



Social Factors Affecting Recidivism Among Ex-Convicts in Nigeria

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Abstract. Recidivism, the consistent return of ex-prisoners to offences, persists in Nigeria, reflecting the structural defects in the nation's criminal justice and correctional services. The study attempts to examine the nature and extent of recidivism in the light of the services provided by the Nigerian correctional services in terms of reformation and rehabilitation. It is a systematic content analysis studious the use of secondary data in making conclusions. High recidivism is indicative of other issues, including insufficient rehabilitation programs, social stigmas, and economic struggles ex-felons have after they leave prison. This research examines the various elements leading to recidivism in Nigeria underscore the role of prison rehabilitation, unemployment, peer pressure, and lack of a support system. In these correction facilities, effective vocational training and psychological aid are relatively absent, so ex-prisoners are poorly equipped to enter the workforce. Furthermore, the negative effect of the stigma attached to having a criminal record, combined with the difficulty of obtaining stable employment, is an important contributor to habitual offending. Factors of peer and reintegrative effects of ex-convicts also make the problem worse. Building on Agnew's General Strain Theory, the current study connects strain (e.g., unemployment, rejection, and social support deprivation) with higher recidivism. The study suggests that widespread reform is needed, such as improved rehabilitation programs, public consciousness drives to reduce stigma, job assistance, and greater support systems for post-release, to fully facilitate a successful reintegration. The solution to these factors is important to reducing the recurrence of criminals, making Nigeria safe, and building an all-embracing society.

Keywords: Social Degradation, Recidivism, and Ex-convicts.

1. Introduction

The need to understand the conditions in which ex-prisoners decide to go back to what landed them in jail in the first place (Recidivism). High rates of recidivism reflect fundamental problems with Nigeria's criminal justice and correctional services systems, and larger societal problems that impact offender rehabilitation (Okunola, 2017). This vicious circle of recidivism is a waste of the efforts of our justice system and continues to be a direct burden to the population of the country. Explanation given to the reasons for recidivism is essential in designing holistic and successful rehabilitation programs that lead to eventual decrease in re-offending and better societal re-entry.

Social or hidden degradation is a situation in which the social environment denies ex-convicts' friendship, marriage, association, etc., partly because they have once served a sentence. It is indeed another form of punishment in which only the ex -convict is aware of. Habitual offending, also known as recidivism, is considered a condition where ex-convicts find returning to criminal violation as either normal or derive pleasure from it without any fear of the consequences. Meaning, those who have served a prison term return to criminal violations primarily because of certain factors that are either unappealing or because they lack the opportunity to be accepted back into society as law-abiding citizens.

In Nigeria, one of the major reasons for recidivism is the inadequacy of the correctional facilities to offer effective rehabilitation programs. Few of the Nigerian detention centers provide effective vocational education or academic and psychological support, and those that do are underfunded. Adeyanju (2020)

noted that the absence of holistic rehabilitation programs is the reason why most ex-convicts are ill-equipped for life out of the prison walls, as a significant factor that causes them to be recidivists. 'Without positive outlets for learning new skills through achievement and a source of emotional support, prisoners find it hard to fit back into everyday life and very often resort to re-offending as a coping mechanism.

The stigma of society is also a major factor for recidivism, thereby causing a convicted offender to be repunished by society (Hidden degradation). Convicted offenders in Nigeria, similar to other locations, experience severe social stigma, with challenges accessing employment and reintegration into the society at large (Akinmoladun et al., 2019). Their isolation and hopelessness are worsened when they are socially excluded, shunned by family and friends — these all could push them back into criminality (Osayi, 2021). Marked as a result of punishment, outcasts are further disposed of, which makes it difficult for ex-offenders to enjoy the basic social services and support that provide work, helping to sustain the cycle.

Poverty also leads to recidivism amongst former prisoners. The inability to secure a decent and sustainable job placement is also what pushes the ex-convicts into abject poverty, thus enhancing the high tendency of them getting back to crime to fend for themselves (financially) (Abifor & Eze, 2016). According to Okunola (2017), lack of employment and economic empowerment constitutes a major factor leading to recidivism, as witnessed especially in Nigeria, where the economy has structural problems, and unemployment is in double-digit figures. Suppressing their economic hardship, ex-prisoners also bear the burden of a criminal record and operating in a hostile world. It is not an easy task to make a living after prison.

