairman appointed by the President who is the vice president, the Minister for the Interior, the director-general of prisons is appointed by the President of Ghana on the advice of the Council of State, a medical practitioner nominated by the Ghana Medical Association and a lawyer nominated by the Ghana Bar Association. Other members include the Attorney-General or his representative, a representative from the Ministry or Department of State responsible for Social Welfare, representative from religious bodies, two members of the Prisons Service, one of whom shall be of a junior rank and other two members appointed by the President (Ghana Prison Service Annual Report, 2011).

The prison officers are classified under three main groups namely staff, trades and escort, within the Service. The staffs perform general administrative and financial duties and may rise to the status of senior officers and officers-in-charge or prison wardens. Trades available include artisans, plumbers, mechanics, basket-and-cane weavers, makers, masons and carpenters. The escort performs guard and escort duties (Appiah-hene Gyamfi, 2011).

The Service has four major branches and a few specialized departments which include general administration, prison establishment, training, and the Ghana Borstal Institution as well as the accounts, legal, operations, records, industries, farms, and personnel departments. In addition to Ankaful Maximum Prison commissioned most recently on 8th November 2011, the service comprises forty-seven (47) establishments located in all the

ten regions in Ghana. At the apex of the institutional hierarchy is the Prisons Headquarters in Accra which also houses the offices of the Director-General of Prisons and two deputies, five Directors of Prisons and other principal office holders. The Headquarters is the administrative centre of the service where prison policies are formulated for effective management of all prison establishments in Ghana. There is a Prison Officers' Training School (POTS) in Accra with the sole objective of ensuring human resource development of the Ghana Prisons Service and Senior Correctional Centre (Borstal Institution) for efficient rehabilitation of offenders in Ghana. There are seven Central Prisons (CP), thirteen Local Prisons (LP), seven Female Prisons (FP), three open Camp Prisons, nine Agricultural Settlement Camp Prisons (ASCP), one Medium Security Prison and one Contagious Disease Prison (CDP) (Ghana Prison Service Annual Report, 2011). Apart from Nsawam Female Prison, all the female prisons are attached to the male prisons. Six male prisons are maximum security, one is a medium-security facility, but 25 are minimum-security prisons (Appiah-hene Gyamfi, 2011). Seidman (1969: 448) has described Ghanaian prisons as having "great walls, a watchtower, all the apparatus of a dungeon keep". Thus it has internal security measures in a form of the panopticon.

Some of the challenges faced by the Ghana Prison Service include the limited budget allocation, overcrowding in prisons, inadequate accommodation for officers and the unwillingness of society to support prisoners' rehabilitation, welfare and resettlement. The rate of congestion in the prisons worsens due to increasing prison numbers. The 5.9% rise in the prison population is due to over-stayed remand prisoners, an increase in the average daily lock-up. This increasing prisoner population is also partly due to the incidence of re-offending among ex-convicts. For example in 2008, 19.3% of admitted convicts had had one or more previous convictions. The mean age of prisoner admitted

in 2008 was 29.4 years. It is estimated that 88.7% of the inmates are between the ages of 18-45 years (Ghana Prison Annual Report, 2008).

Although there is educational and vocational training for some inmates, inadequate qualified teachers, lack of materials and equipment pose a great challenge to the realization of effective rehabilitation. Formal education at the junior and senior levels as well as non-formal (functional literacy) and vocational training in trade skills exist for inmates. However, these challenges make it difficult to ensure an effective transformation into productive beings. Unfortunately, efforts by the GPS to establish after-care project for ex-convicts to facilitate their smooth re-integration have been hampered by lack of funding (Ghana Prisons Service Annual Report, 2008).

It is important to note that the prison facilities in Ghana have both male and female sites. The Assistant Directors of Prisons are chief administrators. Both male and female sites have an administration block, a criminal records office, telephone exchange and a chapel/mosque. The prisons also have blocks for various categories of criminals namely petty thieves, first time offenders, gangsters, professional racketeers, psychotics, and neurotics, psychopaths, armed robbers, murderers, those condemned for manslaughter, narcotic drug dealers, fraudsters, kidnappers, remand prisoners etc. There are special blocks for political detainees, condemned prisoners and an isolation block for those with infectious diseases (Shirley, 2000).

3.6 The Trend of Recidivism in Ghana (2004 – 2011)

Crime statistics may be affected by some characteristics such as the nature or type of the offense, frequency, intensity, geographical distribution as well as the age and sex of the offender. From such figures, criminologists can determine crime trends, the increases

and decreases of crime overtime (Adler, Mueller & Laufer, (1995). Crime as a social problem should be a concern to the citizens.

In Ghana, the perception that crime rates are on the increase or decrease usually comes from the media, police and prisons. Such crime trends indicate the changes over time in the levels and patterns of crime. For instance, the police occasionally embark on a public education on crime prevention with measures including the dissemination of crime statistics. Such public education takes place during news conferences, police week celebrations, in television programmes and newspapers, press-releases relating to drug/narcotic offenses and violent crime, especially armed robbery, organized and fraud related crimes involving both locals and foreigners (Abotchie, 2008).

The Ghana Prison Service (GPS) in their annual reports also publish crime statistics relating to convict, remand and juvenile offenders including sex, age distribution of prisoners, type of offence committed, and their monthly and regional distributions. For instance in 2008, the average convict population was 9,845. Out of this figure, 98.2% were male while 1.8% were female. Male to female offender ratio 54:1 (Ghana Prisons Annual Report, 2008). Besides, offenses committed by prisoners in Ghana include

- (a) Offenses against the person,
- (b) Offenses against property and
- (c) Offenses against public order, health, and morality.

Offenses against the person include murder, manslaughter, threatening, causing harm, assault, abortion, infanticide, rape, defilement, child stealing, slavery and slave dealing, and attempted suicide. Therefore offense against a person can be violent and economic in nature. Offenses against property include arson, criminal damage, larceny theft, burglary and pick pocketing, fraud, dishonest receipts, extortion, embezzlement, and swindling.

Robbery is a property offense and an economic crime under Ghana's Criminal Procedure Code (CPC) 1960, Act 29, and section 149-150. Offenses against public order, health, and morality relate to national security, public health and morality. It includes treason, misprision of treason, sedition, mutiny, abetment of mutiny, piracy, publication of false rumour and "false reports injuring the reputation of the state," currency offenses, including counterfeiting and trafficking, smuggling, driving offenses, possessing and firing of guns, noise making and obstruction in the streets, including defacing public notice, throwing rubbish into the streets, shouting, behaving violently in prison. Other offenses in this category include wilfully causing financial loss to the state, perjury, slavery and slave dealing, trial by ordeal, drug/narcotic offenses, and prostitution, vagrancy and food safety violations. Finally, bestiality or having carnal knowledge with an animal, sodomy, and possessing obscene pictures are prosecuted under offenses against public order, health, and morality.

Among these categories of offense, offenses against the person have the highest rates (48%), followed by offenses against property (44%), and offenses against public order, health, and morality (8%). Among the individual offense categories, assault and larceny theft (67%) have the highest incidence rates. Most of the offenses recorded by the police are non-serious or misdemeanours (Appiahene-Gyanfi, 2011).

Although crime statistics published by the GPS in their annual report include categories of convicts, any detailed information relating to the type of offense, frequency, geographical distribution as well as the age and sex of recidivists are usually excluded from the publications. As a consequence, changes over time in the levels and patterns of re-offending in Ghana are difficult to estimate. In addition, classified and tabulated facts relating to recidivism rates compiled not only by the GPS but also by the police and the courts suffer from inaccuracies because they are not representative of the entire repeated

crimes in Ghana. Most recidivism rates go to the “dark figure” because there is no proper mechanism of identifying first offenders from re-offenders. The result is that the recidivism rates compiled by the GPS do not represent the true picture of re-incarceration in Ghana. Below are recidivism rates in Ghana from 2004 to 2011

Table 1 Recidivism Rates in Ghana

Year	Convicts Admitted	Recidivism Rate	Percentage (%)
2004	8,157	1,713	21.0
2005	7,977	1,819	22.8
2006	8,810	1,722	19.5
2007	9,895	2,038	20.6
2008	9,377	1,806	19.3
2009	8624	1678	19.5
2010	7,942	1,847	23.3
2011	7,011	1,556	22.2

Source: (Ghana Prisons Service Annual Report, 2004-2011).

Table 1 represents the recidivism rate in Ghana from 2004 to 2011. The figures indicate that recidivism rates in Ghana between 2004-2011 have been fluctuating. It can be seen that the rate increased by 5.8% between 2004-2005 and then reduced by 5.6% between 2005 to 2006. Then it increased again by 15.5% between 2006-2007, however between 2007 to 2008 the recidivism rate reduced by 23.9% and further decreased by 7.6% between 2008 – 2009. Then it increased by 9.1% between 2009-2010 and finally decreased by 18.7% between 2010 -2011.

This is a worrying situation that demands that subsequent publications by the GPS should include not just the categorization of convicts into first offenders and re-offenders but detailed crime statistics on the type of offense, frequency, regional distribution, and age and sex distribution especially for re-offenders in Ghana. In order to resolve this problem, some of the variables such as sex, age, frequency of offense, marital status, religion, educational level, residence at the time of arrest, the number of repeated offenses their categorization into economic crime, violent crime and crime against public order as well as the sentences associated with them have been considered in explaining the characteristics of re-offenders in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This study employs a mixed methods approach with a particular emphasis on the qualitative research design. It sought to explore and understand the lived experiences and the transitional challenges of offenders and ex-offenders in Ghana, which result in a relapse into criminal behaviour. As observed by Van Den Hoonaard (2012), the importance of a qualitative study includes the fact that it involves “a variety of approaches through which researchers attempt to understand everyday activities and social settings of the people they study” (p.2). Marlow (2005) states that, qualitative information involves the non-numerical examination of phenomena, using words instead of numbers, and focuses on the underlying meaning of patterns of relationship. This research approach is consistent with the phenomenological, interpretive or social constructionist approach with paradigmatic assumptions based on human interaction, negotiation, interpretation, understanding and experience of the world in a meaningful ways. From the perspective of qualitative scholars, social reality is constructed by the researcher and the respondents involved in the social situation (Cresswell, 1994).

4.2 The History of Nsawam Medium Security Prison (Study site)

The study was conducted at the Nsawam Medium Security Prison (NMSP) in Ghana. The NMSP was established on a one mile square plot of land located at about two kilometers along the outskirts of the Nsawam township on the eastern side of the Nsawam-Accra road. Oral tradition has it that the precinct of the prison is a sacred place where chiefs and important personalities have been buried. The land originally belongs to the Adonten Division of the Aburi stool which comprises the Osei Stool, the Duoyedin

and the Dobro. In acquiring the land, the then Convention People's Party (CPP) government was assisted by the late Ohene Djan who was incidentally a royal of the Aburi Stool. As a friend of President Nkrumah and a former sports director, Ohene Djan was very instrumental in the negotiations leading to the release of the land to the government. The NMSP was built by the government to decongest the central prisons in the country.

By 1949, the overcrowding had reached its peak. The McCarthy Committee on Prisons was set up to look into the overcrowding situation in the country's prisons. The Committee presented its report to parliament in 1951 and recommended that a new prison be built at Nsawam near Accra. It also recommended dormitory accommodation instead of a cellular construction. The construction began in 1956 and received the first inmates on 10th October 1960 with CSP J.K. Arhin Acquah as the first Officer-In-Charge. The NMSP is a large multi-security level prison with an official capacity of 717 prisoners and an average of 20 prisoners per cell.

The parameter of the prison is one mile with a high degree of internal security. For instance it has an outer parameter wall of 9 inches thickness and about 20 feet in height. It has a command gate designed with an arched double metal gate which opens back and forth. The compound has 5 separate cell units called blocks and 5 other blocks are annexes, segregation and a special block (condemned block) all of which house the inmates.

The blocks are surrounded by a high wall topped with barbed wire. A high chain link fence, topped with barbed wire prevents prisoners from approaching the wall thus creating a security zone. Besides the cell blocks, there are other buildings such as the school library, infirmary, chapel, mosque, kitchen, administration block and workshops.

The administration block is a two-storey building so that there can be constant observation of the inmates. There is also a visiting block with a provision of not more than 6 visitors at a time. The operational function of the prison has not changed much with the exception of gallows.

The choice of NMSP was motivated by the fact that it is the largest prison in Ghana (Appiah-hene Gyamfi, 2011). It accommodates all the categories of criminals from different security levels and different types of offences such as offenses against the state, the person, property, and offenses against public order, from first time petty offenders to hardened criminals. It further accommodates offenders from shorter sentences to life imprisonment.

4.3 Target Population and Sampling Technique

The recidivists (both within the prison and discharged) and their family members, together with the correctional service providers (prison officers and social workers attached to the prison) and prison evangelists were purposively selected for the study as key participants. The choice of this target group was motivated by the fact that they have the characteristics, knowledge and experiences about the transitional challenges of offenders in Ghana.

4.4 Sample Size and Procedure

According to Healey (1996), researchers in the social sciences are faced with the challenge of populations that are too large to test. Researchers do not have enough resources in terms of time or money to collect data on every case of concern. Even with a small population, the logistics for testing is difficult to obtain. To deal with this problem, social researchers select samples, or subsets of cases from the population of interest.

According to Duverger (1964), though there are problems with the choice of the sample size, this can be resolved through the calculation of a sample size that is not beyond a certain margin of error. Thus as a general rule, one-tenth of a sample population ought to be representative. For qualitative research, it is not easy to predict sample size from the start, it is, however, advisable to sample until theoretical saturation. Purposive sampling was used and data saturation was arrived at 87 respondents. The following are the details of the research participants:

Table 2 Sample Size

Recidivists	34
Prison Officers	43
Social Workers	3
Prison Evangelists	2
Family Members of the Recidivists	5
Total	87

Source: Fieldwork, Nov. 2013

Purposive sampling was considered appropriate because it ensures that the sampling units are intentionally selected based on their peculiar characteristics, knowledge, feelings and experiences about the transitional challenges of offenders in Ghana. In other words, purposive sampling ensures that the sampling population as identified above satisfies certain features and attributes which are not randomly distributed in the total population but were typical or exhibit most of the characteristics of interest to the study.

According to Marlow (2005), key informant sampling, relies on people in the community identified as experts in the field of interest.

4.5 Techniques and Instruments of Data Collection

Face-to-face interviews and observation were used to collect the data. A semi-structured interview guide was used to solicit information from the re-offenders, correctional service providers, key family members of the re-offenders and prison evangelists. Interviews allowed for flexibility in that the researcher usually had some few questions in mind but had the freedom to phrase questions and probe responses which were unclear. Thus the interviewer could go beyond written questions and probe respondents' underlying feelings and reasons. This enabled the interviewer to understand the sentiments that followed a particular answer (Twumasi 2001). For instance, the semi-structured interview guide included questions such as: previous convictions, current conviction, and nature of offence, sentence period, what were the attitudes of your spouse, children, kinsmen and community members towards you when you were first discharged? (See appendix 1). The interviews were conducted in English and local languages such as Twi, Ga and Ewe and transcribed verbatim through field assistant. The local languages were used because not all the re-offenders spoke English. Field notes were written after each interview. Fieldwork experience was that on arrival at the gate I would be searched, leave all belongings tagged and escorted to the administrative secretary. She then asks of my mission and refer me to the officer directly in charge of the recidivists. The national leader of the inmates would be contacted who then contact the block and cell leaders for the recidivists to be interviewed. Also, the administrative secretary would refer me to the appropriate unit to interview the officers. This covered a period of four months. Moreover, certain patterns of the inmate behavior such as

overcrowding, their interactions with the prison officers and among themselves were observed.

4.6 Dependability and Validity of Results

While establishing good quality studies through dependability in qualitative research, Seale (1999, p. 266) observes that the “trustworthiness” of a research report finds expression in dependability. The research findings can be replicated given the same research instruments which truly represent the appropriate measurement of the main objectives of the study. However, the research results may be affected by the small sample size of 87 respondents. Consequently, there might be some threat to external validity which may affect the generalizability of the results. Moreover, the threat of internal validity may also be present since the research instrument may not clearly capture all the questions regarding the transitional challenges of offenders in Ghana.

4.7 Data Sources

In order to find the nature of transitions for offenders in Ghana, both primary and secondary sources of data were used. The primary data sources include semi-structured interviews from the field of study. My secondary data source was the official crime statistics from the Ghana Prisons Service annual report publications to describe the trend of recidivism in Ghana from the year 2004-2011. Other secondary sources include documents such as textbooks, journal articles, magazines, films and documentaries on the prison. These helped the researcher to know and understand what people generally say about prisoners, how they make decisions about prisoners within Ghanaian popular culture, how these experiences are shaped by institutional arrangements, how it affects the self-conception of the offenders, identity formation and subsequent behaviours.

4.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical clearance for the study was obtained from the Ethics Committee for Humanities at the University of Ghana, Legon. In addition, permission was sought from the Ghana Prisons Services at the Headquarters in Accra. The study was conducted in an atmosphere that respected the rights and dignities of the offenders. In this way, the researcher ensured voluntary participation, informed consent, protection from harm, confidentiality, anonymity and the absence of invasion of privacy and deception. Marlow (2005) states that confidentiality occurs when the researcher knows the identity of the respondents and their associated responses but ensures nondisclosure of this information. Appropriate language or words were used and respondents were debriefed at the end of the data collection.

4.9 Data Handling

The field notes were edited and coded to generate concepts. Thus the data were reduced to analyzable units by first editing. Key words, phrases, themes, and patterns of occurrence were identified and assigned labels. The labels were used to identify concepts and ideas. In other words, the codes were used as “heuristic devices” because these helped to identify concepts and ideas (Coffey & Alkinson, 1996, p. 27). In order to move from coding to interpretation, the data was re-contextualised to display subcategories of a category. Thus the codes were categorised and sub-categorised to make them separate from the data that have no bearing on the research objectives. These were followed by a period of reflection, analysis and interpretation of findings. According to Morse (1994), data analysis leads to conceptualizing and theorizing. For Morse, theoretical development begins with understanding and synthesizing it. For Coffey and Atkinson

(1996), the inability to link codes to concepts, ideas and theories render a data meaningless.

Therefore, the data was analysed and reflected upon by asking questions about the data, what the data were saying about the concepts and how the same concept had been used in a different setting. Then I looked for themes, patterns, inconsistencies, contradictions, linking the concepts to current literature and theorizing from the data or hypothesis about recidivism. The analysis was aimed at determining from the qualitative perspective whether a significant relationship existed between recidivism and the risk factors.

CHAPTER FIVE

PRESENTATION OF MAIN FINDINGS:

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RECIDIVISTS AND FORMAL INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

5.1 Introduction

Research shows that offenders have criminogenic needs and deficiencies that are directly related to their commission of crime. Prison and community-based interventions are aimed at changing the attitudes of the offenders and giving them skills as well as social and community support so that they can lead conforming lives after their release. This chapter discusses the socio-demographic characteristics of the recidivists and identifies the predominant formal institutional support services available to offenders in Ghana. It further attempts to find out whether the offenders have adequate access to this support services and the impacts of the services on the attitudes and reintegration of offenders in Ghana. The socio-demographic variables of re-offenders including their sex, age, marital status, religion, educational level, and residence at the time of arrest, previous conviction, nature of offense, frequency of offense, history of substance abuse and mental illness were examined. The analyses are based on responses solicited from 87 respondents including re-offenders, correctional service providers, and key family members of the re-offenders, prison evangelists and discharged re-offenders which provide the basis for the findings.

5.2 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Re-Offenders

The sex, age, marital status, religion, educational level, residence at the time of arrest, region of birth, previous convictions, nature or type of crime and the period of sentencing are some of the basic facts that are important in criminological research.

These characteristics have direct bearing on the outcome of the research, namely to describe the trend of recidivism in Ghana. The table below gives details of the variables, rationale for the inclusion of each variable together with the findings and explanations.

Table 3 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Recidivists

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	31	91.2
Female	3	8.8
Total	34	100
Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
19-29	12	35.3
30-39	12	35.3
40-49	5	14.7
50-59	4	11.8
60-69	1	2.9
Total	34	100
Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	10	29.4
Married	5	14.7
Divorced	13	38.3
Separated	5	14.7
Significant Relationship	1	2.9
Total	32	100
Religion	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Christians	26	76.5
Moslems	8	23.5
Traditionalists	0	0
Pagans	0	0
Total	34	100
Education	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Illiterate Primary/Elementary	7	20.6

Junior High School/Middle School	11	32.4
Senior High School/O & A' level	7	20.6
Tertiary	7	20.6
Total	2	5.9
	34	100
Employment Prior to First Arrest	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Self/Informal Employment	31	91.2
Formal Employment	1	2.9
Unemployment	2	5.9
Total	34	100
Place of Residence at the time of Arrest		
Accra Metropolis	16	47.0
Eastern Region	11	32.4
Brong Ahafo Region	2	5.9
Volta Region	2	5.9
Northern Region	1	2.9
Western Region	1	2.9
Ashanti Region	1	2.9
Total	34	100

Source: Fieldwork, Nov.2013

Sex and Criminality

Sex has always been a strong determinant of criminal activities. Sex differences in crime are distinctions between men and women as perpetrators of crime. Crime statistics compiled by Uniform Crime Statistics in America indicate that male-female arrest ratio is 3:1 and for violent crime, the ratio is 6:1 (Siegel, 1998). Crime is predominantly a male activity. This is because in all criminal population, men outnumber women

especially in serious offenses¹⁰. This high level of male offending in relation to female is universally recognized by criminologists and it is a phenomenon known as the gender gap in crime (Heimer, 2000; steffensmeier & Allen 1996).

From the table 3, it can be seen that 91.2% of the recidivists sampled were males while only 8.8% are females. This confirms report that male offender rates are much higher than female rates in Ghana (Ghana Prisons Annual Report, 2008). Although both males and females have the propensity to commit criminal behaviours, more men commit crime than women do. This observable disparity in male and female criminality in Ghana could be attributed to socio-cultural factors.

Socio-culturally, it is believed that gender-based crime differences in Ghana are a function of socialization. Thus the gender roles and expectations affect crime rates of men and women in patrilineal and matrilineal societies in Ghana. It is believed that men's involvement in crime originates from the view that these societies are patriarchal. Traditionally, most girls are more supervised, and protected against outside influences. In addition, girls are socialized to be less aggressive than boys. Thirdly, most girls respond to provocation with the feeling of anxiety and depression while boys are encouraged to take risks and to be tough and aggressive. Therefore, boys have more opportunities and inclinations to commit crime.

As suggested by Heimer & De Coster (1999), the gender roles and expectations are used as a system of control because people tend to accept the nature of the role inherent in each different sex. Some of these differences are more closely associated with violent

¹⁰<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/142953/crime/53428/Characteristics-of-offenders#toc53429>

behaviour than others. For instance boys and girls in Ghana are socialized differently and the socialization process makes boys more delinquent than girls.

The 8.8% of women re-offending is an indication that women generally commit less crime than men. Adler (1975) observes that traditionally, lower crime rates for women can be explained by their second-class economic and social positions. The gender roles within the nuclear family is that the father performs roles which make him to be more of a leader and provider, whilst the mother performs the expressive role of giving emotional support and socializing children. The implication is that by their position and role, men would be more prone to criminal behavior than women. Carlen (1990) states that a woman's crimes can be known as the 'crimes of the powerless.' It is important to note that these studies (Adler, 1975; Carlen, 1990) are appropriate to Ghana because most women in Ghana live in poverty with little power to change the situation.

However, some criminologists view the lesser crime rate of females as a deliberate attempt by the criminal justice system to be lenient towards women (Pollack, 1950). This has given rise to the chivalry hypothesis which explains that female criminality often goes into the dark figure because of the protective attitudes towards females in popular culture (Steffensmeier, 1980).

Perhaps the most significant gender difference in crime is the overwhelming dominance of males in more organized and highly lucrative crimes (Steffensmeier, 1983). This is evident in the arrest, conviction and incarceration data in most societies. According to Adler, Mueller & Laufer (1995), with the exception of crimes such as prostitution, shoplifting and welfare fraud, males traditionally commit more crime than females at all ages. Male criminal participation in serious crime greatly exceeds female involvement, regardless of data source, crime type, level of involvement, or measure of participation

(Steffensmeier 1983, Steffensmeier & Allan 1995). Western (2007) revealed that the effects of “prison boom” on gender relations are that more men are incarcerated while women remain in the free community to cater for the family (p. 512). These men are the youth of working age with small children.

