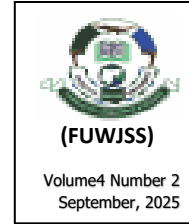


**SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS
OF FEMALE INMATES IN KIRIKIRI
CORRECTIONAL CENTRE, LAGOS, NIGERIA**



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Abstract

The study provides a description of the profiles of female inmates in Kirikiri Correctional Center Lagos, Nigeria. Despite the growing concern about the increasing number of females inmates in Kirikiri Correctional Center, there is a dearth of information on the socio-demographic characteristics of female inmates, particularly in Kirikiri Correctional Center, Lagos. Having knowledge of the features of these female inmates is important for developing effective rehabilitation programmes that address their specific needs and promote successful reintegration. The study used both primary and secondary data. The population of the study comprises both female inmates available and the staff of the facility. Quantitative data were collected via questionnaires while qualitative data were collected through in-depth interviews and observations. Findings show that the female inmates in Kirikiri Correctional Center Lagos were those on awaiting trial who have never been to prison before. The inmates were mostly within the age range of 23-27 years. All the inmates were Nigerians and majority of them were Christians. The highest levels of educational attainment of the female inmates were secondary and primary education. Most of them attended public schools and were single without being married. Few of the inmates with children have 1-2 children. Most of them came from large families and were primarily raised by both parents but most of their parents were separated or dead.

Keywords: Kirikiri, female inmates, correctional centre, crime, public schools

Introduction

The incarceration of women is an issue of growing global concern, marked by an alarming increase in the number of female inmates over recent years. Historically, correctional facilities have been designed predominantly for male inmates, often neglecting the distinct needs and vulnerabilities of women (UNODC, 2018). This systemic oversight has resulted in significant disparities in the treatment and living conditions of female inmates. In Nigeria, this challenge is particularly evident in correctional facilities such as Kirikiri Correctional Centre in Lagos, one of the most prominent prisons in the country. Understanding the profile and living conditions of female inmates within such institutions is essential to addressing gender-specific challenges and ensuring adherence to human rights standards.

The profile of female inmates refers to their demographic, social, and economic characteristics, including age, marital status, educational attainment, and socioeconomic background. It also includes factors such as the types of offenses committed, the duration of incarceration, and previous criminal records. On the other hand, living conditions encompass the physical, psychological, and social environments in which inmates reside. These include access to basic necessities such as food, water, clothing, and medical care, as well as the quality of housing, sanitation, vocational training, and rehabilitation programs.

Globally, the number of incarcerated women has risen dramatically. The World Prison Population List (2024) estimated that over 10.35 million people are held in penal institutions worldwide, either as pre-trial detainees or as convicted offenders. According to Walmsley (2022), the female prison population has increased by 50% since 2000, compared to an 18% rise in the male prison population. In 2021, approximately 740,000 women and girls were incarcerated globally. The World Prison Brief (2022) corroborates these figures, reporting that over 741,000 women were held in correctional facilities worldwide. This surge is attributed to several factors, including stricter drug policies, economic marginalization, and inadequate gender-sensitive approaches to justice. Female inmates face unique challenges, including the stigma of incarceration, pregnancy, childcare responsibilities, and a heightened risk of physical and psychological abuse. These issues are compounded by systemic failures in correctional systems, which often fail to address the specific needs of women. For instance, many correctional institutions are ill-equipped to handle the healthcare needs of pregnant women, mothers with children, or those suffering from mental health issues.

Regionally, the World Prison Brief (2022) provides the following breakdown of female incarceration:

Table 1: Regional breakdown of Female Inmates in the World

Region	Number of Female Inmates	Percentage of Female Inmates
Asia	244, 000	33.0
America	233, 000	31.0
Europe	134, 000	18.0
Africa	93, 000	13.0
Oceania	5, 0000	1.0

Source: World Prison Brief (2022).

Table 2: Highlights of Countries with the highest Female Prison Populations

Country	Number of Female Inmates
USA	225, 000
China	145, 000
Brazil	55, 000
Russia	44, 000
India	33, 000

Source: World Prison Brief (2022).

