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Implications of Congestion on Inmates in Nasarawa State Correctional Centres, Nigeria

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Abstract
Congestion is a common problem that affects many countries correctional facilities. This has implications on the health and well being of Inmates and may also adversely affect public health. It is on this note that this study set out to assess the implications of congestion on inmates in Lafia correctional centre. The study population was 615 inmates and Yamane formula was applied to arrive at 86 sample size for both males and females inmates. Data were collected using primary and secondary sources such as questionnaires, observations and internet. Six structured questionnaire (6) was administered to staff of correctional facility and 86 was administered to the inmates using propulsive and simple random sampling technique respectively. The copies of the questionnaires were completed and analyzed using simple statistical method and multiple regression analysis was used to test hypothesis that relate to congestion and implications on inmates' health". The finding revealed that the available facilities are overstretched in Lafia correctional centre. The result of hypothesis testing revealed that there is significant relationship between correctional facility congestion and inmates' health implications. The study recommends that government should upgrade existing buildings and improvement of correctional facilities to meet the International Minimum Standards and build more facilities to improve inmates' health and welfare. In conclusion, government expressed only desire to transform correctional centres without political will and commitment; if necessary approaches are taken correctional centres will remain congested and make the condition of inmates' worst rather than rehabilitation.

Keywords: *Correctional facilities, Physical condition; staff, Inmates, Prison.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid increase in urban population has also increase the rate of crime committed in most towns and cities. This has further posed a major challenge to existing capacity of correctional facilities due to increase number of inmates' population in correctional facilities. The steady increases in prison populations in both developed and less developed countries have not been matched by

additional built capacity and other resources thereby leads to congestion and unhealthy environments, with cramped living spaces and reduced access to the basic minimum requirements for human health (Heard, 2019). In addition, more crimes are committed in correctional facilities instead of serving as correctional centres. Kurland (2021) stated that the correctional facilities congestion has resultant effect in increased rate of crimes in the facility (Kurland, 2021).
A report on the situation of the Philippine Penitentiaries revealed that lack appropriate recreational spaces, sanitation, particularly for toilet/water supply, adequate beds/bedding/mosquito nets, in-sufficient medical facilities, and poorly equipped facilities are also present in most of the prisons (De Guzman *et al*., 2020). These problems are real in prison in the provinces due to inadequate facilities (Jones & Narag, 2021 cited in Alipoyo, 2022). Franklin and Pratt (Juan, 2019) examined the relationship between prison overcrowding and inmate misconduct and discovered that correctional facility congestion has a significant impact on inmates' behavior. The authors further noted that imprisonment is a stressful experience and stress levels increase when inmates feel clustered; which can lead to violent behavior. Garcia-Guerrero & Marco (2021) reported that this issue can be resolved either by sentencing the inmates for a short-time period or by building more prisons. Congestion in correctional facility can also affect the physical health of an inmate. Cook (2015) reported that despite efforts made by its administrators, the jails still faces severe congestions. According to El-Nasr *et al.* (2020) many countries design the prison facility on the basis that it is a place for punishment and therefore this facility is designed not according to any humanitarian considerations. The authors studied the design of the building of one of the international prisons designed according to the human rights standards mentioned in the international agreements, to benefit from it in deriving an ideal design vision for the prison building.

The condition of correctional facilities in many African countries in general and Nigeria in particular, are afflicted by severe inadequacies including high congestion, poor physical, health and sanitary conditions, inadequate recreational, vocational and rehabilitation programmes(Joseph, 2021). The numeral of inmates increasing daily without an equivalent increase in funding and upgrading of the physical structures and facilities has been serious problems.Review of literature revealed that ideal correctional facility require having adequate space to house inmates, but space depends on the size of facility compared with the maximum capacity and the total number of inmates daily (Juan *et al.*, 2019). According to the report of Bureau of Justice Statistics (2021), it is essential that correctional facilities should operate below capacity to prevent congestion. But, as long as the capacity of correctional facilities remains static, increase in prison population would continue to be a threat to the prisons administration, the State and the country as a whole (Joseph *et al.*, 2021).

