

The Impact of Christian Interventions in Rehabilitation of Offenders and Reduction of Recidivism: A Case Study of Kodiaga Maximum Prison, Kisumu County

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Abstract

Religion has a role in ensuring conformity and regulation of human behavior through moral and ethical guidance. However, deviation from the norms and values results in punitive measures such as incarceration, which is believed to be justice for the aggrieved. Despite the existence of punitive measures, crime continues unabated. Additionally, the probability of ex-inmates reoffending is high. This has been attributed to an extremely high economic state with a high burgeoning need to be satiated. The study assessed the impact of Christian interventions in reducing recidivism and their effectiveness in rehabilitating inmates. Through the authority of scripture, Christianity commands believers not to steal or covet a neighbor's property but to work with their hands. Thus, when individuals fail to observe such principles, the law catches up with them through punitive incarceration. The study area, the Kodiaga prison, is the largest prison in western Kenya. The study employed a qualitative research method and data collection tools that involved interviews and questionnaires. The pastoral Circle theory was applied because of its great input in defining social issues as crime. The finding posited that several Christian intervention programs bible study, Christian counseling, and mentorship, Music offered at Kodiaga prison had a positive impact on transforming the lives of inmates. This greatly helped the inmates reintegrate and resettle after incarceration, thus reducing the probability of offending.

Keywords: *Incarceration, Recidivism, Chaplaincy, Delinquent behaviors, Rehabilitation, Re-integration, Rehabilitation*

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1. Introduction

Research indicates a glaringly high number of prisoners, a population of 10.2 million globally, for a global population of 6.9 billion.¹ This indicates that for every 10,000 people, 146 have been charged and convicted of life in prison. Additionally, there was a slight increase of 30% and an upward shift in recidivism, indicating a return of ex-inmates who had gone through prison and been rehabilitated in Africa, the USA, and Asia in the year 2013.² In Africa, South Africa has the highest recidivism levels at 74%, Kenya 47%, whereas Uganda trails the least at 32%, thus suggesting better rehabilitative measures that have been effective.³ In Kenya, the data confirmed that prison was home to approximately 60,000 as of 2023, with the figures an accumulation of both pretrial and those convicted of different charges. Kodiaga prison has a high population of approximately 3000 and continues to grapple with overcrowding, with several attempts to decongest it through the correctional department and judiciary.⁴ A life confined to the four walls of prison normally relegates inmates to hopelessness, a lack of identity and purpose, which in most scenarios results in depression and some instances, suicide. The overcrowded environment also creates a fertile ground for diseases with poor sanitation and little medical care, resulting in deaths.⁵ Scholarship on prison life notes that such confinement can be painful, distressing, and breeds loneliness as most inmates wrestle with thoughts of guilt and shame.⁶ The church, through the chaplaincy department, has a core mandate to seek souls and restore them to God's intended purpose and will. Most of the inmates are in a reflective season of their life where questions on their existence, purpose, and the need for a higher power over their life make it suitable for them to engage in Christian intervention programs offered in prison that focus on liberation, forgiveness, and the redeeming power of God.

Definition of terms

The section provides definitions of terms used in the study.

Chaplaincy: Pastoral ministry entrusted to pastors in a prison setting. They are tasked with providing spiritual guidance to the inmates, spiritual counseling, and overseeing other religious functions in prison. They aim to transform the inmates' former criminal life and mindset into new creatures through biblical principles. This is well illustrated by Skotnicki, noting the chaplain's duties to deliver sermons to visiting the inmates in their cells and hospitals when sick.⁷

¹ Roy Walmsley, *World Prison Population*: International Centre for Prison Studies. London. 2023

² Roy Walmsley, *World Prison Population*: International Centre for Prison Studies. London. 2023 , 87

³ Kenya National Commission on Human Rights. *Prison Reforms Publication*. Nairobi, 2018, 52

⁴ Kenya News Agency, *Task Force Recommends expansion of Kodiaga Maximum Prison*," Kenya News Agency, February 12, 2023

<http://www.kenyanews.go.ke/task-force-recommends-expansion-of-kodiaga-maximum-prison>

⁵ Amnesty international. Kenya: *Prisons- Deaths due to torture and Cruel, Inhuman and degrading conditions*. December 7, 2000, 38

⁶ Ibid 67

⁷ Skotnicki Andrew. *The prison chaplain and the mission of the church*. New theology Review, 17, 2004, 22

