



ATTITUDE OF NIGERIAN CORRECTIONAL SERVICE INMATES TOWARDS STRESS AND ITS COPING STRATEGIES IN ENUGU CUSTODIAL CENTER

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Abstract

This was a survey study aimed at ascertaining the attitude of Nigerian correctional service inmates towards Stress and its Coping strategies in Enugu custodial center. Specifically, three purposes with three corresponding research questions and three hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The area of the study was Enugu Custodial Center while the population for the study was 2225 Correctional inmates. Survey research design was used to accomplish the purpose of the study. Purposive sampling techniques was used to draw 225 correctional inmates from the population. Questionnaire was the only instrument used for data collection which was developed by the researcher. The instrument was face validated by an expert in the department of Human Kinetics and Health Education. Three research questions were answered using mean scores and standard deviation while three null hypotheses were tested using t-test at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that stress makes inmates feel anxious and tensed under pressure, increases the risk of illness such as headache, stroke and heart attack. Findings also revealed the type of stress among the inmates which includes accommodation, relationship with other inmates, health problems, financial problems among others. Findings also showed that Inmates engage in exercise to ease off stress. They enroll in National Open University of Nigeria to cope with stress, they also engage in skill acquisitions trainings in order to cope with stress. Three null hypotheses were not rejected as there was no significance difference between male and female inmates on their perception towards stress, types of stress and its coping strategies. In addition, the inmates were ready to adjust to any coping strategies available in order to be good citizens of Nigeria. Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made: The Correctional service should be adequately funded to enhance effective rehabilitation of cells for the inmates. The Correctional authorities should provide earning schemes to inmates to enhance their effective reintegration and rehabilitation into the society.

Introduction

Stress is the body's way of responding to any kind of demand or threat. When you sense danger, whether it is real or imagined, the body defenses kick into higher gear as rapid automatic process known as "fight or flight". Stress is a mental health problem associated with diverse Physical, mental disorders including depression.

A growing number of literature documents that the rise in incarceration rates have great consequences on the inmates' mental health. There are also evidences that incarceration is a stressful and stigmatizing life event. The psychological impact of incarceration is well recognized by early researchers describing how the imprisonment and regimentation of imprisonment leads inmates to experience mental health disorder than they might have had if they had remained in the normal public life. Stress according to Wallen (2018) could be defined as a condition causing



hardship which could be due to a disturbance in any of the factors of the individuals' external or internal environment as a result of working habits, economic status or emotional problems. Inmates face some stressors which includes illness, diseases, Lack of sex, severe hardship, aging, poor feeding, starvation, loneliness, death of beloved ones, marital separation, unwanted pregnancy, overcrowding among others. The level of Stress that a person experience is directly related to his or her perception of the amount of control that he or she has over the situation.

According to Folk, Schaefer and Lawson (2019) sources of stress in the prison can be examined by a list of potential sources of problems in the custodial center which includes accommodation, poor diet, lack of privacy, relations with other prisoners, lots of idle time, relations with the correctional officers, and health problems.

Wallen (2018) stated that these inmates are forced to found ways in which to cope with the stresses they encounter while serving their jail term. Folkman and Quick (2014) defined coping as any activity human's carryout to seek and apply solutions to stressful situations or problems that emerge because of the stressors. On the other hand, there is also what is called proactive coping where the coping techniques are positive coping and there are coping strategies that are maladaptive. Maladaptive is common with the correctional inmates.

According to Ebigbo (2013) maladaptive coping is non-coping since a person who responds to a stress using a coping technique that is not able to positively ward off the stressor or solve the stressful situation has not coped with the stress at all. In addition, one's level of education may influence the way she Cope with stress. An educated person according to Davis (2018) is one having an educated manner based on a certain amount of experience or factual knowledge. The Enugu Custodial Center was established in 1915 as a Convict Custody with lock up of 636 inmates but as at September 30th 2021. The lock up is 2225. This shows that the custodial center is congested and this was a source of stress. The Enugu custodial center have three sections Male, Female and Asylum Sections.

It was on this basis that the interest of the researcher was alerted to find out how these individuals whose freedom of movement was a privileged and not a right cope with the stresses associated with their imprisonment hence the present study.

Statement of the Problem

Stressors and stress have become a common word in our modern life. It cuts across all strata and manner of persons to the point of affecting human functions and activities for this reason, custodial inmates are not left out. The problems faced by most Nigerian correctional inmates are anxiety, frustration, depression, tension, superstition, financial insecurity, disease, loneliness, lack of support, starvation unhygienic drinking water, poor feeding, hunger, death of close inmate and marital separation. A typical custodial center is inhuman and graveyard for inmates. The



Enugu Custodial Center was established in 1915 as a Convict Custody with lock up of 636 inmates but as at September 30th 2021. The lock up is 2225. This shows that the custodial center is congested and this can lead to different types of stress.