Moreover, the expression of masculinity or femininity influences the criminal involvement of boys and girls. Parsons (1964) is of the view that masculinity is internalized during adolescence and this predisposes boys to be more delinquent than girls. Therefore, boys commit crime as a means of constructing their masculinity. The most dominant form of masculinity is known as hegemonic masculinity where women are expected to be submissive. This is equally applicable to Ghanaian societies where men’s position provides them with a different access to power and resources which leads to different constructions and expressions of masculinity and this leads to different types of crime. Some men construct their masculinity around physical aggression, anti-social behavior, delinquency and violence.

Age and Criminality

Age is another strong determinant of crime. Crime statistics have revealed that the age of the offender is normally recorded and age distribution of crime covering a variety of contexts over a long period are not hard to find. Age has been instrumental in the rise of the longitudinal study that developmental and life-course theorists adopt in their criminological research. These researches lay emphasis on the association between age and such concepts as career criminals, recidivism, and desistance. Most studies often compare rates of crime for boys and girls for particular offenses, thus suggesting considerable flexibility in the age distribution by sex.

From the study, it was revealed that although the age of the recidivists range between 19-69 years, 85.3% of the recidivists were aged between 19-49 years. This is made up of young adults (19-29), medium aged adults (30-39), old adults (40-49) while 14.7% were the aged between the ages of 50-69. The mean age of the Ghanaian recidivist is 35.5 years. The above data is an indication that most of the criminal activities are committed by the youth. The high prevalence of delinquent behaviour among the youth has long been observed in Ghana. The fact that 85.3% of re-offenders were aged between 19-49 years old confirms report that about 88.7% of Ghanaian prisoners are aged between 18-45 years (Ghana Prison Annual Report, 2008).

This finding is consistent with criminological research which has established that age is inversely related to crime. The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (2005) established that although the youth are the asset of every country, they also constitute source of social vulnerability. Adding that globally, the only single fact about crime is that it is committed by teenagers and young adults regardless of the predisposing factors. Criminality in the young is an important issue for discussion because crime is mostly committed by young people. The assumption is that the youth are more likely to engage in criminal behaviour than the aged. Young offender is a term that encompasses juveniles and young adults up to the age of 24 years (Martinez & Abrams, 2013) and these people are vulnerable to patterns of repeated offending. Young people who behave aggressively may harm not only themselves but also their family, the community and society at large.

Studies that examine the relationship between age and crime have shown that the slope of the relationship ascends rapidly during adolescence, peaks in early adulthood and then falls thereafter. For instance "Age-of-onset" studies easily suggest that the age

distribution of crime varies across ethnic or racial groups, however, criminal activity rises with age, peaks in the late teens, and then falls (Hirschi & Gottfredson, 1983). Some possible explanation for this phenomenon is that as people get older, they take on more personal responsibilities (for example work or a career) and social responsibilities (for example caring for children or partner) which make them consider the effects of their behaviour on people they value. Age is negatively correlated with recidivism. According to Gendreau, Little & Goggin (1996), the younger an offender is released, the higher the likelihood of re-offending.

Marital Status and Criminality

There is a strong relationship between marital status and crime (Sampson & Laub, 1993). The impact of marriage on the participation in criminal activities has been of interest to criminologists. From the data above, it can be seen that 38.3% of the respondents were divorcees, 29.4% were single, 14.7% were married, and 14.7% were also separated while 2.9% were involved in a significant relationship. The implication is that the lack of a marital relationship by most of the offenders leads to criminal persistence in Ghana. There is a significant body of literature to suggest that if there is a positive marital relationship can result in criminal desistence (Farrington & West, 1995; Sampson and Laub, 1993; Warr 1998). A marital union can strengthen the attachment or the bond of solidarity thereby serving as a social control mechanism.

Hirschi (1964) suggests that the closer a husband is to his wife, the less likely he is to get into crime since the involvement in criminal behaviour will jeopardize the close relationship. The social ties in marriage bring about a system of obligation, mutual support and restraint the criminal propensity. Marriage ensures that there are changes in everyday activities and patterns of association with other people. Marriage has the potential to change the routine activities of a person, especially with regard to deviant

friends. Marriage can ensure that ex-offenders have obligations and reduce leisure activities outside the family. In addition to social support, many wives control the management of the house and act as informal social control agents of their husbands. According to Waite and Gallagher (2000), marriage makes people better off partly because it constrains the couple from certain behaviours, which, while perhaps immediately attractive, does not pay off in the long run. Getting married involves having an identity which brings about changes in the self-conception through cognitive transformation (Giordano et al., 2002).

Religion and Criminality

Sociologists and criminologists have long recognized the potential links between religious belief and delinquent behaviour (Ross, 1921). A number of sociological theories have attempted to explain the mechanisms through which religious belief may affect criminality. For instance the “hellfire” hypothesis posits that religion has a deterrent effect on criminal behaviour through punishment after death (Hirschi & Stark, 1969).

From the table 3, it can be observed that 76.5% of the respondents were Christians while 23.5% were Moslems. This figure may be due to the fact that 63% of the Ghanaians population are Christians while 21% are traditionalists and 16% are Moslems. Even with the Christians, only about 9-11% are born again with the rest being Church-goers, therefore it is probable that because most Ghanaian Christians are not born-again, most of these Christians have not renewed their minds from wrong doing. It is also probable that the Ghanaian traditional ethical and moral values of collective responsibility as well as beliefs and practices associated with the supernatural have become weak as a result of social change. The implication is that most Ghanaians do not fear the punishment accompanied with the violation of relevant religious principles and in addition do not

expect to enjoy the blessings associated with its conformity. According to Ross (1921) religious belief system rather than the physical laws of society serves as a means of social control. As Abotchie (2012) rightly puts it “in Christianity, the promises of God as contained in the scriptures assure believers that those who do the word instead of being just mere hearers would attain the Summum Bonum namely the ultimate good which is salvation and eternal life” while those who do not obey the commandments are punished (p. 16). Christianity, for instance, teaches that a man born of a woman has the high probability of committing evil but the conscience would prevent such occurrence. The implication is that the Ten Commandments in the Old Testament of the holy Bible enjoin all citizens to abide by the rules and regulations to ensure peace just as Islam teaches Moslems to adhere to the five pillars and enjoy the blessings of Allah and all these ensure conformity to the norms of society. The regular evangelism in prison is meant to transform the offenders to imbibe these religious teachings so as to transform them into law-abiding citizens after release. However, re-offending after the spiritual rehabilitation suggests that prison-based reformation efforts are not complemented with the social and community support needed to ensure informal social control and desistance from criminal behaviour. This is because through religious activities in the prison, some of the inmates renew their minds and repent from wrong doing, but because they do not enjoy the support from the families and community members, their predisposition to re-offend becomes overwhelming.

Education and Criminality

From the table above, it can be seen that 53% of the recidivists were illiterate or at most have primary or elementary education, 20.6% each have basic and secondary education while 5.9% have tertiary education. Some of the participants dropped out of school at the primary and basic levels due to financial problems. The lower educational attainment

among the penal population than the general population has been a recognized problem of offender reintegration in Ghana. In a paper presented at the 108th International Seminar, William K. Asiedu (1999) observed that as at 1990, 48% of the inmate population in Ghana were illiterate, 39% had elementary education, 8% had secondary education, 3% had technical education, 1.5% graduates while 0.5% had post-graduate education respectively.

“While illiteracy and poor academic performance are not direct causes of criminal behaviour, people who have received inadequate education or exhibit poor literacy skills are disproportionately found within prison” (Petersilia, 2003, p. 32). This lower educational attainment among offenders coming home implies that there is a higher probability of re-offending. There are several reasons why low educational attainment can promote crime. Given the fact that education provides the opportunity through which one can achieve social mobility in Ghana, it remains that the low educational attainment implies that offenders lack the needed skills to enhance their opportunity to access legitimate work and income and lead a law-abiding life. This may lead to the reliance on an illegitimate opportunity structure such as the development of a pro-criminal attitude, skills and associates leading to re-offending.

Place of Residence at the Time of Arrest

Almost half of the respondents (47%) were arrested in the Greater Accra Metropolis. The rapid growth of urbanization in Africa, combined with a high population density and cultural diversities is correlated with high crime rates. Africa is urbanising at about 4% a year. This will inevitably lead to high crime rates due to the concentration of the cultural goals in these areas (UN Office on Drugs and Crime, 2005). The concentration of many Ghanaians in the urban areas such as Accra according to Abotchie (2008) originates from the economic, social and cultural push and pulls factors of migration. Economically,

most Ghanaians migrate to the urban centres because of the industrial gap between the rural and urban centres, compulsory market schemes or fixed prices for agricultural products is a disincentive to most farmers. Besides, the traditional system of production where the farm products are shared either equally between the landlord and tenant (abunu system) or 70% for the landlord and 30% for the tenant (abusa system) is also considered unfair and a disincentive. Moreover, mechanization of agriculture together with the medical factor results in surplus rural labours who in the absence of rural jobs are compelled to migrate to the urban centres for greener pastures. Also, social mobility is based on ascription to in the rural areas but in the urban centres, mobility is readily achievable. These factors push the rural folks to the urban areas. Finally, most of the rural areas in Ghana do not have the infrastructural and social amenities, as a result, these areas are dark, drab and dull. All these factors force or attract the recidivists skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled to migrate to the urban areas for wage paid labour and a more exciting life. However, given the inability of the urban areas to economically cater for their rural migrants, a phenomenon which is known as “over-urbanization” takes place and most of the migrants do not succeed in getting jobs and are compelled to innovate, resulting in high rates of criminal activities in the urban areas.

Health Problems and Drug Usage Among Inmates

The inmates in Nsawam Medium Security Prison are disproportionately burdened with medical and mental health problems. This study reveals the prevalence of communicable and chronic diseases among the inmate population and mental health problems. Some of them include hepatitis, influenza, tuberculosis, blood pressure, skin rashes, malaria, colds, headache, waist pain, eye problems, hernia and asthma and so on. Although all the inmates have National Health Insurance which covers these diseases, it does not cover some health problems like hernia. In addition, it is an undisputed fact that substance

abuse problems are prevalent in the NMSP. There is evidence to suggest that most of the inmates have a history of substance abuse.

There is a relationship between substance abuse and crime. According to Goldstein (1985), drugs may affect crime in three ways. In the first place, individuals engage in crime as a result of the psychopharmacological effects of drugs. Drugs and alcohol are often used in connection with prior incidents of victimization and the means to commit other criminal behaviours. Secondly, drug users obtain money illegally to buy drugs and finally individual may become aggressive in connection with the being drug. Participation in prison-based substance abuse treatment can significantly reduce re-offending (Chamberlain, 2011). Cognitive Behavioural Programmes relating to substance abuse reduces recidivism (Inciardi et al. 2004). However, studies have revealed that inmates are more likely to re-offend when they have a criminal history, are unemployed, abuse drugs and alcohol (La Vigne et al, 2006; Petersilia, 2003).

5.3 Previous Convictions and Sentencing

One of the key issues to consider in recidivism studies is the number of times a person has been to prison. A relapse into criminal behaviour leading to re-arrest, reconviction and re-incarceration brings about a criminal record. The criminal record summarizes the history of criminal behaviour of a person, including the number of times a person has committed an offence, the type of offence and the methods used in committing that offences and the number of years sentenced to prison. There is a relationship between a criminal record and repeated offending. It has been hypothesized that the higher the criminal record, the greater the probability of re-offending (Gendreau, Little & Goggin, 1996). Criminal history poses a major challenge to ex-offenders because it prevents them from being trustworthy, getting employment and having a good relationship with others.

Table 4 Previous Convictions

PREVIOUS CONVICTIONS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
First Time	0	0
Second Time	32	94.1
Third Time	2	5.9
Total	34	100

Source: Fieldwork, Nov. 2013

From the fieldwork, it can be noticed that 94.1% have acquired the criminal label for at least two times while 5.9% of the participants have been to prison three times. The type of offence and the sentence associated with it is illustrated in table 5.

Table 5 Criminal Convictions and Period of Sentencing

Name of Recidivist	Type of Offence and Period of Sentence		
	First Offence	Second Offence	Third Offence
Yaw	Stealing/6months	Stealing/8months	
Kofi	Stealing/6months	Narcotics/5years	
Kwasi	Fraud/remand	Dishonest receiving/7years	
Ben	Stealing/1year	Armed robbery/15years	
Owusu	Stealing/6months	Stealing/25months	
Boakye	Stealing/6months	Possessing firearms/3years	
Prince	Fraud/5years	Defilement/5years	
Kwabena	Stealing/6months	Stealing/12years	
Michael	Stealing/2years	Narcotics/3years	
Bismark	Stealing/6months	Narcotics/1year	Narcotics/6years
Clifford	Stealing/6months	Defilement/12years	
Papa	Stealing/18months	Assault/5months	
Acheampong	Stealing/1year	Stealing/8years	
Nana	Stealing/2years	Fraud/18months	
Baba	Stealing/4years	Assault/7years	
Nii	Assault/1year	Rape/5years	
Togbe	Stealing/2years	Murder/life	
Nyarko	Assault/6months	Assault/8months	
Joseph	Stealing/3years	Stealing/2years	
Bompata	Suspected robbery/remand	Suspected robbery/remand	
Salifu	Stealing/8months	Armed robbery/15years	

Frank	Armed robbery/10years	Abetment of crime/remand	
Bishop	Assault/1year	Armed robbery/15years	
Kwaku	Threat to kill/3years	Unlawful entry/4years	Unlawful escape/7years
Emmanuel	Stealing/2years	Armed robbery/41	
Daniel	Stealing/2years	Armed robbery/40years	
Onipanua	Assault/1year	Fictitious trade 12years	
Brother	Suspected robbery/2years	Robbery/30years	
Oteng	Traffic offence/2years	Conspiracy to steal/14years	
Monica	Assault/1year	Narcotics/10years	
Yaayaa	Assault/6months	Default/1year	
Owusuaa	Assault/6months	Stealing/1year	

Source: Fieldwork, Nov. 2013

Table 6 Current Conviction

CURRENT CONVICTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Stealing	7	20.6
Armed Robbery	7	20.6
Narcotics	4	11.8
Assault/murder	4	11.8
Fictitious trade/default	3	8.8
Defilement/rape	3	8.8
Dishonest receiving/fraud	2	5.9
Abetment of crime/conspiracy to commit crime	2	5.9
Unlawful Entry/Escape	1	2.9
Possessing firearms	1	2.9
Total	34	100

Source: Fieldwork, Nov. 2013

About 65.5% of the recidivists were incarcerated within 3 years after their release. This finding is consistent with findings of Lagan and Levin (2002) that the majority of ex-offenders in the US re-offend within three years after their release. Some of the offenses that brought these offenders back to prison include stealing, armed robbery, narcotics, dishonest receiving, fraud, possessing firearms, defilement, rape, assault, murder, abetment of crime, conspiracy to commit crime, unlawful entry, unlawful escape, fictitious trade and debt.

Although sentencing range from less than six months to 41 years and life imprisonment, it was revealed that a total of 58.8% were serving sentence between less than 1 year to 10

years, 2.9% serving between 40-50years while 2.9% serving life sentence. The rest of the participants were on remand. Stealing and armed robbery alone constitutes 41.2% of the total re-offending behaviour. This confirms the publication by the Ghana Prison Service annual report (2008) that stealing constitutes 41% of the total offence committed. Moreover, the menace of robbery and armed robbery has been threatening the security situation in Ghana in recent times. No one is immune from the unimaginable brutality associated with this criminal behaviour. Attafua (2008) described the heinous and traumatic effects of armed robbery in Ghana and indicated that:

Even peasant women travelling at dawn on a dusty rural road to distant markets are sometimes ambushed by gun and cutlass-wielding bandits who beat them, rape them and steal their monies or other valuables... Some are humiliated beyond endurance and locked up in the toilets, some are killed in gruesome way (p. 1).

Inferring from Table 6, it can be seen that economic crimes (stealing, armed robbery, dishonest receiving, fraud, fictitious trade and debt constitute 55.5%, followed by crime against public order (narcotics, possessing firearms, abetment of crime, conspiracy to commit crime, unlawful entry and unlawful escape) which also account for 23.5% while violent crime (defilement, rape, assault and murder) equally account for 20.6%.

5.4 Types of Crime Committed by Recidivists in Ghana

The type of crime committed by the recidivists can conveniently be categorized under economic crime, crime against public order and violent crime. Below is a table of criminal typology.

Table 7 Types of Crime

Types of crime	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Economic crime	19	55.5
Crime against public order	8	23.5
Violent crime	7	20.6
Total	34	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, Nov. 2013

An interesting issue that emerged from the study is that most of the re-offending behaviour occurred in a greater degree of severity. In other words, the subsequent criminal activities were more severe than the first offence. For instance one recidivist had stealing as the first offence with 2 years sentence and armed robbery as the second offence with 41 years sentencing. Another recidivist had assault as the first offence with 6 months sentence, stealing as the second time offence with 5 years sentence and fraud as the third offence with 7 years sentence.

5.5 Predisposing Factors of Recidivism in Ghana

The study revealed that the predisposing factors of recidivism in Ghana can be conveniently grouped under primary and secondary causes. The primary causes of recidivism include formal institutional and social/community push factors while the secondary causes include formal institutional pull factors.

5.5.1 Introduction to Formal Institutional Factors

With reference to the objective of finding out the predominant formal institutional support for the offenders in Ghana, the study found that institutional support begins with

prisonization, followed by reformation, rehabilitation and aftercare. Prisonization occurs where all the inmates in NMSP just like inmates in other parts of the world undergo universal prisonization (Clemmer, 1940), where they get assimilated or go through the culture and existing patterns of prison life. The process of prisonization includes reception, orientation, diagnosis and classification and case management.

Prisonization is the formal institutional factor (secondary factor) that pulls ex-offenders to re-offend in Ghana. This is because there is a well-defined inmate social structure in a form of cell, block and national leaders who supervise the activities of other inmates and coordinate the activities between inmates and authorities. Besides, there are cell courts which together ensure discipline and orderliness in the prison. These subcultures provide statuses and roles to the inmate elites and further give them recognition and respect by both the inmates and officials.

Moreover, the hardship in the free world makes it relatively safer for some to be in prison because of the free services they receive. Some of these services include food, clothing, shelter and the absence of the payment of utility bills such as water and light. There are also recreational facilities to keep inmates active and happy. These in a way provide a sense of survival in prison in which some of them lack access to in their post-released lives. These institutional pull factors are the secondary predisposing factors of re-offending in Ghana.

5.5.1.1 Prisonization in Ghana

As soon as a convicted person arrives in NMSP, the first place he/she is sent is the reception. Some of the activities that take place at the reception include the following:

- a. Checking of documents to ensure that he/she is the right person to be legally detained.

- b. Searching of belongings for proper records and safe keeping.
- c. Receiving prisoners' uniform/cloth for proper identification.
- d. Explanation of prison rules and procedures
- e. Initial health screening to identify the current health status

After the reception, the new prisoner is then given the orientation to integrate him/her into the prison environment. This usually takes place in a separate section (diagnosis center) for a period not more than three weeks. Then the assessment occurs immediately after the completion of reception and orientation. The assessment is a process by which information is obtained about offenders to assist in making decisions about their placement and management while in prison. Through the assessment, information relating to educational opportunities, work, visit and health are obtained from the prisoners. The assessment is used to identify offenders who are more likely to escape, re-offend after their release from prison as well as their strength and needs. It is important to note that the risk assessments ensure proper identification of the offender's needs so that programmes can be designed to address these risk factors. These programmes differ depending on the risk factors and the type of re-integration challenge to be addressed. Thus it is based on the completion of the assessment and classification that case management can begin. The following are some of the excerpts from the perspective of correctional officers in answer to the question "how is the prison service preparing the inmates for release?"

From the gate, fresh offenders are sent to the admission centre for proper documentations and identification. Here, detailed information is obtained regarding the offence, sentence, weight, colour etc so as to compare the offender during and after admission. There are two main forms namely too small (for offenders sentenced below 2years) and too large (for those above 2years). Usually, all the offenders come with a warrant. There are three types of warrants namely remand warrant (for those on remand), distress warrant (where an offender is supposed to pay a fine or serve a sentence in addition to the fine) and commitment warrant (where an offender has no other alternative but to serve the sentence). At the

admission centre, there is a system of identifying offenders with a photograph (which started from Dec. 2013 only in Nsawan Prison). From here, they are sent to the diagnose centre for orientation (Prison Officer).

At the diagnose centre, first time offenders are conscientized with the rules and regulations of the prison, to allay their fears and other prejudices they might have before imprisonment. Personal information from the offender as well as those on the warrant or from the police are obtained in order to determine the risk and needs of the offender. However, this unit finds it difficult in obtaining information from the family members partly because some of the inmates do not want their parents/family to know that they are in prison or the inability of the unit to access the family members of the offenders due to lack of resources (Prison Officer).

If a prisoner arrives, after being searched at the gate, he is escorted at the administration office, after the necessary documentation, he is sent to the diagnosis centre for identification of talents to enable us place him at the appropriate block and the rule and regulations (Prison Officer).

At admission, we speak to them and find out their problems, we have psychologists and counsellors who prepare them for staying in the prison (Prison Officer).

5.5.1.2 Inmate Social System

Part of the explanation of prisonization is the way of life among the prisoners. In NMSP for instance, as early as 5 am, the rising bell will be sounded to alert the inmates who will be subsequently awake by 6 am. The row would be checked between 6am and 6.30am. This is followed by breakfast while lunch and supper are served simultaneously. The breakfast may be porridge or rice water while the lunch and supper may include gari, banku and so on. Usually, one person from each block will go for the food which would then be shared among all the inmates in the block. All the inmates are fed with one cedi eighty pesewas (GH¢ 1.80p) a day an amount which is less than one dollar. However, 8 times checks are conducted by the prison officers within the various shifts. Table 8 provides details of daily checks in NMSP in Ghana.

Table 8 Security checks

Early shift	6am-2pm
Main shift	8am-4.30pm
Afternoon/late shift	2pm-8pm
Night shift	8pm-6am

Source: Fieldwork, Nov. 2013

After the breakfast, all the inmates go about their routine activities. Some of them go to school or workshops while others also go to the farm. There are recreation activities every day to entertain inmates and keep them healthy. Some of these games include football, tennis, volley, cards, draft etc. there is also satellite television available in each block. With regard to visit, convicts are visited once a week but those on remand can be visited any time because their fate has not been determined yet. When asked about the daily routine activities, one of the recidivists had this to say:

The rising bell will sound around 5 am to signal the inmates who will finally wake up by 6am. Then row call will be conducted between 6am to 6.30am. This is followed by breakfast of porridge or rice water together with the lunch and supper. Occasionally, we will be served with bread like once in 3months. The roll call is conducted 3 times and finally when those officers on night duties come, they also count us making the row call 4 times a day. From there, we go to our duties.

It was revealed from the study that the inmates have a well-defined sub-culture. As a prisoner community, the NMSP has a formidable latent social structure that exists within the formal organization. This informal social structure promotes interactions, discipline and solidarity among the inmates based on their values, customs, and folkways. These inmate value systems take the form of a social code which prescribes the normative patterns of behaviour within the prison. The prisoners' code protects inmates' interests and revolves around subgroup loyalty, restricts conflict between inmates and the

exploitation of inmates. For instance, inmates are supposed to refrain from quarrels, stealing, sodomy, unhygienic attitudes and so on to ensure discipline among the inmates.

In order to ensure this, there is a leadership structure among the inmates. Every cell has 45 inmates, a cell leader, cell judge, cell police, cell commando, cell adviser and cell father. Every block has a block leader and cell leaders within a block constitute block executives and secretaries. Beyond the block leader, there is a national leader. The cell, block and national leaders constitute the inmate elites (star class). An appointment to these positions is based on serving four years and above with good behaviour. The cell and block leaders ensure that the rules and regulations of the prison are followed. There are court systems in each block to try and punish inmates who violate the rules. For instance, if there is any violation of the inmate code of behaviour, the cell court would be set up and judgement will be passed on that offender. Sentencing can range from washing the bath room, removal from one's bed or a fine. If the case cannot be determined within the cell, it will be transferred to the block leader for the solution. If the block leader cannot resolve matters within his block, then the intervention of the national leader becomes necessary. If the issue is beyond him, then it goes to the block commander/prison authorities for the final resolution.