Peer pressure and external environment have an important role to play in predicting Recidivism. Most ex-offenders return to neighborhoods where such behavior is not just common but also accepted as normal, and a lack of positive models won't help their temptation to commit crime once again (Adeyanju, 2020). Peer groups, especially those engaged in illegal behavior, play an important role in determining how an individual will behave when there are minimal options to earn an economic livelihood. According to Soyombo (2019), ex-offenders are often discouraged from adopting positive habits after release — such habits may be undesirable in their old social circles, and the inability to

detach may be a factor that encourages re-offending.

In view of all these, addressing recidivism in Nigeria will require multifaceted approaches that are broader than prison rehabilitation. Policy changes are required to empower both rehabilitation programs in the correctional institutions and post-release support systems, to reduce the prejudice of society (Adeyanju 2020) and create more jobs for the former criminals. Additionally, by creating a more conducive environment for reintegration, for instance, rolling out community-based programs that help foster social acceptance or eliminate the obstacles to reentry, the cycle of re-offending can be broken.

Implementing rehabilitation programs which encompass vocational training, Psychotherapy and support networks, along with a redefinition of societal values to break the stigma and to provide better economic opportunities, are central in the strategy to tackle recidivism in Nigeria (Osayi, 2021). Nigeria can begin addressing the systemic and social causes of offender recidivism, and work toward lowering its alarmingly high rates of recidivism and curbing the Recidivism rate of ex-convicts.

2. Theoretical Framework: General Strain Theory (GST) and Recidivism

General Strain Theory (GST) of Robert Agnew was developed as the next logical extension of classic strain theories such as Merton's (1938). In contrast to Merton's focus on social structures and their goals, Agnew's GST is more of an individual-level theory of the strain effect, proposing that strain can induce negative emotions such as anger and frustration, and that these emotions, when extreme, are associated with increased likelihood of criminality. Under GST, people react to stress in terms of their history and resources (Agnew, 2001). In the absence of legitimate outlets to address stress, some people may turn to crime as a means of escape or response (Agnew, 2006).

The article rests on Agnew's General Strain Theory (GST) to examine predictors of recidivism in Nigeria, ex-convicts. GST suggests that individuals who feel stressed or strained are at greater risk of involvement in deviant and delinquent behavior, including Recidivism upon release. Agnew's general strain theory suggests that strain arises when people experience a range of stressors (e.g., failing to achieve positively valued goals, the loss of valued relationships, or exposure to

negative stimuli) that can, in turn, increase the probability of crime, especially in the absence of adequate coping strategies (Agnew, 2001). In the case of ex-offenders, factors such as unemployment, stigma, and absence of social support are important re-offending triggers, as they obstruct successful reintegration in community.

This research utilizes Robert Agnew's General Strain Theory (GST) for understanding the factors that contribute to re-offending by ex-convicts in Nigeria. According to GST, individuals under stress or pressure are more likely to respond with deviant or delinquent activities, such as re-offending after being released from prison. According to Agnew, strain is caused by different stressors, like failing to achieve positively valued goals, losing valued relationships, or experiencing negative stimuli that can increase the probability of criminal actions, especially if a person has no efficient coping methods (Agnew, 2001). For ex-offenders, stressors such as unemployment, stigma, and lack of social support are important factors that can influence Recidivism by impeding successful re-entry into society.

Agnew's GST specifies different strains that have the potential to instigate criminal action. Failure to attain positively valued goals – They do not obtain well-regarded social or cultural accomplishments (employment, money, and relationships). Loss of valued relationships – The loss of important social relationships (e.g., family, friends, or romantic relationships), which can be emotionally distressing. Negative treatment – This refers to a person being exposed to negative conditions that are aversive, such as abuse, discrimination, and poor living conditions (Agnew, 2006).

These forms of strain are what former prison inmates in Nigeria experience in different forms, which ultimately push them back into crime. Former prisoners experience many of these obstacles in ways that match the dimensions of strain identified in Agnew's theory — like social rejection, financial burdens, and lack of support systems.

3. Factors Affecting Influencing Recidivism Among Ex-convicts in Nigeria

Unemployment is one of the largest drivers of recidivism among former inmates. It is a well-known fact that most people released from prison find it very difficult to obtain a secure job

because of the stigma of being a former offender and their inability to regain their place in the labor market (Ugwuoke, 2017). Unemployment, which is not stable for security and sustenance, also contributes to pressures related to the economy and frustration for those who are involved in tailoring and dressmaking. It results in demoralization and hopelessness (Osayi, 2020). According to general strain theory, individuals who experience financial strain, in this case unemployment, turn to deviant coping, including criminal coping. A person of ex-convicts finds it inevitable to get involved in acts that will lead to arrest. In situations of this nature, they are unable to fend for themselves, making them vulnerable to re-offending (Akinmoladun, 2018).