Delinquent behaviors: A contravention of society's set norms and ethics that results in punitive measures, such as imprisonment. These are mostly reflected in young people who choose to go against the set rules and laws. They may engage in acts as fights, stealing, robbery, vandalism, among other crimes, prompted by psychological needs as trauma, poverty, or lack of education. Delinquent behaviors are exacerbated by deviating from religion and biblical principles.⁸ Therefore, Christian intervention programs fill the gap, helping to restore such individuals and achieving transformed lives. Schroeder and Jon Frana, in their book *Spirituality and Religion, Emotional Coping and Criminal Desistance*, note that religious devotion and spirituality are important in initiating sustained behavioral change.

Recidivism: This is the tendency of ex-inmates to re-engage in crime after serving and completing a prison term. The act of reoffending after release has been attributed to several factors. This has also been a way of measuring the effectiveness of the Christian intervention programs offered in prison. However, despite repeating an offence, spirituality is a continuous way of life and does not stop at the point of committing a crime. Émile Durkheim notes that society gets into a quagmire of a cycle of crime when religion as a societal structure is neglected.⁹ Religion is a moral compass that helps to define societal norms that guide individual behaviors morally. Those who are God's children follow his ways, Mathew 16:24.

Rehabilitation: Refers to the transformative process inmates go through to restore them to society as reformed individuals. This involves a comprehensive approach including spiritual awakening, psychological counseling, and skill-based training. Spiritual programs aim to transform the individual morally, translating to being a law-abiding citizen as exhorted in the scriptures.

Incarceration: Refers to the confinement of an individual charged and found guilty of the crimes committed. The court passes the verdict on the custodial sentence, and justice is delivered to the victim, and a punitive measure that aims to protect society.

Problem Statement

There has been a yearly increase number of recidivists in prison despite great endeavors employed through Christian programs to rehabilitate offenders. Statistics indicate that 70% were recidivists within the last five years, with an increase within the last 6 months of recording the data. The Kenya Prison Handbook on human rights confirms the rise in recidivism and first-time offenders, raising the question of the impact of the Christian interventions in prison.¹⁰ In 2012, the number of prisoners was noted to be 49,947, a slight increase in 2013 to 49,979, with many noted to be repeat offenders.¹¹ The Christian intervention rehabilitation model applies

⁸ Schroeder and Jon Frana in his book *Spirituality and Religion, Emotional coping and criminal desistance*, Intervarsity press, 2009, 143

⁹ Durkheim Emile. *The Elementary Forms of the Religious life*, free press, 1995, 87-90

¹⁰ Prison the Handbook on Human Rights in Kenya Prisons ,2006, 48

¹¹ Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, Kenya Economic Survey 2014, (Nairobi: KNBS, 2014), 272.

the scriptural principles exhorting individuals to live morally upright lives because, as noted by Snyder, crime destroys relationships and results in social disorder.¹²

Additionally, the increasing inmate population in prisons is a clear indication of the essential role of the church in prison evangelism to reach out to inmates in their most desperate moments and seasons of life. Imprisonment has great repercussions both to the incarcerated individual and his family. Such individuals lose the ability to contribute to building socially and economically the nation, and their families have a high probability of being predisposed to abject poverty as the main providers are confined in prison. Additionally, most incarcerated individuals relinquish a desire to live as there is no hope for life. This is coupled with shame, guilt, and a society that terms them as social misfits. The Christian intervention approach aims to restore the inmates to a purposeful, transformed individual, new creatures bearing good fruits.

2. Literature Review

Theoretical framework

The study used the Pastoral Circle Theory developed by Joe Holland and Peter Henriot to guide the researcher in conducting the study, as it aims at dealing with a social issue as crime and restoration.¹³ Those in pastoral ministry employ the theory as chaplaincy and faith-based workers to realize transformation in the lives of individuals. In this case, the Pastoral Cycle theory helped analyze and identify the noticeable impact of Christian Interventions based on the life experiences of the inmates at Kodiaga Prison. The theory related to the pastoral duty of the chaplains and other faith-based workers in prison is based on theological reflections. Additionally, the prison environment relegated the inmates to a life of hopelessness, loneliness, and desperation, with others suffering different ailments due to the hostile conditions. Such situations prompt many to struggle with mental health, which results in depression and suicide, thus requiring pastoral action. Therefore, this theory provides a faith-based solution to realize scripturally grounded transformation. The Pastoral Cycle theory consists of four stages that include as discussed below.