The inmate leaders are well respected by the inmates and it is important to note that the statuses and responsibilities of these inmate elites have official recognition by the prison authorities. This inmate social system is an essential part of the prisoner community and provides a cushioning mechanism against the pain of imprisonment. The inmate social system represents "a way of adjusting to the situation and making the best of the circumstances" (Hayner and Ash, 1939, p. 364). Some of the inmates also serve as office boys. These statuses and roles together with access to recreational facilities, free meals and accommodation give the inmates a sense of survival and

happiness because of the post-release social rejection in the free world. In short, the institutional pull factors such as the inmate sub-culture of a court system and inmate elites (which earn them statuses and respect by both co-inmates and prison officials), a sense of attachment and survival serve, (because of the hardship outside the prison), as human rights in prison and access to recreational facilities serve as the secondary causes of re-offending in Ghana. To some inmates, life in prison is more interesting than life in the outside world. Some of them after spending long years in farming, prefer to return to prison to enjoy the fruit of their labour. The following are some of the interviews with inmates and prison officers regarding the inmate social system.

We are 45 in a cell. If there is a problem in the cell, it first goes to the cell leader. If he cannot resolve it, then it goes to the block leader. If the problem is beyond the block leader, then it goes to the national leader. If the problem is beyond the national leader, then it goes to the prison authorities. We have a cell leader, a judge, a commando, police, an adviser and a father who help to ensure discipline in the cell. Cell and block leaders are block checkers who help the officials in counting the inmates. Cell leaders are block executives and secretaries. Some of the inmates stay here for a long time, one prisoner has a farm and has gone out and come back for about 5 times. Anytime he is being released, he would ask a co-inmate to take care of the farm until he comes back to take over the farm and make himself like a king. Sometimes, when he comes out of prison, he links up with old convicts and re-offends (Recidivists who is a cell leader).

Life in prison is more interesting than life in the outside world. Some of the inmates serve as cell and block leaders and executives. So they are well recognised and respected by both inmates and officers. Some of the inmates have people serving them and greeting them while others engage in little businesses such as washing for a fee, so they are happy here (Prison Officer).

The system gives inmate leaders the recognition and respectability but when they go out, society rejects them. This is one of the reasons why they re-offend (Prison Officer who is a block commander).

In the first place, because of fundamental human rights, no one can mistreat a prisoner and go free. Secondly, they have access to recreational activities such as TVs, DSTVs and other games including football, ludo, cards etc. Thirdly, because of the hardship outside, most of the ex-prisoners are unable to feed themselves, provide clothing and shelter and pay for other things such as water and light bills. Here, they don't pay light bill, there are free meals, free water and free accommodation. Fourthly, when they are here, some of them have people serving

them, greeting them and respecting them. Finally, some enjoy being here. Thus some are cell leaders, block leaders, block executives and national leader. Some even work in the offices, so they enjoy life in prison here than outside (Prison Officer).

From the information above, it clear that the offenders feel better within the prison than when they are outside the prison. The reason being the offenders at least satisfy some basic freedom, necessities and perform roles that give them respect and recognition.

5.6 Training and Treatment of Criminals (formal institutional support)

In Ghana, in an effort to transform offenders from pro-criminal to pro-social attitudes, correctional education programmes such as rehabilitation and reformation are carried out in all the central prisons together with the core functions custody and welfare. In NMSP for instance, correctional education is the predominant formal institutional support for the offenders. Correctional education is a crime prevention strategy that focuses on the renewal of the mind and heart from criminal thinking (reformation) and the acquisition of vocational and educational skills (rehabilitation). In other words, reformation has to do with spiritual and moral transformation while rehabilitation goes with vocational training, formal education and non-formal education. These interventions are aimed at changing the criminal attitudes of the offenders and providing them with employable skills so that they would lead law-abiding lives after release. As stipulated in the prisons rule “the purpose of training and treatment of convicted persons shall be to establish in them the will to lead a good and useful life upon discharge and to fit them to do so” (cited in Abotchie, 2008, p. 65).

5.6.1 Ineffective Reformation in NMSP in Ghana

Religious instructions are mechanisms of social control for offenders because it helps inmates to reform. It is believed that the long period of incarceration serves as a period

of reflection of the wrong doing leading to repentance. The pre-release faith-based programmes are important because they provide inmates with the renewal of their minds from criminal thoughts through the adoptions of moral values, spiritual care, life skills and pro-social behaviour with moral education.

Although there is freedom of worship in NMSP in Ghana, the spiritual transformation is dominated by two religious beliefs and practices, namely Christianity and Islam. There is a church and mosque where Christians and Moslems worship on a daily basis. The Nsawam Medium Security Prison (NMSP) also has a Chaplaincy unit with two ordained religious leaders (pastor and imam). The role of these persons is to coordinate and liaise with other religious bodies and civic organizations in providing inmates with religious instructions, moral education and the donation of items such as food, clothes, medicine, televisions and tools to supplement the efforts of the government. They also provide reading material for the prison library and show reformatory films to the inmates.

In both religions, the fear of punishment and the desire for reward from God shape the religious instruction. In addition, both religions equate crime with sin. In the Bible for instance, the Ten Commandments prohibit Christians from committing such acts as stealing, armed robbery, fraud, murder, false witness etc. The teachings of Koran also deal with the tradition of the prophet and Islamic jurisdiction. The tradition of the prophet talks about his dealings with the people and the Islamic jurisdiction is structured around dos and don'ts. The Koran is against robbery, murder and stealing. The Islamic jurisprudence talks about the 5 pillars (how to pray or worship God - 5 times a day, giving alms/ zakat, pilgrimage/Hajj, only one God known as Allah and Ramadan). Inmates are conscientized to be aware of these so that they don't go contrary to them. The Moslem inmates undertake the spiritual studies in the morning from 10-12 noon. In

addition, there is a weekly worship service from 12-1pm. Inmates who are Christians are mostly seen praying and singing at the assembly hall while the Moslems are also in the mosque praying. Various religious groups also come and fellowship with the inmates and present some items to them. The following are quotes from some of the respondents:

Religious activities take place every day. There is a Coalition of Prison Evangelists (COPE) made up of churches such as the Presbyterian Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the Methodist Church, Seventh-Day Adventists Church and so on, which come here to preach. On one Sunday, the Presbyterians can come and leave after 2 hours, and then the Methodists will come. Since SDA people worship on Saturdays, their members congregate on Saturdays (Prison Officer).

Yes, we have churches and mosque in the society that help in the offender reformation and rehabilitation but it is not official. Some of them give the prisoners food and medicine, some also give them the word of God. The churches can go for the preaching and aftercare. They will try to give them skills or help them get a job and supervise them for the final discharge. But because we do not have the aftercare or social welfare is not well resourced to carry out the aftercare. Some of the organizations that help the prison include Hebron, An-Nisaah Foundation in Accra, Federation of Moslem Women Association – Ghana (Nsawam branch) and the Islamic University (Prison Officer).

However, as to whether these offenders genuinely reform is a different issue all together. Thus reformation is not effective correctional intervention in Ghana's corrections because the majority of the inmates do not take religious training seriously. Like most people in the general population, most of them are just church-goers or pretenders. They participate in religious activities because the churches give out some items. A few of them genuinely reform but because of lack of post-release support, they re-offend. As one prison officer said "they don't take religious training serious, some of them go to church because the churches give out items. This is a quote from one prison evangelist.

Occasionally, we organized a crusade for the offenders, some of them genuinely change and give their lives to Christ. We also give them things like soap, water, food and so on. However, like the general population, some of the inmates are church-goers or pretenders. They come to church because of the items they get. A few of them genuinely repent and accept Christ but because they don't get any support from elsewhere, they re-offend (Prison Evangelist).

This implies that even the few inmates who genuinely reform sooner or later re-offend because of the lack of continuity of post-release care and support.

5.6.2 Ineffective Rehabilitation in NMSP in Ghana

Prison sentences as a form of sanction are intended to help the offenders by transforming their criminal thoughts and equipping them with training so that they become productive and law-abiding after their release into the society. Rehabilitation is the main tool for effective social reintegration. Revisiting the records of successful rehabilitation, Duguid (2000) observes that “through educational programmes, prison can provide a more natural, organic or authentic process of self-transformation through empowerment, communication of values and the formation of new interest” (p. xi).

In Ghana, although there are no precise records on when the Ghana Prisons Service (GPS) began rehabilitation. In NMSP for instance, it is believed that rehabilitation began on October 10th 1960 when the first inmates were admitted. This is because the workshops for various trades together with the blocks and cells were in place at the commissioning of the prison. Thus from the commencement of the prison, trade training was the only form of rehabilitation in NMSP. Male convicts were trained in areas such as agriculture, carpentry, tailoring, barbering, draughtsmanship, shoemaking, laundry, masonry while female convicts were trained in sewing, soap making, hair dressing, bakery, batik, tie and dye. Upon completing the training when the inmate is discharged, tools were provided to participants to enable them establish their own businesses. The aftercare officers also visit them to ensure their successful reintegration

It was not until January 2008 when formal classroom education namely Junior and Senior High Schools together with informal education began in NMSP. Currently, Ghana Education Service (GES) standards are used to assess correctional students as they write

final examinations conducted by West Africa Examination Council (WAEC) called West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE). Final examinations for Senior High Students are conducted at St. Martin Secondary School and Nsawam Secondary School while Junior High Students have theirs at the Methodist Basic School. However, with trade or vocational training, the NMSP is the examination centre and prospective students are issued certificates by the National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI).

Currently, the Inmates' Education Unit (IEU) in collaboration with the Centre for National Distance Learning and Open Schooling (CNDLOS) coordinate the formal education programme. Some of the subjects taught at the Junior High School (JHS) level include English Language, Core Mathematics, Integrated Science, Social Studies, Religious and Moral Education, Basic Design and Technology, Akuapem Twi and Information Communication Technology ICT. At the Senior High School (SHS), the subjects taught also include Core Mathematics, English language, Integrated Sciences, Social Studies, Economics, Financial Accounting, ICT (not examinable). The non-formal education programme is loosely structured around the acquisition of general reading and numeracy skills for inmates who are illiterate. It also includes functional literacy programmes in local languages such as Ewe, Twi, and Ga.

The service-receiving patterns or teaching period is four hours beginning from 7.30am-9.30am and 11am-1pm daily with the exception of Saturdays and Sundays. This time table enables inmates to partake in the intermittent row calls and dining. Usually, advertisements are placed on notice boards at the various blocks so that inmates who are interested can register. The criteria for selection into the vocational and formal education include the following:

- i. The inmate should be serving four or more years.
- ii. The inmate should have served two thirds of the sentence.
- iii. Should not be a re-offender.
- iv. Have an interest in that vocation or prior knowledge in that vocation. Asare (2009) observed that even for the few ones who had the opportunity to undertake rehabilitation activities, the criteria for selection was not based on compulsion but rather on previous experience.
- v. Pass selection test to see the suitability of the inmate for the training.
- vi. Should not have committed a felony offense such as armed robbery, murder and so on.
- vii. Should be of good behaviour.

At the moment, the teaching staffs of NMSP are depicted in table 9 below:

Table 9 Teaching Staff

Teaching Staff	Number of Teachers
Inmate Teachers	18
National Service Personnel	8
Prison Officers	7
Permanent Teachers	5
Total	38

Source: Fieldwork, Nov.2013

As would be expected, the number of inmates who participate in the formal and vocational education is small. For instance as at February 2014, out of the total of 1,759 male convicts, only 40 representing 2.3% and 31 representing 1.8% participated in formal education at the JHS and SHS respectively. Of the total of 69 female convicts,

only 2 representing 2.9% participated in formal education at the JHS level. There was no female participation in formal education at the SHS level.

In addition to the formal education, 48 male convicts representing 2.7% and 19 female convicts representing 27.5% participated in vocational training. The following are the breakdown of total number of inmates both male and female prisoners who participated in formal educational programmes at Nsawam Medium Security Prison.

Table 10 Total Convict Population with Accesses to Formal Education in NMSP

EDUCATION	MALE	FEMALE
JHS	40	2
SHS	31	0
Total	71	2

Source: Fieldwork, Nov. 2013

The above table 10 indicates the total number of convicts (both first offenders and recidivists) who have access to formal education at NMSP. Thus only 40 and 31 male prisoners have access to JHS and SHS respectively while only 2 female prisoners also have the opportunity to participate in JHS.¹¹ Table 11 depicts the total number of convicts who have access to vocational training in NMSP in Ghana.

¹¹ JHS and SHS imply Junior High School and Senior High School respectively

Table 11 Total Convicts Population with Accesses to Vocational Training in NMSP

MALE	NO. OF STUDENTS	FEMALE	NO. OF STUDENTS
Carpentry	16	Sewing	6
Tailoring	22	Crocheting	5
Barbering	5	Soap making	3
Draughtsmanship	5	Hair dressing	2
Others	-	Tie and die	3
Total	48	Total	19

Source: Fieldwork, February, 2014

The lack of access to the formal institutional training namely formal and vocational education by the majority of the convicts implies that inmates are only confined to prison walls. Because there is no proper categorization, the absence of a legitimate opportunity to learn employable skills and pro-social behaviour implies that most inmates get attached to the illegitimate opportunity structures and learn the various techniques of committing serious crime. This is not surprising because the devil finds work for idle hands.

Closely related to vocational training is prison industries. The study found that there are no prison industries in NMSP where correctional students could be receiving their apprenticeship and produce items to be able to earn some income. At the moment, most of the trade workshops such as blacksmithing, cane and basketry, shoemaking, laundry and painting are not operational because of lack of tools and professional instructors to handle them. The following are some of the excerpts from the prison officers.

After the documentation, observation, counselling and allocation of blocks, then case management follows. Though there is no specific treatment for drug, sex, violent and other offenders however, only convicted prisoners are recommended for various training programmes based on personal interest, length of sentence, prior knowledge and availability of facilities, passing the selection test, not have committed a felony offence and be of good behaviour. Some of the training programmes available include reformation, vocational skills, formal and non-formal education (Prison Officer).

From the word go, we conscientize them to come to terms with the prison, from there we have the sentence planning. There we introduce them to training. We have the moral education where pastors and imams preach and counsel them. We do not have specific treatment for all the offenders but we counsel them irrespective of the offence. The case planning involves trade, formal education, informal education and reformation. The trade include tailoring, masonry, barbering, carpentry, electronic, electrical, draughtsmanship, shoemaking, cane and basketry. The formal education includes Junior and Senior High Schools and Information Technology. Some of the subjects offered at the JHS level include Core Maths, English Language, Integrated Science, Social Studies, Religious and Moral Education, Basic Design and Technology, Akuapem Twi and IT. The SHS subjects include Core Maths, English Language, Integrated Sciences, Social Studies, Economics, Accounting and IT (not examinable). The non-formal education subjects are Ewe, Twi, Ga, English (reading and writing) and numeracy (Prison Officer).

We have carpentry, tailoring, shoemaking, electrical and blacksmith workshops. We have chaplaincy and welfare but we don't have substance abuse treatment etc. Provided an inmate has the skills and interest, he can be given the opportunity to train (Prison Officer).

There are no enough professionals to help re-socialise the inmates with certain specific needs because the service is not attractive to these professionals. There are some professionals in the service but they are not permitted to perform their professional duties. The reason is that the attention of the media, politicians and the public is on the prisons. Therefore, most officers-in charge ensure that professionals are made to perform general duties because of the emphasis on security first. How can a professional be placed on a night shift, how is someone with a background in development studies made to develop programmes for the training of inmates while the psychologists are there. This amounts to putting a square peg in a round hole (Prison Officer).

5.6.3 Lack of Offense Specific Treatments in NMSP in Ghana

Specific treatments for offenders with specialized treatment needs do not exist in NMSP.

For example sex, substance abuse and violent offenders face issues that are quite specific to their type of criminality. However, there are no specific programmes that fit the circumstances and specific challenges faced by the different groups of offenders. There is the absence of cognitive behavioural programmes such as a Sex Offender Programme,

Violence Prevention Programme, Drug Rehabilitation Programme, Victim Awareness, Anger Management Programme and Relapse Prevention Programme. There are some pastors/imams who re-socialise the inmates or provide general counselling on moral issues to these offenders. As a part of the explanation of the absence of specific treatments, this enquiry revealed that there are some of the officers who are professionals who can help in the re-socialization of the inmates but the emphasis on security first makes it difficult for them to perform their professional duties. For instance professionals are made to go on night shift instead of working on day shifts and help to design programmes for these category of offenders. Given that 32.4% of the recidivists have deficiencies relating to specific needs (narcotics, assault, murder, defilement and rape), the absence of offense-focused interventions to deal with inmates special needs implies that the root causes of these criminal behaviours have not been addressed. It is not surprising that some of them are unable to be re-socialised with pro-social skill to enable them to overcome the transitional challenges.

The recidivists popularly known as “Oldkakos” “Oldjakatos” “Old-jail-men”. They go through the processes of prisonization with the exception of the diagnose centre because they have been to prison before. Reformation is structured around religious activities for both Christians and Moslems, however, the majority of the inmates do not participate in the trade and formal education because the criteria for selection exclude recidivists. When asked whether they received trade training or formal education during their previous incarceration, 67.7% of the recidivists gave a negative response. Although some of them were imprisoned because of defilement, rape, assault and drug offences, it was clear that none of them received specific training relating to substance abuse prevention, sex offender treatment and violence prevention. The majority of them have not received vocational or formal education while the few lucky ones who participate in these

trainings do not have connections to post-release employment avenues. The following are excerpts from interviews with the recidivists regarding rehabilitation as a form of institutional support.

At Akuse prison, I was not given any trade training and this contributed to my re-offending because I did not get any skills to enable me get work (Recidivist).

Because I did not learn any work, I did not get any job and the idleness led to my re-offending (Recidivist).

Since the time I came here, I have not been given any training. I have been here for 2 years. There are a lot of training opportunities here but I have not been given one yet (Recidivist).

I was transferred from Ho prison to Nsawam so I did not go through the diagnose centre. They just sent me to my block. I was reformed after my second conviction so I learned driving. They did not give me training either in Ho or Nsawam (Recidivist).

They first took me to the diagnose centre for initial assessment. They talk to us about what we should do, what we should not do so that we don't come back to prison again. No training was given to me (Recidivist).

The table 12 shows the number of recidivists who participate in rehabilitation and reformation in Nsawam Medium Security Prison.

Table 12 Recidivists with Access to Formal, Vocational and Non-Formal Education in NMSP in Ghana

TYPES OF TRAINING OFFERED	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
No training	21	61.8
Trade	6	17.6
JHS	2	5.9
Bible studies	3	8.8
Non-formal education	2	5.9
Total	34	100

Source Fieldwork, Nov. 2013

Table 12 indicates that 61.8% of the recidivists did not participate in rehabilitation programmes both formal and vocational education. Only 17.6% and 5.9% of the recidivists participate in trade and Junior High School respectively. The service receiving patterns for the trade and formal educational training is four hours a day with the exception of weekends but the religious activities occur daily. This actually confirms the perspective of correctional service providers that rehabilitation programmes exist but only a quarter of the recidivists participate in these programmes.

In spite of the problem of financing rehabilitation in NMSP, the academic performance of Reformers' Junior and Senior High Schools has been amazing. This was confirmed in the excellent results released by West African Examination Council (WAEC). According to the Ghana Prison Service Annual Report (2010), in 2010, 45 inmates who sat in the Basic Education Certificate Examination obtained a 100%

pass. This is an impressive performance taking into consideration the limited resources at their disposal coupled with the coercive environment in which they find themselves. According to DelliCarpini, (2008), correctional education occurs in a coercive environment unlike the mainstream education, as a result of this difference, correctional students may have a better chance of excelling.

One main issue which became obvious is that it is difficult to ensure proper segregation of inmates as all categories of prisoners mingle together. This coupled with the lack of skills training to pre-occupy and re-socialize them with pro-social attitudes predispose them to conversations that promote criminal behaviour. Within the prison walls, respectability is usually accorded to hardened and notorious criminals leading to the inculcation of criminal ideologies especially by first time offenders. This is also an aspect of the prisonization or the dogmas in the prison that promote the acquisition of criminal attitudes among prisoners and prevent post-release reintegration. One officer said: “We don’t keep them busy so they engage themselves in criminal conversations with their friends”. Another officer lamented as follows: “Classification is a problem here. First offenders are not supposed to mingle with second offender but because there is no proper classification, the interaction among them leads to contamination”.

Here, we discuss a lot of things among ourselves for instance when a new person comes we ask what he did, whether the person is a first time offender or not, what happened before the person was arrested and how he went about the act. Thus because of the “toli” we share, some of the offenders commit bigger crimes and come back to prison (Recidivist).

When we wake up, we don’t have anything to do so some of the inmates group themselves somewhere and converse. One person can “open a key” thus begin with a topic for instance what did you do and how were you arrested? If that person made a mistake that led to his arrest, another person can also suggest how he could have executed the act and escaped without arrest (Recidivist).

5.6.4 Lack of Motivation to Participate in Rehabilitation

Another interesting issue that emerged from the study is that even with the few recidivists who had the opportunity to participate in the vocational and formal education did not feel obliged to participate in these institutional training undertakings because the training will not be beneficial to them. They did not hesitate to say that no employment opportunities are available to them after participating in these programmes neither would they be given tools to start their own business. This confirms Hagan (2013) finding when he conducted a study in NMSP. He observed that “the attitude of the inmates towards vocational training was not the best. Inmates are lackadaisical towards the trade that they have enrolled in. Some of them are more or less compelled to come for lessons” (p. 52). Some of the recidivists indicated that they do not want to participate in any new trade apart from what they already know. As one recidivist said “I already know fitting so when I came here, there was no fitting here so I decided not to learn anything.”

When I came, at the diagnose centre, I told them my parents are dead. They sent me to the block and if I am interested, I should give my name to the block master and he would send it to the authorities for consideration. However, I am not interested because after here no one will employ me or give me money to start your own business (Recidivist).

The study further revealed that there is no parole system, half-way home and transitional partnership to ensure their successful re-integration. In conclusion, social reintegration of offenders in Ghana has been a daunting task because of inadequate or ineffective formal institutional support to address to criminogenic needs of offenders. Consequently, most leave the prison without participation in skills acquisition.

5.6.5 Factors Responsible for the Ineffective Rehabilitation in NMSP

Although correctional education has been in Ghana for a long time, there are still questions regarding programme effectiveness and integrity. Some of the reasons why only a fraction of the inmates rehabilitate include the following:

- i. Inadequate State Funding
- ii. Profile of inmate population, overcrowding and short sentencing
- iii. Lack of interest by the inmates
- iv. Inconvenience and security protocol
- v. Lack of inherent programme intensity and integrity

Inadequate State Funding

According to the Ghana Prisons Service Annual Report (2008), 88.7% of the inmates are aged between 18-45 years. The youthful nature of the prison population is a crucial situation because it requires the expansion of facilities for a more effective educational training of the inmates so that they can be productive. As stipulated in section 41 of the NRCDC 46, 1972 the Prison Service is required to “establish in every prison courses of training and instruction assigned to teach simple trades, skills and crafts to prisoners who may benefit from such training”. However, the GPS is confronted with the problem of limited budgetary allocation thereby making it difficult to finance rehabilitation programmes. One interesting thing is that the GPS use this limited resources in the areas of personal emoluments, administration and other service activities. As one prison officer put it “there is no specific allocation of funds either by the government or the GPS for any rehabilitation purpose in NMSP. Sometimes we have to lobby before the authorities would give us something small to keep the school running”.