Agnew (2006) Claims the failure to obtain legitimate access to succeed within a society or not being able to attain financial independence through just means triggers negative emotions such as anger and frustration that lead to delinquency. In Nigeria, a lot of former prisoners feel like outcasts because of the poverty they fall into, leaving them vulnerable to recidivism as a survival strategy. Research shows that deprivation is one of the most powerful predictors of recidivism (Adeyanju, 2020).

A second very significant strain that contributes to Recidivism is the negative impact on reentering individuals who have a criminal record. Former convicts are mostly socially rejected by individuals in officers, families, and the larger society, thereby disconnecting them and raising their level of desperation and low self-esteem (Soyombo, 2019). The former prisoners tend to suffer discrimination due to the social stigmatization of having served time in jail in Nigeria, which makes it difficult for an ex-prisoner to reintegrate into society. Such social exclusion is a big stressor on people, leading them into crime simply to manage the mental and emotional effects of social rejection.

Agnew, 2001 theory posits that when an individual is confronted with social strain and the loss of valued relationships or failure to gain societal acceptance, they may react with criminal behavior. This triggers feelings such as frustration, resentment, and hostility, which appears peak at the moment of re-offending. Lack of social support or positive models also puts ex-convicts at higher risk to reoffend (Ugwuoke, 2017). Thus, one major contributor to recidivism in the context of ex-convicts in Nigeria is that this stigmatization adds other

emotional and social pressure, which makes criminal conduct more attractive.

The absence of family and community support is another pressure that leads to recidivism. Ex Offender Reentry & Aftercare Services. When they are not prepared, supported, or guided emotionally or financially, ex-prisoners feel isolated and frustrated (Osayi, 2020). Their stress is compounded by the fact that they can't turn to family or community networks for support or guidance -- which makes their reintegration harder. Agnew (2006) suggests that people are more prone to crime when they experience strain from the absence of valued relationships, such as family support.

For labor market offenders, family bonding may be an important factor in the assimilation process of ex-convicts. Yet, without the emotional or practical support to cope with this loss of family connectivity, feelings of abandonment and despair can be further compounded. This pressure is more severe in Nigeria, where the family and the community form the bulk of the traditional support systems that are central to reintegration (Soyombo, 2019). Without that support, ex-prisoners often succumb to insurmountable barriers and end up re-offending.

Apart from the above, peer pressure and situating oneself in negative environments are key components of strain in recidivism. Ex-convicts frequently return to settings where criminal conduct is made ordinary, and the desire to leaf once more through the old crime-playbook cannot be underestimated (Adeyanju, 2020). Agnew's (2001) GST holds that those who are exposed to negative stimuli, like criminal peers, and situations that are conducive to crime, will be more likely to return to a delinquent lifestyle. In Nigeria, for instance, once released, ex-offenders can reintegrate into crime-ridden communities, where a lack of positive role models and legitimate sources of income pressure them into crime.

4. Dynamics of Recidivism Among Ex-Convicts in Nigeria

In a general sense, many factors play a key role in determining recidivism conditions among ex-convicts, and these include individual, institutional, societal, and environmental considerations. These elements are linked with each other and represent the inseparability of offender reintegration into society. Understanding these conditions is important to developing successful programs for lowering recidivism and maintaining public safety; thus,

it examines the dynamics of recidivism amongst ex-prisoners, including socio-demographic, institutional, societal, family, economic, and environmental dynamics.

Socio-Demographic: Study after study has found some socio-demographic variables, such as age, sex, and level of education, to be strong predictors of recidivism. Youth, especially those in their late teens and early twenties, have significantly higher recidivism rates than older adults (Abrifor et al. 2012). Perhaps that is largely because of developmental reasons, as young men in their 20s may not yet have developed the emotional strength and impulse control needed to live productively outside of prison. Younger offenders are less cognizant of the long-term effects of their behavior than those who are older, rendering them more impulsive and susceptible to recommitting a crime" (Adeyanju, 2020, p.9).