Female inmates constitute approximately 3–8% of the total prison population in Sub-Saharan Africa, which is lower than the global average of 6.9% (UNODC, 2020). In Nigeria, women account for about 2% of the total prison population (Nigerian Correctional Service, 2022). Despite this relatively low percentage, female inmates face severe challenges such as overcrowding, inadequate healthcare, and poor living conditions (Ogunwale & Ajayi, 2021). Many of these women are detained for minor, nonviolent offenses, yet the slow pace of Nigeria's justice system leads to prolonged pretrial detention. The Kirikiri Correctional Centre, Lagos, reflects these broader challenges, with reports highlighting issues such as inadequate vocational training and psychosocial support, which undermine rehabilitation efforts (Ajayi & Adebayo, 2019). Additionally, research shows that female incarceration follows identifiable patterns, with offenders often being between 20-35 years old, from low-income backgrounds, lacking full-time employment, and having experienced abuse or domestic violence (Steyn & Booyens, 2018).

International standards, including the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (SMR), also known as the Mandela Rules, and the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders (Bangkok Rules), emphasize the humane treatment of inmates. These frameworks

mandate adequate food, clothing, sanitation, medical care, and rehabilitation opportunities (UN, 2015). The Bangkok Rules, adopted in 2010, expand on these guidelines to address the specific needs of female inmates, advocating for gender-sensitive imprisonment, non-custodial measures for minor offenses, and improved access to mental health support and family contact. However, many correctional systems in low- and middle-income countries, including Nigeria, struggle to implement these standards due to resource constraints and male-centered prison models. Overcrowding, poor sanitation, and inadequate healthcare remain prevalent in facilities like Kirikiri Correctional Centre, limiting rehabilitation efforts and making reintegration into society difficult. Adhering to these international standards is crucial for fostering a correctional system that upholds human rights, supports rehabilitation, and facilitates the successful reintegration of female offenders. This study, therefore, seeks to examine the profile and living conditions of female inmates at the Kirikiri Correctional Centre, addressing gaps in existing research and highlighting the systemic challenges they face.

Female incarceration in Nigeria, though relatively low compared to male imprisonment, has been steadily increasing over the years. Data from the World Prison Brief (Institute for Crime & Justice Policy Research, 2021) indicate that the number of female prisoners rose from 709 in 2000 to 1,415 in 2020, accounting for approximately 1.9% of the total prison population. While this percentage remains small, it reflects a growing trend in female incarceration, largely due to systemic failures in the justice system and broader socio-economic conditions that push women into criminal activities. Despite the rise in female incarceration, correctional facilities in Nigeria remain overwhelmingly male-focused, neglecting the specific needs and vulnerabilities of female inmates. Overcrowding, poor healthcare, prolonged pretrial detention, and lack of access to rehabilitation programs remain key issues that female prisoners face (Aborisade& Oni, 2020).

Contrary to the common perception that crime in Nigeria is predominantly a male issue, reports indicate a rising involvement of women in criminal activities, including armed robbery, kidnapping, homicide, and terrorism (Kwabuggi, Haganagiwa&Kilba, 2017; Ekpimah, 2017; Tobazuaye, 2017). This has necessitated the incarceration of more women and the establishment of gender-specific correctional facilities. In response, Nigeria created two female-only correctional centers—Kirikiri Female Correctional Centre in Lagos and Numan Female Correctional Centre in Adamawa—alongside other mixed-gender facilities (Oluwatayo, n.d.). However, despite the growing female prison population, there is a significant lack of research on female inmates' backgrounds, living conditions, and challenges within correctional facilities. Kirikiri Female Correctional Centre, in particular, has gained notoriety for housing a large number of

female inmates compared to Numan and other mixed-gender correctional centers, yet there is minimal scholarly focus on its inmate population. The absence of comprehensive research has led to poor policy decisions and ineffective interventions that fail to address the rehabilitation and reintegration of female offenders.

One of the major concerns surrounding female incarceration in Nigeria is the failure of correctional facilities to meet international standards, particularly those outlined in the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders (Bangkok Rules). According to the World Prison Brief (as cited in Adebayo, 2019), over 93% of Nigeria's prison population consists of men, leaving female inmates as a marginalized group whose needs are often overlooked. Reports highlight that many female inmates endure harsh conditions, including overcrowding, inadequate healthcare, and exposure to physical and sexual abuse. Some are pregnant or caring for young children while incarcerated, yet correctional facilities do not provide adequate maternal or child healthcare services. Additionally, there is a general lack of nutritional support, with no dietary plans designed to meet female inmates' reproductive and health needs (Agomoh, 2003). The neglect of female prisoners is a serious violation of human rights and undermines the goal of rehabilitation.