For instance, in a discussion to approve an amount of GH¢1.2 billion to the Interior Ministry in the 2015 budget in Ghana's parliament, a member of the Defence and Interior Committee of parliament, Mr. Seth Kwame Acheampong, warned that the Police and Prison Services may be handicapped in carrying out their duties in 2015 due to low budgetary support. He added that an amount of GH¢800,000 debt for the Prisons Service and the Fire Service has also not been settled.¹² Even with limited budgetary allocation to the GPS, large proportion of this amount goes to the expenditure other than rehabilitation. For instance in 2008, the government allocated twenty-one million, seven hundred and five thousand, fifty-nine Ghana cedi (GH¢21,705,059.00), to the GPS. This amount covers four main expenditure items namely personal emoluments, administration, service activities and investment (Ghana Prisons Service Annual Report, 2008). Other supplemented allocations to the service include eight million, five hundred and ninety thousand Ghana cedis (GH¢8,590,000.00) from the Highly Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) Fund to continue the Ankafu Maximum Security Prison. An additional amount of one hundred thousand and seventy-five thousand Ghana cedis (GH¢1,705,000.00) was made for the rehabilitation of ablution facilities in selected prisons. Finally, an additional amount of one hundred and seventy-five thousand Ghana cedis (GH¢175,000.00) from Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI) Fund was received for the procurement of footwear for officers (Ghana Prisons Annual Report, 2008). Meanwhile, the Heifer Project, an aftercare programme intended to support ex-convicts to establish a small scale income generating activities to reduce re-offending lacks the needed finance to support ex-offenders to lead law abiding life (Ghana Prisons

¹² See more at: <http://www.myjoyonline.com/news/2014/December-18th/cut-employment-in-security-agencies-nunoo-mensah-urges-govt.php#sthash.9ZndyTfm.dpuf>

Annual Report, 2008). The above situation shows how the GPS is financially handicapped in the efforts to rehabilitate offenders in Ghana.

Although United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Presidential Special Initiative on Distance Learning (PSI-DL) provide some support for inmates' formal education while the non-Formal Division of the Ministry of Education also supports functional literacy programmes for inmates (Ghana Prison Annual Report 2008), these sources of funding are not enough for meaningful rehabilitation programmes.

The erratic support for offender rehabilitation implies that most convicts are unable to participate in the formal and vocational education because of lack of tools or the reliance on obsolete equipment, lack of materials and professionals to effect correctional education. As a result of inadequate state funding, some of the workshops such as blacksmith, cane and basketry, shoemaking, laundry, masonry and painting are not operational because of the non-availability of materials and professional instructors.

Lack of Skilled Personnel

Previously, the NMSP severely lacked qualified teachers and relied on inmate teachers¹³ to handle some of the courses until recently when national service personnel and trained teachers were posted from the Ghana Education Service (GES) to assist in the rehabilitation of the inmates. As at February 2014, the teaching staffs included 18 inmate teachers, 5 permanent teachers from Ghana Education Service (GES), 8 national service personnel and 7 prison officers who handle both vocational, formal and non-formal education. Even these teaching staffs are not enough to handle all the programmes. The inmate teachers are only given some allowance which is not motivating enough because they are serving their sentences in hard labour. Sometimes, when an inmate teacher is

¹³ Inmate teachers are prisoners who teach or impart knowledge in their colleagues prisoners

discharged, it becomes difficult to continue to teach that particular subject. This contravenes Article 77 (2) of the prisons rule which requires that education of prisoners be integrated with a country's educational system. Moreover, some of the prison officers can teach at the JHS and SHS but are unable to do so because of the shift system where an officer may be on night shift or in the farm. This is because security is prioritised over rehabilitation in Ghana prisons. When asked why correctional education in NMSP suffers from lack of tools, materials and qualified teachers, one prison officer indicated that:

Because the prison does not generate money for the government, the government also does not want to resource the prison, not even the NGOs. Though the prisoners produce commodities such as doormats etc no one will buy them. The question is why does the government not giving the contract to the prisoners? Sometimes they will say 'the procurement laws', so why not making it a policy to resource the prison?

The fact is that, the absence of institutional training may lead to re-offending is not new to the prison officers. As one of them said: "Lack of skills training correlates positively with higher rates of re-offending". Most inmates don't get the opportunity to train because of lack of tools and high number of inmates and this leads to re-offending". Another officer lamented as follows: "The lack of equipment to train the inmates leads to re-offending. As I am speaking to you now, we have some inmates just sleeping. They wake up and do more sleeping".

Profile of Inmates, Overcrowding and Short Sentencing

Another reason why few inmates participate in prison-based rehabilitation programmes in the NMSP in Ghana is due to the profile of the inmates. The inmate population include those with physical impairment or mental conditions, learning disabilities, speech, hearing, vision, mental, physical, and aged. This limits the ability to train or work.

Besides, the inmate population include those who do not qualify to participate in vocational or formal education. They include recidivists who have committed felony offense such as armed robbery and murder.

Another reason why some inmates are unable to participate in rehabilitation is overcrowding. This age-old problem still persists in NMSP. The observation by Burk, Geld & Horowitz, (2007) that prison boom may not necessarily originate from a higher crime rates, but rather, stricter sentencing policies is relevant in Ghana's penal system. The mass incarceration in Ghana, results from the high inflow of convicts and especially also remand prisoners whose warrants have expired, but are still in prison custody.

Despite the significant success chalked by the "Justice for All Programme"¹⁴ overcrowding and poor conditions of service continue to be a major source of worry in Ghana prisons.¹⁵ Although overcrowding is not the direct cause of inmates' inability to participate in rehabilitation programmes, it is obvious that the inmate population outstrips the educational facilities available, making it difficult for interested convicts to participate in these programmes. As at February 2014, each cell accommodates about 45-51 inmates instead of the original intake of 20 inmates (see p. 4).¹⁶ This issue of overcrowding in Ghana prisons is a serious concern because inmates have limited access to space and sleep. The Ghana prisons look like slave dungeons. Sleeping is very uncomfortable because prisoners have to alternate between standing and sitting positions. A documentary on Joy News titled "Locked and Forgotten" which highlighted the

¹⁴ An initiative by the Ghana Judicial Service to decongest Ghana prisons by trying those on remand within the various prisons in Ghana

¹⁵ Ghana Prisons Service Annual Report, 2010, p.1

¹⁶ Fieldwork Nov. 2013

inhumane conditions under which these prisoners are kept in Ghana. Plate 1 reveals the sleeping condition of inmates in Ghana.



Plate 1: Overcrowding Prisoners in NMSP

<http://www.myjoyonline.com/news/2015/March-14th/judges-vow-to-reconsider-judgments-handed-to-remand-prisoners.php> www.myjoyonline.com retrieved on 15th March 2015

This sleeping arrangement is against the United Nations Standard Minimum rules for the treatment of prisoners (1977). According to the standard, all accommodation provided for the use of prisoners and in particular all sleeping accommodation shall meet all requirements of health, due regard being paid to climatic conditions and particularly to cubic content of air, minimum floor space, light, heating and ventilation. This problem of congestion has further implications for the health of prisoners. This is because an outbreak of contagious or infectious diseases like cholera may affect most of the prisoners who live in the same cell. Besides, the lack of a balanced diet makes them

weak and susceptible to ill health. Regarding the poor accommodation conditions in Ghanaian prisons, one recidivist poised:

Our accommodation and feeding is bad. We are about 47-51 inmates in one cell and there is no fresh air. Our sleeping arrangement is bad. While one person's head is on top, the other person's head is at the down. Before you realize, someone can even have sex with you, even this morning, this incident occurred. Our feeding is bad, for instance breakfast is porridge without bread "koko-sakora". Lunch and supper can take the form of gari or banku without physical meat because powdered fish is used to prepare the food.

Breakfast is porridge or rice water and sugar. Occasionally (say once in 3 months) before we will be served with bread (Recidivist).

Closely related to overcrowding is the issue of short sentencing. It has been established that one of the criteria for the participation in prison-based rehabilitation programmes is the sentence length. In NMSP for instance, an inmate is supposed to serve four or more years before he/she can be considered for educational or vocational training. Given the fact that 58.8% of the recidivists are serving sentences less than or equal to 3 years, it can be inferred that misdemeanants serving less than three years are more likely to be excluded from participating in these programmes.

Sometimes, traffic offenders are brought to prisons for 3 months. The person has to be fed, use light, water and the state caters for his medical expenses etc. So you realise that it is not wise to bring the person here, the person need probation. Besides, you are tarnishing the image of the person (Prison Officer).

Lack of Interest by the Inmates

Most of the convicts lack the interest to participate in these rehabilitation programmes. The lack of enthusiasm for the participation of rehabilitation stems from the fact that most of the inmates are thinking about their freedom rather than any other thing.

Inconvenience and Security Protocol

Inconvenience and security checks disrupt the smooth functioning of rehabilitation programmes. Although Ghana Education Trust Fund (GETfund) has since 2013, begun constructing a new classroom block in NMSP, there is insufficient space for teaching and learning, prompting some classes to be held under sheds. Sometimes, these classes end abruptly during rainfall and other harsh weather conditions. Moreover, although the Ghana Education Service provides teaching materials to the Inmate Education Unit, they are not sufficient. As one officer put it “some parents buy learning materials for their wards but others do not, so everything they need, they ask for. If a student asks for a book, next time he asks for a pen and another time he asks for a pencil. If he is not given, he becomes fed up and stops”. Besides, there is no space for private studies as the various cells are congested and inmates do not even have enough space for sleeping. The lights also go off by 7.00pm. As one officer put it, “we requested for one block for the students so that they can have the convenience and the atmosphere to concentrate but the authorities refused”. Again, there are eight security checks per day which also disrupts effective learning. Finally, for security reasons, students are prevented from using mathematical sets in their private studies because the “protractor” “compass” and “divider” can be used as weapons while calculators are given to students only during classes. As a result, most students perform poorly in maths at both JHS and SHS levels (Ghana Prisons Service Annual Report, 2008).

Lack of Programme Intensity and Integrity

It also emerged from this study that rehabilitation programmes lack intensity and integrity. In the first place, programme intensity is low because students are allowed four hours a day (excluding the weekends) to participate in formal and vocational training programmes. This time period is woefully inadequate as compared to the time period

given to students in the mainstream population. Secondly, the programmes do not target the criminogenic needs of the offenders. The implication is that the participation in these programmes are not based on prior assessments of the needs and deficiencies. Some of the offenders are placed in programmes they do not need. Therefore, these programmes do not have any significant impacts on the offenders. For instance, some of the programmes are advertised on the notice boards in the various blocks so that interested inmates can apply. This implies that there is no coordination between the diagnose centre and the educational unit to ensure that the right inmates get the opportunity to participate in the programmes.

5.6.6 Motivation to Participate In Formal Institutional Training

When asked whether inmates feel motivation to participate in these institutional training, there was a mixed reactions in opinion among the officers as some believe in the contrary.

Sometimes they don't feel responsible to take part in the training. That is why unless an officer instructs them to do something, they will not use their initiatives to do it". Another officer said "they don't take religious training serious. Some go to church because the churches give out something" (Prison officer).

However, some officers believe that inmates are motivated to participate in the educational programme because those trainings are beneficial. Thus the formal institutional training helps them to change their behaviour and also get employment or establish their own business. In addition, students can continue education after their release. However, sometimes they find it difficult to get work or they don't have the capital to start their own business.

They are responsible for participating in rehabilitation programmes. This is because once a while, they do call to tell us that because of the training, they have secured employment, because of the training they are disciplined. Thus some of the ex-convicts are happy because they get something but the problem they face is the tag “ex-convict” (Prison Officer).

Therefore, rehabilitation programmes in NMSP are not consistent with the general principles and characteristics of effective correctional treatments and training. Correctional education lacks programme integrity because they are not implemented as theoretically designed to ensure the intended effects.

5.6.7 Absence of Parole System

Ideally, inmates who are about to be released need a midway home or reporting centre. However, the parole system does not exist in NMSP and the rest of all the prisons in Ghana to ensure a gradual release and the proper supervision of the offenders. The only early release in Ghana’s correctional system is by remission, amnesty, for medical reasons and through a presidential pardon. As enshrined in the Prison Service Decree (NRCD 46) 1972 “a person serving a sentence of six weeks or more may by industry and good behaviour, earn a remission not exceeding one-third of his/her sentence”. However, certain categories of offenders are excluded from enjoying remission.

They include:

- i. Those serving life imprisonment/condemned prisoners.
- ii. Those detained at the pleasure of the Head of State.
- iii. Debtors
- iv. Those guilty of contempt

Although Article 208 of the 1992 constitution makes provision for its introduction and currently, Parole Bill is before Parliament for consideration, it is difficult to pass the bill into law and implement it due to the challenges in supervising the conditions of parole in

Ghana. Currently, the conditions to ensure parole status such as the possession of employable skills, having a house to reside in as well as the availability of job opportunities are not considered before an offender is discharged. Besides, there is no supervision to ensure that the released offender lead a law-abiding life.

The absence of a parole system in Ghana makes it difficult to ensure post-release adjustment and supervision. In the absence of parole, there is no parole board to ascertain whether the offender has clothing, tools and capital to start a business. Offenders coming home are given gate money or the bus fare to the places of first arrest. For instance discharged offenders coming to Accra and Teshi-Nungua from Nsawam are given ₵ 3.50 and ₵ 4.00 respectively.

5.6.8 Ineffective Aftercare System in NMSP in Ghana

The aftercare system in NMSP is ineffective. It exists only in theory. This is because the transitional functions that ought to be performed are not put into practice. With reference to in-prison aftercare, this study first found that social workers attached to the prison are unable to follow up on an offender's debt or transactions which he/she cannot follow. Secondly, social workers find it difficult to link some offenders to the family especially, where the family members do not know that the person has been imprisoned. The reason being that they are not adequately resourced by the state to perform this function effectively. Thirdly, social workers are unable to identify and persuade family members to visit the prisoners. This is due to the fact that some of the inmates do not want their family members to know that they have been imprisoned. Moreover, social workers do not investigate and find out why for example a prosecutor has relaxed in remand cases. Besides, social workers are unable to deal effectively with welfare issues of the offenders. For instance the quality of food they eat, accommodation and gate money.

Furthermore, social welfare officers also find it difficult to connect people outside the family with the prisoner. However, social workers have been instrumental in making the arrangements to send the children born to pregnant inmates to either the family members or care homes.

The in-prison aftercare exists but only in theory. Thus in practice, it is not effective because the social workers from the Dept. of Social Welfare are not adequately resourced to carry out these functions effectively (Social Worker).

With reference to out-prison aftercare, interviews with the prison officers have it that hitherto, when an offender is being discharged, a social welfare officer will have to accompany the returnee offender to his/her destination, identify the situation thereof, counsel both ex-offenders and family members and link the ex-offender to an apprenticeship, skills training or employment or provide the needed capital to start business. As Ukueku (2008) observes, the after-care services involve provision of tools to discharging inmates who are proficient in various fields of occupation and other vocational skills. After that, the officer monitors the progress of the offender to ensure his/her reintegration. But now, the provision of tools as a form of out-prison aftercare has died off. The absence of an effective post-release aftercare makes it difficult to ensure the reintegration of offenders in Ghana.

The aftercare system has broken down entirely because first when offenders are leaving, we hand them over to the social welfare officers who go with the discharged prisoners to their destinations to identify the situation so as to link them with the skills they learned while in prison. After that, they do the monitoring, if the ex-offenders do not progress, the location or the trade is changed. If this is done, it will help prevent re-offending (Prison Officer).

We used to have aftercare but now, it has died off. First, if a prisoner is being discharged, we give the person tools to start a business after training. The social workers would visit, monitor and assess the progress of the ex-offender to ensure that he/she has settled down but now it has died off. This is the reason why they re-offend (Prison Officer).

The reasons for the ineffectiveness of the aftercare service in Ghana include the fact that first, prison officers who are social workers are prohibited to carry out the aftercare function like the social worker from the Department of Social Work.

Prison officers who are social workers can't do a case follow up which involves information given by the inmate. If the inmate was arrested without family members knowing, it is the duty of the social worker to link such a person to the family but that is deemed as "trafficking" by the prison officer who is social worker. Carrying information from the prison to the community is prohibited by prison regulation (Prison Officer).

Secondly, the Department of Social Welfare is not adequately resourced to carry out the aftercare service very well. In theory, the in-prison and out-prison functions of a social worker attached to a particular prison cannot be practically achieved because of financial constraints. This makes it difficult to ensure post-release employment and supervision.

We need to have a fund so that after discharge the ex-offenders will establish themselves. Then the aftercare officer will supervise them and see how they are faring, whether they need help and see to their welfare. However, due to financial problems, they are unable to perform this function effectively (Prison Officer).

Moreover, there is no collaboration between the government, correctional service providers and other governmental or non-governmental bodies. There is no transitional partnership to ensure a successful re-integration of offenders. The following statements by one of the correctional officers capture these themes:

Social re-integration should begin from prison. The interventions should be well done so that if a person has learned a trade, after release, the person should be given tools. There should be half-way home so when the person is discharged, he or she will stay there and get work. There should be programme collaboration between the government and prisoners being discharged. If a person is being discharged, copies should be sent to the municipal director where that person is going so that the director can receive him/her, ask what trade he/she did the learn while in prison, then the director will link the person to other training centres or work. There should be proper monitoring. The social worker staff should meet the prisoners at the gate, send them to the director concerned, call their family members to inform them and this is part of the acceptance. But this is not the case in Ghana. No one is born a criminal but the society makes people criminals (Prison Officer).

The Presbyterian ministry is committed to providing half-way homes for re-entry offenders but the problem is lack of resources. A member of COPE indicated that: “Currently, we have aftercare for offenders where our aim is to assist those who have genuinely changed. We give them training in tie and dye and we are now moving into sewing and tailoring. We also have 2 ex-offenders we accommodate. But we don’t have resources”.

5.6.9 Absence of Transitional Partnership

There is no transitional partnership made up of parole officers, community police and social workers, re-entry offenders and their families as well as faith and charity-based organizations to discuss the proper ways of managing the re-entry process. As a result most released offenders find it difficult to be re-located back to their communities. This is because there are no agencies to ensure the monitoring of offenders, by facilitating the formal and informal social control mechanisms and strengthen the interpersonal bonds that link ex-offenders to community treatment, job training and placement, mental health services, family services and transitional housing. The absence of a transitional partnership prevents ex-offenders from desisting from crime.

In conclusion, the study found that formal institutional support begins with prisonization where inmates go through the reception, orientation, diagnosis, and classification and case management. An aspect of the prisonization which finds expression in inmate leadership, inmates judicial system which promotes interaction, solidarity, discipline, statuses, responsibilities and a sense of survival serve as institutional pull factors. This is a secondary predisposing factor of recidivism in Ghana. In particular, formal institutional support finds expression in reformation and rehabilitation.

Reformation is carried out through religious instructions. Although there is the freedom of worship in NMSP, two religions namely Christianity and Islam dominate the religious beliefs and practices. There is the chaplaincy unit that liaise with other religious bodies and civic organizations in providing religious teachings and the donation of items to the inmates. There is the coalition of prison evangelists made up of different churches who come and fellowship with the inmates. However, most of them do not take religious training seriously. Like the general population, most of the inmates are church-goers or pretenders, because they have not genuinely repented from their wrong-doings. They go to the church because of certain items they expect to get. Reformation is therefore not an effective mechanism of social reintegration.

Rehabilitation since the commencement of this prison has been limited to trade training in areas such as carpentry, tailoring, barbering, shoemaking, sewing, soap making etc. after the completion of the programmes, participants were given tools or capital to start business when they were being discharged. Aftercare officers used to visit the ex-offenders to assess and assist them in their reintegration. Formal education began in 2008 and was limited to Junior High School and Senior High School. Subjects taught include English, maths, integrated science, social studies, economics, financial accounting etc. there is also the non-formal education that provide inmates with reading and numeracy skills. However, correctional education in NMSP is ineffective, consequently, only a fraction of the convicts participate in these programmes. Most convicts lack access to formal and vocational training and are only confined within the prison walls. In addition, there are no specific treatments for specific offenders as inmates with offences such as defilement, rape, assault and narcotics are given general counselling by religious persons.

The reasons for fewer convicts' participation in rehabilitation programmes include the problem of finance, lack of interest, short sentences, inconveniences, security concerns and mass incarceration. Even those who participate in these programmes are not provided with the tools or the capital to start their own business after release. Besides, the stigma of a prison record also serves as an employment barrier.

There is no parole system to ensure gradual release and supervision. The implication is that conditions that are necessary for post-release success such as accommodation, employment and the avoidance of certain behaviours, like bad company and substance abuse, are also absent. The aftercare system exists but is not effective because of lack of resources to carry out the functions. The result of ineffective and inadequate formal institutional support implies that most offenders coming home have unattended criminogenic needs. This leads to a relapse into further criminal behaviours. The ineffective rehabilitation is an institutional push factors that predispose offenders to re-offend. It is a primary cause of recidivism in Ghana.

In conclusion, returning inmates in Ghana face multiple transitional challenges that prevent their ability to lead a law-abiding lifestyle. Incarceration is aimed at changing the attitudes that are directly linked to the criminal behaviour. Therefore, formal institutional support for offenders exists in a form of reformation, rehabilitation and aftercare. Yet most offenders come home without receiving the so-called reformation and rehabilitation but rather in a worse situation than even before their imprisonment. In the first place, reformation is ineffective because inmates participate in religious activities not because they want to renew their criminal intent but because those religious bodies provide participants with certain items. Besides, rehabilitation (both vocational and formal education) is also not effective because of inadequate state funding, profile of inmate

population, overcrowding and short sentencing, lack of interest by the inmates, inconvenience and security protocol and lack of programme intensity and integrity

Moreover, offence-focused treatments such as drug rehabilitation for drug addicts, sex offender treatments etc. are virtually absent in NMSP. As a consequence, most offender returnees have poor education, lack of job experience, and have a history of substance abuse and mental illness because of ineffective institutional support to address the criminogenic needs. The erratic institutional support to meet the rehabilitation needs of the inmates and the consistent coercion makes inmates adapt a cushioning mechanism by resorting to discussions that contaminate first time offenders. Other inmates also seek statuses and perform leadership roles which provide them with respect by both inmates and prison officers. This serves to attract some of them back to prison because of the post-release social rejection. Moreover, given the hardship in the outside world and a sense of survival in prison, some of them re-offend and come back to the prisons because prison provides at least a sense of survival.

The parole system aimed at ensuring gradual release with supervision is absent. The aftercare services equally exist but only in theory. The reason is that the post-release aftercare aimed assisting ex-offenders to readjust is not being performed because of lack of finance. Finally, transitional partnership to coordinate transitional activities does not exist in Ghana's corrections. The ineffective formal institutional support (ineffective rehabilitation) push the offenders to re-offend while the aspect of prisonization that gives inmate statuses and respect and a sense of survival constitute the formal institutional pull factors of re-offending in Ghana.

CHAPTER SIX

SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

6.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at the community phase of offender reintegration and takes into consideration the broader social context and builds capacity for the offender through the mobilization of community resources to assist the offender. It thus examines the post-release support from the family, accommodation and employment opportunities as well as faith and charity based organizations within their respective communities to ensure bonding relationships and informal control. Providing re-entry services is critical because they aim at bonding the former offender to conventional society, reducing unemployment and homelessness, prevent substance abuse, mental illness and domestic violence. Moreover, the chapter also examines the impact of the institutional, social and community support on the attitudes and reintegration of offenders in Ghana.

6.2 Inadequate Social and Community Support

The inadequate social and community factors which in themselves are primary causes of recidivism push most ex-offenders to re-offend in Ghana. Accordingly, the study uncovered that there is no treatment of offenders within the communities in Ghana. After being discharged from prison, ex-offenders are given gate money to their places of first arrest. For instance a discharged inmate who was arrested in Accra may be given three Ghana cedis and fifty pesewas (GHC 3.50p), an equivalent of one dollar, as transportation from Nsawam to Accra. The only hope for ex-offenders is their family, because family ties are strong in Ghana and as the saying goes “one does not cut off the

limb when the child goes to toilet on it” is an indication that family ties are unbroken as a result of imprisonment.

However, most offenders in Ghana coming home have difficulties in overcoming the transitional challenges as a result of the social rejection. This social rejection emanates from the coercion and lack of support from their family members and the general public. Most ex-offenders in Ghana face the distressing experience from actual or potential psychological distance from the family and generalized others. The reasons being that although most ex-offenders return to their families, the interpersonal relationships with spouse, parents, siblings, kinsmen or friends are not cordial, making it difficult for ex-offenders to meet the expressive and instrumental needs. Most ex-offenders are socially rejected because of the stigma of prison records. The implication is that ex-offenders in Ghana have unfavourable social interactions and interrelations with the family members in particular and community members in general. Thus the social rejection takes the form of micro and macro rejections and manifests itself through stigmatization, lack of housing, marital/family problems and other forms of marginalization such as unemployment and constitutional limitations and the general perception that prisoners are bad people. The stereotypical perception by most Ghanaians that prisoners are bad people is still fresh in the minds of the people.