It was on this basis that the interest of the researcher was alerted to find out how these individuals whose freedom of movement was a privileged and not a right perceive stress, types of stress in the custodial center and coping strategies adopted by these inmates hence the present study.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to investigate the attitude

1. identify the inmates of Nigerian Correctional Service Enugu Custodial Center's attitude towards stress and
2. identify types of stressors common among inmates of Nigerian Correctional Service, Enugu Custodial Centre and
3. identify various stress coping strategies adopted by the inmates of the Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial center.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will be of immense benefits to the society, correctional officers, correctional inmates, government, non-governmental organization, educationist, health workers, ministry of health and other researchers on similar area. The basic fact about this is that, there is no custodial center without stressors. The findings of this study will help the society and the citizens of Nigeria in particular to know the stressors facing the inmates in the custodial center which in no doubt will go a long way to moderate their excesses.

The correctional officer will also benefit immensely from the findings of the work as it is hoped that it will contribute in producing better training, preparation and resources for the correctional officers as well as to better perform their duties and keep and maintain better relationship with the inmates.

The study will also be of immense benefit to the inmates as it can hopefully help the inmates better accept their incarceration and keep and maintain better relationship in their personal lives. Finally, the findings may influence the policy of the Ministry of health and health workers in terms of the provision of better health facilities and intensive efforts towards health education in the custodial center.

Scope of the Study

The study was limited to Nigerian Correctional Service Enugu Custodial center. This custodial center was chosen because it has all classes of correctional inmates; condemned inmates, convicted inmates, awaiting trials, lifers, asylum and even debtors. The study was also limited to attitude of inmates towards stress, types of stress and stress coping strategies as well as gender as an independent variable.



Research Question

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial centre attitude towards stress?
2. What are the types of stressors among the inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial centre?
3. What are the various stress coping strategies adopted by the inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial centre?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypothesis were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H0₁: There is no significant difference between mean responses of male and female inmates of Nigerian Correctional Service on their perception towards stress.

H0₂: There is no significant difference between mean responses of male and female inmates on the types of stressors common among the inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial centre.

H0₃: There is no significant difference between mean responses of male and female inmates on the various stress coping strategies adopted by the inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial centre.

Review of related literature

This section houses the related literature review, it was discussed under the following headings: Conceptual framework which include – Concept of stress, Types of stressors, Concept of correction/correctional inmates, Concept of coping strategies, and Types of coping strategies in custodial centers; Theoretical Framework which include: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory in explaining stress and coping in the custodial center; Empirical Studies relating to stress and stress coping strategies; and Summary of review of related literature.

Concept of Stress

Griffiths (2013) define stress as a feeling of strain and pressure. They explained that small amounts of stress maybe desired, beneficial and even healthy positive stress help to improve athletic performance. It also plays a factor in motivation, adaptation and reaction to the environment. Excessive amount of stress however may lead to bodily harm. Stress can increase the risk of strokes, heart attacks, ulcers and mental illnesses such as depression.

Stress can be external and related to the environment but may also be created by internal perceptions that cause an individual to experience anxiety or other negative emotions, surrounding a situation such as pressure, discomfort etc. which they then deem stressful. Humans experience stress or perceive things as threatening, when they do not believe that their resources for coping with the obstacles (stimuli, people,



situation) are enough for what the circumstances demand. When human think the demand being placed on them exceed the ability to cope then stress is perceived.

Stress as a scientific concept is too well known yet little understood. Broome (2019) explained that stress is an everyday occurrence. According to Broome, every human organization is exposed to stress at every moment of life and his response to stress often determines the quality of life and health. Davis (2018) define stress as pressure, tension or worry resulting from problems of life. Adinmma (2018) thought of stress in terms of multiplicity of changes that take place in the body as a result of stress agent (stressor). These stressors have always been threats to the body's homeostasis and when the disruption is so serious that the body is not capable of regaining homeostasis by itself, danger or disease occurs and medical therapy as well as psychotherapy maybe necessary to correct it. Stress is the non-specific response of the body to any demand made upon it. This definite emphasizes the non-specificity of responses or reactions made by the body to the stressor no matter their source or nature.

Esset (2018) referred to stress as stimuli or pressure from within and not to the response. He used the term stress almost invariably to refer to situational, environmental or psychological factor or stimuli, which elicit emotional or visceral response or appear to be related to the onset of medical illness in which psychosomatic factors apparently are involved.

Caruthers (2017) defined stress to simply means being subjected to external forces or pressure and can be either positive or negative depending upon the effect of the external force. Caruthers added that a certain amount of stress is necessary in order to accomplish goals or projects. This stress serves as a stimulus to help reach an adequate level of accomplishment and success. However, if this level of stress is greater than individuals are able to support, the individual become stressed. The output decreases and the situation if not altered can become explosive.