Many studies have been conducted to understand the problems of correctional facilities congestion in developed countries with varies magnitude of anti-social and health problems in correctional facilities which may not be the same with that of Africa or Nigeria because of difference on its socio-cultural setting (Alaba, 2020; Nweze *et al.*, 2021). Correctional facilities congestion is one variable that has been constant in many studies, and the issue should be a cause of significant concern for government officials. Nweke *et al.* (2021) observed that problems relating to correctional facility congestion in Africa have long been studied but there has been a dearth of specific or accurate data on the capacity of each correctional facility, following the congestion,

which largely varies from one region to another and from one country to another within a region in Africa. Several studies (Ajah, 2017; MacDonald, 2018; Juan *et al*., 2019; Joseph *et al*., 2021; Obadiah, 2024) have been conducted on this, but available literature shows that none has been done on the variables the researcher is studying in Nasarawa State correctional facilities. Study by (Ajayi *et al*., 2019) focused on correctional facilities conditions in the South-West of Nigeria. The study used variables such as fabric and structure (facilities), service, aesthetic and environment to assess correctional facilities and the study found out that condition of correctional facilities was not at their desire state.

Lafia correctional facility has limited capacity and poorly planned, it creates severe health issues and other accidental cases within the prison. Hence, instead of correcting the behavior of inmates, but at times made them worst as they came in and other things. The issue of the implications of congestion on inmates in correctional facilities in North Central of Nigeria including Nasarawa State has not received the desired attention because they are viewed as local holding facilities. The efforts of Nasarawa State and Federal Government to address the congestion observed and improving prison infrastructure across the State has not yielded the desired results. The correctional facilities still remain congested with poor condition of facilities that may have physical and mental implications on the inmates.

Based on the conditions of congestion, it is not clear the kind of implications and availability of facilities in the correctional centre. There is need to study correctional facility congestion in order to unravel the implications on inmates in Nigeria and redesigning of the facility to meet international standards. Understanding why correctional facilities are congested is expected to suggest possible reasons for congestion of correctional facilities in Nasarawa State and Nigeria. This understanding could provide solutions to the government officials that have faced several setbacks for several years. Therefore, this study seeks to assess implications of congestion on inmates with particular reference to Lafia correctional centre.

The specific objectives of the paper are to:

i. Assess the availability and conditions of existing facilities in Lafia correctional facility.
ii. Determine the implications of congestion on inmates in Lafia correctional facility

The study has tested the research hypothesis formulated as follows:

Null hypothesisH_0: There is no significant relationship between correctional facility congestion and implications on inmates' health.

Alternative hypothesisH_1**:** There is significant relationship between correctional facility congestion and implications on inmates' health.

2.0 Research methodology

This chapter discusses the study area and the details of the techniques employed in collecting the data for the research as well as the tool used to analyze the data. It also describes the settings used in the study as well as the survey participants.

2.1 The study context

This study shall cover Lafia correctional facility congestion only which can be generalized for all the remaining centres. It was also limited to ascertaining the health implications on inmates in the correctional facility. The choice of the study area is because Lafia Correctional facility is located at the state capital as well as it has the highest number of inmates in all the correctional centres in Nasarawa State.

2.2 Study location

The study is located along Doma Road, 2km from central roundabout, Lafia town, Nasarawa State. Nasarawa State is located at the North-central geopolitical zone of Nigeria, between latitudes 8˚18' N to 8˚ 51'N and longitudes 7˚ 18'E to 7˚40' E. It covers a total land mass of 28,735km², bounded by Kaduna State to the north, Abuja and Kogi States to the west, Benue State to the south, Plateau and Taraba State to the east (Lafia Development Plan, 2012).

The state was created on the 1st October 1996 with its headquarters in Lafia LGA, the population of the State is 1,983,910 (2006 Census) projected at 3.2 % annual growth rate to 2016 to give the total number of 2,523,400 (NPC, 2006). Lafia town is found at the south-western part of State within latitudes 8°25' N and 8°35'N and longitudes 8°28'E and 8°34'E. It is the capital and largest city of Nasarawa State, with a population of 330,712 inhabitants as of the 2006 census (NPC, 2016). Lafia Correctional Centre, Nasarawa State was established in 1927 by the Native Authority (Ebuga*et al*., 2021).