The perception that “if a snake changes itself, it is still a snake” still persists in the minds of most Ghanaians. The result is that, most people are unwilling to engage in a meaningful social interaction with ex-offenders. This social rejection poses a serious threat to offender reintegration in Ghana. The erratic social support for ex-offenders or the inadequate assistance especially from their family members or confiding partners and the general public make ex-offenders highly vulnerable to repeat offending because of their inability to satisfy both the instrumental and expressive needs.

When asked about the challenges of offender re-integration in Ghana, most of the recidivists, all the prison officers, social workers, prison evangelists and the family members of the recidivists indicated that social rejection is the main transitional problem of offenders in Ghana.

6.3 Micro Rejection

Micro rejection is rejection by family members. Criminological research has established that inmates who maintain family ties have higher rates of post-release success than inmates who do not (Bales & Mears, 2008; Hairston, 1988, 1991; Holt & Miller, 1972). However, the findings of this research indicates that most returning prisoners in Ghana lack the needed support or assistance from their family members in meeting their expressive and instrumental needs such as emotional, material and moral supports. In addition, there are non-cordial interpersonal relationships between most ex-offenders and their family members. These relationships are characterized with coercion. Most family members always look down upon a member who is an ex-offender. Coercion finds expression in unnecessary suspicion, fear, humiliation, teasing, critical comments, and ostracism on the part of ex-offenders by their family members. As a result of the stigma of imprisonment, the views of ex-offenders are usually not recognized and in most cases, people don't want to plan with ex-offenders or consult them when taking important decisions that concern the family in Ghana.

This micro rejection originates from family members (spouse, parents, siblings and kinsmen) and is known as consanguineous or family rejection. This rejection includes the refusal of family members to visit the offender while he/she is in prison. In some rare cases, family members are reluctant or unwilling to accept the offender back into the house after release from prison. Family rejection also occurs where a partner may

divorce the ex-offender, or a partner may not respect and trust the ex-offender any longer. From Table 3, it can be seen that 38.3% of the recidivists were divorcees while 14.7% have been separated as a result of the incarceration. In some cases too, ex-offenders face humiliation, ridicule, suspicion, ostracism and other negative remarks as a result by family members and friends.

The role of family in the post-release life of an offender is critical and its absence poses a serious challenge in the offender reintegration in Ghana. As a result of social rejection, the personal relationship characterized by a sense of attachment, intimacy, mutuality, and solidarity to serve as a means of social control and provide the needed social capital is also absent. Therefore, the higher the micro rejection, the weaker the social ties that bond, bridge and link ex-offenders to the needed social capital and the greater their probability to persist in offending. When asked why ex-offenders re-offend, all the officers said social rejection is the main challenge of offender re-integration in Ghana. For instance, one officer said that “family rejection is a problem for most offenders in Ghana. For some prisoners, the prison is their home and prisoners are their family. For instance one prisoner did not want to go home after he is discharged from prison and I am sure by now he is already back inside”.

I have my role to play and the community has its own. In the first place, the relatives/families are involved. This begins when the inmate is in prison. The families don't visit them while they are in prison, let alone receiving them, they reject them. Some even go the churches without going to the family (Prison Officer).

When it happens this way, some of the ex-offenders link up with anti-social friends or go back to the streets. Closely related to this social rejection is the issue of homelessness which constitutes one of the major challenges of inmates coming home in Ghana. The study found that some offenders re-offend because after release, they do not have a place to stay. Meanwhile, the prison provides them with free meals and accommodation.

The issue of preventing re-offending is a complex one because people find it difficult to trust ex-offenders and so reintegration of ex-offenders into the society has been a problematic. Employers do not want to employ them, family members advise their children to lock the door whenever they are going out. An inmate who was about to be discharged pleaded with the authorities to allow him to stay for at least a week to enable him plan where he will sleep. But the authorities refused to grant his request and discharged him accordingly. However, the ex-offender went straight to the market and deliberately stole something. He was subsequently arrested, sentenced and brought back to the prison (Prison Officer).

The first thing that brings them back to prison is rejection. We should wipe away “old jail man syndrome”. Though some families protect their members who have been in prison by not telling other people, other families close their gate when the ‘old-jail-man’ is coming home and so they go away. When you do that, they will feel embarrassed (Prison Officer).

In some cases, returning inmates go to their families for support because family ties are still strong in Ghana. However, after returning to their family home, ex-offenders are stigmatized through ridiculing, insinuation, ostracism, disrespect, mistrust and suspicion by members of their family because of the “old-jail-man”, “oldkako” syndrome. There are varying degrees of stigmatization depending on the type of offense committed. The more violent the offence committed, the greater the level of stigmatization. For instance felons such as armed robbers are more highly stigmatized than a misdemeanant who is a petty thief. It is important to note that stigmatization manifests through ostracism or the complete avoidance of company by close friends while the indirect include ridicule, insinuation and suspicion. Another officer lamented as follows: “Society has rejected ex-offenders because of the tag “ex-convict”. For instance the moment they go out, people call their children and advise them “the thief has come oo, if he sends you, don’t go”.

Social rejection is the main challenge faced by ex-offenders. Even their own siblings reject them. Other challenges include finance, accommodation, marital problems, employment, constitutional limitations and stigmatization. For instance when they live with their family, the family members are careful about them, when they get to the public, people are careful about their pockets. Most of them can't stay in the house so they live in the society on their own. Sometimes, the family rejects them but the stigmatization is when people are careful about you. However, there are varying degrees of stigmatization based on the offense committed. If you are an armed robber, the stigmatization is more severe than of the one who commits assault (Prison Officer).

6.4 Macro Rejection

This study found that community support services do not exist for ex-offenders in Ghana. The lack of post-release support for offenders by the generalized others in Ghana is a macro rejection. This manifests in a form of collateral consequence of imprisonment such as difficulties in securing accommodation, employment, educational and counselling services, legal limitations and rejection by charity-based community organizations as well as the stereotypical perception of most Ghanaians that prisoners are bad people. Although some faith-based organizations such as the churches and mosques do support ex-offenders, they are rare and unofficial. Macro rejection also manifests in overcrowding in prison, inadequate feeding fees, and government's reluctance to fund rehabilitation projects, land lords refusing to rent their rooms to ex-offenders among others. One officer revealed that "society refuse to accept them, sometimes their family refuse to accept them, no job, no shelter, lack of recognition even in our churches. The pastors will accept them but the members of the church will neglect them because of the stigma".

The social perception about prisoners in Ghana is bad. Society has neglected the prisoners even the officers. Some think the officers are criminals themselves that is why when they donate something to the prisoners, they want to make sure the things get to the intended persons before they leave. Society has rejected the prisoners and this can be seen in a form of over population in the prisons, 1.80p feeding, equipment for training and rehabilitation is not the priority of the government. Besides, most employers don't want to employ ex-offenders and even when they are employed, later when the employers get to know of it, they dismiss them (Prison Officer).

Unemployment continues to be one of the main obstacles to successful re-integration of offenders in Ghana. The majority of ex-offenders do not have jobs to do to be able to cater for themselves and their families. This ex-offender unemployment in Ghana can be partially explained by the lack of rehabilitation to provide the job skills and the experience. Besides, the stigma of a prison record makes it difficult to obtain employment from the private and public sectors of the economy. From the perspective of correctional officers, most employers in Ghana are unwilling to hire the services of ex-offenders because of the stigma of a prison record and even when they are employed and the employers later get to know of it, they dismiss them.

Unemployment is a problem ex-offenders face in Ghana. This is because people don't want to employ ex-convicts. But they have forgotten that the stomach does not go on leave. One has to struggle before getting the daily bread but employers refuse them because they are ex-convicts. For instance an ex-convict worked with a company for 5 years and the manager got to know that he was an ex-convict. The manager took the name of the ex-convict to the headquarters enquire about him. Then one of the workers asked the manager, has the worker (ex-convict) done anything wrong? The manager replied no, then he asked why the enquiry? The manager replied, I can't work with an ex-convict. The worker asked again, has he committed a crime in the course of his employment? The manager replied no but insisted he wanted to dismiss him. So the worker told the manager not to dismiss him (ex-convict) because he might have established his family and when he dismisses him, he (the manager) will be putting the ex-offender back into crime. Then the manager took 1year to monitor him and realised that the guy is hardworking. So he asked him, what motivates you to work hard? Then he replied "I have been to prison before and vow not to commit crime again" (Prison Officer).

From the above data, it is clear that most employers do not want to employ ex-offenders because of the stigma of imprisonment. The legal limitation is another major impediment

to offenders' reintegration in Ghana. This problem finds expression in the constitution and other acts that limit offenders in occupying certain employment statuses. For instance although the 1992 constitution of Ghana makes provision for the fundamental human rights and freedom of Ghanaians. These include the right to life, personal liberty, and respect for human dignity, equity and freedom from discrimination, economic and educational rights among others. In particular, chapter five section 17 (2) of this same constitution states that "a person shall not be discriminated against on grounds of gender, race, colour, ethnic origin, religion, creed, social or economic status". Section 24 (1) of that same chapter states that "every person has the right to work under satisfactory, safe and healthy conditions and shall receive equal pay for equal work without distinction of any kind". However, this same constitution discriminates against ex-offenders by preventing them from participating in or occupying certain statuses. For instance chapter ten section 94 (2c) clearly states that "a person shall not be qualified to be a member of parliament if he/she has been convicted of a crime under this constitution". Moreover, the civil service law, 1993 section (58) states that "no person who has been convicted of criminal offense involving fraud, dishonesty or moral turpitude shall be employed in a civil service post". In addition, the absence of legislation to promote employment of ex-offenders constitutes another macro level discrimination and put ex-offenders in a socioeconomic disadvantage relative to the general population.

From the perspective of most recidivists "Oldkagos", post release challenges include lack of training and social rejection. The social rejection manifests through micro and macro rejections. The micro rejections find expression in the poor interpersonal relationship between the offender and family members or friends. For instance no visit by family members and close friends during the period of imprisonment, financial

problems, unnecessary suspicion, disrespect, stigmatization, ostracism, divorce and refusal to accept ex-offenders into the house by family members.

The macro rejection is evidenced in unemployment, lack of support from the government, also lack of support from faith and charity organizations and constitutional limitation. When the recidivists were asked about the challenges they faced during their last release, they indicated that social rejection was the main predisposition of their re-offending. Some relatives of these recidivists have not visited them while some recidivists were divorced by their partners as a result of imprisonment. In addition to these, most ex-offenders face the problem of coercion which manifests in mistrust, ostracism, divorce and disrespect by members of the community in which they live. The following are some of the excerpts of interviews with the recidivists. One recidivist had this to say: “My family has rejected me because none of the family members has visited me for 13 years”. Another recidivist also lamented as follows: My wife divorced me. My siblings don’t want to mind me because I am a thief, when they see me, they say leave him alone, he is a thief, so I don’t feel like getting close to them.

Family members do not trust you and anything criminal, you are the first person to be suspected. Friends and community members also do not trust you because you are “an old-jail-man” and anytime there is an armed robbery in the area, you’re the first to be suspected. The government don’t support you and if there is a job, old-jail-man don’t qualify (Recidivist).

You lose respect as an ex-convict and because of that, people don’t want to help you, father gets angry with you, there is no job for you and even going to church is a problem. If something gets missing in the house, you will be held responsible, even when you live close to your sister’s door, when she is going to bath, she will close the door (Recidivist).

The attitude of my family is like they cast insinuation against me, if I need something, they won’t act, I feel total rejection by my family, if I get into trouble they don’t care, they don’t consult me when they take family decision, because I bring disgrace to the family (Recidivist).

Yes I feel rejected, my 2 brothers rejected me, and no friend was close to me after my release. Sometimes it pains me a lot. I look like an animal to them, when people see me they run. When I was not in prison, I was not accorded this rejection but after I was imprisoned, I realised that yes, when they advise you and you don't take care, you suffer. Even if I eat from a bowl, my grandmother doesn't want to eat from it again. So when I remember the sorrow and how my family rejected me, I feel reluctant to go home (Recidivist).

Bad friends lured me into this problem. When people see you they suspect you. If there is any problem they hold you responsible. Lack of jobs and housing facilities were the problems I faced during my first release (Recidivist).

When the recidivists were asked to describe how people in their community generally react towards them during the last release, most of them indicated that members of the community had negative attitudes towards them. This negative attitude towards ex-offenders stem from the stigma of a prison record. The following are excerpts of interviews with the recidivists. This is what one recidivist had to say: "Sometimes you feel uncomfortable because people suspect you. People tell others not to talk to you, people pass by when they meet you". Another recidivist said: "I went for a loan from a member of the community but he told me even your family members have rejected you, so I will not receive you either".

He is my junior brother. He is a cool guy but when he started the JHS, his life changed, he started making bad friends, drinking and smoking wee. We are 2 brothers, so after his release from prison, I brought him home and asked what work he wanted to do and he said he wanted to sell second hand clothes. I gave him the money to start the business but he "choped" the money and stopped selling. And I have to take care of our father and others too so I gave up. So he has been going to Tesano, our former place, and link up with friends, then they will call me that my brother has stolen someone's item, my brother has been arrested so I am tired (Family member of the recidivist)

The macro rejection also finds expression in the inadequacy of post-release community support from faith and charity based organizations. Consequently, most ex-offenders in Ghana are unable to access emotional, spiritual and economic support from these

organizations. Usually, ex-offenders find it difficult to approach the faith-based organizations for support because they don't want to betray themselves.

Although some community faith-based organizations in Ghana assist ex-offenders to reintegrate is rare or unofficial. This is because these organizations lack enough resources to provide the re-entry services. Besides, there is the absence of recognized charity-based organizations to assist newly release offenders with survival needs. Therefore, informal support to complement the efforts of family members by developing a deeper sense of togetherness and full settlement is a major challenge in the transitional process of offenders. This weakens the attachment to conventional society and increases the pain of reentry thereby making it difficult to ensure desistance from crime in Ghana. The study also found that in Ghana, there are no half-way homes, though the Presbyterian Church of Ghana as part of its Prison Ministry is committed to providing such facilities as housing and trade training for ex-offenders in Ghana. When asked about the challenges discharged offenders face when they come home, this is what one discharged recidivists told me.

I learned how to make soap, cream and powder while in prison. When I was discharged, I was given four cedis and fifty pesewas (¢ 4.50p) from Nsawam to Anyaa in Accra where I was arrested. Luckily for me, when I came home, my children helped me with food. Initially, I did not have the capital to start the soap making business and I didn't have anyone to help me so I started preaching in buses to raise money. I had forty Ghana cedis (GH¢40) to start the business. Now, I am looking for a loan to help me expand the business and support my children. My problem is the capital to start the business. Also, I want to leave the area where I stay because sometimes my neighbours use the stigma of having been to prison to insult me. A certain man promised to marry me, but my neighbours told him not to marry me because I am an ex-convict. So I have decided to leave the area. Other recidivists also have problems of stigmatization and homelessness. For instance I had to provide accommodation for a friend who is also an ex-convict for two months before she left for Kumasi (Discharged Recidivist).

According to one Prison Evangelist:

After their discharge, they don't want to expose the fact that they are ex-prisoners so they don't tell people, unless you know them. Society has the perception that they have to be punished. One of them told me "mama, I don't have anywhere to go" so I had to accommodate her. One girl stayed with me for four years. Many of them change but they don't have anyone to help them so they re-offend and go back to prison. It is not their fault. We are trying our best but we don't have anyone to help us.

She added that:

The main post-release challenge of offenders in Ghana is that they face social rejection from the family and the church, they don't have job to do so they re-offend.

As a member of the Coalition of the Prison Evangelists (COPE) put it "many Ghanaians still don't understand why we are doing this, why do you waste your time on somebody who is a murderer, armed robber, rapists? But we think it is part of the work of God".

Employment is a critical factor in the transition from prison to the community because it provides the required income to support material conditions. However, there are low employment prospects for prisoners in Ghana and so they are in and out of prison. Section 42 of the Prison Service Act (NRCD 46) 1972 which regulates prison labour in Ghana requires that convicts shall perform work beneficial to the community or the Prison Service or to help them lead a law-abiding life after release. In Ghana, prison labour is exploited in two ways namely working for the state and utilizing prisoners on contract basis. The prisoners on contract can either be working on the field alongside officers who supervise them or take a contract to produce certain goods such as furniture, baskets, shirts etc where prisoners who have trade skills acquire the apprenticeship and receive some incentives. However, this prison industry does not exist in NMSP because of lack of tools, materials and qualified instructors. This implies that there is no pre-release income which can be used even to secure tools or capital to start business after release. Though some of the inmates are teachers, they only receive a little money for

their efforts because they are prisoners serving in hard labour. Besides, due to the stigma of a prison record, the prospect for post-release employment is low. When asked about the income support of offenders both officers and the recidivists indicated that prisoners or ex-prisoners do not have enough income to provide for their basic needs.

There is no prison industry where the inmates could produce items for the members of the public or organization so that they can earn some money. However, inmate teachers are given something small (Prison Officer).

There is a law that prevent ex-convicts from employment in the civil service. Even the government who is the largest employer has not done enough to ensure the employment of ex-offenders (Prison Officer)

When inmates get released, those who know that they are ex-convicts are reluctant to employ them. Even when they are employed, the employers will dismiss them after realising that they are ex-convicts (Recidivist).

6.5 Post-Release Needs of Offenders

When I asked about Inmates' perception on post-release needs, the recidivists indicated that they need housing, a job or tools to start a business, money for the children's fees and feeding, moving away from bad friends and attend church service, advice, clothes, spiritual support, money and Medicare, the need to continue their education or learn some work, marriage and social acceptance.

Social acceptance such as love and care because if the family members don't accept you, then you will be forced to join friends and this can lead you to another problem. Sometimes, your own family members suspect you. For instance if something gets lost in the house, you are the first person to be suspected (Recidivist).

In a study conducted by Bratton, Morani, Wikoff & Linhorst (2011), it was found that self-identified needs of the offenders prior to their release into the community include transportation, clothing, food, housing, employment and vocational training. Exploring the significance of "exits" for juvenile male offenders who are preparing to leave correctional institutions, Abrams (2011) found that regardless of expressed motivation to

change, all of the youth offenders due to be released were contemplating and planning the logistical components of their exit and reentry. In the first place, they emphasized a need for legal employment and a steady and significant income.

Greene, Polzer & Lavin-Loucks (2006) found that offenders prefer to earn money while in prison which would help them after their release, post-release counselling, job skills and access to job fairs to help them learn about employment opportunities. Aside job fairs, Visher, La-Vingne & Travis (2004) argue that offenders with strong family support are more likely to find post-release employment and avoid substance abuse as a means of ensuring relapse prevention. Visher et al. also find that the attitude towards the self and the readiness to change are also important in relapse prevention.

Exploring offenders' perceptions of re-entry needs in Trinidad and Tobago, Rougier et al. (2012) find that there are five factors that are crucial to assist offenders for their release. These include educational and vocational training, cultural programmes, recreation, faith-based support and life skills programmes. The majority of the inmates identified educational and vocational training as crucial for any post-release success. The post-release challenges they anticipated include employment, housing, community acceptance, protection, resource materials and life skills.

6.6 Collateral Consequences of Imprisonment

The social rejection of offenders constitute what Borzychi (2005) called "collateral consequences" (p. 9). These include divorce, children stop school, loss of accommodation, of a job, personal belongings, important personalities and social linkages. The following are some of the excerpts of interviews with the recidivists regarding collateral effects as a result of incarceration. One recidivist said: "I lost my job, my room and those people who would help me". Another recidivist also said: "I lost

my room, my land lord told me he has allowed the police to take my things to the police station because I kept so long and my rent got finished, I lost my clothes and so I had to beg friends for clothes”. A third recidivist lamented as follows: “I learned that now my wife doesn’t tell me the actual thing but she has left my house to her parent’s place. So the unlawful sentence has caused damage to my marriage and job”. A fourth recidivist said the following words: “My things got missing, my wife has re-married and I have lost my job”. A fifth recidivist also said: “All the things in my room got lost, I am now going to start life again”

These collateral consequences of imprisonment put returning offenders in a disadvantaged situation. What makes the plight of returning prisoners worse according to Borzychi, (2005) is that the offenders have a stigma of a prison record, low prospects for employment, reduced access to housing, loss of family and social ties and an increase risk to commit suicide. In the United States for instance, in some states felons face legal restrictions such as the loss of parental right, the right to vote and the right to hold public office (Uggen, Manza & Thompson, 2006). Petersilia (2003) has indicated that in 1980, laws were passed to restrict the kind of jobs in which the services of ex-felons can be required, restrictions on access to welfare and housing subsidies. Travis (2002) observed that such laws go beyond the manifest functions and have negative effects on ex-offenders. He calls these restrictions “invisible punishment” and indicated that they have become instruments of “social exclusion”, creating a permanent diminution in the social status of convicted offender (cited in Petersilia, 2003, p. 9). Griffiths (2010) observed that one of the pains of the re-entry is that the criminal records make ex-offenders “strangers in a strange land” (p. 346). It embarrasses and makes ex-offenders inadequate and indicated that everyone can tell from a glance that this is an ex-prisoner.

In conclusion most ex-offenders face micro and macro rejections. The micro rejection stems from the coercive interpersonal relationship between ex-offenders and their family members. This usually manifests in erratic coercion such as humiliation, unnecessary suspicion, teasing, negative remarks, insults, insinuation and ostracism from family members and friends. It also includes erratic support as assistance from family members is inadequate to provide their emotional, financial and spiritual needs. The macro rejection stems from the fact that the stigma of a prison record limits their employment prospects, reduce their access to housing and limit assistance from faith and charity-based organizations. All these rejections present collateral effects of imprisonment. The lack of support from legitimate sources both, micro and macro put ex-offenders in difficult situations. The inability and unpreparedness of society to cater for the needs of the offenders both expressive and instrumental make them highly vulnerable to repeat offending. This social rejection finds expression in collateral consequences of imprisonment which has a negative impact on ex-offenders.

6.7 Implications of Inadequate Institutional, Social and Community Support

The absence or inadequacy of the re-entry services namely rehabilitation, family, income and community support systems have a negative impact on the attitudes and the reintegration of offenders in Ghana. The consistent coercion and erratic formal institutional support implies that most offenders leave the prison environment without having been transformed into productive and law-abiding citizens. Moreover, coercive interpersonal relationship and erratic or inadequate support from micro and impersonal or unfavourable relationship at the macro level weaken the ties to conventional society. Most ex-offenders are unable to satisfy their expressive and instrumental needs. These

circumstances produce strain or anger among ex-offenders because deviation factors outweigh conforming factors leading to the relapse into criminal behaviours.

As the discharge dates approach, most of the offenders get filled with anxiety and fear because of the anticipated absence or inadequate support services from the family, faith and charity-based organizations and the general public. Although incarceration is aimed among other things to change the attitudes that are directly linked to the criminal behaviour, in Ghana, most offenders come home without receiving the so-called rehabilitation but rather in a worse situation even before their imprisonment.

These high criminogenic needs of offenders imply that they have not been transformed into useful human capital to be able to lead a law-abiding life after their release. As a result of that, most offenders come home without the strong desire or motivation to succeed. When asked whether the absence or inadequacy of institutional training leads to re-offending, the following were the responses from the prison officers. One officer said: “Yes, inadequate training leads to re-offending especially if the person is an illiterate. Most inmates don’t get the opportunity to train because of lack of tools and high number of inmates and this leads to re-offending because of low morale”. Another officer said: “They have the opportunity to learn from others and re-offend again”.

Offenders have been excluded from the society and forced to adjust to an antisocial value system and upon the release these same offenders are expected to uphold pro-social values and be able to cope with the daily life in the outside world. This constitutes what Griffiths (2010) refer to as “the pain of the re-entry” (p. 345). In addition to the inadequate institutional support, the study found that most ex-offenders in Ghana face post-release rejection from micro and macro sources such as erratic coercion and

inadequate support from the family, friends, community members, organizations and the government. The implication is that the ties to conventional society become weak.