A key issue contributing to the difficulties faced by female inmates is the slow pace of Nigeria's judicial system, which results in prolonged pretrial detention. Many women in Kirikiri Correctional Centre have been detained for minor offenses, yet they spend years awaiting trial because they cannot afford legal representation (Hyde, 2017). This situation contradicts the principle of "innocent until proven guilty" and exposes many inmates to unnecessary psychological distress and trauma. Additionally, prolonged incarceration increases the likelihood of inmates being negatively influenced by hardened criminals, thereby reducing their chances of successful rehabilitation. The isolation of female inmates at Kirikiri, due to its location, further exacerbates their trauma by limiting family visits and emotional support. This violates United Nations Rule 26, which emphasizes the need to facilitate inmates' communication with their families to support their reintegration into society.

Furthermore, the hygiene needs of female inmates are severely neglected. Many prisoners lack access to sanitary products, soap, and toiletries, forcing them to rely on donations from visitors and religious organizations. This makes it difficult for female inmates to maintain personal hygiene and dignity. The poor sanitation within correctional facilities also exposes them to communicable diseases, including COVID-19, Ebola, Hepatitis, and sexually transmitted infections like HIV/AIDS. Additionally, financial constraints prevent many inmates from accessing

quality legal representation, further prolonging their detention and complicating their chances of securing justice. Even when female inmates are eventually released, the stigma of incarceration follows them, making reintegration into society particularly difficult.

Despite the increasing number of female inmates at Kirikiri, there is a significant gap in research regarding their demographic backgrounds, health conditions, educational attainment, and socio-economic status. Most existing studies on the Nigerian prison system have focused on male inmates, leaving female prisoners as an overlooked group within academic and policy discussions. The limited information on female inmates' experiences has hindered the development of targeted interventions aimed at improving their rehabilitation, reformation, and reintegration into society.

In light of these challenges, this study seeks to bridge the knowledge gap by providing a comprehensive analysis of the profile and living conditions of female inmates at Kirikiri Female Correctional Centre. It aims to examine key socio-economic and demographic characteristics of female prisoners while assessing whether their treatment aligns with international standards, particularly the Bangkok Rules. By shedding light on the challenges faced by female inmates, this research hopes to inform policies that enhance rehabilitation efforts, improve prison conditions, and promote the successful reintegration of female offenders into society.

Theoretical Framework

The study adopted the Marxist Feminist theory, which is rooted in Karl Marx's Conflict Theory and explains gender oppression as a product of class struggle and capitalist exploitation. While Marx did not directly address gender issues, his ideas were later expanded by Friedrich Engels, Eleanor Marx, Rosa Luxemburg, and other Marxist feminists who applied his class-based analysis to the subjugation of women. The theory argues that human nature is shaped by social relations, and women's oppression is not a natural occurrence but rather a result of economic and political structures that benefit the ruling class. Marxist feminism highlights how capitalism reinforces patriarchy by exploiting women's labor, both in paid and unpaid forms. It contends that class inequality is the fundamental cause of women's oppression, and within capitalist societies, working-class women (proletarians) experience greater levels of subjugation than their wealthier, bourgeois counterparts. Unlike Socialist feminism, which gives equal weight to both class and gender in women's oppression, Marxist feminism asserts that class struggle is the primary determinant, with gender oppression stemming from capitalist structure (Cottais, 2021).

A key assumption of Marxist feminism is that women are exploited through a dual system: capitalism and patriarchy which work together to

reinforce their subjugation. The theory emphasizes that women's work status influences their self-image and societal treatment, with economic disparities dictating the level of oppression they face. This framework is particularly relevant to understanding the conditions of female inmates, as numerous studies (Simpson, 1989; Gyong, 1994) have shown that the majority of incarcerated women come from impoverished backgrounds. Many of them have histories of domestic violence, substance abuse, and economic hardship, factors that contributed to their involvement in the criminal justice system. Marxist feminism effectively explains why poor women are more likely to be criminalized and receive harsher treatment compared to affluent women, who often evade imprisonment or experience better conditions if incarcerated. The theory underscores how economic and social structures shape women's experiences within correctional facilities, making it a valuable tool for analyzing the disparities in the treatment of female inmates and the broader implications of gendered oppression under capitalism.