Experience

This is also known as the insertion stage and forms the basis of the social and theological analysis of the issue of concern. It seeks to find out what is happening. It involves walking the inmate journey of life through the art of listening, observation, and narration in an endeavor to clearly understand comprehensively the social issue and its impact.¹⁴ In Kenya, youths are the majority of the inmates, many of whom are predisposed to crime because of the hard economic times, which lead to unemployment. Additionally, children who have experienced parental neglect, traumatic situations, serious lack, lack of education, and engage in drug abuse have

¹² Richard Snyder, *The Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Punishment* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005, 11-13.

¹³ Joe Holland and Peter Henriot, *Social Analysis: Linking Faith and Justice* (Washington, D.C.: Orbis Books, 1983).

¹⁴ Joe Holland and Peter Henriot, *social Analysis: Linking Faith and Justice*. Maryknoll New York, Orbis Books, 1983

higher criminogenic needs that result in crime. Disobedience of laws and rules is a sign of human broken nature and that human beings are inherently sinful, as this predisposes individuals to desiring a carnal worldly life of the lust of the eye and passions of the body.¹⁵

Social Analysis

This probes the reason for the existence of a social issue through the question of why this is happening. It analyses the causes and the contributing factors to the occurrence of the social issue.¹⁶ It involves applying the sociological angle of view while using the knowledge in psychology and sociology to understand the existing structures contributing to crime, thus incarceration¹⁷. As confirmed by Todd, the different programs in prison seek to offer solutions to the systemic issues that prompted the inmates to offend, thus contributing to criminal behavior.¹⁸ The study endeavored to understand why there were overwhelming numbers of inmates with the yearly rise in figures despite the existence of Christian Intervention programs offered in prison. Social analysis was also crucial to the chaplains and the faith-based ministry workers as it enabled them to learn how to help the inmates charged with different offences. The rate of the criminogenic needs of the inmates helps identify the probability of reoffending and the most viable programs to engage the inmates. Individuals who overindulge in drugs, have experienced trauma or abuse, abject poverty, and lack access to education have a high probability to commit and reoffend if proper guidance is given.¹⁹

Theological Reflection

This is a reflection of what is happening through the lens of faith. It answers the question of what the Christian faith, under the authority of scriptures, speaks on the social issue at hand.²⁰ That is, the application of the scriptural principles to the struggles of the inmates' experiences, ranging from guilt, shame, revenge, and anger. Most of the inmates have experienced the worst that life can offer, confined to the four walls of prison, living in deplorable conditions, and have nothing to hope for. However, the gospel of Christ is good news and transformative to those termed social misfits by society. It reignites hope to those who have hopelessness as their friend and restores purpose and identity in Christ to those who no longer see any sense in living. John 3:16 reminds believers that Christ's death was for the salvation of humanity, and believers have been justified by his death. Inmates alike can be forgiven and, through the redemptive work of the cross, have a new life in Christ Jesus. This provides a second chance to inmates to no longer conform to the old patterns of life in crime but be renewed in Christ. This knowledge, shared with inmates, restores a sense of hope and the ability to transform life. Additionally, sin has its roots in original sin, and man is inherently

¹⁵ John Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason* Oxford: Blackwell, 2006, 122

¹⁶ Ibid 69

¹⁷ Ibid 95

¹⁸ Todd Clear, *Faith Based corrections and Reentry Programs*, National Institute of Justice, 2002.

¹⁹ Sikasa Mercyline. *Factors influencing Recidivism among convicted prisoners: A case of Langata Women Prison in Nairobi County*

²⁰ Ibid 102

predisposed to sin and desires a carnal life. The enemy, the devil, prowls on humanity to kill, steal, and destroy, but through the forgiveness of sin, no human being, inmates included, is beyond the saving grace of God. John 10:10, Romans 3:23, Mathew 25:36, Luke 4:18.

Pastoral Action

This stage aims to find out the proactive work that can be done to address the social issue through the question, How should we respond. Involves the practical response of the chaplains to reforming and rehabilitating the offenders into law-abiding citizens. This includes the implemented faith-based programs offered by the chaplains and other faith-based organizations in prison. Inmates are taught to read the bible, pray, meditate on the Word, worship, and regularly attend fellowship. However, the inmate's spiritual growth greatly depends on their commitment to the course. The key goal, therefore, includes transformation and advocating for structural changes that aim at improving the lives of the inmates. This has been possible through organizations such as Faraja Foundation, which fundamentally helps in re-integration and resettlement, thus reducing recidivism through capacity building and skill development for the inmates. Philemon Ministry is an FBO that focuses on spiritual development, shelter provision, and personal care items.