For instance, most of the ex-offenders find it difficult to overcome the first test of the re-entry experience. The explanation is that relocating back to the society after a long term of imprisonment is a problem in Ghana. This is because in the first place, all returning prisoners are given transport to the place of first arrest and barely have enough to survive. Some even find it difficult to get transport to their hometown. Some of the thoughts that go through the minds of the offenders immediately after release include where to go from here? What do I eat? Where do I sleep? How do I survive? Secondly, micro rejection implies that there is the poor interpersonal relationship and lack of support from family members or friends for the ex-offender. Most ex-offenders in Ghana face aversive situation from family members in a form of humiliation, suspicion, fear and negative remarks and ostracism. Thirdly, consanguineous or family rejection implies that ex-offenders lack the social support from family members in meeting the expressive and instrumental needs. The coercive interpersonal relationship between ex-offenders and their families weakens the bonding and linking social capital. This ultimately means that the psychological bond such as love, affection and respect together with the social capital from the family members linking ex-offenders to the resources and opportunities will be absent. The erratic coercion and support or social rejection by family members is one of the main transitional challenges that make ex-offenders susceptible to re-offend in Ghana.

The macro rejection is the disadvantageous relationship that exists between former offenders and the larger society. This originates from the unfavorable market conditions against ex-offenders in terms of the difficulties in securing employment, legal limitations, and lack of assistance from faith and charity-based community organizations,

stereotypical perception by the public that prisoners are bad and lack of government support for prisoners.

The social rejection is a form of collateral consequence of imprisonment and presents a problem of desistance because of their stigmatized status as outsiders. The criminal conviction constitutes an external penalty for ex-offenders because it puts them in difficult situations. It stigmatizes and limits them from attaining certain positions in society. Returning offenders in Ghana face pre and post-release challenges that make them vulnerable to re-offending. The implication is that most ex-offenders do not have structured routine activities to ensure a proper means of social control. This is because in addition to the lack of rehabilitation and dysfunctional family relations, most ex-offenders in Ghana are unable to participate in economic activities, educational and religious institutions. The criminal records disqualify ex-offenders from practicing certain professions and most employers are not willing to employ ex-offenders. The lack of employment further weakens their nutrition and the health standards of ex-offenders and limits their ability to pay for their children's fees and other bills or go to church. This weakens the bond to conventional society.

This influences the cognitive, affective and behavioural tendencies of ex-prisoners leading to loneliness, low self-esteem, hopelessness, and the development of self-defeating habits. Research shows that low self-esteem is associated with depression, anxiety and other psychological problems (Taylor & Brown, 1988).

The frustration and anger among ex-offenders make them manipulate other potential sources of support to survive. As a result of the pain of the re-entry Griffiths (2010), some resort to substance abuse and link up with antisocial associates as a cushioning mechanism leading to family violence or aggression, streetism and other criminal behaviours. The poor interpersonal relationship and the lack of support from legitimate

sources make ex-offenders resort to support from illegitimate sources leading to re-offending. It implies that crime prevention strategies have failed to successfully reintegrate offenders by ensuring that they lead law-abiding lives. The absence of crime prevention mechanisms to ensure offender reintegration leads the persistence in offending in Ghana. When asked about the impact of social rejection on the attitude and reintegration of offenders, one recidivist responded as follows: “When people such as family members have negative attitude towards you, you feel rejected. So you want to be with friends and this may lead you to other problems like substance abuse and armed robbery”. From the perspectives of Correctional Service Providers, recidivists, their family members, discharged recidivists and members prison evangelists, recidivism in Ghana is a function of social rejection.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DISCUSSION OF THE STUDY FINDINGS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the main findings of the data and the views of the broader society. The organisation of the chapter is based on the specific objectives of the study namely, (a) to identify the formal institutional, social and community support services available to offenders in Ghana, (b) examine the accessibility and effectiveness of these support systems and (c) to ascertain their impacts on the attitudes and reintegration of offenders in Ghana. From the findings of this study, it emerged that the predisposing factors of recidivism in Ghana include institutional pull and push factors as well as social and community push factors. The institutional pull factors involve prisonization while the institutional push factors include ineffective rehabilitation, non-existence of parole and ineffective aftercare. The social and community push factors also involve social rejections or collateral consequences of imprisonment. The institutional pull factors are the secondary predisposing factors while the institutional push and social/community push factors are the primary predisposing factors of recidivism in Ghana.

7.2 Formal Institutional Support

The formal institutional support for offenders in Ghana usually begins with prisonization.

7.2.1 Prisonization

It emerged that one of the predisposing factors of recidivism is prisonization. Thus some aspects of the inmates sub-culture promote inmates leadership, political sub-culture, discipline, solidarity, and interaction among the inmates. This in a way provides statuses

roles and a sense of survival among the inmates which they would have been denied when they get released from the prison. The negative effects of prisonization hold true among Ghanaian prisoners in the NMSP. This finding of institutional pull factors are consistent with prisonization theory which postulates that affiliating with others who have adopted inmate lifestyle leads to a greater degree of prisonization. This theory asserts that inmates who internalize the attitudes and criminal lifestyle have a greater propensity to develop criminal careers (Clemmer, 1940; Gaes et.al, 2002). The prison code forces the inmates to be loyal to co-inmates rather than the custodial staff. Clemmer beliefs that virtually no can be entirely unprisonized and incarceration socialises prisoners into aspects of prison lifestyle. As a criminal society, the interactions between these offenders as a relief mechanism are deleterious. Criminal contacts and values are shared by members of this community (Hayner, Ash, 1939). One of the ironies of penal thinking is that a reduction in criminal activities can be achieved through imprisonment. The unintended consequence of this involuntary association is the heightening of the activities that led to their confinement (cited in Abotchie, 2012).

7.3 Ineffective Formal Institutional Support

Another finding of this study is that offender rehabilitation in NMSP in Ghana is not effective in transforming the offenders to enable them lead law-abiding lives. This is because most of the returnee offenders in Ghana leave the prison with unattended criminogenic needs. While prisoners have high criminogenic needs relating to substance abuse, educational and vocational needs, programmes aimed at addressing them are relevant in prison. These deficiencies when left unattended to, they can significantly affect re-offending (Gendreau, 1996; Inciardi, Martin & Butzin, 2004; Uggen, 1999). This finding is consistent with the recent research conducted by (Petersilia, 2003, 2005;

Travis et al, 2001) that most of the inmates in American leave the prisons without participating in rehabilitative programmes. Recidivism reflects the degree to which released inmates have been rehabilitated and the role correctional programmes play in reintegrating prisoners into society (Maltz, 2001). When re-entering society, people who have been incarcerated face a lot of challenges including a lack of resources, lack of education and a criminal history. He explains that if these challenges, are not addressed, individuals face great danger of recidivating.

The institutional push factors which predispose offenders to renew their offending behaviour include the problem of finance, lack of specific treatments, profile of inmates and short sentences, lack of interest to participate in rehabilitation by the inmate, inconvenience and security concerns, mass incarceration and lack of programme integrity, absence of parole and an ineffective aftercare system.

7.3.1 Inadequate State Funding

One interesting finding of this study is that the ineffectiveness of offender rehabilitation in NMSP is due to the problem of finance. Crime prevention strategies in Ghana do not focus on the investment in offender rehabilitation. The implication is that most convicts are unable to participate in the formal and vocational education because of the lack of tools, materials and professionals to effect correctional education. For instance, there is no specific allocation of funds either by the government or GPS for rehabilitation purposes in NMSP. Although UNDP and the Presidential Special Initiative on Distance Learning (PSI-DL) provide some support for inmates' formal education, while the non-Formal Education Division of the Ministry of Education also supports functional literacy programmes for inmates (Ghana Prison Annual Report 2008), these sources of funding are not enough for a meaningful rehabilitation programme. Consequently, 47.4% of the

teaching staff in NMSP is inmate teachers who are not well motivated to give of their best because they are serving their sentences in hard labour. In some cases, when the inmate teachers are discharged, those subjects or trades are temporary suspended. Sarklin (2008) revealed that among the objectives of modern imprisonment, rehabilitation and reintegration have remained elusive and controversial in Africa. The reasons are that overcrowding and under-funding prevent the achievement of effective rehabilitation. He maintained that although rehabilitation is usually seen in penal policies of African governments however, the lack of political will prevents its implementation. He noted that recidivism rates in Africa can only be reduced provided there are effective rehabilitation programmes.

Responding to the criminal behaviour of convicted persons suffers a defeat if inmates are not reformed and rehabilitated. Warren E. Burger (1907-1995), former chief justice in the U.S. believes that “confining offenders behind walls without trying to change them is an expensive folly with short term benefits.”¹⁷ Thus although incarceration has crime control effects, confining offenders without changing their attitudes may have a negative impact on community safety. Studies have shown that the lack of proper funding of prison programmes and the lack of fully qualified teachers are some of the challenges of correctional education (DelliCarpini, 2008; Lewis, 2006; Makorios & Travis, 2010). With little funding, prisons are forced to hire educators with fewer skills, less experienced teachers and volunteers to help educate their inmates (Lewis, 2006).

The lack of funding for rehabilitation projects originates from the scarcity of resources in Africa, therefore most people do not see the wisdom in using the limited resources to

¹⁷ Factories with fences retrieved from <https://www.unicor.gov/information> on 18th June, 2015.

cater for the castaway people like prisoners. Kibuka (2001) notes that, the African continent is confronted with so many social needs, therefore providing resources to cater for the needs of prisoners is not the priority of most governments, as many Africans believe in custody and deterrence rather than rehabilitation and reintegration.

Asare (2009) in his study at Obuasi prison in Ghana find that the intention to equip prisoners with the skills, knowledge and attitude to establish in them the will to lead a good and useful life as enshrined in the prisons rule was ineffective because of lack of the required personnel and facilities needed to rehabilitate the offenders. Amenyendzie (1998) in his study at the Ghana Borstal Institute found that most of the inmates had to provide their own tools before the commencement of trade training. He observed that 50% of the respondents were unable to provide the funds for the purchase of the tools while 36% were not consistent in providing funds for the payment of the tools. Adu-Buahene (2004) observed that rehabilitation programmes in Awutu Camp prison in Kasoa in Ghana were not effective because about 65% of the respondents had not received any training since detention. According to Hagan (2013) who studied at NMSP, some of the challenges of vocational training programmes include lack of appropriate equipment, poor quality tools/obsolete machines, poor attendance by the inmates and lack of large capital and the negative perception of the vocations by some of the inmates.

Perhaps it is because post-colonial governments in Ghana have not paid particular attention to rehabilitation programmes as correctional goal, that the 1967 Commission of Enquiry into the conditions of prisoners in Ghana (the Asafo-Adjei Commission) was established. The commission recognized the fact that though there exist correctional education in Ghana's prison however, efforts must be made to "provide prisoners with the facilities to promote their formal and informal education within the prison service and institutions under its administration". The Commission further indicated that

“although prisoners may be incarcerated as a punishment, everything done to avoid creating bitterness and resentment in them is ultimately for the good of the society to which they will eventually return”. The Commission recommended that the GPS should intensify its efforts to recruit more qualified teachers to undertake the urgent task of educating the mass of illiterate inmates.

7.3.2 Lack of Specific Treatments

This study observed that specific treatments or cognitive behavioural skills such as life skills, anger management, violence prevention, substance abuse and sex offender treatment which according to Koehler, Loser & Humphreys (2012) ensure cognitive transformation and desistance from crime are absent in NMSP. In its place, inmates are re-socialized with the general guidance and counselling by non-professionals, partly because the professional are made to go on night duties. Therefore, the absence of offence-focused therapy implies that inmates’ criminal attitudes still remain unchanged. Petersilia (2003) observed that there large mismatch between treatment needs and the programmes available. Although environmental factors such as family relations influence a person’s behaviour, psychologists believe that human behaviour is shaped by cognitive processes. This is because self-defeating habits and hopelessness is a function of unproductive thoughts relating to past experiences. The absence of cognitive therapeutic models of rehabilitation in Ghana prisons imply that offenders who have committed specific offenses such as assault, drug abuse and rape lack the cognitive skills to transform their criminal thinking, mood and behaviours. The absence of specific and well organised and specific interventions to deal with inmates with specific needs makes it difficult to address the root causes of their criminal behaviour.

Monahan (1996) observes that those who are mentally ill and abuse drugs or alcohol have a higher probability of committing violent and serious crime. Drug and alcohol dependency and misuse are associated with offending (Dowden & Brown, 2002). According to Goldstein (1985) drug may affect crime in three different ways. In the first place, after an individual engages in crime as a result of the psychopharmacological effects of drugs. Thus committing crime under the influence of drugs. Secondly, drug users may obtain money illegally to buy drugs and finally, individuals may become aggressive in connection with the use and distribution of drugs. The link between drug use and re-offending is more pronounced for “poly-drug use” and class A drugs such as cocaine and crack (Ministry of Justice Analytical Series in UK, 2013).

Harper & Chitty (2004) suggest that severely addicted persons are often prolific offenders and therefore policy-makers should focus on drug-related rather than alcohol-related offending. Burrows et al. (2001) observed that “drug dependent offenders are caught in a vicious cycle. Unless the treatment they receive in prison for their addiction is maintained on their return to the community, the chances are that they will relapse and begin offending again to support their drug use. Failure to access appropriate support services in the community can result in offenders returning to prison time and time again, as the cycle of offending is perpetuated” (p.1).

As a consequence, some scholars have established that prison is not an appropriate place for rehabilitation (Seiter, 2004). The inappropriateness of a coercive environment as a place for rehabilitation confirms some recent debates about the effectiveness of prison-based programmes. Martinson (1974) notes that the various prison-based programmes have little impact on reducing re-offending and assisting the post release behaviour of ex-offenders. Adding that even with rehabilitation in mind, prisons still do not effectively *establish in prisoners the will to lead a good and useful life upon discharge*

and to fit them to do so as stipulated by the prisons rule. For Martinson, prison as an institution has a lot of problems and therefore operates to negate whatever intervention intended to bring changes in the behavior of offenders. He believes that “nothing works” in correction and concludes that prison-based programmes are not effective in reducing re-offending. Morris observed that rehabilitation cannot be effective in a coercive environment. It is not surprising to find that little or no rehabilitation can be found in these facilities (Currie, 2002). Foucault (1977) criticizes the medical model of corrections and concludes that the criminal justice system is unfair and produces criminals rather than transforming them. The psycho-social environment of prisons is such that prison culture and its deleterious effects render rehabilitation ineffective. Prison-based programmes have low “ecological validity” in that life in the “real-world” cannot be replicated in a prison setting (Howells, 2000, p. 2).

7.3.3 Lack of Motivation to Participate in Rehabilitation

It also emerged from the study that some of the convicts lack the interest to participate in the rehabilitation programmes. The lack of enthusiasm for the participation in rehabilitation stems from the fact that most of the inmates are thinking about their freedom rather than any other thing. Even with the few recidivists who had the opportunity to participate in the trade and formal education indicated that they do not feel responsible to participate in these institutional training because the training will not be beneficial to them. They indicated that no employment opportunities are available to them after participating in these programmes neither will they be given tools to start their own business.

Griffiths (2012) finds that sometime, some of the inmates do not feel responsible or have no motivation to participate in rehabilitation programmes because of the assignment of

dull work, obsolete tools and absence of programmes that ensures post-release employment to ex-offenders. The lack of interest by the inmates to participate in these programmes is consistent with the findings of Hagan (2013) who carried out a study in Nsawam Medium Security Prison. He finds that, the reasons for the inability of some correctional students to either enrol or complete the training programmes include the following. In the first place, some of the students were thinking about their sentences and families. Secondly, the conditions in the prison is bad and finally,. there is the problem of lack of time and food. In conclusion, re-offending in Ghana is an indication that the existing correctional interventions are ineffective in addressing the criminogenic needs of the offenders.

7.3.4 Inconvenience and Security Protocol

Although the findings of this research indicates that only a few convicted criminal in Ghana participate in correctional education in the areas of vocational and formal educational trainings, there is the evidence to show that not all correctional education reduces re-offending. This is because coercion is consistent while support services are erratic in NMSP and Ghana's corrections in general. There is 8 times security check each day and the pain of imprisonment manifest through the deprivation of goods and services, deprivation of liberty, deprivation of autonomy, deprivation of security and deprivation of heterosexual relationships. As a result, offenders are unable to satisfy their expressive and instrumental needs.

In the study of "Society of Captives", Sykes (1958) redirects the attention to the conditions of penal confinement. Although Syke's work was done over five decades ago, the findings still have relevance in modern corrections such as Ghana. His conclusion that "attempting to reform criminals by placing them in prison is based on fallacy" (cited

in Abotchie, 2012, p. 67) finds justification. The punitive nature of imprisonment renders rehabilitation efforts ineffective. His observation that custody demands take priority over treatment consideration explained the fact that if a prisoner escapes, some prison officers will be in trouble, therefore security issues are considered first before any other thing. Prisoners only conform to internal regulations because they must do so and not because they have truly reformed from their wrong doings.

In NMSP in Ghana, the eight times check daily by the prison officers in the early, main, late and night shifts clearly illustrate the concerns of the Officers-In-Charge on security over rehabilitation. Even professionals who are supposed to work during the day are made to work in the night. The performance of general duties by the officers who are professionals implies putting a square peg in a round hole.

7.3.5 Mass incarceration

One of the reasons why few convicts participate in rehabilitation is due to the fact that the population outstrips the rehabilitation facilities available. It is logical that the overcrowding in Ghana prisons makes it difficult for interested convicts to take part in the programmes. This age-old problem of overcrowding in prisons still persists in NMSP. This mass incarceration results from the high inflow of convicts and especially remand prisoners whose warrants have expired but still in prison custody. Despite the significant success by the “Justice for All Programme”, by Ghana Judicial Service, (an initiative to decongest the prisons in Ghana), overcrowding and poor conditions of service continues to be a major source of worry in Ghana prisons (Ghana Prisons Service Report, 2010, p.1).

According to Sarklin (2008), overcrowding is the biggest problem in African prisons. He asserts that this problem owes its origin from colonialism on the continent. African prisons are almost full to capacity because of the need to repress indigenous political opponents. The physical conditions of African prisons are deplorable because the buildings are old, poorly ventilated and inadequate sewage systems. This brings about the transmission of communicable diseases because of the limited space for sleeping, poor hygiene and poor nutritional standards. He observes that majority of the inmates are awaiting trial and conviction. He observed that African prisons sometimes accommodate “crowded cells where inmates sleep in shifts, warders sell juveniles for sex with other cons and guards smuggle weapons, drugs and alcohol to paramilitary gangs” (p.27).

7.3.6 Lack of Programme Intensity and Integrity

It emerged from this study that the rehabilitation programmes in NMSP lack integrity. The reasons are due to the low programme intensity and also, the programmes do not target the criminogenic needs of the offenders. Therefore, these programmes do not have any significant impacts on the life of the offenders. Studies have shown that when rehabilitation do not follow sound programming practices or lack integrity, the impact on recidivism and other outcomes will be lacking (MacKenzie, 2006; Van Voorhis & Brown, 1995). In a study to evaluate Ohio’s halfway homes in the U.S., Lowencamp, Christopher & Latessa, (2006) find that good programme implementation and programme quality are significantly related to the reductions in recidivism. Research conducted by Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections (2010) concludes that, good programme implementation and integrity should be consistent with the following:

- The theoretical underpinnings and treatment methods that are shown to be effective.

- Validated risk and need assessment instruments must be used.
- The officers who would assist in the implementation of the programme must be trained to understand the rationale behind.
- The participants must be allowed a time period considered long enough so as to have a meaningful impact on them.
- There must be administrative support (funding, staffing, group size restrictions) to implement the programme as designed.
- The programme should enhance intrinsic motivation.

According to Lowenkamp et al., offenders who were unsuccessfully discharged from the programmes were associated with higher rates of recidivism

7.3.7 Absence of Parole

The absence of parole system in Ghana's corrections implies that offenders after serving their sentences are released without any supervision and other conditions such as employable skills, accommodation and employment deemed crucial in criminal desistence. Therefore, most returning offenders find it difficult to survive the first stage of immediate post-release life of relocating to the society. Reintegration becomes further complicated as most ex-offenders are unable to go beyond the physical re-entry into the society into an improved personal and social transformation. Most ex-offenders lack the social capital from emotional relationships and material support to ensure social integration. The lack of continuity of care leads to a relapse into criminal behaviours. Most ex-offenders may find it difficult to permanently settle into the communities as a result of lack of attachment to the society.

Bazemore and Stinchcomb (2004) observe that communities can be both a major stumbling block and a facilitator to offender reintegration. The barrier to the reintegration occurs when returning offenders are not assisted by community actors to acquire new identities by inter-mingling with pro-social others and performing important services. The social-psychological process of the re-entry becomes a problem because of the lack of informal social control. The sense of stigmatized identities and the community's static perspective on the offender make it difficult to ensure offender reintegration in Ghana. In a study to compare two groups of offenders namely, those released on conditions as against those released unconditionally in the US, Ostermann, Salerno and Hyatt (2015) reveal that within three years of leaving prison, 65% of unconditionally released inmates were rearrested for new crimes, 55% were reconvicted for a new offense stemming from a re-arrest, and 41% were re-incarcerated for a new offense stemming from a reconviction.

7.4 Social and Community Rejection

In the study of ecological approach to development, Bronfenbrenner (1994) proposes that developmental influences must include the person's interaction with the environment, the person's changing physical and social settings, the relationship among these settings and the way the entire process is affected by the society in which the settings are embedded. He explains that, there must be a mutual accommodation between the person and the environment namely, the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem (cited in Vander Zanden, 1993). From this perspective, it can be inferred that crime is a function of the lack of a meaningful interaction and interrelationship especially within the micro and macro systems. As observed by Maltz (2001), recidivism is a function of the failure of society to cater for the needs of that person. From the

findings of this research, it is clear that most ex-prisoners in Ghana re-offend because of the challenge of social rejection they face from the micro (rejection by family members) and macro (rejection by the wider society) sources. The micro rejection stems from the erratic support or assistance from their family members in meeting their expressive and instrumental needs such as emotional, material and moral support. In addition, there are coercive interpersonal relationships between most ex-offenders and their family members. The coercive interpersonal relationship and lack of or inadequate support from family members as well as coercive impersonal relationship at the larger society ultimately results in a cycle of incarceration and release in Ghana.

Clearly, most ex-offenders in Ghana are faced with social rejection because of the erratic support and coercion from their family members and the larger society. This makes it difficult for them to satisfy their expressive and instrumental needs. The coercion and lack of support manifest through the mistrust, suspicion, stigmatization, fear, ostracism and lack of emotional, educational and financial assistance to ex-offenders. The stigma of prison record also serves as employment barrier to most ex-offenders in Ghana. Moreover, there is the absence or ineffective faith and charity-based support in providing aftercare services such as education, housing, employment, resettlement advice, substance misuse advice and family services to ensure post-release success.

7.4.1 Erratic Coercion and Inadequate Micro Support

Makorios, Steiner and Travis, (2010) observe that people leave prison with little or no money, resources or social capital. Studies have shown that the majority of former prisoners eventually return to their family members and rely on them for support (Altschuler & Brash, 2004; Ekland-Olson, Supanic, Campbell, & Lenihan, 1983; La Vigne et al., 2004; Naser & La Vigne, 2006; Naser & Visher, 2006; Nelson, Deess, &

Allen, 1999). Criminological research finds that upon release from prison, offenders commonly rely on parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts, and uncles. Family members come to represent offenders' social networks (Malik-Kane & Visser, 2008; Shapiro & Schwartz, 2001). Although family may receive their relatives from prison bitter emotions can pose a problem in the re-integration of the offender. These emotions might include anger, a sense of betrayal and disappointment (Nelson & Trone, 2000). Sometimes it becomes impossible for some families to support ex-offenders. This is true especially if that family is facing health problems and unemployment (Shapiro & Schwartz, 2001).

Studies have shown that lack of informal social support negatively affects the post-release adjustment of returning inmates (Sullivan, 2004). Research has shown that in the absence of emotional and material support for offenders at the time of their release, it will be very difficult for offenders to break the cycle of release and re-arrest (Griffiths, 2007). Studies by Cottle, Lee and Heilbrum (2001) shows that a poor family relationship is responsible for re-offending. Although attachment to the family positively affects the re-integration of ex-offenders, under certain conditions, families may worsen the plight of returning inmates. This happens when family problems were responsible for the criminal behaviour of offenders, going back to that same criminogenic environment may bring about further problems (Martinez & Abrams, 2013).