Research Methodology

The study was conducted at the Kirikiri Female Correctional Centre in Lagos State, Nigeria. This facility, built in 1963, was relatively small with a capacity of 211 inmates and was known for its fairly clean environment. It was one of the two female correctional centers in the country and was located near both the Kirikiri Maximum and Medium Security Correctional Centres. The study relied on both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data was collected directly from female inmates and correctional staff, including welfare officers, medical personnel, religious leaders, and inmate representatives. Secondary data was obtained from official documents such as the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and institutional records. A census sampling method was employed to include the entire inmate population, alongside key correctional staff interviews, to ensure a comprehensive assessment of the inmates' profiles, living conditions, and the facility's adherence to prescribed standards.

Data collection involved both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative approach utilized structured questionnaires, which were administered to all female inmates and designed to capture both open- and close-ended responses. The qualitative aspect included in-depth interviews and observations, using a checklist to assess facilities such as accommodation, food quality, healthcare services, rehabilitation programs, and opportunities for religious practice and communication with loved ones. A total of 253 copies of the questionnaire were administered to female inmates at the Kirikiri Correctional Centre. However, only 202 copies were returned and used for analysis, representing an 80% response rate, while 51 copies (20%) were not filled and returned. The collected data was sorted,

coded, and analyzed using SPSS to generate statistical summaries, while qualitative responses were transcribed and examined for patterns of convergence and divergence. The qualitative data collected from in-depth interviews were content-analyzed and used to complement the quantitative data, ensuring a more valid and comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing the living conditions of female inmates at the correctional facility. Triangulation was applied to cross-validate findings from different data sources, further strengthening the reliability of the study.

Results and Discussions

Table 4.2.1 Category of Inmates

Categories	Respondents Views	
	Frequency	Percentage
Convict	20	9.9
Awaiting trial	182	90.1
Total	202	100

The data presented in Table 4.2.1 highlights the distribution of inmates at the Kirikiri Female Correctional Centre by their legal status. Of the 202 respondents, only 20 inmates, accounting for 9.9%, are convicted and serving sentences, while a significant majority, 182 inmates (90.1%), are awaiting trial. The high percentage of inmates awaiting trial indicates systemic delays in the judicial process, which could have profound implications for the welfare and rights of these individuals. The data obtained from the IDI agreed with the above finding. Informants were unanimous that the female inmates on awaiting trial are more in the facility than the convicted inmates. The Muslim leader said that: Most of the inmates you see here were on the awaiting trial. If not because of the slow trial or dispensation of justice we are facing here, you wouldn't have met most of the inmates you are interviewing today, most of us would have been released long ago.

Data collected through survey and IDI suggest that indeed, majority of the inmates in Kirikiri Correctional Center Lagos are on awaiting trial as evidently shown by the two sources. This finding is in agreement with the studies Opafunso & Adepoju (2016) who said that congestion constitutes a major problem, creating a negative effect on the welfare of inmates in Nigerian prisons. The researchers attributed this to poor administration of criminal justice in Nigeria and unethical activities of the Nigerian Police, which constantly threaten the physical, mental, and social well-being of the inmates. This finding implies that a significant number of inmates remain in custody without formal sentencing, potentially violating their rights to a fair and speedy trial.

From a Marxist Feminist perspective, this disproportionate pretrial detention reflects how capitalist structures and gender inequality combine to disproportionately impact economically disadvantaged women. Under capitalism, those with financial resources—such as money for bail or skilled legal representation—are better able to navigate the judicial system. In contrast, women from lower-class backgrounds, often lacking these resources, face extended periods in detention. Furthermore, women's roles in society, shaped by economic dependence and caregiving responsibilities, can further limit their ability to secure proper legal defense or to obtain bail, thus exacerbating their vulnerability within the system.