Second, gender also influences the recidivism tendency. The majority of the prison population is male, and men are more likely to re-offend. This gap is driven in great part by the ideal of masculinity that is prevalent in society, where it's still expected that men should be the breadwinners and hold a certain position in society. If men experience economic strains or cannot conform to social expectations upon release, they may be inclined to engage in criminal activities to reassert their status or obligations (Okunola, 2017). In addition, male ex-offenders face a greater likelihood of obstacles to obtaining steady employment and may be more vulnerable to being influenced by the criminal behavior of friends.

Level of education is the other important social demographic variable associated with recidivism. Less educated former prisoners are likely to re-offend because they face limited chances of securing jobs. As Osayi (2021) pointed out, education and a trade are necessary for successful reentry. Failure to be educated and lack of job skills tend to increase the tendency of being reoffended among ex-prisoners who, to keep an existence, become out-and-out crooks. Soyombo (2009) has validated this, where some people who have not had the opportunity to go through formal education may be pushed into crime when they are released from detention, because they may not be able to secure good jobs.

The rehabilitation process within the prison system is of utmost importance in reducing recidivism. Insufficient rehabilitation, such as job training, educational programs, and psycho-

social counseling, continues to result in high rates of recidivism. Otu (2015) reported that incomplete rehabilitation has been identified as the cause of recidivism among ex-convicts. At most Nigerian prison facilities, overcrowding, lack of facilities, and poor training compound the failure of rehabilitation. Therefore, when most inmates leave prison, they do not possess the skills that they need to reenter society, and re-offending becomes a real option.

Additionally, substandard living conditions in prison are strongly associated with re-offending. These difficult circumstances, which include insufficient food, no access to medical care, and overcrowding, lend themselves to an environment that can augment psychological stress and trauma. Former inmates also avenge refusals in many cases and can also recommit by way of further criminal activity (Adeyanju, 2020). The trauma in a prison is said to be dismal as a malaise that reinforces hopelessness and estrangement, and which enhances the odds for re-offense (Ugwuoke, 2017).

Furthermore, a majority of Nigerian prisons do not have in-house psychologists to offer counselling and psychological counselling/treatment. Ex-offenders are not well equipped with coping skills for reintegration without treating their psychological needs (e.g., anger management, depression, and addiction (Otu, 2015). Many prisoners have mental health issues or need therapeutic assistance that is not available; they are being released with unresolved mental/emotional problems, and they re-offend.

Ex-convicts are typically stigmatized and shunned once they re-enter society, making their reintegration process very difficult. Stigmatisation means the negative branding of people with criminal backgrounds, which brings discrimination to bear on employment, housing, and social inclusion. As Osayi (2021) observes, ex-prisoners barred from society feel alienated and estranged, which makes successful re-entry difficult. Their criminal record stigma reduces their chances of getting a stable job, and that creates anger and frustration, which will cause recidivism (Ugwuoke, 2017).

According to Soyombo (2009), lack of family support could heighten the sense of being abandoned, hopelessness, and loneliness, and also compel ex-prisoners into re-engaging in crime as a mechanism of dealing with their circumstances. For reformation, it is necessary to have the social and emotional support of the

family, and its absence would impede the rehabilitation process.

Furthermore, the local community must accept the returnee into the society. Studies show that when ex-prisoners return to crime-friendly environments or communities that don't want them, the chance they will reoffend is greater. It is emphasized that communities ought to have an increased input into embracing released offenders and facilitating their re-entry (Adeyanju, 2020). Community-based programs designed around inclusion and reduction of stigma can reduce recidivism by giving ex-prisoners the social support and acceptance that will keep them out of the crime cycle.

Unemployment and the absence of job opportunities are important factors for repeat offenses. In Nigeria, former inmates encounter barriers in their attempt to secure jobs after being released from prison and returning to society due to their criminal background. This condition casts "ex-prisoners into the shadow land of personal and social despair." (Ugwuoke, 2010) Many ex-prisoners are portrayed as individuals who do not have the financial means to fend for themselves and their families after discharge from prison, thereby facing financial pressures and a higher risk of returning to criminality. The financial struggle, added to the pressure and despair an ex-inmate has to endure, contributes to leading him into involvement in the world of crime as a way to ease the pain.

Poverty is also an important economic driver of recidivism. Former convicts let out with nothing – and no work options – face a far greater chance to go back to the future. Adeyanju (2020) posits that it is almost impossible to struggle to make a living without resorting to crime. In Nigeria, the situation is the same, as unemployment is high and the economy is under severe pressure. Such individuals make minimal wage with no access to job training and constantly face the burden of being labeled an ex-convict.