Patterson (1995) observes that coercive relationships such as aversive family interchange and disciplinary patterns are the main sources of juvenile delinquency. Coercive interchange includes the use of physical force like beating or non-physical force such as negative comments, critical remarks, teasing, humiliation, yelling and threat. Patterson notes that children from a coercive family background are more likely to become early starters in delinquency who later becomes life-course persistent offenders (Moffitt, 1997)). Straus (1984) notes that a coercive environment leads to

crime. Colvin and Pauly (1983) observes that a coercive relationship produces alienated social bonds. Social control theorist such as Hirschi (1969) observes that weak social bond or the lack of proper attachment to the family bring about delinquency.

Agnew (1992, 1985), theorizes that a coercive interpersonal relationship constitutes negative stimuli or aversive forces that produce strain or anger leading to crime. Instead of using the acute disjuncture between the cultural goals and legitimate means as the source of strain as suggested by (Cloward & Ohlin, 1960; Cohen, 1955; Merton, 1938), Agnew observes that negative stimuli are the sources of strain. These negative stimuli are characterized by a coercive environment such as putting a person in confinement, family or parental rejection and unfair discipline. The probability of a coercive interpersonal relationship producing a strong sense of anger is high. As the anger intensifies, individuals may regard the coercive treatment as unacceptable leading to the repudiation to authority (Sherman, 1993).

7.4.2 Erratic Coercion and Inadequate Macro Support

Agnew (1992, 1985) equally observes that impersonal coercive forces such as unemployment produce strain leading to crime. Impersonal coercion originates from structural impediments and circumstances beyond individual control that create anger leading to crime. This includes poverty, unemployment or lack of government support. Bazemore and Stinchcomb (2004) observe that communities can be both a major stumbling block and a facilitator of offender reintegration. The barrier to reintegration occurs when community actors do not provide the needed support to help ex-offenders meet their instrumental and expressive needs. They believe that when ex-offenders are not re-engaged in conventional activities, it prevents them from inter-mingling with pro-social others and build new identities. Bazemore et al. (2004) reveal that if ex-offenders

are not re-engaged in civic activities to create new pro-social roles, the community's negative perception on offenders become static and this reinforced their stigmatized identities.

Sociocultural and criminological theories have explained that certain personal and circumstantial characteristics such as unemployment, poverty, and living in a ghetto and poor education positively correlated with crime. These criminogenic needs weaken the ties to conventional society thereby making individuals less vulnerable to the deterring power of shame (Braithwaite, 1989). Unemployment increases crime because it reduces the opportunity to live a conforming life and be attached to pro-social others. Crime in general is a function of total unemployment (Kapuscinski et al, 1998). Unemployment is a consistent factor in recidivism and having a criminal record limits employment opportunities and decreases income (Holzer, 1996).

Research shows that convicted felons face both formal and informal barriers to becoming productive citizens and responsible members of their communities (Uggen, Manza & Thomson, 2006). Securing employment and suitable housing are some of the major barrier to ex-offenders (Bushway & Reuter, 2002; Pager, 2007, 2003; Pager, Western & Sugie, 2009; Uggen, 2000). The stigma of a prison record puts ex-offenders in an unfavourable labour market conditions. This implies that the pre-conditions for living a conforming life are blocked.

In the study of "Mass Incarceration and Economic Inequality", Western (2007) reveals that mass incarceration has influenced the institutionalization of poverty and inequality among the minorities in America in various ways. In the first place, incarceration brings about economic inequality because employers are unwilling to hire the services of ex-offenders. Secondly, incarceration reduces the life chances of ex-offenders because the

stigma of a prison record reduces human capital and puts ex-offenders out of the labour force, weakens the social network to legitimate employment opportunities and also reduces wages. “Not only does incarceration reduces pay and employment, it also limits the kind of jobs that are available to formerly incarcerated workers. Career jobs requiring a high level of trust, skills and credentials or well-placed social connections are largely out of reach for those with prison records”(Western, 2007, p. 510). Thus incarceration places ex-prisoners in the secondary labour market where limited prospects for social mobility exist. Weiman (2007) observes that a prison record can block the desistance pathway by increasing the barriers to the formal labour market.

Unemployment is also associated with crime because it makes the individual powerless, alienates or weakens the ties to the society, prevents a conforming life, puts the individual into a low social status, poverty and deprivation, poor education and a waste of human resource (Box, 1987; Braithwaite, 1979). Robert Merton (1938) believe that crime is a function of the frustration and anger (strain) that produces anomic conditions among those who have been blocked from legitimate opportunity structure. Neighbourhoods with high unemployment rates have high crime rates (Chiricos, 1987; Shaw & McKay, 1969).

The findings also include legal or constitutional limitations as ex-offenders are restricted by the 1992 constitution of Ghana from occupying certain positions because of the stigmatizing label. By the word stigma, Goffman (1963) implies persons who do not have full social acceptance because their identities have spoiled. They include those with blemish character such as prisoners, drug addicts, physically deformed persons and so on. In addition, the civil service law 1993 prevents ex-convicts from being employed in

the service. According to Uggen, Manza and Thomson (2006), having the stigma of prison record constitutes a “unique status of dishonour” (p. 302). Uggen, Manza and Behens, (2004) maintain that once a person receives the label “ex-convict”, such a person faces a life-long stigma even after the offender has been punished. This stigma of having been incarcerated prevents inmates from multiples of resources and opportunities they may need to prevent re-offending (Malott & Fromader, 2010). According to Petersilia (2003), employment opportunities that are legally restricted to ex-offenders in America include child care, education, security, nursing and home health care. According to Maruna (2001), incarceration does not bring about a positive self-assessment among offenders. He advocates for redemption ritual to reduce the status as offenders and enhance their status as citizens.

The restrictions associated with the status “ex-offender” present collateral consequences (Borzynski, 2005; Travis et al., 2001) and limit ex-offenders from participating in conventional activities of society. These civil restrictions are invisible punishment (Travis et al, 2001) because they go beyond the sanctions imposed by the criminal justice system and represent the means of social exclusion (Travis et al., 2001). The background checks constitute the “gate keeping” mechanism used by employers to sort out applicants with or without a criminal record. Braithwaite (1989) observes that the use of the criminal justice system to convict offenders to prison constitutes stigmatizing or disintegrative shame. This is because it focuses on the actor as an evil person and not the action. He believes that disintegrative shame makes offenders more vulnerable to re-offending because it weakens ties to the family and community.

The labelling theory postulates that the application of formal and informal stigma, label or tag brings about the continuation of criminal behaviour. In his work on “Looking Class Self” Cooley (1902), believes that the self-concept is a reflection of others’

attitudes towards on the person concerned. Thus if other people think that we are this type of person (smart, intelligent, good, humble or criminal), then we act on that accordingly. Therefore, our self-concept and actions are shaped by the label. The label is attached to persons to prevent crime but ironically, the unintended consequence of the label is the continuation of criminal behaviour. Therefore, the more a person is labelled, the greater the predisposition to commit further crime (Akers, 1997). A study conducted by Vorvor (2011) at the James Camp Prison in Accra, Ghana, reveals that a greater number of inmates had a low level of education and were unlikely to be employed after their release because of the stigmatizing label.

7.5 Implications of Social Rejection on the Attitudes of Ex-Offenders

The micro and macro rejections have negative social-psychological effects on the attitudes of ex-offenders and weaken the ties to conventional society. Consequently, most of them are unable to satisfy the expressive and instrumental needs. This leads to anger, frustration, low self-control and the development of hopelessness and self-defeating habits. Most ex-offenders in Ghana are unable to satisfy their hunger, thirst, sex drive and safety needs. In addition to these, most of them lack such needs as belongingness, love, affiliation, acceptance and recognition identified by Maslow (1942) as the fundamental and psychological needs of every human being.

Leary, Scrandorfer & Haupt (1995) observe that a person's self-esteem is an indication of the level of inclusion and exclusion by others. Using the theory of socio-meter, Leary et al. propose that the self-esteem evolve as a monitor of social environment for clues indicating social acceptance or social rejection. The theory thus depends on two sided coin namely, the perceived relationship with others and self-judgement on issues regarded as important to others. When a person behaves in a way that promotes self-

esteem, it increases the relational value in the eyes of others and ensures social acceptance. On the other hand, low self-esteem is associated with psychological problems such as depression, loneliness, substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, poor academic performance and criminal behaviour.

The finding of social rejection confirms differential social support and coercion theory which postulates that if an individual is embedded in an inadequate legitimate support from both micro and macro sources, then that individual is more likely to commit crime. This is because inadequate legitimate support reduces the sense of trust, increases the strain and the sense of hopelessness, lowers the self-esteem and self-defeating habits and reduces the social and psychological bonds thereby weakening the moral commitment to conventional others. This leads to the propensity for exploratory deviance as individuals seek support from illegitimate opportunity structure by developing criminal capital through skills, information and criminal network that promotes crime (Hagan & McCarthy, 1997). Thus the legitimate support systems for ex-offenders in Ghana are inadequate or absent therefore, most of them find it difficult to meet their expressive and instrumental needs. Consequently, they seek support from illegitimate sources by developing the criminal capital leading to moderate and chronic unskilled and organized criminal activities.

7.6 Limitations of the Study

Although recidivism can be measured using re-arrest, reconviction and re-incarceration data, it is very difficult to get reliable crime statistics on re-arrest and reconviction in Ghana. This is because some re-offenders escape arrest while others cannot be properly identified. In order to resolve this problem, this study will employ only re-incarceration data as a measure of recidivism in Ghana.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

8.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions, policy implications, contribution to knowledge and practice and suggests areas for future research. Although much research has been conducted on the process of law making, law breaking and societal reaction to law breakers, little remains known about the extent to which offenders are rehabilitated and reintegrated and how important stakeholders describe the outcomes at the institutional, social and community support services. This study sought to fill this gap by using qualitative research approach to analyse the perspectives of recidivists, correctional service providers, and key family members of the recidivists and prison evangelists regarding the transitional challenges of offenders in Ghana. Specifically, the objectives of this study are to identify and analyse the predominant formal institutional, social and community support services available to offenders of Nawam Medium Security Prison in Ghana, examine the adequacy and effectiveness of these support services from the perspectives of the offenders, their family members, correctional service providers and prison evangelists and to ascertain the impacts of these support services on the attitudes and reintegration of the offenders in Ghana.

8.2 Summary

This study was devoted to the investigation of the challenges of offender re-integration in Ghana. It is on record that 24% of ex-offenders in Ghana re-offend sooner or later after their release from prisons. This implies that crime prevention strategies in Ghana are ineffective in addressing the deficiencies that are directly related to the criminal

behaviour. Questions relating to the availability of formal institutional, social and community support services in Ghana, its effectiveness and their impacts on the attitudes and reintegration on offenders were addressed. In addressing these questions, a sample of offenders who were recidivists, correctional service providers (case managers and social workers), prison evangelists (from Nsawam Medium Security Prison), family members of the recidivists and discharged recidivists were purposively engaged in in-depth interviews. The findings indicate that recidivism in Ghana is high because of individual characteristics, family relations, community context and the state's penal policies.

8.2.1 Main Findings of the Study

Using differential social support and coercion theory as a framework, the findings suggest that most offenders in Ghana re-offend because of the secondary and primary factors. The secondary factors are the institutional pull factors which more or less attract ex-offenders to come back to prison. They include some aspects of prisonization that promotes leadership, discipline, interactions and solidarity and provide the inmates with statuses, roles and respect. The others institutional pull factors include the free meals, free accommodation and the absence of utility bills such as water and light. Besides, there are recreational activities which keep inmates entertained. These pull factors provide a sense of survival to the inmates compared to when they are in the mainstream society.

The primary factors are the institutional push factors and social/community push factors. The institutional push factors stem from the fact that penal policy in Ghana largely emphasis on custody, deterrence and retribution rather than rehabilitation. Although rehabilitation is the main objective of modern imprisonment, the majority of offenders in Ghana are unable to participate in these programmes because custody requirements take

priority over training and treatment considerations. Pre-release treatments and training programmes are ineffective in transforming the inmates because post-independent governments in Ghana have failed to provide adequate funding for rehabilitation.

The consistent coercion coupled with erratic institutional support in Ghana prisons implies that only a fraction of the inmates participate in rehabilitation programmes because of the lack of tools, materials and professionals. There are no prison industries to ensure that inmates work while in prison to save money for their post-release lives because most of the workshops in NMSP are not functional. Although some prisoners perform duties in the yard while some also go on outside labour and few others who work in the shops are expected to be paid, but low income from prison labour makes it impossible. As Asiedu (1999) former Director General of Prison puts it “in Ghana, the problem is not getting prisoners to work but the issue is getting work for prisoners” (p. 334). Consequently, most offenders lack the needed income to support their maintenance and save money for their post-release employment. The implication is that most offenders are released with high criminogenic needs or deficiencies that directly predispose them to criminal behaviours. Most offenders leave the prison having less education, low job skills and have substance abuse histories and mental health problems. Besides, specific offenders such as rapists and drug addicts do not participate in specific treatments and trainings that are offense-focused. The reasons for ineffective rehabilitation include the following:

- vi. Inadequate state funding
- vii. Inadequate skilled personnel
- viii. Profile of inmate population, overcrowding and short sentencing
- ix. Lack of interest by the inmates
- x. Inconvenience and security protocol

xi. Lack of programme intensity and integrity

Even the few inmates who get the opportunity to participate the rehabilitation programmes do not feel motivated because of post-release unemployment. Moreover, there is virtually no parole system to ensure a gradual release and supervision while the aftercare services are equally ineffective to ensure post-release adjustment in Ghana's corrections. These are the primary formal institutional push factors that render most returning inmates highly vulnerable to repeat offending.

The other primary predisposing factors of recidivism in Ghana include the social and community push factors in a form of social rejection. At a point of release, all the inmates barely have enough resources to survive on. All discharged prisoners are given transport to the place of first arrest. Most of them find it difficult to reach their hometowns and are thus left hungry and without places to sleep and survive. In addition these, the social system in the "outside" world are also coercive and non-supportive. Most of them return to their families, because social ties are strong in Ghana and as the saying goes "a woman cannot cut off her thighs because the child had soiled them" (Asiedu, 1999, p.338) shows that family bonds cannot be broken. However, ex-offenders in Ghana face coercive interpersonal relationships in the form of suspicion, critical comments, threats, yelling, humiliations, divorce and ostracism from their family members. Further, family members are unwilling to support them in meeting their emotional and material needs. In addition, most of them do not get the needed support from the larger society. The stigma of prison record constitutes a legal barrier and reduces their employment prospects especially in the civil service. Besides, post-release support from faith and charity-based community organizations are also rare. The implication is that informal control mechanisms which are critical in criminal desistence become weak.

The lack of support from legitimate sources both micro and macro implies that ex-offenders are unable to participate in relevant social institutions. This implies in a wider sense a weak or alienated tie to conventional society. Most ex-offenders face collateral consequences of imprisonment, a situation of civil restrictions that Travis et al. (2001) refer to as invisible punishment and an instrument of social exclusion. Ex-offenders in Ghana thus become “strangers in their own mother land.” The feeling of social rejection produces anger, strain or frustration, low self-esteem, lack of self-control, hopelessness and the development of self-defeating habits in the lives of ex-offenders. As a consequence, most ex-offenders in Ghana tend to seek support from illegitimate sources by developing criminal capital leading to exploratory deviance and chronic criminal behaviours.

8.3 Conclusions

With reference to the general objective of understanding the challenges of offender re-integration in Ghana, the study concludes that: The nature of transitional challenges of offenders in Ghana is complex and interlink with one another. It involves prison-based and community-based components. The prison-based challenges are the pre-release institutional problems that render rehabilitation ineffective, absence of parole system and ineffective aftercare. The community-based challenges include the lack of post-release social and community support from family members, charity and faith-based organization and the society in general which prevent them from satisfying the emotional, spiritual and material needs.

With reference to the institutional support, the study found that two of the themes that have persisted in Ghana's correctional system are rehabilitation and reformation. Rehabilitation finds expression in formal, non-formal and vocational education while reformation includes religious teachings in Christianity and Islam. However, in practice these correctional goals are ineffective in changing the criminal attitudes and helping offenders to re-integrate into the society after their release. Thus institutional support (rehabilitation and reformation) has no meaningful impacts on the lives of most inmates. For instance, reformation is not effective correctional intervention because the majority of the inmates do not take religious training seriously. Most of them are just church-goers or pretenders who take part in these activities because the churches distribute some items and not necessarily because they want to renew their minds from pro-criminal attitudes. A few of them genuinely reform but because of lack of support, they re-offend. Rehabilitation is not effective and as a consequence, only a fraction of the inmates participate in these programmes. One of the main reasons for the lower inmates' participation is due to the fact that most governments in Ghana do not fund rehabilitation programmes. Therefore, the prisons service lacks the required tools, materials and motivated personnel for an effective rehabilitation. The main correctional goal in Ghana is deterrence and not rehabilitation. The other reasons for the ineffective rehabilitation include short sentencing, lack of interest by the inmates, inconveniences and security protocol, mass incarceration and the lack of programme integrity. The specific treatments for specific offenses such as rape or substance abuse are also non-existent. Moreover, inmates are not motivated to participate in these programmes because of the lack of employment opportunities for ex-offenders in the private and public settings or be given tools to start their own business. The prison industries do not also exist and as a consequence, penal labour is not effectively exploited for personal and societal benefits.

The inmates do not participate in re-release employment opportunities to raise income to defray the maintenance cost and save money for post-release employment. The lack of employment for ex-offenders in Ghana can be partially explained by the absence of a parole system. Convicts are only entitled to remission. The implication is that there is no gradual release with supervision to ensure that parolees meet certain conditions such as having employment, place of residence and the avoidance of pro-criminal attitudes before they are released. Upon release from prison, ex-offenders have virtually nothing to survive on. The aftercare services by social workers to help in their re-integration into the society after releases are equally ineffective because of lack of resources. Although some members of the Coalition of Prison Evangelists (COPE) perform aftercare services but this is rare and unofficial. Besides, there is no transitional partnership made up of stakeholders such as case managers, parole officers, police, social workers, family members and faith and charity-based organizations to coordinate the transitional activities.

The absence of a well thought out pre-release rehabilitation path means that the majority of offenders coming home have multiple criminogenic needs. This negatively affects their motivation to succeed after their release. Based on the above explanations, this study concludes that the ineffectiveness and the absence of institutional support systems are the primary factors that push ex-offenders to re-offend in Ghana.

Also, other institutional factors which predispose ex-offenders to re-offend are the pull factors. For instance some aspects of the prisonization promote inmates leadership, a political sub-culture, discipline, solidarity, and interaction among the inmates and provide statuses, roles and respect to the inmates. Besides, the hardship in the free world makes it relatively safer for some ex-offenders to come back to prison because the prison at least offers free services such as food, clothing, shelter, no water and light bills. There

are also recreational facilities to keep inmates active and happy. These in a way provide a sense of survival to inmates. However, the institutional pull factors are secondary factors of re-offending in Ghana.

With reference to social support, the study found that most offenders coming home have difficulties in overcoming the transitional challenges as a result of social rejection. In the first place, in addition to the fact that most governments in Ghana are unwilling to fund rehabilitation projects, the stigma of a prison record limits their employment prospects. Moreover, most ex-offenders have difficulties in accessing accommodation, assistance from the family and the society at large. Thus returning offenders face both micro and macro rejections. The micro rejection takes the form of coercive interpersonal relationship and lack of assistance from family members in meeting the expressive (emotional, belonging and love) and instrumental (material) needs of the ex-offenders. Although some family members refuse to visit their relatives while in prison, most ex-offenders go to their families after release. However, the reality is that they face family rejection because of the coercive interpersonal relationships. Some partners even divorce ex-offenders because of the stigma of a prison record. Although ex-offenders in Ghana are stigmatized, the degree of humiliation varies depending on the nature of the offense committed.

The macro rejection goes beyond the family rejection to include the rejection by the larger society. Most ex-offenders in Ghana face employment barriers, legal restrictions, and lack of support from faith and charity-based organizations. Further, the general public seem to have stereotypical and static perception that ex-prisoners are criminals. The result is that, most governments are unwillingness to increase their feeding fees, fund rehabilitation programmes to ensure their successful reintegration.

With reference to the impacts of the institutional, social and community support on the attitudes and re-integration of the offenders, the study found that the ineffective and inadequate institutional, social and community support for the offenders find expression in social rejection. The social rejection weakens the ties to conventional society because most ex-offenders are excluded from participating meaningfully in the social activities. As their release dates approach, most offenders get filled with fear and anxiety because of the anticipated social rejection in the free world. In the first place, ineffective rehabilitation implies that offenders coming home have not been transformed into productive human capital. Secondly, ex-offenders find it difficult to survive immediately after release from prisons. At a point of release, all the inmates barely have enough resources to survive on. All discharged prisoners are given transport to the place of first arrest. Most of them find it difficult to reach their hometowns and are thus left hungry and without places to sleep and survive.

Thirdly, micro rejection implies that ex-offenders may not be able to meet their expressive and instrumental needs. This in a wider sense implies that the psychological bond such as love, affection and respect which are critical in desistance may become weak. This further weakens the social capital because of the inability of family to provide the needed assistance and link ex-offenders to the needed resources and opportunities.

Fourthly, macro rejection in a form of poor and disadvantageous relationship between ex-offenders and the larger society implies that ex-offenders may have difficulties in securing employment, face legal restrictions, lack the assistance from faith and charity based community organizations and face the stereotypical view of the public that ex-prisoners are criminals. The lack of accommodation and especially employment further weaken the nutritional and health status of the ex-offenders as ex-offenders because of

lack of funds. The result is that the poor social interactions and interrelations, lack of opportunities, statuses and roles influence the cognitive and affective processes of the offenders leading to a sense of rejection, hopelessness, helplessness, low self-esteem, and lack of self-control, the development of self-defeating habits, frustration, strain and anxiety. These situations or circumstances predispose ex-offenders to seek support from illegitimate sources by developing the criminal capital leading to vicious circle of sentence contamination.

8.4 Policy Implications of Findings

In view of the increasing numbers of offenders eventually coming home coupled with a significant recidivism rate of 24% (as measured by the re-incarceration rate) in Ghana, it is imperative that crime prevention strategies should be directed at reducing the high criminogenic needs and ensure their successful reintegration.

However, given the complexity of the plight of offenders in Ghana, it is suggested that the transitional challenges of offenders should be addressed in a holistic manner. Social reintegration of offenders should be comprehensive enough to combine custodial and community support services to ensure the “through care” system of offender management in Ghana. Successful reintegration of offenders into the society should include in-prison training, post-released employment initiatives such as aftercare, restoration of economic support and rebuilding family networks. Each of these interventions increases the chances of ex-offenders to start a new life after incarceration. Policies aimed at shaping the transitional trajectories of the offenders and enhance their greater access to the legitimate sources of support from the institutional, social and community sources thereby reducing the level of coercion and to ensure successful offender reintegration in Ghana should be implemented. The “Effiase Project”, the ten-

year strategic plan by the Ghana Prisons Service Council to address the challenges of offenders should aim at meeting the rehabilitation and reintegration needs of returning offenders in a holistic manner to ensure the continuity of support. The following measures are worth considering to reduce the incidence of re-offending in Ghana.

1. National Offender Reintegration Plan (NORP)

In order to ensure the continuity of care from the prison to the community, there is the need for the introduction of a National Offender Reintegration Plan that would provide the framework for offender management in Ghana. The objectives of NORB would include the provision of institutional, social and community support systems to offenders. This would transform the offenders into productive human capital and ensure their self-sufficiency through micro and macro support systems. Thus the pre and post-release interventions would ensure public safety and reduce recidivism in Ghana. Thus, secondary crime prevention strategies should include measures aimed at changing the attitude of the offenders, increase their skills and employability, secure their employment and housing facilities and bond them to their family and communities.

Since criminological research has shown that personal and circumstantial characteristics such as anxiety, unemployment, homelessness, dysfunctional family relations and low education are positively correlated to crime, secondary crime prevention measures should aim at addressing these criminogenic needs by providing consistent support to ensure social reintegration of offenders in Ghana. There is the need to develop comprehensive crime prevention strategies with a detailed review of existing services, policies and practices and build a consensus on social reintegration issues in Ghana. It is necessary to pass new legislations and review the existing legal and regulatory frameworks for offender rehabilitation and reintegration programmes in Ghana. In order

to achieve the institutional support for offenders in Ghana, the following measures are worthy of consideration:

1. In the first place, parliament should pass the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) or Prison Welfare Reform (PWR). The objective is to change the mission of the Ghana Prison Service (GPS) from custody-oriented to rehabilitative-oriented correctional institution. In particular, section 1 of the Ghana Prison Service Decree 1972 which requires the prison service to ensure “the safe custody and welfare of prisoners and whenever practicable, undertake reformation and rehabilitation of prisoners” should be amended to support an improved transition. In this regard, the name GPS should be replaced with Ghana Correctional Service (GCS) to reflect the emphasis on reformation and rehabilitation as the main correctional goals in Ghana.
 - a. The government should increase the budgetary allocation to the GCS to enable the service provide specific allocation of funds for offender rehabilitation projects in Ghana prisons. This would ensure that the majority of convicts participate in skills training.

