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ABSTRACT

Despite the fact that correctional programmes are aimed at equipping offenders with survival life skills to enable them to lead free life upon release, the majority of convicted offenders are reoffenders leading to the questioning of efficacy of correctional programmes. This has prompted the researcher to carry out a research to investigate the effectiveness of correctional programmes. The study was carried out at Chikurubi Farm Prison covering the period January 2010 to December 2013. Firstly the study aimed to identify the correctional programmes practiced at the institution, secondly to determine factors that affect the effectiveness of programmes, thirdly to investigate the factors that cause reoffending after having programmes and finally to establish mitigation on reoffending. The descriptive survey method was used to analyse data gathered through questionnaires, interviews and observations for the topic under study. The target population was Chikurubi Farm Prison, a male prison in Harare Province which had 96 reoffenders who participated in programmes at the time of study. Out of the total population of 96 people a representative sample of 20 reoffenders and 4 released inmates was selected to make a sample of 24 people. The researcher used systematic purposive sampling and snowballing in selecting the research participants who were then stratified for them to become homogeneous. Primary data was collected using questionnaires and interviews, where participants were asked to respond to both closed and open ended questions and secondary data was obtained from prison documents and official correspondences. The sampled data was analysed and presented using the Microsoft Excel Package in the form of pie charts, bar graphs, tables and narrative. The study established that correctional programmes have poor or no theoretical basis and are poorly implemented. Correctional programmes also fail because they take place in a living environment which is hostile, filled with negative and anti-social criminogenic behaviours and attitudes. The study also reveals that getting a job after imprisonment is impossible and correctional programmes do not continue after imprisonment which found it difficult for inmates to adjust to life after prison. The study therefore recommends that Zimbabwe Prisons And Correctional Services should collaborate and partners with all relevant stakeholders such as employment agencies and Government to allocate more funds for the ministry to improve quality of services.