Most former convicts return to communities of criminal culture and ex-cons, which is where they most likely link up with their criminal brethren. Soyombo (2009) also reports that peer pressure is one of the factors responsible for the recurrence/repetition of criminality, as ex-convicts often claim to have been linked to committing crime with familiar criminal coaches/peers.

At last, living in an area of high crime, poverty, and poor educational or employment

accessibility can lead to recidivism. Ex-inmates who return to a community life with crime and violence are more likely to revert to old habits. As opined by Adeyanju (2020), the social environment is also an important determinant of behavior, and ex-prisoners who return to neighborhoods with a high level of criminal activity are more likely to struggle to desist from previous criminal influences.

5. Challenges in Controlling Recidivism in Nigeria

Recidivism, a phenomenon in which ex-convicts tend to re-offend, is a never-ending battle in the Nigerian criminal justice system. Many barriers hinder the reintegration or rehabilitation of former prisoners back into society, while discrimination and prejudice continue to increase the rate of recidivism among ex-inmates in Nigeria. These problems can be anything from an insufficient rehabilitation need behind bars, to the stigma of society, trouble keeping and getting a job, and poor post-release support. To combat these impediments, more holistic reforms are required that directly tackle the proper rehabilitation and reintegration of the formerly incarcerated.

One of the major causes of recidivism in Nigeria is the absence of effective reformation programs in the correctional institutions. Rehabilitation is essential to the reformation of inmates, equipping them with the skills and emotional support they need to return to society. Nevertheless, most Nigerian correctional facilities are characterized by so much congestion, poor facilities, and a deficiency of qualified staff; hence, the inadequate provision of rehabilitation programs (Otu, 2015).

As Otu (2015) reports, Nigerian prison facilities are overstretched with over-crowding of prisoners beyond their built capacity. This congestion also makes it hard to provide personalized rehabilitation services, including vocational training and counseling to cope with psychological trauma. There are a few centers that have schools or simple vocational skills training, and they are not well supported, nor are they well managed. As a result, too many ex-convicts exit prison without the necessary know-how and support to get through life on the outside and have a much better chance of re-offending.

Counseling is a key aspect of the rehabilitation and an important rider. Most prisoners have some kind of psychological and emotional

problems, for example, depression, anger, post-traumatic stress disorder, etc., left untreated, can be a source of re-offending. Nevertheless, according to Otu (2015), the lack of mental health professionals and counselling facilities in prisons further heightens the emotional and psychological load experienced by inmates, and with this development, it will be difficult for them to change.

One of the most difficult hurdles to manage related to recidivism in Nigeria is societal stigmatization of the ex-convicts after their release. Ex-convicts in Nigeria are stereotyped and suffer stigmatisation. The stigma can greatly influence their ability to integrate with society; they are discriminated against in many areas of life, such as in work, housing, and interpersonal relationships (Osayi, 2013).

Osayi (2013) says that having a record or association with a record causes distinct social isolation in Nigeria. Most prisoners are isolated from their families, their home communities, and from broader society. This exclusion is a barrier to housing and health and pushes them to the margin, preventing their reintegration. In addition, the stigmatization of ex-convicts by society can lead such individuals to hopelessness, leading to emotional estrangement and re-offending (Osayi, 2021).

The social exclusion of former prisoners is not only confined to informal structure, but also finds expression in formal institutions (workplace, education) as well. Many employers are reluctant to hire people who have committed a crime, for fear that their reputation may be tarnished or that criminals will be more likely to offend again. This discrimination has deprived ex-prisoners of opportunities to turn their lives around, and this encourages them to reoffend to make ends meet (Osayi, 2021). Thus, social perceptions must be altered to foster a community in which ex-offenders are not just welcomed, but also given a chance to add value.

One of the most important causes of recidivism in Nigeria is a lack of jobs. Former inmates are frequently barred from securing stable employment because of the stigma of their criminal past. In a society with poor employment generation, such as Nigeria, the chances of getting a job are limited in the case of an ex-convict (Ugwuoke, 2010). There are no jobs for ex-cons. This leads to poverty and anger, and ultimately results in their choosing crime instead.

Economic hardship is a major predictor of recidivism, as stated by Ugwuoke (2010). If this were in danger of happening for a whole group of ex-cons who can't find employment (maybe because of their criminal record), they may feel the pressure of financial woes and may opt to resort to crime, like theft, drug peddling, or fraud. The dire need to access necessities such as food, shelter, and medical services sometimes drives people to engage in crime to fend for themselves (Ugwuoke, 2017). Nowhere is this truer than in Nigeria, where many live in a state of economic precarity due to the massive poverty rate; thus, ex-prisoners are especially prone to recidivism.