The criminogenic needs of the offenders should be addressed based on proper assessment instruments such as the Level of Service Inventory – Revised (LSI-R) and Psychopathy Checklist – Revised (PCL-R). Case management should be focused on addressing dynamic risk factors.

- b. Correctional education both formal and vocational training should be made compulsory for the majority of the convicts in Ghana. In this way, the criteria for selection should be reviewed so that most convicts can benefit from these training. Qualified and professional teachers should be employed to handle

various subjects or trades. Tools and materials should also be provided to aid the smooth acquisition of skills.

- c. Since characterological defects are responsible for some of the cases of re-offending, the introduction of cognitive-behavioural treatments for specific offenders such as anger management, substance abuse prevention programmes and sex offender treatments should be introduced in Ghana. In all, the principles of effective correctional programming must be followed to ensure programme intensity, quality and integrity.
- d. Introduce a parole system in Ghana to ensure the gradual release with supervision. This should begin 6 months prior to the discharge date and continue until the end of supervision when the offender gets adjusted into the community. This would ensure skills development, reduce homelessness and increase the employment prospects of the returning offenders. In order to achieve these, there is the need for the establishment of Transitional Housing Scheme (THS) or midway homes or reporting centres to reduce the problem of homelessness among ex-offenders in Ghana.
- e. With a THS, the collective labour of ex-offenders can be mobilized to undertake certain productive ventures. Revenue accrued from this can be used to pay the ex-prisoners and the rest used to subsidize the scheme. To this end, District Assemblies (DA) should award contracts to organizations that provide employment to ex-offenders in areas such as road construction, supply of furniture to schools. Alternatively, returning inmates can be provided with capital/tools for those who acquired some vocational skills to enable them establish their own businesses. The housing facility, employment and supervision would ensure successful resettlement after their release.

- f. The Department of Social Welfare should be resourced to ensure the effective performance of both in-prison and out-prison aftercare. For instance, the aftercare officers can link offenders and their family members or persuade them to visit their relatives in prison. Social workers should also prepare the grounds for the return of offenders, provide counselling to both the ex-offender and family members and link the ex-offender to resources and opportunities such as agencies, apprenticeship or full employment.
- g. Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) or Prison Welfare Reform (PWR), the government should officially recognize the COPE and subsidize their operations to enable them perform supplementary aftercare. This would include assisting the chaplaincy work in the prisons, provide inmates' welfare and ensure that the aftercare ministry enhances post-release adjustment of offenders. The main functions of COPE would include:
- i. Pre-release preaching, Bible studies, counselling and donations. Secondly, all the members of COPE should provide post-release aftercare ministry to the offenders in the various regions, districts and localities in Ghana. Thus inmates coming home should be given introductory letters to seek spiritual and material support from a member of COPE nearby. This is because, the prison ministries can better provide the aftercare services through spiritual care, accommodation, feeding, and educational training than the social workers. The members of COPE should know and understand the situation and circumstances of the offenders, love them, be their friends and mentors and work to restructure their criminal value system to pro-social attitude and the fear of God.

- ii. Members of COPE should also raise internal funds from church activities to help ex-offenders and turn their lives into productive members of the community. This can take the form of providing capital to help them start business, help them continue their education, get them accommodation, employment, family advice and assistance. Charitable organizations and individual philanthropies can also contribute to the Prison Welfare Reform Fund.
- iii. Expand prison facilities to ensure proper segregation among offenders to prevent contamination.
- iv. Establish a National Database (ND) within the criminal justice system to ensure accurate and up to date records on re-arrest, reconviction and incarceration in Ghana. There should be a biometric registration at the police, courts and prisons to ensure easy identification of first and re-offenders. Such data should include information on the name of the offender, age, sex, height, picture, and type of offence, the methods used in committing the crime, place of occurrence, previous convictions, educational background, marital status, religion/ethnic origin and occupation. This would help ensure the availability of reliable crime statistics on recidivism in the country.

2. Public Sensitization on the Acceptance of Ex-offenders

Since most offenders eventually return to the communities and in particular to their family members, and empirical studies have shown that attachment to the family significantly reduces the propensity of offending (Hirschi, 1969; Sampson & Laub 2001), there should be public sensitization on the need to accept ex-offenders back home. There should be public education on the need to avoid

coercive interpersonal relationship in the families, and provide emotional and material assistance to ensure their success. The public should be sensitized to change their stereotypical perception about ex-prisoners in Ghana. As one prison officer has suggested:

The way to help offenders in Ghana to reform is to show that we care and have not neglected them. Some of them have not been visited by their wives and parents and it looks as if the whole society has rejected them. In a situation of social rejection, it is very difficult to be reformed and rehabilitated.

Some of the offenders genuinely reform but because of the social rejection, they re-offend. Society needs to forgive ex-offenders and accept them. The public sensitization can be done in the media and the churches/mosques. Thus there should be a public discussion to educate the people that “just like people living with HIV/AIDS, imprisonment is not the end of a person and prison is a place where everyone can end up”. The churches and mosques should preach forgiveness to their members so that they can come to accept their relatives when they return from prisons. In order to achieve social acceptance for returning offenders in Ghana, the following measures should be put in place:

- a. Family members should be educated to visit their relatives in prison. After their release, families should maintain strong ties with ex-offenders through emotional, financial and spiritual support. Family members should provide the needed social capital to ex-offenders and ensure social control by helping them to embark on routine activities to ensure their successful reintegration.
- b. The legal or constitutional barriers on ex-offenders from getting employed in the private or public sectors or holding certain positions in Ghana should be removed. Since getting a steady employment significantly reduces the propensity of re-offending (Berg & Huebner, 2011; Sampson & Laub, 1990).

3. Social Crime Prevention

Since social support occur at the micro and macro levels, policies aimed at improving the socio-economic standards of the people in the larger society would indirectly increase micro level support and reduce coercion. Social crime prevention should promote education and employment and remove the legal restrictions on ex-offenders. For instance policies to support families such as health insurance, increase in employment and salaries, free basic education, a reduction in fuel prices would shape the interpersonal experiences of ex-offenders and their families. This would reduce the psychological distress among ex-offenders and promote pro-social behaviour.

4. National Offender Transitional Partnership System (NOTraPS)

Desistance is a process consisting of the interactions between human agencies, life-events and historical contexts (Petersilia, 2003; Sampson & Laub, 2001). For the offenders to be properly managed to ensure their successful re-integration, there should be collaborations between formal and informal agencies in providing reentry services such as education, employment, housing and substance abuse treatments to reduce the likelihood of re-offending. There is the need for civil involvement in crime prevention measures in Ghana. This would ensure the continuity of institutional, social and community support. Therefore, the introduction of National Offender Transitional Partnership System (NOTraP) should be made up of prison-based regional and district coordinators (case workers) who will liaise with community police, and aftercare officers from the Department of Social Welfare, parole/probation officers, Regional and District Executives, faith-based organizations (COPE) in all the regions and districts in Ghana, charity-based organizations and family members of the ex-offenders. The

functions of NOTraP would be to find out proper ways of managing the offender re-entry processes in Ghana. These include prison-based educational and vocational training, cognitive behavioural training as well as post-release accommodation, employment, relational issues, health care and supervision. This would ensure the thorough care system of offender management and a successful reintegration in Ghana.

5. Community Rehabilitation

The findings of this study also imply that there must be a shift in criminal sanctioning from custody to community rehabilitation. This is because crime prevention in Ghana largely depends on coercion. The use of the criminal justice system to “get tough” on crime and crack down on criminals resulting in mass incarceration is counterproductive (Andrews & Bonta, 2010, p. 39). The coercive criminal justice system brings about disintegrative shame (Braithwaite, 1989) and leads to defiance of authority (Sherman, 1993). Community rehabilitation or non-custodial sentencing will reduce congestion in Ghana prisons and ensure re-integrative shame.

Community rehabilitation is a community-based sanctions aimed at diverting a convicted person from being in prison. It includes restorative justice and other treatment options to ensure social reintegration. The fact is that, a crime reduction strategy does not produce any significant outcome when low risk offenders who are serving short sentences and who probably would not have re-offended get incarcerated. As part of the efforts to ensure an alternative to incarceration, parliament should pass a Community Sentence Act (CSA) for short term low-risk offenders in Ghana. This will include suspended sentences and adult probation. Thus for offenses committed, unpaid community work in a form of the collection of waste material and refuse, desilt gutters, sweep and paint principal streets will be a good

measure of punishment. Offenders will be expected to abide by the conditions of their release so as to avoiding bad company and substance abuse, sleep at specific times of the night, exclusion from certain areas, reside at specific places and be expected to pass drug tests. Community sentencing is important because:

- a. It will prevent contamination and reduce the rates of re-offending in Ghana.
- b. This will reduce overcrowding in prison and ensure that only felons are incarcerated to protect the community.
- c. It will also prevent the stigma associated with incarceration.

8.5 Contributions of the Study

8.5.1 Contribution to Theory

This study was grounded in the theory of Differential Social Support and Coercion propounded by (Colvin, Cullen & Vander Ven, 2002). The perspective from which this theory explain re-offending in Ghana stems from the weak formal institutional, inadequate social and community support services to ensure their reintegration into society. The lack of formal institutional support finds expression in ineffective reformation and rehabilitation to transform these offenders and enhance their human capital. Most returning offenders come home with low education and job skills. As a consequence, most of them have a low motivation to succeed after release. The ineffective treatment and training coupled with the absence of any parole and ineffective aftercare systems in Ghana's corrections implies that offender returnees may find it difficult to ensure post-release adjustment.

In addition to weak formal institutional support, most ex-offenders in Ghana face coercive interpersonal relationships and erratic social support from their family members and coercive impersonal relationship from the larger society. As a result, ex-offenders are confronted with unfavourable structural arrangements and circumstances beyond their control. These risk factors include the fear and suspicion by family members and the public as well as structural barriers such as unemployment and legal or constitutional limitations. Besides, the stereotypical perception by most Ghanaians that ex-offenders are bad also prevents faith and community-based organizations from assisting ex-offenders. Most ex-offenders lack the social capital to bond, bridge and link them to the required resources. Consequently, most ex-offenders find it difficult to meet their emotional, material and spiritual needs because of their weak ties to conventional society. The lack of legitimate support from micro and macro sources produce negative feelings, frustration and strain among ex-offenders thereby putting them in a state of hopelessness, low self-esteem and a sense of rejection. Some of these ex-offenders seek support from illegitimate sources by developing the criminal capital leading to exploratory deviance and chronic criminal behaviours in Ghana.

Using Differential Social Support and Coercion theory (Colvin, Cullen & Vander Ven, 2002) to explain the reasons for the persistence in offending in Ghana, this study has made a significant contribution to criminological theory. It represents an attempt to think of the recidivism from a new perspective. It was an effort to investigate re-offending from a new framework that incorporated multifaceted risk factors of offending from weak institutional factors such as the ineffective reformation and rehabilitation as well as social factors such as the lack of or inadequate support from family members and peers. The community factors include the coercive impersonal relationship and structural impediments such as unemployment. Coercion and lack of or inadequate social support

services were rooted through subcultural, social labelling and control theories to explain recidivism in Ghana. This shows that through scientific methods, social problem such as re-offending can be studied qualitatively to discover new insight into the phenomenon. Although theory explains that differential social support and coercion generates social psychological responses thereby leading individuals to differential criminal and noncriminal outcomes, it failed to account for the social psychological factors. This study clearly identifies coercive interpersonal and impersonal relationships with family members and other members of society as the social factors. The outcome of these relationships affects the emotions of ex-offenders thereby predisposing them to re-offend. By identifying and explaining the social-psychological factors which predispose individuals to re-offend within the realities of contemporary Ghana, this study has extended on the Differential Social Support and Coercion theory.

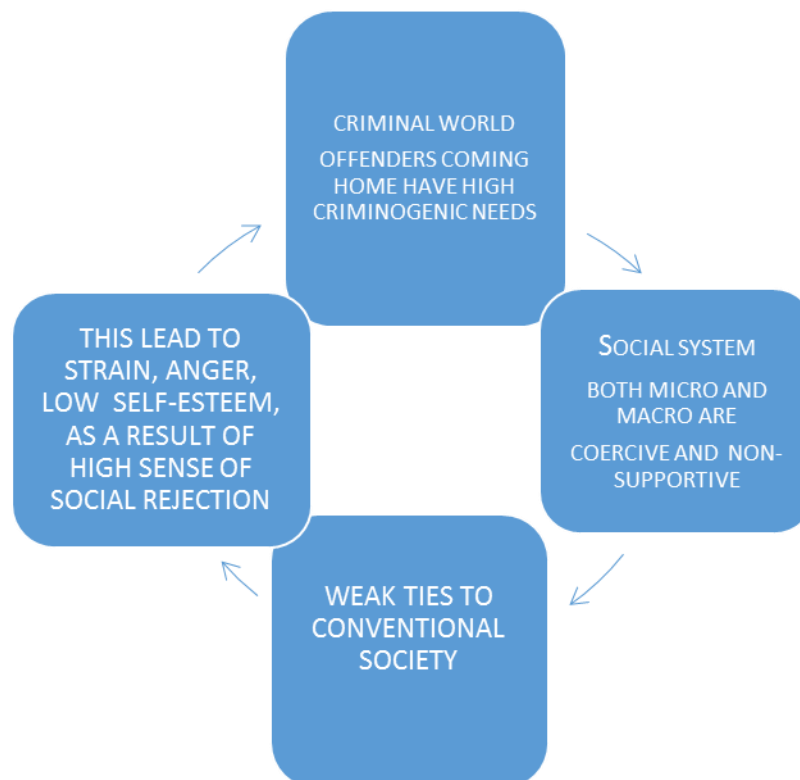
8.5.2 Toward an Integrated Social Rejection Theory of Re-Offending

Sorokin and Znaniecki suggest that if Sociology is to be considered as a science, then sociological studies must lead to the development of new concepts relevant to the phenomenon being studied. These concepts form the basis for generalization (cited in Abotchie, 1988). These new concepts include formal institutional push and pull factors as well as social and community push factors of re-offending.

The findings of this study form the basis for suggesting a theory of recidivism. The postulates of the theory can be stated as follows:

1. If offenders come home with high criminogenic needs,
2. And if the social system (both micro and macro) is coercive and non-supportive,
3. Ties to conventional society become weak,

4. This produces strain, anger or frustration, low self-esteem, low self-control, loneliness, hopelessness and the development of self-defeating habits as a result of a high sense of social rejection.
5. As a consequence, ex-offenders seek support from illegitimate sources by developing the criminal capital leading to deviation differentials. Ex-offenders engage in exploratory deviance as a means of soliciting dependable social support or develop of chronic criminal behaviours as a means of freeing themselves from erratic coercion.



Source: Author

8.5.3 Contribution to Practice

The traditional roles of the criminal justice systems in post-colonial African countries have not undergone much significant alterations since independence. Most African countries continue to employ the colonial tactics of using the prisons as instrument of social exclusion and repression without clear cut intentions to reintegrate the offenders into the communities. Therefore, majority of ex-offenders in Africa are unable to overcome the transitional challenges as they re-offend again and again. In order to reduce the rates of recidivism not only in Ghana but the rest of Africa, the criminal justice systems should support the process of desistance by incorporating mechanisms to ensure offender reintegration. This implies that both primary and secondary crime prevention strategies should focus on providing institutional, social and community support and reduce the level of coercion. Penal policies should emphasis on rehabilitation and prison industries where penal labour can be effectively exploited for personal and societal basis. In the absence of parole and effective aftercare systems, prison industries can help provide the needed capital to enhance post-release employment. Besides, engaging ex-offenders in conventional activities as a crime prevention measure will ensure re-integrative shame. Thus social and community support from family members, faith and charity-based organization will strengthen the bond to conventional society. By suggesting a shift in crime prevention strategies from the traditional custody and deterrence to rehabilitation and social acceptance, this study has made a significant contribution to the criminal justice system.

8.6 Future Research

Based on the findings of this research, I propose that future research should be concentrated on the following areas:

- a. Sex differences in patterns of re-offending in Ghana in order to ascertain the distinction between men and women as perpetrators of crime.
- b. Why do 66% of offenders desist from crime?
- c. The impact of alternative to imprisonment on re-offending in Ghana.
- d. Why economic crime dominate the cases of re-offending in Ghana?
- e. Specific group of recidivists such as sexual recidivists and violent recidivists.
- f. The challenges of offender reintegration on the family and the community.

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APPENDICES**Appendix A: Questionnaire****DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY****UNIVERSITY OF GHANA****LEGON**

Dear respondents,

The researcher is a PhD student of University of Ghana, Legon, and is undertaking a study on the topic: SOCIAL REINTEGRATION OF OFFENDERS AND RECIDIVISM IN GHANA. I humbly appeal to you to complete the questionnaire below which will be used confidentially and for academic purpose.

Thank you for your cooperation

Section A: Socio-demographic Background of Respondents

1. Sex
 - a. Male
 - b. Female
2. Age.....
3. Marital Status
 - a. Single
 - b. Married
 - c. Divorce (since release from prison)
 - d. Separated
 - e. Widow
 - f. Involved in a significant relationship
4. Religion
 - a. Christian
 - b. Moslem
 - c. Traditionalist
 - d. Others.....
5. Ethnic Group
 - a. Akan
 - b. Ewe
 - c. Ga-Adagme

- d. Gur
 - e. Guan
 - f. Others.....
6. Education
- a. Primary
 - b. JSS
 - c. Secondary/Technical/Vocational
 - d. Post-secondary
 - e. Tertiary
 - f. Others
7. Employment status
- a. Employment
 - b. Unemployment
8. Residence.....
9. Region of birth

Section B: Criminal History, Substance Abuse and Illness

10. Previous convictions
- a. Second time
 - b. Third time
 - c. Fourth time
 - d. Fifth time
 - e. Others
11. Current conviction.....
12. State the nature of the offenses you have committed and the sentences associated with them.
- | | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| First Offense/sentence | Second Offense/sentence | Third Offense/sentence |
|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
13. What is the period between your last incarceration and the current one?
- a. Less than 6 months
 - b. 6 months – 1 year
 - c. 1 year – 1.5 years
 - d. 1.5 years – 2 years
 - e. 2.5 years – 3 years

f. Others.....

14. Do you have any health problems?

a. Yes b. No

15. If yes, explain.....

16. How does this health problems affect you.....?

17. Used drugs 6 months before arrest?

a. Yes b. No

18. If yes specify.....

Section C: Institutional Support Services and Recidivism

19. Did you receive any form of treatment/training during your last incarceration?

a. Yes b. No

20. If yes, identify

Treatment:

a. Substance abuse treatment

b. Sex offender treatment

c. Anger management

d. Others.....

Training:

e. Reformation

f. Non-formal education

g. JHS

h. SHS

i. ICT

j. Vocational

21. If you received the treatment/training how often were they?

Treatment

Training

a. Didn't get any treatment

f. Didn't get any training

b. Once a week

g. Once a week

c. Twice a week

h. Twice a week

d. Thrice a week

i. Thrice a week.

e. Others..... j. Others.....

22. If you received the treatment/training were they beneficial?

a. Yes b. No

23. If no why.....?
24. Can you say the less or absence of these treatment and training contributed to your re-offending?
a. Yes b. No
25. If yes, tell me more.....
26. Are you currently receiving any form of treatment/training?
a. Yes b. No
27. If yes, identify.....
28. If no, why.....

Section D: Social Support Services and Recidivism

29. With whom did you live during the last release?
a. Homeless
b. Lived with friends
c. Lived alone
d. Lived with spouse and children
e. Lived with kinsmen
f. Others.....
30. What was the attitude of your spouse, children, kinsmen and friends towards you?
a. Spouse.....
b. Children.....
c. Kinsmen.....
d. Friends.....
31. Did you receive any support from them?
a. Yes b. No
32. If yes identify
a. Spouse.....
b. Children.....
c. Kinsmen.....
d. Friends.....
33. Were they enough?
a. Yes b. No
34. If no, were the support you needed but not provided?
a. Yes b. No

35. If yes why.....
36. Did you feel rejected by your significant others?
a. Yes b. No
37. If yes, tell me more.....
38. Can you say the lack of social support contributed to your re-offending?
a. Yes b. No
39. If yes, tell me more.....
- Section E: Community Support Services and Recidivism**
40. Did you participate in post release treatment/training during the last release
a. Yes b. No
41. If yes, identify.....
42. Were you working 6 months before your arrest?
a. Yes b. No
43. If yes, what work.....
44. Was the income enough?
a. Yes b. No
45. IF no how did that affect you.....
46. Did that contribute to your re-offending?
a. Yes b. No
47. If yes, tell me more.....
48. Did you receive any community support from faith and charity-based organizations during the last release?
a. Yes b. No
49. If yes, identify
a. Faith-based organization.....
b. Charity-based organization.....
c. Community members.....
50. If no why.....
51. Why did you re-offend?
52. What do you think can be done to ensure that you do not re-offend again after your release.....

Appendix B: Interview Guide for Re-offenders

Institutional Support and Recidivism

1. How is the prison service preparing you for release? Identify the treatment/training available in this prison and those you are receiving. Will they be beneficial to you after release? Please tell me more.
2. What were/are the service-receiving patterns (weekly, daily, hours)? Please describe the detail activities involved.
3. What are the factors considered before participating in the treatment/training programmes? (eg. type of crime and the length of sentence).
4. Do you feel responsible to participate in this programme? Please tell me more.
5. How will the institutional support services affect your attitudes and reintegration?

Social Support and Recidivism

6. What are your perceptions on the post release needs?
7. What were the challenges you faced during the last release/what are the challenges you anticipate when you are released? What should be done to ensure that you lead a law-abiding life after release?
8. With whom did you live during the last release? What were the attitudes of your family, kinsmen and friends towards you? Did you receive any help from them? Please tell me more.
9. Did you feel rejected? How did you know you were rejected? How did that affect your attitudes and reintegration?

Community Support and Recidivism

10. Were you working six months before your arrest? Please tell me more.
11. Did you participate in post release treatment and training during the last release? Please tell me more
12. Did you receive any support from faith-based and charity-based organizations? /What help do you anticipate to receive from faith-based and charity-based organizations? Please tell me more.

Appendix C: Interview Guide for Correctional Service Providers

Institutional Support Services

1. How is the prison service preparing the inmates for release? Please identify the treatment/training available in this prison. What are the criteria for selection?
2. What are the service-receiving patterns (weekly, daily, hours)? Please describe the detail activities involved.
3. What factors does the service-receiving patterns depend on? (eg. type of crime and the length of sentence).
4. What are the factors considered before participating in the treatment/training programmes? (eg. type of crime and the length of sentence).
5. Do inmates feel responsible to participate in the rehabilitation programmes?
6. How will the institutional support services affect their attitudes and successful reintegration?

Challenges of offender Reintegration

7. What challenges do offenders face when they are discharged from prison?

Social Support and Recidivism

8. What are your perceptions on the post release needs of the offenders?
9. What should be done to ensure that offenders lead law-abiding life after their release?

Community Support and Recidivism

10. Do ex-offenders participate in post release treatment and training?
11. Do ex-offenders get employed?
12. Do ex-offenders receive any support from faith-based and charity based organizations in Ghana?
13. Do you have aftercare programmes for ex-convicts in Ghana?

Interview Guide for Key Family Members/Friends

1. Please tell me about your family background and how you relate to the offender

2. Please tell me about the life history of the offender:
 - a. Where he/she was born and stayed until the age of 18 years
 - b. Educational history
 - c. How he/she relates to family members and others
 - d. Whether he/she was working or not
 - e. Is he/she calm or troublesome
3. What challenges does he/she face when he/she comes home?
4. What are the things he/she will needs when he/she comes home?
5. What can be done to ensure that the re-offender do not commit further offenses after their release?