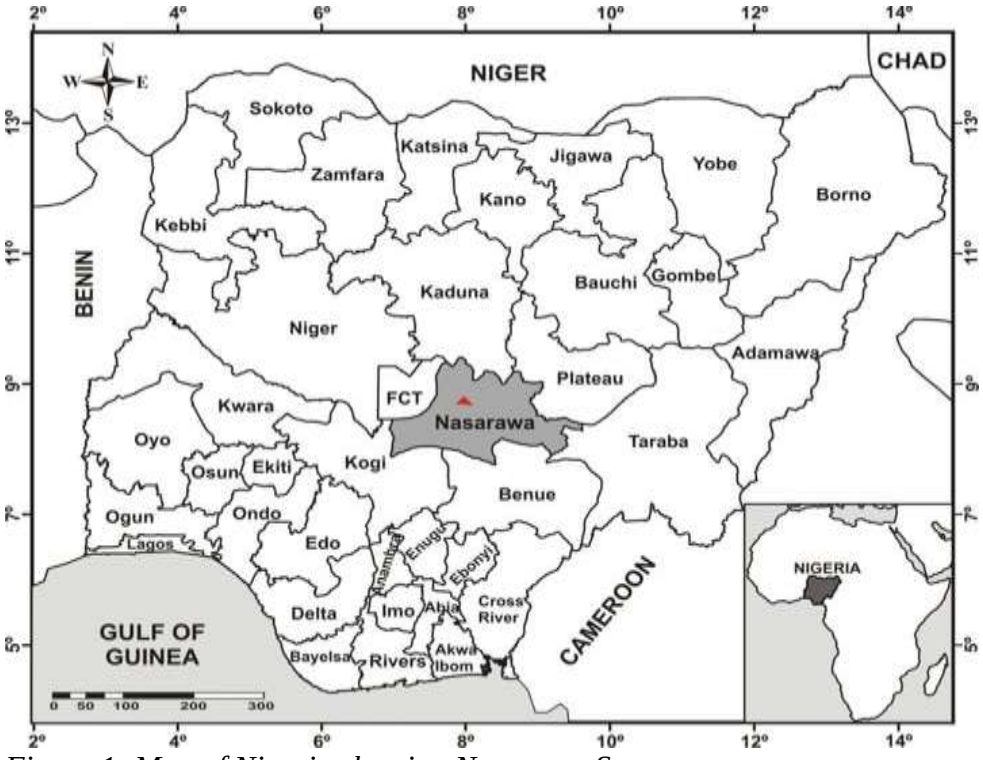

Figure 1: Map of Nigeria showing Nasarawa State
Source: Nasarawa State Ministry of Lands and Urban Development, 2023

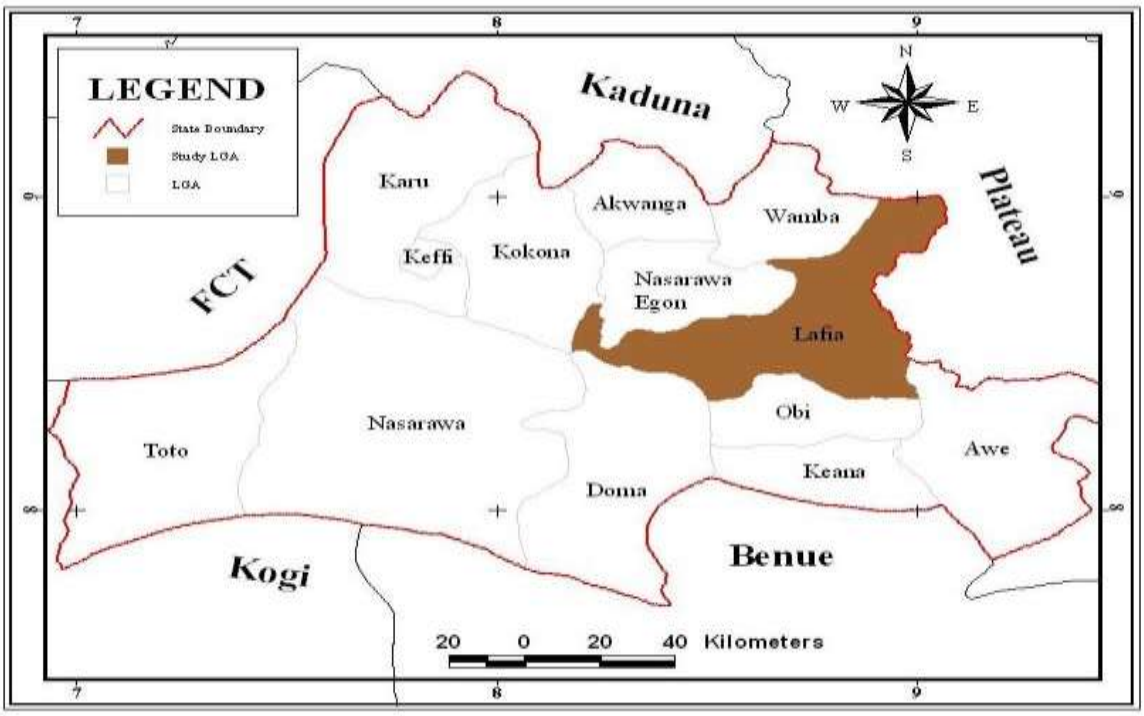

Figure 2: Map of Nasarawa State showing Lafia local government areas
Source: Nasarawa State Ministry of Lands and Urban Development, 2023

2.3 Lafia Prison Yard

The name of the correctional centre is called Federal Prison (Medium Security), Lafia.The Correctional centre has six (6) wards, namely; A – ward with 3 cells, B – ward with 2 cells, C – ward with 4 cells, D – ward with 1 cell, E – ward with 3 cells and F – ward storey building with 6 cells. It has an official capacity of 412 inmates but currently lock-up inmates of 615.