Stress has been used not only to refer to extreme environmental or psychological condition but also as a substitute for behaviors which otherwise might have been called anxiety, conflict, emotional distress, age threat, frustration, threat to security, tension. Chukwu (2017) explained stress as silent killer, he describes it as any stimulus that interferes with the biological as well as the psychological balance of an organism.

According to Chukwu, behavior is said to depend on how persons respond to both the environment and internal stress that impinge on such persons. He further said that every individual encounters a considerable degree of stress either by changing something about environment or changing something about a person. Chukwu revealed that the capacity with which anyone can adjust to accommodate a prevailing stressful situation was therefore limited by the opportunities one had to change one's



external environment or adjust to it according to one's physical and emotional make-up.

Type of stress/stressors:

Many authors have propounded different types of

1. stress/stressors: Chukwu (2018) also identified two main types of stresses namely: External and Internal
2. stress: Cohen (2019) classified stress into: Biological stress and psychological stress. They also identified two major stressors as physical stressors and psychological stressors.

Ezuma (2017) classified stress as emotional stress, psychological stress, result as a phenomenon whereby an individual tries to cope with pressure that is beyond his capabilities. Some investigators have taken the position that stress exists in the way the individual interprets his overall situations. One prominent investigator expressed it this way "we cannot really speak of psychological stress without considering this (the person) subjective evaluation, for what is stress for one maybe a welcome challenge to another. Arnold (2017) psychological stress like systemic stress is a concept inferred from certain observed responses.

Emotional stress is another type of stress to stressors which result when the individual is depressed, disappointed with someone or himself. A good example of this type of stress is the individual on internal stress.

The ailment associated with prolonged stress range from simple headaches, loss of appetite, nausea and vomiting, heartburn, constipation or diarrhea to more complex conditions as arteriosclerosis, hypertension, stroke, heart disease, diabetes mellitus, peptic ulcer, infectious diseases, and many more (Griffths,2017) Stress could be manifested through fear, anxiety and some emotional depressive reaction that could lead to withdrawal syndrome, suicide etc. other complication of stress include alcoholism, chain smoking, and other anti-social behavior.

Biological stress and physiological stress are another type of stressors. They are related because what affects the body affects the mind. The difference is that the stress imposed on us by nature is much less destructive than those we impose on ourselves and others. Selye (1956) defined biological stress as the common denomination of all the body's adaptive reaction. It is non-specific demands made upon it. According to him, the stressors associated with biological stress are diseases such as a person dying of cancer, cirrhosis of the liver, tuberculosis, gastro enteritis, dehydration, heart failure, blindness can wear down the body cells to a state of exhaustion, fear, anxiety, anger and loneliness, over activity of hormones as a result of adjustment to stress. Most of these diseases are caused by the general deplorable condition of the custodial center like overcrowding, lack of adequate supply of water, ill ventilation, and poor lighting.



Selye observed that female have lower resistance to stress which diminishes their level of immunity.

Another type of stress is social stress Harray, (2019) defines social stress as a consequence of engagement. Social institutions whose very structures and functioning can endanger and sustain patterns of conflicts, confusion, and distress which can become deeply rooted in the social contexts in which individuals find themselves.

Physical stress is another type of stress that result from fatigue, exhaustion, physical handicapping, conditions like blindness, orthopedic handicap, deafness⁵⁴ and dumbness, stressors responsible are financial insecurity, accident, diseases and boredom (Healey, 2019).

Occupational stress is another type of stress enumerated by Hob fool (2016). Although stress is found in all aspect of our lives, they seem particularly numerous on the job or workplace or even in the custodial center.

Hob fool (2016) also defined occupational stress as negative environmental factors or stressors associated with a particular job. Occupational stress may result when there is lack of harmony between the worker and his work environment. This is evidence that occupational stress contributes to wide variety of physical, mental and behavioral disorders.

The importance of work in any society cannot be over emphasized. Work may serve as a means of survival, personal identity, and self-actualization. However, it is equally important to recognize that the work environment has been viewed as a threat or risk factor with regards to the physical health and safety of workers.

Concept of correctional service and inmates:

In 1861 when the British government assumed the responsible for the administration of Lagos, they made provisions for accommodation of 300 offenders called prison custody then it was called Broad Street prison Lagos.

In 1915, Enugu prisons now Enugu correctional centre was built. 1915 by British colonial government. It has a carrying capacity of 638 inmates' concept of coping techniques.