Table 4.2.3 Times Inmates Served Prison Sentence Before

Number of Times	Respondents Views	
	Frequency	Percentage
1	2	1.0
2-3	1	0.5
More than 4	1	0.5
None	198	98.0
Total	202	100

The data in Table 4.2.3 illustrates the number of times inmates at the Kirikiri Female Correctional Centre have previously served prison sentences. Out of the 202 respondents, a vast majority, 198 inmates (98%), reported having never served a prison sentence before. In contrast, only 4 inmates (2%) indicated prior incarceration, with 2 inmates (1%) serving one previous sentence, 1 inmate (0.5%) serving two to three sentences, and 1 inmate (0.5%) serving more than four sentences. This data demonstrates that most inmates at the correctional facility are first-time offenders, emphasizing the predominance of individuals with no prior criminal records. The findings reveal systemic inequalities in the criminal justice system that align with Marxist feminist theory, highlighting how capitalism and patriarchy intersect to oppress marginalized groups. The overwhelming majority of inmates (98%) are first-time offenders, many of whom committed minor crimes that could have been addressed through non-custodial measures. This suggests that incarceration is being used as a tool of economic control, disproportionately targeting those with limited resources while reinforcing the criminalization of poverty.

The age disparity in imprisonment further reflects structural inequities. Younger individuals (18-27) are more likely to be awaiting trial, often due to financial barriers such as an inability to afford bail or legal representation. Meanwhile, convicted inmates are predominantly older (33-38), a demographic that may struggle with job security under capitalism, making them more vulnerable to systemic incarceration. This pattern underscores

how the justice system serves not only as punishment but also as a means of controlling surplus labor.

Additionally, the issue of prison overcrowding points to the exploitative nature of mass incarceration, which functions as a mechanism for economic and social discipline rather than rehabilitation. From a Marxist feminist perspective, this aligns with critiques of the prison-industrial complex, where the state and private interests benefit from the incarceration of marginalized populations. Ultimately, the findings reflect a justice system that perpetuates class oppression while maintaining capitalist and patriarchal structures.

The IDI responses confirm the survey findings. The Christian leader reveals that:

The few inmates here have the experience of serving prison sentences before is just for one time. This implies that the majority of us here do not have such experience. Some of the inmates are ordinarily not supposed to be here due to the trivial nature of the offence which they commit. Some of the offences were supposed to be solved by the police rather than bringing them to this facility. That is why the place is overcrowded. Inmates with minor offences shouldn't have been brought to this place, it is just an act of mere wickedness.

The implication of the survey and IDI data is that the majority of the inmates in Kirikiri Correctional Center Lagos have been to prison just once.

Table 4.2.4 Age of Inmates

Age	Respondents Views	
	Awaiting Trial	Convict
18-22	55 (30.2%)	-
23-27	82 (45.1%)	-
28-32	27 (14.8%)	-
33-38	11 (6%)	15 (75%)
39-44	7 (3.8%)	5 (25%)
Total	182 (100%)	20 (100%)

The data in Table 4.2.4 shows the age distribution of inmates at the Kirikiri Female Correctional Centre, categorized by their legal status (awaiting trial or convicted). Among the inmates awaiting trial, the majority fall within the age range of 23-27 years (82 inmates, 45.1%), followed by 18-22 years (55 inmates, 30.2%), and 28-32 years (27 inmates, 14.8%). Smaller proportions are seen in the 33-38 years (11 inmates, 6%) and 39-44 years (7 inmates, 3.8%) categories. For convicted inmates, most are aged 33-38 years (15 inmates, 75%), while the remaining are in the 39-44 years category (5 inmates, 25%). The age distribution indicates that the majority of inmates

awaiting trial are younger adults, predominantly between the ages of 18 and 27, suggesting this demographic may be more vulnerable to alleged involvement in activities leading to incarceration. Meanwhile, convicted inmates are predominantly older, with 75% falling in the 33-38 age bracket. The findings reveal systemic inequalities in the criminal justice system that align with Marxist feminist theory, highlighting how capitalism and patriarchy intersect to oppress marginalized groups. The overwhelming majority of inmates (98%) are first-time offenders, many of whom committed minor crimes that could have been addressed through non-custodial measures. This suggests that incarceration is being used as a tool of economic control, disproportionately targeting those with limited resources while reinforcing the criminalization of poverty.

From a Marxist feminist perspective, this aligns with critiques of the prison-industrial complex, where the state and private interests benefit from the incarceration of marginalized populations. Ultimately, the findings reflect a justice system that perpetuates class oppression while maintaining capitalist and patriarchal structures. The finding of this study is in tandem with Agomoh (2001) who found that a significant majority of the female prisoners were aged between ages eighteen to fifty. This also suggests that younger individuals are more susceptible to allegations that lead to incarceration, whereas convictions are more common among older inmates.