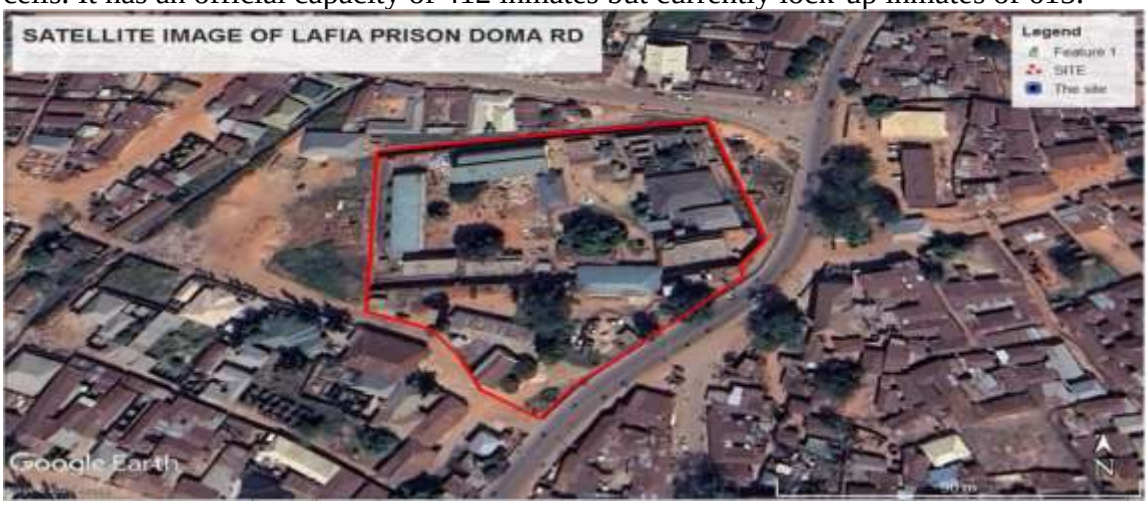

Figure 3: Google image of Lafia Prison
Source: Google Earth Image, (Accessed 28/10/2024)

2.4 Population Sample and Size of the Study

Lafia Correctional facility has 615 inmates and a total of 36 personnel of Nigerian Prisons Service (NPS) are serving in the correctional facility. The study population focused on the inmates comprise of males and females of different age groups. Yamane (1965) formula was applied at 95% confidence level and level of maximum variability (P = 0.05) to derive the sample size. The calculated sample size of this research was considered as 86 inmates for both males and females inmates. The sample size was 25% of the 36 prison personnel which constitutes 9 staff of the correctional facility.

The prison staff were purposively selected for the purpose of this study and eighty six (86) questionnaires were distributed among the Inmates using simple random; meaning every member of the population had an equal chance of being selected to the sample. The list of all the male inmates was obtained from the record units and use as the sampling frame. The actual respondents were be selected by computer generated numbers. Of the 11 females in custody, 6 consented to the study and were all selected purposively.

2.5 Method of Data collection

Methods of data collection were through primary and secondary sources. The primary data collection methods were from the administration of questionnaires, observations and interviews. Each sampled inmates were given a structured questionnaire with the help of Research Assistant to answer the questions. The questionnaires were also administered to correctional facility staff to give information on the implications of correctional facility congestion on inmates. Observations were also taken to ascertain the existing facilities in the prison. The secondary data collections were prison records, satellite images from NAGIS, journals and internet sources.

2.6 Method of Data Analysis

The quantitative data collected were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software application. The analysis used statistical tables showing frequency distribution and percentages of variables investigated and hypothesis was tested using multiple regression analysis. The variable predicted was the dependent variable (also called outcome variable). The variables used to predict the value of the dependent variable were the independent variables (also called predictor or explanatory variables). The facilities were analysed using the U.N. MSRs Required Conditions of a Prison Facility.