What is importance in one's life are not the tribulations, trials, and turbulence one encounters, but how one manages them. Understanding the mechanism and dynamics of stress as well as its potential destructive abilities, is the first step within the coping techniques for stress (Coleman 2015). Coping has been defined by Coleman as person's efforts to reside stress and create new ways of handling new situation at each time in life. Stress management has been seen as many strategies



adopted to overcome obstacles or problems, to come to terms with them. In this process one tries to change some aspect of his environment in order to survive or attempts to change, some aspect of his personality profile to fit into the challenging situations and achieve an adequate environmental fit (Coleman, 2015)

Melgosa (2016) defined coping as “constantly changing cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage specific external and internal demands that are appraised as taxing. Simply put, coping is an activity we do to seek and apply solutions to stressful situations or problems that emerge because of our stressor.

Actually, the term coping is more associated with reactive coping as a response to stressor. On the other hand, there is also what is called proactive coping, wherein the coping response is aimed at presenting a possible encounter with a future stressor while coping techniques are ways to which external or internal stress is managed, adapted or acted upon. Melgosa, (2016) further stated that coping techniques are brought about by a person’s conscious minds. It doesn’t mean that all of them bring about positive coping. These are some types of coping techniques which are maladaptive and this is common with prisoners.

According to Ebigbo (2013) maladaptive coping is also synonymous to non-coping. Since a person who responds to stress using a coping technique that is not able to possibly ward off the stressor or solve the stressful situation has not coped with the stress at all.

Maladaptive coping with stress includes smoking, drinking, too much, over eating, or under eating, withdrawing from friends, family and activities, using pills or drugs to relax, sleeping too much, procrastinating. They maintained that these coping techniques may temporarily reduce stress but they cause more damage in the long run.

According to ‘Joel’ (2017) the following guidelines may help inmates and people cope with stress or at best in attempting to avoid excessive stress that may lead to diseases of adaptation such as nervous breakdown, peptic ulcers or heart attack. Develop a stress-free philosophy of life. Develop positive belief about life. Manage your life style as well as resolve personal conflicts. Wallen, (2018) articulates the famous coping techniques exhibited by prisoners as followings, phoning, writing letters, seeing doctors when sick, self-medication, playing football, praying, homosexually, masturbation, smoking, lesbianism, reading novels, reading bible, practicing some handcraft, telling stories, borrowing from other inmates, borrowing from fellow inmates, begging from visitors, engaging in exercises, games, industries and even discussion.



According to Keith (2017) the simple realization that you are in control of your life is the foundation of stress management. Managing stress is all about taking charge of your thoughts, emotions, schedule and the way you deal with problems.

Identifying the sources of stress in your life, starting a stress journal and look at how you currently cope with stress are some of the ways stress could be managed.

Okoli (2017) produced nine situation specific coping techniques for inmates as follows:

information seeking, planning, direct actions, focus on emotions-interpretation
wishful thinking and humor: recognizing the amusing sides of the situation.

Concept of Perception:

Perception refers to the way sensory information is organized, interpreted and consciously experienced. Perception involves both bottom-up and top-down processing. This is called top-down processing. One way to think of this concept is that sensation is a physical process whereas perception is psychological.

Positive perception: The predisposition that results in desirable outcomes for individuals and organizations can be described as positive perception: positive perception is rewarded. It means the individual is encouraged to do the same thing in future.

Negative perception: The tendency of a person that results in an undesirable outcome for individuals and organizations can be described as negative attitude.

Negative attitude is punished in order to discourage the same action in future.

Therefore, confinement may pose a lot of stress among the inmates.

Theoretical Framework:

General adaptation theory by Selye (1956) argues that stress and stress phenomenon floats aimlessly like loose legs on the sea. It periodically, rises and falls in waves of popularity and disgrace. General adaptation theory consists of three stages. The alarm stage, the resistance stage and the stage of exhaustion, which explains the body's response to stress:

Stage I:

The Alarm Stage: In the first stage, alarm reaction resembles the fight or flight response. It signifies the presence of threat. Physiological arousal is increased and the organization mobilizes the necessary resources for fight or flight as described by Selye (1956)

The initial shock stage can last from a few moments to as long as 24 hours depending on the intensity of stressor and the vulnerability of the individual. Symptomatically,



the individual may complain of chest pain, palpitation, headache, joint pain, if survival of the organism is possible, a stage of resistance follows alarm reaction.

Stage II Resistance stage:

The second stage of the general adaptation theory is the stage of resistance. This occurs if the stress continues, physiological arousal stabilizes as the organism gets accustomed to the threat. If the threat persists over time, the organism enters the third phase, the stage of exhaustion.

Stage of exhaustion

At this stage, the body's resources get overwhelmed due to inherent limitations. Physiological arousal decreases and eventually the individual may collapse from exhaustion. The state of reduced resistance leads to what Selye's theory exposes he relationship that exists between stress and physical illness. It showed how prolonged exposure to stress can lead to disease.