Christian Interventions and its impact on Rehabilitating Inmates

The faith-based approach to rehabilitating inmates vividly expresses God's redemptive power and restoration. It is a sin that results in incarceration and depicts the weakness of humanity and the reasons for the entire dependence on Christ. Prison ministry is an elaborate example of the incarnational duty of humanity mandated by Christ in Luke 4:18, to seek the lost, liberating those who have been taken captive.

Restoration of Human Dignity

Prisonization creates a sense of guilt and shame in the individual, which results in a loss of identity.²¹ Many struggle to reintegrate and settle back into society after serving and completing their jail term. Securing employment is a big hurdle, as societal stigma makes people believe they will commit the previous crime.²² However, despite this, scriptures exhort believers to treat each other with love, the past notwithstanding, as we have been created in the image of God (Gen 1:27), and it is God who redeems humanity. As humans, we have all fallen short of the glory of God. Maruna, in his book *Why God Is Found Behind Bars*, notes a strong interlink between spirituality and incarceration. Humanity seeks answers to life's questions at the lowest point of their lives, thus finding God.²³ A transformed life in Christ leads to a renewed identity, as they live in fellowship with God and the other community of believers. Such inmates are no longer social misfits but children of the Most High, no longer prisoners enslaved with guilt, fear, and shame but free individuals, invited to the family of God.

²¹ Cassia Spohn and David Holleran, "The Effect of Imprisonment on Recidivism Rates of Felony Offenders: A Focus on Drug Offenders," *Criminology* 40, no. 2 (2002): 329–358,

²² Harding, David J., Jeffrey Morenoff: *On the outside: Prisoner Reentry and Reintegration*. 2019, 76

²³ Maruna S., Wilson L., Curren K. Why God is often found behind bars: Prison conversions and the crisis of self-narrative. *Research in Human Development*, 2006, 110

Reduced Recidivism

One measure of an effective rehabilitation model is the reduction of recidivism in the criminal Justice system.²⁴ In a study conducted on the impact of Prison Fellowship programs on inmates in New York State, Byron's study findings indicate that active participants of the faith program have a lower chance of rearrest during a one-year follow-up period.²⁵ When inmates are transformed through the faith-based programs offered in prison, such as scripture reading and memorization, praying and worshipping, they live a crime-free life. Studies note that such practices and faith-based programs translated to reduced stress, aggression, and anxiety and resulted in inmates' transformation.²⁶ Regeneration through the power of the holy spirit translates to transformation, a tangible fruit of spiritual renewal. Inmates in their former lives lived a life of sin in the form of crime and had no reverence for the Lord. Such individuals were in the world and were guided by their carnal nature. The gospel shared through Christian Interventions to such inmates leads to a total shift in both social and personal behavior, Mathew 7:17.

Message of Forgiveness

The society harshly terms inmates as social misfits who deserve death and serious punishment for the crimes they commit. When released back to the community, several experience serious setbacks and fear, as securing employment becomes a challenge.²⁷ Most people believe they have not been completely rehabilitated, and the probability of reoffending is high. This is contrary to the message of grace, as Christ died for all who had been sinners and have been justified by his death. All individuals have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, but Christ restored us through forgiveness and redemption. Forgiveness is an integral part of the pathway towards rehabilitation because it is more than a moral obligation; it is a scriptural mandate that demonstrates the character of God through redemption.²⁸ Through forgiveness, reconciliation is achieved, helping mend broken relationships. Jason Sexton notes that Forgiveness and justice are inseparable.²⁹

3. Methodology

The study employed qualitative sources that captured comprehensive information from different stakeholders in the prison and the experiences of inmates. The data collection tools were questionnaires and interviews. In-depth interview with the chaplains and two inmates who were recidivists was preferred to be able to comprehensively capture the experiences of their lives. This also helped observe the non-verbal communication and the emotive discussion.