3. Discussion of Results and Findings

Based on the survey conducted in Lafia correctional centre, in this study various multiple responses on availability of facilities in correctional centre were presented in table below.

Table 1: Availability of facilities in Lafia Prison

Availability of facilities	Responses		Percent of Cases
	N	Percent	
Sanitary facilities	69	9.9%	80.2%
Portable water	84	12.0%	97.7%
Health facilities	84	12.0%	97.7%
Waste disposal bins	58	8.3%	67.4%
Toilets facilities	75	10.7%	87.2%
Bathroom facilities	84	12.0%	97.7%
Cafeteria	2	0.3%	2.3%
Recreational area	71	10.2%	82.6%
Window	86	12.3%	100.0%
Doors	86	12.3%	100.0%
Total	**699**	**100.0%**	**812.8%**

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.
Source: Field survey, 2024

Table 2: Number of beds per cell

Range	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than 21	28	32.6	32.6	32.6
21-40	35	40.7	40.7	73.3
41-60	15	17.4	17.4	90.7
60 and above	8	9.3	9.3	100.0
Total	**86**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, 2024

Table 3: Do you have bed space?

Bed space	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	32	37.2	37.2	37.2
No	54	62.8	62.8	100.0
Total	**86**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, 2024

Table 4: How do you sleep?

Sleeping space	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Share bed	50	91.2	91.2	91.2
On the floor	2	8.8	8.8	100.0
Total	**86**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, 2024

Table 5: Number of toilet per cell

Toilet	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	27	31.4	31.4	31.4
2	59	68.6	68.6	100.0
Total	**86**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, 2024

Table 6: Number of bathroom per cell

Bathroom	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	31	36.0	36.0	36.0
2	53	61.6	61.6	97.7
4	2	2.3	2.3	100.0
Total	**86**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, 2024

The result of the multiple responses in Table 1 revealed the availability of facilities in Lafia correctional centre with two sets 86 responses constituting 12.3% of inmates says they have both windows and doors, three sets of 84 responses constituting 12.0% of inmates says they have portable water, health facilities and bathroom facilities. This result was followed with 75 of responses constituting 10.7% of inmates says they have toilets facilities, 71 of responses constituting 10.2% says they have recreational area, 69 of responses constituting 9.9% of inmates says they have sanitary facilities and 58 of responses constituting 8.3% says they have waste disposal bins while only 2 of the inmates constituting 0.3% says they have cafeteria. The finding shows that Lafia correctional centre has portable water supply, health facilities, bathrooms/toilets, recreational area, sanitary facilities and waste disposal bins.

The result in Table 2 revealed the number of beds in a cell with 32.6% of inmates responded that they have less than 15 beds in their cell, 40.7% of respondents says they have 15-20 beds and 17.4% of the inmates says they have 26-30 beds while 9.3% responses says they have 30 and above in their cells. The implication is that majority of respondents from 15-20 in a cell is more than 25 inmates which shows beds were inadequate. The result in Table 3 revealed the number of inmates who has beds space with 37.2% of respondents says yes and 62.8% of the inmates say no. This finding means that majority does not have beds space and may have other alternatives to sleep. The result in Table 4 further revealed from the inmates that respondent they have no beds space with 91.2% of respondents shared bed and 8.8% of inmates sleep on the floor. The implication of sharing bed is the likely spread of any contagious disease. The result in Table 5 revealed the number of toilets in a cell with 31.4% of respondents says they have 1 toilet in their cell and 68.6% of inmates say they have 2 toilets. The implication of this result shows that the toilets are inadequate for inmates of more than 20 in a cell. The result in Table 6 revealed the number of bathroom in a cell with 36.0% of respondents says they have 1 bathroom in their cell, 61.6% of inmates say they have 2 bathrooms and 2.3% says they have 4 bathrooms. The implication of this result shows that the bathrooms are inadequate for inmates of more than 20 in a cell.

3.2 Availability of facilities in Lafia correctional centre

Based on the survey conducted in Lafia correctional centre, in this study various multiple responses on availability of facilities in correctional facility were presented below.