In his studies, Selye noticed that the body has been adapting to external stressors in terms of a biological pattern that is actually predictable, so that the internal balance, would be restored and maintained. In its attempt to retain the balance, the body makes use of its hormonal system also known as the fight or flight response.

With this response, the person would notice how the body wants things to be resolved fast and easy that is why it already resorts to releasing hormones that would enable the person to combat stress in the most immediate way possible. This struggle of the body against stress is the main theme of the General Adaptation Syndrome.

Selye also discovered that even if the body wants to control or reduce the stress, it is still having its limits, the limited supply of body energy to adopt to the stressful environment is even more compromised when the body is exposed to the stressor continuously.

In the custodial entre, many people automatically respond to stress with this flight or fight reaction, because they cannot run away. They feel rough and act irritated. This theory is useful for students so that they will understand the stages of stress and device a strategy to manage stress when it occurs. However, whether stage I, II, III, the most important thing is for the stressed (the inmate to actually understand the situation and device a means of managing the stress)

Marwa (2015), conducted a study to ascertain stress and among undergraduates in the department of physical Education and Engineering in pedagogy, in India. A sample of 60 subjects was randomly sampled from the physical Education and Engineering institute. India. The instrument used was questionnaire Data was analyzed using ANOVA (Two way analysis of variance finding revealed that stress due to all the stimuli was significantly higher among girls in comparison, to boys of their



profession. Finding also showed that coping strategy was higher in boys than girls of their respective profession, but physical Education girls had higher coping strategy than girls of Engineering.

Recommendations were made for the students to participate regularly in aerobic exercise as it was shown to decrease overall level of tension, elevate and stabilize mood, improve sleep and improve self-esteem.

This study is in relation with the present study because both discussed stress and coping strategy. Meanwhile the present study is different because it looked at the inmates in the correctional services, Enugu custodial centre:

Prince, (2019) conducted a study on the impact of stress on job performance. The purpose of the study is to carry out an empirical study on employees. The study was a descriptive survey. The result obtained from the data revealed that workload and role conflict, and inadequate monetary reward are the prime reasons of causing stress in employees, and thus stress reduces their efficiency.

Thus, it was recommended that employer should minimize stress by lowering the work load, abate the role, conflict, pay adequate salary and provide training and counselling to employees in order to improve their job performance and job satisfaction. This study is related to the present study because both focused and stress, however the present study is different because deals with perception of stress among correctional inmates.

The review of literature is summarized as follows: On the conceptual framework, the concept of stress, refers to being subjected to external forces or pressures.

It can be either positive or negative depending upon the effect of the external force. Stress comes in many forms and can be seen as anything that produces the emotional and mental pressure that leads to worry, anxiety, fear, anger, apprehensions.

Therefore, stress is a body's method of reaching to change.

Authors whose works were reviewed agreed that confinement is a stressor and inmates under a lot of stress while in the custodial center. An author studies academic stress while another studied stress level and coping strategies among undergraduate students, the various studies did not cover the perception of stress among the inmates of Nigeria correctional services. Enugu custodial center. The above gap is what this study seeks to fill.

Descriptive survey research design was used to accomplish the purpose of the study. According to Nworgu (2011), descriptive survey research is one in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from a few people or items considered to be representative of the entire group. Specifically descriptive



survey research design was used to determine inmates' perception towards stress, types of stress and coping techniques among inmates in Nigeria Correctional Service Enugu Custodial Center. Sanjeev (2017) adopted survey research design successfully in a related study. Therefore, the descriptive survey was found most appropriate for the study.

Area of the Study.

The study was conducted in Nigerian correctional service, Enugu custodial centre: it is located at E/24 Kingsway Road Enugu. It was established in 1915 by British colonial government. It was built to carry the capacity of 638 inmates. Enugu state is geographically located at south East Nigeria. Enugu State was created in 1991 from the eastern two-thirds of Anambra State. It is bounded by the states of Kogi and Benue to the north, Ebonyi to the East. Abia to the South and Anambra to the West. Enugu State is covered by open grassland with clusters of oil palm trees. The Igbos constitute the majority of the state's population.

Agriculture plays an important role in the state's economy; Yams, Oil palm Product, Corn, rice, and cassava are the main crops. Enugu, the state capital is a major centre for coal mining. Enugu Custodial Center have 15 cells namely: A & B C, D, G, H , I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, CC Block and Female Section. It comprises of all the Convicted, awaiting trials, debtors, Lifers, Condemned.

Population for the Study

The target population for this study consist of all the male and female inmates of Nigerian Correctional service Enugu.