The IDI responses converge with survey findings. The IDI responses also indicate that inmates on waiting trial are younger than the convicted inmates in the prison. The Welfare Officer said that:

Although we have older women in this prison, the number of younger ones below the age of 30 years is more in the facility. Even those below 20 years are here with us.

Drawing from the survey and IDI responses, it can be concluded that the majority of the female inmates in the facility are within the age range of 18-27.

Table 4.2.6 Religious Affiliation of Inmates

Religion	Views of Respondents	
	Awaiting Trial	Convict
Christianity	173 (95.1%)	16 (80%)
Islamic	8 (4.4%)	4 (20%)
African Religion	1 (0.5)	-
Total	182 (100%)	20 (100%)

Table 4.2.6 provides information on the religious affiliation of inmates at the Kirikiri Female Correctional Centre. The data shows that Christianity is the predominant religion among inmates, with 95.1% of those awaiting trial (173 inmates) and 80% of convicted inmates (16 inmates) identifying as

Christians. A smaller proportion of inmates identify as Muslims 4.4% among those awaiting trial (8 inmates) and 20% among convicts (4 inmates). Only one inmate (0.5%) awaiting trial identifies with African Traditional Religion, with no convicts in this category. The high proportion of Christian inmates reflects broader class inequalities, where economically marginalized groups are more vulnerable to criminalization. From a Marxist feminist perspective, religion functions as an ideological tool that reinforces capitalist and patriarchal structures, legitimizing systemic oppression rather than resisting it. The disparity between awaiting trial and convicted inmates highlights how poverty limits access to legal defense, deepening social inequalities. Religious institutions may also promote obedience and submission, discouraging resistance against unjust systems. This finding is in line with the study of Olushola et.al. (2020) who also found that the respondents largely identify as Christian, and the majority have received at least secondary education, although a significant minority lack formal education. Data generated through IDI similarly indicates that Christians are more in the facility. The Christian leader says that:

Our number outnumbered any other religion here. Both the Traditional and Islamic religions are put together, but we are still more than them in number. Nonetheless, I don't think this is suggesting that we Christians commit more crimes.

The implication of the survey and qualitative data is that Christians are more in the facility.

Table 4.2.7 Highest Level of Educational Attainment of Inmates

Level of Educational Attainment	Respondents Views	
	Awaiting Trial	Convict
None	7 (3.8%)	-
Primary	46 (25.3%)	7 (35%)
Secondary	89 (49%)	13 (65%)
Tertiary	35 (19.2%)	-
Quranic	5 (2.7%)	-
Total	182 (100%)	20 (100)

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4.2.7 provides an overview of the highest level of educational attainment among inmates at the Kirikiri Female Correctional Centre. Among inmates awaiting trial, the largest proportion (49%) have attained secondary education (89 inmates), followed by 25.3% with only primary education (46 inmates), 19.2% with tertiary education (35 inmates), 3.8% with no formal education (7 inmates), and 2.7% with Quranic education (5 inmates). For convicted inmates, the majority (65%) have attained secondary education (13 inmates), while 35% have only primary education (7 inmates).

No convicted inmates reported tertiary, Quranic, or no formal education. The findings indicate that most inmates, whether awaiting trial or convicted, have secondary education as their highest level of attainment, reflecting limited access to higher education among the inmate population. This suggests a possible correlation between lower educational attainment and vulnerability to incarceration. Additionally, the absence of tertiary-educated individuals among convicted inmates raises questions about factors influencing sentencing outcomes. The findings on marital status and education further highlight systemic inequalities through a Marxist feminist lens. The high proportion of single inmates suggests that individuals lacking spousal or family support may be more vulnerable to economic hardship and criminalization. This aligns with the idea that capitalism and patriarchy disproportionately affect those without traditional social safety nets, increasing their risk of incarceration. The disparity in educational backgrounds—where a majority of awaiting trial inmates (53.3%) attended private schools, while 90% of convicted inmates came from public schools—reflects class divisions in the justice system. Those with private education may have better legal resources, reducing their likelihood of conviction, whereas public school attendees, often from lower-income backgrounds, face harsher outcomes. This reinforces Marxist feminist critiques of how class and institutional structures shape incarceration, perpetuating social and economic inequalities. This is in agreement with the study conducted by Steyn and Booyens (2018), the researchers also found that a significant portion of the female inmates were single. The responses from IDI suggest that this disparity could be due to economic differences, as individuals from lower-income backgrounds predominantly attended public schools and may be at higher risk of involvement with the justice system. The IDI data confirms the survey finding that the female inmates in Kirikiri Correctional Center, Lagos are literate but most of them attended only secondary school as their highest level of education.