²⁴ Latessa, Edward.J, and Christopher Lowenkamp. *What works in reducing Recidivism?* 2006, 521-535

²⁵ Johnson, Byron R. David Larson and Timothy Pitts. "*Religious Progra, Institutional Adjustment and Recidivism among former inmates in Prison Fellowship Programs*" 2002, 147-166,

²⁶ Jang,Sung Joon, *Religion aNnd rehabilitation as Moral Reform: A Quasi -Experimental Study of Faith Based Rehabilitation.* "American Journal of Criminal Justice, 2022, 521-541

²⁷ Ibid 43

²⁸ Ibid 76

²⁹ Sexton, Jason S. 2015. "Toward a prison theology of California's ecclesia incarcerate." *Theology* 118. 2: 83-9

Research Design

The research design preferred for the study was a case study, as it would adequately explore a multi-faceted, in-depth study of the inmates' experiences, behaviors in a confined prison setting, thus providing detailed qualitative data.³⁰ Additionally, it allows for a contextual analysis with the focus being the Kodiaga prison. This will thus enable a thorough study of typical social and cultural factors that contribute to an impactful Christian intervention rehabilitation model. Lastly, the design allowed the flexibility of choosing the most desirable data collection method, such as interviews or observation, enabling the researcher to align the objectives with the study and the prison setting.³¹

Target Population and Sampling

The study used purposive sampling for a sample size of 50 participants. This would enable an adequate study based on respondents who consistently participated in the program. This also allowed a thorough application of the array data collection method chosen for the study. The 50 participants included 40 inmates, 5 chaplains, and 5 custody officials.

Table 1: Target Population

Description	Number
Inmates	40
Custody officials	5
Chaplain	4
Ministry volunteer (church)	1
Total	50

Sampling Technique

The study employed purposive sampling, a selection based on respondents' consistent engagement in the programs. This enables uniform farmwork across the country, thus providing reliable, comparable data.

Data Processing and Analysis

Data from the research site was analyzed through transcription and summarized in tables, figures, graphs, and pie charts. Qualitative data obtained by observation, questionnaires, and interviews were transcribed and coded using the NVIVO software. Conversely, to identify consistent themes, diverse and similar experiences, the researcher used thematic analysis to classify and gather relevant data. Data triangulation helped to relate the findings to the effectiveness of the intervention in inmate rehabilitation. The researcher chose to know the

³⁰ Robert Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and methods*, Thousands Oak, CA: Sage Publishers, 2014

³¹ Thomas Gary, "A typology for the case study in social science following a review of Definition, Discourse and structure" 2018

various Christian Interventions (CI) in prison, the impact, perception of the impact on their transformation. The findings posited were as follows.

4. Findings

Christian Counselling

The analysis indicated that one of the interventions employed was Christian counselling. This had been conveniently applied as an intervention, as noted by many inmates. In his responses, R12, an inmate, noted that the most essential interventions that have greatly transformed his life were Christian counselling and therapy, prayers, and Bible study. This is because it greatly helped him seek forgiveness for his actions from God and the offended party. He recounts gradually gaining his hope, which he had relented, now that he has been given a second chance to make things right through redemption. This was echoed by R10, who noted Christian counseling has overly helped deal with shame and guilt, as he also disqualified himself for committing the offence he was charged with. He notes that a lonelier life within the walls of prison, with no relatives caring to visit, coupled with anxiety, had made life unbearable and sunk him into depression. However, consistent Christian counseling has exposed him to a world that cares, reignited hope in him, and a desire to be defined by the word of God. The Christian counseling was also noted to have helped an array of other respondents, like R1, who had suffered grave childhood trauma that predisposed him to crime. R7, a chaplain, confirms that many inmates preferred one-on-one counseling with the chaplains as they are more friendly, approachable, and trustworthy to confide in. It is an essentially transformative approach that focuses on the multi-faceted needs of inmates, ranging from spiritual, social, and psychosocial aspects of inmates. Additionally, this type of counseling relies on its sufficiency in Christ. Matthew 11:28. Christian counseling aligns the psychological approaches to the theological perspectives, thus providing a more spiritual transformation and an identity renewal. This helps to affect a holistic model of rehabilitation, focusing on the spiritual, mental, and emotional healing.³² Additionally, this results in moral transformation and ethical living that points one to a crime-free life of personal growth, peace in line with one's faith.³³

Preaching and Sermons

Several respondents shared how sermons and preaching have presented an opportunity for reflection through spiritual awakening and redefining their identity in Christ. R23 A chaplain notes that preaching grace, forgiveness, redemption, and hope helps the inmates realize they can overcome guilt, shame, and fear through Christ. This helps them overcome their past life while embracing new life as children of God. Other respondents said a religious gathering is fundamental to providing a sense of community through fellowship. Loneliness in prison is common, and there is a desire to belong that results from peer pressure. Sermons serve as a transformational tool, offering moral guidance and a pathway to emotional healing.³⁴ Christian

³² Nganyu Patrick, *Theological Foundation and Theoretical model for Christian Counseling*, 2025, 1-12

³³ American Institute of Health Care Professional. "Christian Counseling and integrating moral guidance" AIHCP Blog, January 15, 2025.