Table 7: Availability of facilities in Lafia correctional centre

Availability of facilities	Responses		Percent of Cases
	N	Percent	
Sanitary facilities	69	9.9%	80.2%
Portable water	84	12.0%	97.7%
Health facilities	84	12.0%	97.7%
Waste disposal bins	58	8.3%	67.4%
Toilets facilities	75	10.7%	87.2%
Bathroom facilities	84	12.0%	97.7%
Cafeteria	2	0.3%	2.3%
Recreational area	71	10.2%	82.6%
Window	86	12.3%	100.0%
Doors	86	12.3%	100.0%
Total	**699**	**100.0%**	**812.8%**

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Source: Field survey, 2024

The result of the multiple responses in Table 7 revealed the availability of facilities in Lafia correctional centre with two sets 86 responses constituting 12.3% of inmates says they have both windows and doors, three sets of 84 responses constituting 12.0% of inmates says they have portable water, health facilities and bathroom facilities. This result was followed with 75 of responses constituting 10.7% of inmates says they have toilets facilities, 71 of responses constituting 10.2% says they have recreational area, 69 of responses constituting 9.9% of inmates says they have sanitary facilities and 58 of responses constituting 8.3% says they have waste disposal bins while only 2 of the inmates constituting 0.3% says they have cafeteria. The finding shows that Lafia correctional centre has portable water supply, health facilities, bathrooms/toilets, recreational area, sanitary facilities and waste disposal bins.

Table 8: Availability of facilities in Lafia Prison based on standard requirement

S/N	Facilities	Available	Not Available
1	Single & shared cells	√	
2	Dormitories	√	
3	Mother baby units		√
4	Visits		√
5	Dayroom		√
6	Yard	√	
7	Classrooms		√
8	Library		√
9	Workshops		√
10	Health facilities	√	
11	Kitchen areas	√	
12	Mess areas	√	
13	Physical Recreation		√
14	Other facilities		√
15	Main gate	√	
16	Security dept.	√	
17	Staff facilities (Dining)		√
18	Electronic Security (CCTV, Scanning detector)		√
19	Central stores	√	
20	Administration	√	

Source: Author's Work (2024)

The result in Table 8 revealed that Lafia correctional centre has 10 available facilities with the following major limitations such as very limited shared indoor living areas; no outdoor and indoor, passive recreation space in the accommodation divisions; very limited visits facilities; limited open space within the perimeter; physical barriers and manually operated gates requiring staff intensive movement control; dining rooms separate from the accommodation units; facilities for staff are very limited; the design of the accommodation units restricts interaction of staff and inmate; and the building, which are about forty years old, have been poorly maintained and are significantly deteriorated.

3.3 Assessment of the Conditions of Existing facilities in Lafia Correctional Centre

Below is a summary of international required conditions of a correctional facility as against conditions found in the study, this international standard is deduced from an overview of the United Nations Minimum Standard Rules, while details from the Lafia Correctional centre conditions were deduced from discussions with key informants in the prison facility.

Table 9: U.N. MSRs Required Conditions of a Prison Facility with Existing Conditions of Lafia Correctional Centre

S/N	U.N. MSRs Required Conditions of a Prison Facility	Existing Conditions of Lafia Correctional Centre
1	**Separation of Categories:**	
	Inmates should be kept in different parts of the prison taking account of sex, age, criminal records, psychological fitness, and so on.	In Lafia Correctional facility; Inmates are only separated according to sex, which is; male and female. Other bases of separation are not considered. Inmates that are psychologically unfit are together with other Inmates without any separation.
2	**Accommodation:**	
	i. In individual cells or rooms, the required space available per Inmate should not be less than 5.4sq.m, and is not desirable to have two persons or more in a cell or room.	The U.N required space of 5.4sqm is met for the individual cells or rooms and cell has more two persons.
	ii. In the case of shared or dormitory accommodation, prisoners should be suitably selected to associate together, with regular supervision by night, with an average of about 3.4sq.m per prisoner.	The shared or dormitory accommodation is used for the remaining Inmates, and is about 0.5sq.m per person, which is below the international standard of 3.4sq.m per person.
	iii Cells should have adequate light, ventilation, heating (if applicable) and weather protection.	There is very little light and ventilation in Lafia Correctional facility from data collected from the questionnaires as well as, observation
	iv Adequate toilet facilities, bathing and shower installations shall be provided to every prisoner. Bath/Shower at a temperature suitable to the climate as frequently as necessary for general hygiene, according to season and geographical region, but at least once a week in a temperate climate,	Toilet facilities are not adequate, especially the male prisoners use the bucket system to excrete and throw into the toilet, and this has led to poor sanitation in the prison facility. The toilet facilities in the female section are used but have issues like bad flushing system and inadequate water supply.
	v. Prison should include appropriate kitchen facilities and equipment	Lafia Correctional facility does not have appropriate kitchen facilities and equipment, for example; cooking is done with firewood, and other kitchen equipment are improvised.