Table 4.2.8 Type of School Inmates Attended

Type of School	Respondents Views	
	Awaiting Trial	Convict
Private school	97 (53.3%)	2 (10%)
Public School	85 (46.7%)	18 (90%)
Total	182	20 (100%)

Table 4.2.8 indicates that on the whole, the inmates attended public schools more. However, the majority 53.3% of the inmates awaiting trial attended private schools and 90% of convicts attended public schools, while the least 46% and 10% of the inmates awaiting trial and convict attended public and private schools respectively. This implies that inmates in

Kirirkiri Correctional Center attended public schools more but with a thin margin. This validates the IDI findings that the inmates mostly attended public schools. When probed why? The female leader says that:

I think this may be connected to the type of family background most of them come from. The majority of the inmates here come from families with low income and you know that the cost of sponsorship in private schools is higher than in public schools where it is less and very much affordable. Therefore, someone from low-income earning families will prefer to enrol his children in a school where he can conveniently pay without much stress.

Drawing from the survey and IDI responses as presented above, it can be concluded that the inmates in Kirirkiri Correctional Center are mostly those who attended public schools.

Table 4.2.9 Marital Status of the Inmates

Marital Status	Views of Respondents	
	Awaiting Trial	Convict
Single	124 (68.1%)	20 (100%)
Married	46 (25.3%)	-
Divorced	6 (3.3%)	-
Widow	3 (1.6%)	-
Separated	3 (1.6%)	-
Total	182 (100%)	20 (100%)

Table 4.2.9 outlines the marital status of inmates at the Kirikiri Female Correctional Centre. Among inmates awaiting trial, the majority are single (68.1%, 124 inmates), followed by those who are married (25.3%, 46 inmates). A small proportion are divorced (3.3%, 6 inmates), widowed (1.6%, 3 inmates), or separated (1.6%, 3 inmates). For convicted inmates, all 20 respondents (100%) are single. The findings reveal that a significant proportion of inmates, both awaiting trial and convicted, are single. This may suggest that individuals without spousal or family support might be more vulnerable to circumstances leading to incarceration. Additionally, the absence of married, divorced, widowed, or separated individuals among convicted inmates could indicate a low level of criminal behaviour among these categories of people.. The findings on marital status and education further highlight systemic inequalities through a Marxist feminist lens. The high proportion of single inmates suggests that individuals lacking spousal or family support may be more vulnerable to economic hardship and criminalization. This aligns with the idea that capitalism and patriarchy disproportionately affect those without traditional social safety nets, increasing their risk of incarceration. The disparity in educational backgrounds—where a majority of awaiting trial inmates (53.3%) attended private schools, while 90% of convicted inmates came from public schools—reflects class divisions in the justice system. Those with private education may have better legal resources, reducing their likelihood of conviction, whereas public school attendees, often from lower-income backgrounds, face harsher outcomes. This reinforces Marxist feminist critiques of how class and institutional structures shape incarceration, perpetuating social and economic inequalities. This finding is validated by IDI findings which confirm that single ladies are more in the facility compared to married women. The Welfare Officer admitted that:

As you can see, merely looking at them, they are very young, most of them are below 30 years old. This confirms the fact that they are not married. Although, some persons may argue that age does not determine marriage as I see it. But to me, it is a fact.

The evidence as presented by both the survey and IDI, it can be concluded that more single women are in Kirirkiri Correctional Center, Lagos.