Custodial centre comprising of 2225 inmates. It consists of both awaiting trials, and convicts including, asylum section: (Nigeria Correctional Service, statistics section: September,2021). (See Appendix 1)

Sample and Sampling techniques

The sample for this study Consist of 225 respondents made of 200 males and 25 females. The researcher purposively selected 15 inmates each from the 15 cells in the custodial centre. She used simple random sampling techniques without replacement. A total of 225 inmates were randomly selected.

Instrument for data collection

A structured questionnaire was used to gather data from the respondents.

The instrument was developed by the researcher after a thorough review of related literature. The questionnaire consists of two sections A and B.

Section A, deals with personal data of the respondents while section B addresses the three research questions with questionnaire items 1-20. Instruments are of 4-point



scale, Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. These responses were scaled 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. (See Appendix 3)

Validation of the Instrument

In an attempt to ensure the use of a valid instruments, one copy of the researcher-made questionnaire, purpose of the study, scope of the study, research question, and hypotheses were given to an expert from department of human kinetics and health education and requested to critically examine it with a view for determining its comprehensiveness, relevance of content, clarity of statement and appropriateness of the items in addressing the specific purpose of the study. The validator examined the instrument and made some useful suggestions which formed the basis for modifying some of the items or even rejecting some of them out rightly. See the validator's comments on appendix 4.

Method of data collection

In order to reach the respondents of the custodial centre, the researcher obtained the permission of the Controller Nigerian correctional service Enugu state Command through the Deputy Controller Enugu custodial centre. The researcher employed the services of two inmates of National Open university of Nigeria in the custodial centre in distribution and collection of the questionnaire in the custodial centre. The research assistants were trained by the researcher in a one-day consultative meeting acquitting them with the purpose of the study, nature of the respondents and how to administer and collect the instrument. A brief letter of introduction explaining the purpose of the study was also attached to each copy of the instrument (See appendix 2).

The questionnaire was distributed to the inmates and was collected the same day. There was a hundred percent rate of the questionnaire distributed and collected.

Method of data analysis

The raw data was collected, assembled, tallied and converted into mean scores by the researcher. The research questions were answered using mean score and standard deviation. Nominal rating of 4, 3, 2 and 1 were assigned respectively to the four-point scaling method of strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and strongly Disagree. In the light of this, Chukwu (2018) noted that the following valued assigned to the responds categories

Strongly agree	-	4 points
Agree	-	3 points
Disagree	-	2 points
Strongly disagree	-	1 point

The researcher collapsed both strongly agree and agree to mean agreement while disagree and strongly disagree stand for disagreement. This means that any item with



mean score of 2.50 or above will be regarded as agree (A) while those less than 2.50 were regarded as disagree.

Data analysis and results

The data collected were presented in tables based on the research questions and hypotheses that guided the study. The responses from the questionnaire and their analysis are shown in the table below:

Research Question One: What are the inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial center perception towards stress?

Table 1: The mean and standard deviation response scores of inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial center on their perception towards stress?

S/N	Read each statement and indicate how you perceive stress using response options on it	SA	A	D	SD	MEAN	STD	DEC
1.	Inmates feel anxious and tense under pressure	180	3	2	17	3.54	0.96	Agree
2.	Stress makes inmates to loss concentration	200	-	1	14	3.72	0.82	Agree
3.	Stress increases the risk of illness such as headache, strokes and heart attach	225	-	-	-	4.00	0.00	Agree
4.	Stress leads to mental illness such as frustration and depression	198	20	-	7	3.82	0.58	Agree
5.	Inmates' characters and manners can change because of stress	180	29	6	10	3.68	0.73	Agree
6.	Stress has emotional implications on the inmates	200	-	-	25	3.67	0.94	Agree
7.	Stress has physical implication on the inmates	199	1	2	23	3.67	0.93	Agree
8.	Stress has spiritual implications on the inmates	70	15	3	2	3.28	0.53	Agree
9.	Stress cause moral undertone on the inmates	111	16	9	8	0.2	1.02	Agree
Grand Mean						3.60	0.83	Agree

Data in Table 1 shows that the respondents agreed to all listed items on the inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial center perception towards stress with mean scores ranging from 3.02 to 4.00. This shows that inmates agreed that stress makes them to feel anxious and tensed under pressure, lose concentration, increases the risk of illnesses such headache, strokes and heart attack, leads to mental illness such frustration and depression, changes inmates' characters and manners and causes moral undertone. Also, they agreed that stress has emotional, physical and



spiritual implications on them. This shows that inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial center had negative perception towards stress. The standard deviation ranges from 0.00 – 0.96, shows that the responses are not far from each other.

Research Question Two: What are the types of stressors among the inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial center?

Table 2: The mean and standard deviation response scores on types of stressors among the inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial center.