<https://aihcp.net/2025/01/15/christian-counseling-and-integrating-moral-guidance>.

³⁴ Ibid 124

fellowship through preaching in prison provides a safe space that supports, loves, and keeps each other accountable. The positive impact portrayed through emotional healing and behavior change results in reduced recidivism in prison. Preaching provides a pathway towards forgiveness, spiritual growth, redemption, and a successful reintegration.³⁵

Christian Programs

From the study, several Christian programs were observed and mentioned by different respondents. Several programs facilitated by different faith organizations, exemplified by the Prison Fellowship Kenya, reached out to the inmates to redefine their identity in Christ. R6, an inmate, the regular Christian fellowship has enabled him to keep good friends, relinquishing the bad company of peer pressure. R27 noted that the program has given him skills that would be beneficial post-jail when reintegrated into the community. Through the gospel of Mark, inmates get a reflective opportunity on their transformation. This program was mentioned as effective in rooting out many inmates. Others like Philemon place a great emphasis on reconciling the two parties. Evangelism Explosives was cited to have helped many have a spiritual awakening and learn to share their faith with others. The programs have a far-reaching impact of the transformative power of the CI³⁶.

Singing

The study revealed that Christian worship was integral to rehabilitating inmates in prison. Respondent R6 stated that “Christian outreaches, mentorship, praising, and worshipping” indicated that praising and worship were used in the rehabilitation of inmates in prison. Others who mentioned praise and worship noted that music was a coping mechanism, giving them comfort, hope, and spiritual solace, thus enhancing emotional well-being. This has helped them maintain a quiet spirit, surmounting anger issues, thus positive behavioral change that restrains them from reoffending. Additionally, the worship services bring others like-minded, thus fostering a sense of community and belonging amongst the inmates. Music is an essential tool in rehabilitating, besides being a therapeutic tool, it reminds the inmates of the love of God towards them.

Mentorship

Christian mentorship is a crucial transformative tool for effective rehabilitation of inmates, as it ensures a spiritual awakening amongst the inmates. This involves intensive guidance and support from faith-based workers and chaplains that translates to the reignition of identity and purpose.³⁷ From the study, we observed that respondent R3 stated that “mentorship, bible study, evangelism” supports the theme that mentorship was used in the rehabilitation of the inmates. The respondent recounted how a program run by Crossroads Prison paired him with a mentor who greatly supported and guided him both spiritually and psychosocially. This also greatly helped overcome loneliness and depressive thoughts as he had a trustworthy faith and even

³⁵ Byron JJohnson and David Larson, “*The inner change Freedom Initiative: A preliminary Evaluation of the Faith- Based Prison Program,*” Centre for Research on Religion and Urban Civil Society, University of Pennsylvania.

³⁶ Eddie Tokpa, *Reintegration of Ex convicts into the local Church: A case study of Philemon ministry at Nairobi Chapel*(MA thesis, Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology, 2005)

³⁷ Ibid 97

more a firm faith in Christ. The study also observed that the respondent R5 “Christian outreaches, mentorship, praising, and worshipping”. Through a faith ministry offered in prison, he has been mentored with additional vocational skills that will enable him to restart her enterprise after prison. Additionally, R26, a chaplain, confirms that organizations support psychosocially by training chaplains and other workers to help inmates’ emotional support.