In addition, there is the problem of a lack of professional training and job skills training in the correctional system. Ex-prisoners will have few options for formal employment that they were not trained for/competent at. According to Adeyanju (2020), prison-based vocational training programmes can significantly reduce rates of Recidivism among released inmates if the ex-offenders possess additional work-related skills. But many released convicts are unready to work because of a lack of opportunities and the insufficiency of useful programs.

Lack of strong post-release networks is also another difficulty that result to high recidivism in Nigeria. (1998) Successful reinsertion into society is dependent on such strong support structures as halfway houses, mentoring programs, and community approaches. However, these processes are routine failures in Nigeria, with ex-convicts being returned to the community without the necessary support networks to reintegrate into society (Soyombo, 2009).

Soyombo (2009) observes that the reintegrating of ex-prisoners is likely to revert to their old ways if they do not receive adequate support. Halfway houses, which offer transitional living for former inmates, are few in Nigeria, and when available, they are usually underfunded and poorly managed. Such facilities can offer the stability of housing, emotional support, and connections to job leads in the early phase of reintegration. Without these resources, former prisoners are more likely to reoffend.

Good mentorship programs may also help reduce recidivism as ex-convicts are guided by those who have successfully integrated into society. Mentors can also provide advice and encouragement on how to navigate the challenges of reentry. This is not a common

practice in Nigeria and was limited to a few community-based organizations (Soyombo, 2009). It all adds up, and it is no wonder that many parolees struggle horribly to adapt to life outside jail, which is why the repeat-offender rate is seriously high.

6. Conclusion

The problem of recidivism in Nigeria is deeply embedded in the failings of the criminal justice system and exacerbated by societal and economic factors. Former prisoners are usually hampered by obstacles that hinder their successful re-integration such as insufficient reformation programmes in prison, social stigma, absence of job potentials, and feeble support structures after release. These issues stop ex-offenders from adjusting to the outside world and make them more prone to criminal behavior for survival. Meeting these challenges will require a range of reforms, including the improvement of rehabilitation programs inside prisons, lessening the stigma with public-awareness campaigns, economic opportunities, and effective post-release support. By addressing the causes of recidivism and giving ex-offenders what they need to reintegrate, Nigeria would go a long way in ensuring people do not reenter a life of crime, reduce Recidivism rates, increase public safety, and build inclusive and supportive communities.

7. Recommendations

To control the plague of recidivism in Nigeria and to make recidivists less prone to repeating their acts, the following remedial measures are recommended:

By offering stronger and more effective rehab, such as vocational training, education, and psychological assistance, prisons can arm offenders with the means to get back on their feet. Rehabilitation programs that work would enable prisoners to acquire new skills and treat any psychological problems they may have, which may be contributing to Recidivism.

Public education campaigns are instrumental in breaking-down the social stigma that is associated with ex-convicts returning to society post-sentence. The social stigma of a felony record makes it hard to find a job, to rent a place to live, and to be accepted among peers. Public education campaigns that encourage acceptance of ex-offenders, as well as educate individuals about consistency and second chances, can reduce the impact of that stigma.

It is suggested that employment opportunities can help to reduce recidivism because there is such a stigma associated with having a criminal record. Many individuals who were placed in incarceration find themselves financially destitute. There are reasons as to why there is a recidivism rate in this country that is way too high. Giving job opportunities and employment training to ex-convicts goes a long way toward alleviating that economic strain. Ex-prisoners are less likely to resort to a life of crime if they have pathways to stable employment. Furthermore, vocational training programs meant to equip former prisoners with employable skills can increase their employability and enable easier reintegration.

Lastly, stronger after-release support is critical to ensure long-term success. Ex-prisoners frequently meet psychological and practical difficulties in re-entering the outside world, and left to their own devices, they are likely to return to their criminal ways. Mentorship programs, a network of community support, and post-release counselling can help ex-cons find their feet. These systems of support can work to solve issues like housing and family reunification and provide a source of possible financial security, giving men who have been imprisoned the resources they need to become successful members of society again. Through this rehabilitation, societal acceptance, economic empowerment, and post-release system, Nigeria can take giant strides in the reduction of recidivism and in the successful reintegration of ex-prisoners.

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