S/N	The following are stressors as perceived by inmates of NCOS Enugu Custodial Centre	SA	A	D	SD	MEAN	STD	DEC
10.	Accommodation	209	8	1	7	3.86	0.56	Agree
11.	Relationship with other inmates	80	4	-	141	2.10	1.44	Agree
12.	Relationship with correctional officers	90	6	1	60	2.80	1.22	Agree
13.	Health Problems	211	-	9	5	3.85	0.58	Agree
14.	Financial Problems	215	-	6	4	3.89	0.51	Agree
Grand Mean							3.30	1.19
Agree								

Data in Table 2 shows that the respondents agreed to all the listed items with mean score greater than 2.50 cut off point set for the study, except for item 11 which had mean score of 2.10. This shows that inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial center identified accommodation, relationship with correctional officers, health problems and financial problems as types of stressors among them. The standard deviation ranges from 0.51 to 1.44 indicating that the responses are not far from each other.

Research Question Three: What are the various stress coping strategies adopted by the inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial center?

Table 3: The mean and standard deviation response scores on various stress coping strategies adopted by the inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial center.

S/N	The following are perception of inmates of NCOS Enugu Custodial Centre on stress coping strategies	SA	A	D	SD	MEAN	STD	DEC
15.	Inmates engage in exercise to use off stress	218	1	-	6	3.92	0.49	Agree
16.	Inmates enrol into NOUN programme to cope with stress	198	18	9	-	3.84	0.46	Agree
17.	Inmates masturbates, engage in homosexual or lesbianism when they feel like having sex	180	34	-	1	3.70	0.71	Agree



S/N	The following are perception of inmates of NCOS Enugu Custodial Centre on stress coping strategies	SA	A	D	SD	MEAN	STD	DEC
18.	Inmates engage in physical activity	206	18	1	-	3.91	0.30	Agree
19.	Inmates listen to music to ease stress	225	-	-	-	4.00	0.00	Agree
20	Inmates like to be enrolled in skill acquisition trainings	100	100	1	7	3.30	0.75	
Grand Mean						3.86	0.42	Agree

Data in Table 3 shows that the respondents agreed to all the listed items with mean score greater than 2.50 cut off point set for the study. This shows that the various stress coping strategies adopted inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial center includes; engagement in exercise and physical activities, enrolment in NOUN and skill acquisition trainings, listens to music and engage in masturbation and homosexual or lesbianism when they feel like having sex. The standard deviation ranges from 0.00 to 0.75 indicating that the responses are not far from each other.

Research Hypotheses

H01: There is no significant difference between mean responses of male and female inmates of Nigerian Correctional Service on their perception toward stress

Table 4: t-test on the mean rating of male and female inmates of Nigerian Correctional Service on their perception toward stress

G r o u p	N	M e a n	S	D	T	D	f	S i g	Decision
M a l e	2 0 0	3 . 6 1	0 . 2 5	1 . 7 6 5	2 2 3	0 . 0 7 9	N		S
F e m a l e	2 5	3 . 5 2	0 . 2 7						

Table 4 shows that the t-calculated value on the mean rating of male and female inmates of Nigerian Correctional Service on their perception toward stress is 1.765; not significant at 0.079 levels of significance, which is greater than 0.05 levels of significance set for the study. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This means that there is no significant difference between mean responses of male and female inmates of Nigerian Correctional Service on their perception toward stress.

H02: There is no significant difference between mean responses of male and female inmates on the types of stressors among the inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial center?

**Table 5:** t-test on the mean rating of male and female inmates on the types of stressors among the inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial center.

G r o u p	N	M e a n	S	D	T	D	f	S i g	Decision
M a l e	2 0 0	3 . 3 3	0 . 5 3	2.193	2 2 3	0.069	N	S	
F e m a l e	2 5	3 . 0 8	0 . 5 8						

Table 5 shows that the t-calculated value on the mean rating of male and female inmates on the types of stressors among the inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial center is 2.193; not significant at 0.069 levels of significance, which is greater than 0.05 levels of significance set for the study. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This means that there is no significant difference between mean responses of male and female inmates on the types of stressors among the inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial center.

H03: There is no significant difference between mean responses of male and female inmates on the various stress coping strategies adopted by the inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial center

Table 6: t-test on the mean rating of male and female inmates on the various stress coping strategies adopted by the inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial center

G r o u p	N	M e a n	S	D	T	D	f	S i g	Decision
M a l e	2 0 0	3 . 7 9	0 . 2 5	2.085	2 2 3	0.139	N	S	
F e m a l e	2 5	3 . 6 7	0 . 3 8						

Table 6 shows that the t-calculated value on the mean rating of male and female inmates on the various stress coping strategies adopted by the inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial center is 2.085; not significant at 0.139 levels of significance, which is greater than 0.05 levels of significance set for the study. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This means that there is no significant difference between mean responses of male and female inmates on the various stress coping strategies adopted by the inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial center.