vi	Adequate recreation space installations and equipment should be made available.	There is no for recreation facility or space for such activity. The Inmates are only allowed to move around the prison yard during the day, some trading for the prison wards, which was considered as a form of recreation.
vi	Sufficient number of furnished offices for prison staff with appropriate lighting and ventilation should be made available.	From data collated and observation done by the researcher, the furniture for prison staff are grossly insufficient. While carrying out the research during visits to their offices, some of the offices could not even provide seat for the researcher, in the prison yard.
3	**Prison Infrastructures:**	
	Prison shall meet sanitation, cleanliness, and suitably for detention and imprisonment.	The yard is not properly sanitised. Most of the buildings are due for maintenance and renovation; it is not clean or suitable. This is partly because; Inmates with psychological problems are meant to use the same facilities with the other Inmates.

Source: Author's Work, (2024) and United Nations, (1977)

3.5 Implications of congestion on inmates in Lafia correctional facility

Based on the survey conducted in Lafia correctional facility, in this study various multiple responses of inmates on health implications of congestion in correctional facility were presented in tables below.

Table 10: Health Implications of correctional facility congestion

Implications	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly disagree	2	2.3	2.3	2.3
Disagree	3	3.5	3.5	5.8
Undecided	15	17.4	17.4	23.3
Agree	24	27.9	27.9	51.2
Strongly agree	42	48.8	48.8	100.0
Total	**86**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, 2024

Table 11: Inmates' health implications

Inmates health implications	Responses		Percent of Cases
	N	Percent	
Spread of contagious disease	82	34.2%	95.3%
Excessive heat	76	31.7%	88.4%
Discomfort	80	33.3%	93.0%
Any other	2	0.8%	2.3%

Total	**240**	**100.0%**	**279.1%**

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Source: Field survey, 2024

Table 10 presents the respondents opinion on the health implications of correctional facility congestion in Lafia correctional centre. The findings revealed that 2.3% of the respondents strongly disagree that correctional facility congestion has implications on inmates health, 3.5% of respondent disagree while 17.4 were undecided. In the same vein, 27.4% of the respondents agree that correctional facility has implications on inmates' health and 48.8% of inmates strongly agree that correctional facility congestion has health implication. The result of the multiple responses in Table 11 revealed the inmates' health implication of correctional facilities congestion with 82 responses constituting 34.2% of inmates says there were spread on contagious disease. This is followed with 80 responses constituting 33.3% of inmates says they feel discomfort and 79 of the responses constituting 31.7% of inmates says there were excessive heat while 2 of the responses constituting 0.8% inmates have one health problems or the other. The implication of this result shows that correctional facilities congestion has inmates' health implications in Lafia correctional facility.

3.6 Hypothesis testing

Table 12: Statistical significances of the model

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	**.333[a]**	**.539**	**.386**	**.99353**	**.386**	**4.054**	**9**	**76**	**.031**

Table 13: ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	9.364	9	1.040	4.054	.031[b]
	Residual	75.020	76	.987		
	Total	**84.384**	**85**			

a. Dependent Variable: Health implication of correctional facility congestion

b. Predictors: (Constant), Waste disposal bins, Number of bathroom per cell, Health facilities, Portable water, Number of Inmate share bed, Number of bed per cell, Number of Inmate per cell, Sanitary facilities, Number of toilet per cell

Table 14: Table of p-values for determinants from SPSS ANOVA Tables

Construct	R Square	F	Sig.(p-value)	df	Research Hypothesis
Correctional facilities	.539	21.063	0.031[b]	6	Accepted

Source: Author's Analysis

The Table 12 presents the result of hypothesis testing that there is significant relationship between correctional facilities congestion and inmates' health implications. The Hypotheses H_1 and H_0

have been tested by establishing the p-values for correctional facilities congestion. Small p-values suggest that the coefficient is important to the correctional facility. A coefficient with a p-value of 0.01 is statistically significant at 99% confidence level; the associated variable is an effective predictor. In social research the probability or significance level is set at less or equal to 0.05. For this research, the p-value of 0.05 has been used, which indicates significance at 95% confidence level. From the p-values extracted from the ANOVA tables for the correctional facility, it has been determined whether the hypotheses should be accepted or rejected. P-values of less than 0.05 mean that the research hypothesis (H_1) is accepted and null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. The table 14 revealed that the p-value for correctional facility related to the congestion is 0.031 which is less than 0.05. The research therefore rejected the null hypothesis that states that there is no significant relationship between correctional facility congestion and inmates' health implications in Lafia prison and accepted the alternative research hypothesis.