Table 4.2.10 Number of Children of Inmates

Number of Children	Views of Respondents	
	Awaiting Trial	Convict
None	85 (46.7%)	20 (100%)
1-2	75 (41.2%)	-
3-4	16 (8.8%)	-
5 and above	6 (3.3%)	-
Total	182 (100%)	20 (100%)

Able 4.2.10 presents the number of children of inmates at the Kirikiri Female Correctional Centre. Among inmates awaiting trial, 46.7% (85 inmates) do not have children, while 41.2% (75 inmates) have 1-2 children, 8.8% (16 inmates) have 3-4 children, and 3.3% (6 inmates) have 5 or more children. In contrast, all 20 convicted inmates (100%) reported having no children. The data indicates that nearly half of the awaiting trial inmates and all convicted inmates are childless. However, a significant proportion of awaiting trial inmates have 1-2 children, highlighting potential familial challenges for these inmates, such as the need for childcare during their incarceration. From a Marxist feminist perspective, the findings on family structure highlight how economic conditions and systemic inequalities shape incarceration patterns. The fact that nearly half of awaiting trial inmates and all convicted inmates have no children suggests that familial responsibilities alone do not shield individuals from criminalization. However, for those with children, having only one or two may indicate economic precarity that limits family expansion. This finding agrees with the IDI result which indicates that most of the female inmates in the facility do not have children, and the few who have children have between 1 and 2 children.

Table 4.2.11 Family Size of Inmates

Family Size	Views of Respondents	
	Awaiting Trial	Convict
1-2 members	14 (7.7%)	-
3-4 members	31 (17%)	1 (5%)
5 and above members	137 (74.3%)	19 (95%)
Total	182 (100)	20 (100%)

Analysis on the number of the family size of the inmates in Table 4.2.11 shows that on the whole, most of the inmates in the facility came from large family sizes with five and above members. The majority, constituting 74.5% awaiting trial and 95% of convicts who participated in the study belong to families with the size of 5 and above members. The least 17% (31) of waiting trials and 5% (1) of convicts come from families with the size of 3-4

members, while 7.7% (14) of the awaiting comes from families with the size of 1-2 members. The findings indicate that most inmates, both awaiting trial and convicted, belong to large families with 5 or more members. This suggests that individuals from larger families may face socioeconomic pressures that could contribute to circumstances leading to incarceration. This finding is in line with the IDI result which shows that most of the inmates in Kirikiri Correctional Center, Lagos belong to large families with more than four members.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings of this study highlight significant challenges within the criminal justice system, particularly concerning the high number of inmates awaiting trial, the prevalence of first-time offenders, and the role of socio-economic factors in incarceration. The fact that 90.1% of inmates are yet to be convicted underscores systemic judicial delays, which contribute to overcrowding and prolonged detention without sentencing. Additionally, the predominance of young, single women from low-income backgrounds in the facility suggests that socio-economic vulnerabilities may increase the likelihood of incarceration, particularly for minor offences that could have been resolved without imprisonment.

Given these findings, it is imperative for policymakers, judicial authorities, and correctional institutions to address these systemic issues. Efforts should be made to expedite trial processes, reduce unnecessary pretrial detentions, and implement alternative sentencing measures for minor offenses. Furthermore, providing educational, vocational, and rehabilitative programs within correctional facilities can empower female inmates and reduce recidivism. Addressing these challenges would not only improve the living conditions of inmates but also promote a more just and effective criminal justice system.

Expedite Judicial Processes and Reduce Pretrial Detentions: Given that a significant majority (90.1%) of female inmates at the Kirikiri Correctional Centre are awaiting trial, urgent judicial reforms are needed to ensure faster case processing. The government should strengthen the judicial system by increasing the number of courts handling criminal cases, implementing alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, and promoting the use of non-custodial sentences for minor offences. This would help reduce overcrowding and ensure that individuals are not unjustly detained for prolonged periods.

1. **Improve Rehabilitation and Reintegration Programs:** To prevent female inmates from being negatively influenced by hardened criminals, the correctional facility should enhance

rehabilitation efforts through structured vocational training, educational programs, and psychological counselling. These programs should be tailored to equip inmates with skills that will aid their reintegration into society and reduce the likelihood of recidivism. Special attention should be given to first-time offenders to prevent them from being drawn into criminal networks.

2. **Enhance Welfare and Living Conditions:** The study highlights poor living conditions within the facility, which can affect inmates' physical and mental well-being. The government and relevant stakeholders should invest in improving basic amenities such as healthcare, nutrition, and hygiene within the correctional centre. Additionally, policies should be introduced to ensure that inmates, particularly those with minor offences, are treated with dignity and have access to proper legal representation, social support, and reformation opportunities.

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