The findings of the study were summarized as follows:

1. Inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial centre had negative perception towards stress.
2. Inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial centre identified accommodation, relationship with correctional officers, health problems and financial problems as types of stressors among them.
3. The various stress coping strategies adopted inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial centre includes; engagement in exercise and physical



activities, enrolment in National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) and skill acquisition trainings, listens to music.

4. There is no significant difference between mean responses of male and female inmates of Nigerian Correctional Service on their perception toward stress.
5. There is no significant difference between mean responses of male and female inmates on the types of stressors among the inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial centre.
6. There is no significant difference between mean responses of male and female inmates on the various stress coping strategies adopted by the inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial centre.

Discussion conclusion and recommendation

Discussion of findings

Inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial center had negative perception towards stress. This perception probably may be because stress arises as pressure, tension or worry which are threats to life. This assertion tallies with the definition provided by Davis (2018) that stress is as a result of pressure, tension or worry resulting from problems of life. Their perception agreed with the submission of Tanner, (2016) that stress is a silent killer which interferes with the biological as well as the psychological balance of an organism. The confinement may pose a lot of stress among the inmates, because interferes with the biological as well as the psychological balance of the inmates. Further analysis revealed that there is no significant difference between mean responses of male and female inmates of Nigerian Correctional Service on their perception toward stress.

Another finding revealed that Inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial center identified accommodation, relationship with correctional officers, health problems and financial problems as types of stressors among them. These stressors can be classified as emotional and psychological stressor as a result of the confinement which is beyond the control of the inmates. This is supported by the assertion of Healey (2019) that emotional stress and psychological stress is a phenomenon whereby an individual tries to cope with pressure that is beyond his capabilities. This finding do not agree with what Prince, (2019) identified as stressors such as workload, role conflict and inadequate monetary reward. Further analysis revealed that there is no significant difference between mean responses of male and female inmates on the types of stressors among the inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial center.

The finding of the study revealed that the various stress coping strategies adopted inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial center includes; engagement in exercise and physical activities, enrolment in NOUN and skill acquisition trainings, listens to music and engage in masturbation and homosexual or lesbianism when they feel like having sex. This tallies with articulation of Wallen (2018) that the famous coping techniques exhibited by inmates as followings, phoning, writing letters, seeing



doctors when sick, self-medication, playing football, praying, homosexually, masturbation, smoking, lesbianism, reading novels, reading bible, practicing some handcraft, telling stories, borrowing from other inmates, borrowing from fellow inmates, begging from visitors, engaging in exercises, games, industries and even discussion. Further analysis revealed that there is no significant difference between mean responses of male and female inmates on the various stress coping strategies adopted by the inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial center. This finding contradicts the finding of Marwa (2015), who found out that coping strategies adopted differs according to gender.

Conclusion

This study examined study investigates the perception of stress and stress coping strategies among the inmates of Nigeria correctional service Enugu custodial center. It was discovered that there is positive attitude towards stress among inmates and most of the stressors among the inmates are in Enugu custodial center are mostly on emotional, accommodation, health and financial wise as well as sexual reasons. Therefore, we conclude that, proper accommodation, healthcare system, and entrepreneurial skill programs should be introduced to custodial inmates so as to reduce stress and aid them in coping with stress.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. The Correctional authorities should provide earning schemes to inmates to enhance their effective reintegration and rehabilitation into the society.
2. The Correctional service should be adequately funded to acquire state of the arts equipment to enhance effective rehabilitation of cells for the inmates.
3. The infrastructure and facilities in Nigerian correctional service custodial centers should be maintained regularly by government so as to maximize the safety of inmates.
4. Functional healthcare system should be provided for the inmates so as to improve their health status.
5. Viewed in this manner, the level of stress in the Nigerian correctional services Enugu custodian center would be reduced to the infinitesimal level.

The findings of the study were summarized as follows:

1. Inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial centre had positive attitude towards stress.
2. Inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial centre identified accommodation, relationship with correctional officers, health problems and financial problems as types of stressors among them.
3. The various stress coping strategies adopted inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial centre includes; engagement in exercise and physical activities, enrolment in NOUN and skill acquisition trainings, listens to music



and engage in masturbation and homosexual or lesbianism when they feel like having sex.

4. There is no significant difference between mean responses of male and female inmates of Nigerian Correctional Service on their perception toward stress.
5. There is no significant difference between mean responses of male and female inmates on the types of stressors among the inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial centre.
6. There is no significant difference between mean responses of male and female inmates on the various stress coping strategies adopted by the inmates of Nigerian correctional service Enugu custodial centre.

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