3.7 Discussion

According to the research questions in the study, the research has revealed that Lafia correctional facility is congested. This study corroborates with study of Alaba (2020); Joseph *et al.* (2021); Nweke *et al*. (2021) that most correctional facilities in developing countries including were congested which need to be adequately taken care of. This study has revealed an evidence of overcrowding which is similar to reports from studies conducted in other parts of Nigeria. For instance, overcrowding was reported in most cells with an average sleeping area of 9.5 sq feet in a study carried out in Ille-Ife Osun State Nigeria. Apart from direct disease condition which may affect the inmates secondary to overcrowding, the physical comfort of sleeping in a cell and on bed among the study population was denied. The study indicated that more inmates shared bed space with fall short of international standard. An overview of the condition of a prison facility as recommended by International Standard stated by Bille and Ebiwari (2018) that individual cells or rooms required space available per inmates that is not be less than 5.4sq.m, and it is not desirable to have two persons or more in a cell or room.

The study also revealed that there are health implications on inmates in congested correctional facility which include contagious or communicable disease, inmates discomfort, excessive heat and other related diseases. This result finding agreed with the studies conducted by Buan (2018) and Juan *et al.* (2019) that correctional facility congestion is often with health challenge on the inmates. Juan *et al*. (2019) reported that consequence of congestion in correctional facilities, inmates habitually share beds or sleep on the ground. Sometimes, inmates sleep and wake up in pains because of these unbearable conditions where they sleep. The finding is similar with that reported in a study carried out by Oninla *et al.* (2012) where skin infections and infestations were reported to be very high among inmates who could probably be due to poor personal hygiene.

The study finding indicated that there are available facilities such as portable water supply, health facilities, and place of worships, bathrooms/toilets, sanitary facilities and waste disposal bins but are inadequate and overstretched. It was revealed that the buildings are poorly maintained and facilities such as recreational, educational, workshops, staff dinning and electronic security system are lacking as well as poor lighting and ventilation. This study agreed with the by Alaba (2020) that problem of congestion in correctional facilities is compounded by overstretched facilities. Ajayi *et al*. (2019) and Alipoyo (2022) observed that most correctional facilities lack adequate

facilities (lack of potable water, inadequate and unwholesome sewage facilities, insufficiency of bed spaces, and appalling state of sanitation) to carter for high population of inmates which has implications on inmates' health.

Finally, the research hypothesis testing revealed that there is significant relationship between correctional facility congestion and inmates' health implications in Lafia correctional facility. The finding also confirmed that there are health implications on inmates' in congested correctional facility which include communicable disease, inmates discomfort, excessive heat and other related diseases.

4. Conclusion

This study has provided theoretical as well as empirical perspectives on the implications of congestion on inmates in correctional facility. It is obvious that the prison system is plagued with various challenges affecting its correctional functions. From the findings of this study, so many issues have risen for thought and action in our national drive towards creating the needed framework within the context of global best practices for the reform of our correctional facilities. The case of correctional facilities in Lafia correctional centre demonstrates that congestion is a key factor that continues to have wide-ranging implications on inmates and their living environment. Although the government has announced plans to increase the number of correctional staff and improve safety, these plans are doomed to fail if they do not also deal with congestion by reducing the number of people sent to correctional facilities. For future research endeavor of the same kind to include other variables such as nature of congestion, crime committed and number of years in prison.

5. Recommendations

Based on the research findings from the study of correctional facilities and inmates' health implications, the following recommendations were made to improve the welfare of inmates in Lafia correctional centre:

i. Government should put mechanism in place to ensure quick and speedy trial of inmates awaiting trial.

ii. There should be implementation of non-custodial sentences in a form of community service sentences, strengthening of the criminal justice system for speedy trail of suspects and constitution of special court for quick dispensation of justice for inmates.

iii. Government should set up a special team of officials, who will be in charge of ensuring that the number of inmates accommodated in Lafia correctional centre does not exceed the maximum capacity that the correctional facility can take.

iv. Government and non-governmental organizationsshould make provision for the construction of new more correctional facilities to tackle the problem of congestion in Lafia correctional centre.

v. Government should upgrade existing buildings and improvement of correctional facilities to meet the International Minimum Standards.

vi. Thus, it is high time for the government and the legislative body of Nigeria government to improve the quality of correctional facilities, the following may be considered: the

installation of high technology, construction standard correctional facilities, and quick rehabilitation of old, outdated, or destroyed jails, allocation of budget or appropriations to enable the employment of more staff/personnel, and limiting the number of inmates in a prison cell.

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