Bible Meditation and Memorization

This foundational spiritual transformational tool contributes to emotional resilience and moral rehabilitation, resulting in reduced recidivism.³⁸ Bible meditation involves internalizing the word of God as exhorted in the book of Joshua, thus culminating in personal change. The scripture notes that the word of God is a double weapon, a sword of the spirit that silences the enemy, which could be portrayed in negative thoughts and emotions, discouragement and anxiety, Hebrew 4:12, Ephesians 6:12. A life committed to religious and continual bible reading and meditation, sermons and preaching is transformational. Inmates who, in most cases, feel overwhelmingly burdened emotionally, psychologically, and physically, learn to depend on the Lord. Additionally, Romans 10:17 notes that faith comes by hearing and hearing the word of God. R12 chaplain noted that most of the inmates find purpose and identity, and with zeal, thus discipling others in prison. A study by John Byron from a study of participants who studied the book of Psalms daily indicated a tremendous shift in renewed hope and psychological well-being.³⁹ Additionally, research by the journal Scientific Study of Religion concurs with the findings in their study of the impacts of religious bible reading on psychological distress. The finding posits that bible reading has a great mitigation on major adverse situations of life on one’s mental health, in this case, a life of imprisonment. This culture is therefore a coping mechanism to stress, anxiety, and helps inmates navigate irate situations that would prompt most to anger, thus reoffending.⁴⁰

5. Discussion of the Analysis of the pastoral circle in rehabilitating inmates at Kodiaga Prison

Experience

Kodiaga is a maximum-security prison that houses many inmates, and thus, all efforts are made to ensure the inmates are rehabilitated and seamlessly integrate into society without any hurdles. The inmates, like other citizens, get their mundane lives interrupted as a punitive measure for the crime they commit. Systematic poverty, injustices, lack of Education, and employment are causes for the majority of the incarcerated. The inmates experience suffering, guilt, fear, stress, and depression with aggression. The deplorable conditions in prison make the majority abhor life, relinquish the hope to live, and lack purpose and identity.

³⁸ Ibid 67

³⁹ Ibid 118

⁴⁰ Nancy La Vignae et al *Faith Based corrections and Reentry Programs: Advancing a conceptual framework for Research and Evaluation*.2009, 167

Social Analysis

The experiences the inmates go through, both as children and adults, have a great impact on their lives. Some children go through traumatic experiences as death and neglect of their parents, abuse that could be emotional, physical, or sexual, some face rejection, with many fall prey to peer pressure and crime. Several other inmates note that financial struggles and abject poverty force them to relinquish school, and without education and with ends to meet, they end up in prison. The traumatic experiences could result in psychological problems exemplified in anger, greed, which unconsciously or consciously result in a life of crime. Involvement in drugs exacerbates the predisposition in involved in crime, leading to the arrest of the inmates. Crime has been attributed sinful nature of man, Romans 3:9.

Theological Reflection

An incarcerated life, within the walls of prison, throws many into a life of hopelessness, shame, and guilt, and the gospel of Christ presents a gateway to freedom despite the four walls of prison. Theologically, Christ showed mercy to undeserving human beings, with grave sin and deserving death. Despite this, he bore it all for humanity, enduring the cross, shame, and humility to the end without relenting. Through the doctrine of redemption, Christ took the sinner's place as a substitutionary offering and justified humanity, redeeming them from the debt of sin. All individuals owe it to others to forgive them when they err and cause pain and grief. When Christians fail to extend mercy, compassion, and embrace them with love, we judge and we become the first to throw stones, as in the case of the woman caught in Adultery. How would Christ have treated some vulnerable individuals? He has mercy and cares about each individual, well-illustrated by leaving ninety-nine for the lost one. As faithful stewards, believers should endeavour to engage in the ministry of restoration through involvement in prison ministry, Ephesians 1:27, Romans 3:24. The theology of Christology and ecclesiology points to God's nature of restoring humanity and the importance of the church, the body of Christ, to be involved in the mission.

Pastoral Action

The church has a mandate to be engaged in the ministry of reconciliation and restoration. This involves applicational of right theological principles as forgiveness, justification, and redemption. Additionally, it should advocate for restorative means to justice rather than the retributive because rehabilitation should go beyond mere moral change to a holistic change. There should be an examination of the doctrine of grace and sin in the rehabilitative model employed by the prison. Lastly, it should lobby for the dignification of inmates because they are not less than human.

6. Conclusion

The prison ministry, through the chaplaincy, has endeavored to ensure a spiritual transformation amongst inmates. Such transformation leads to a reignition of lost hope, identity, purpose, and a focus on reconciliation and forgiveness, resulting in restoration. The saving grace through Christ's redemptive work offers inmates a second chance, liberating them and restoring their lives. Individuals who consistently engage in the different CI endeavors live a crime-free life. This, therefore, means the CI has been impactful, helping inmates live a regenerated life in Christ with room for repentance when recidivism happens.

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