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I. Introduction

Prison systems all over the world mirror the dominant socio-economic, and political realities of human societies. Imprisonment as a major method of punishment has undergone a series of changes with the progression of human civilization. Ruche and Kirchheimer (2003) in a book titled: 'Punishment Social Structure' emphasized the relationship between the functions of imprisonment and environmental factors in the trajectory of prisons under the different social, political, and economic epochs in Europe. On the one hand, Foucault (1977) maintains that prison systems reflect the changing power relations of a given society. The use of imprisonment in Nigeria since the introduction of the modern prisons in 1861 has to a large extent followed the character of the state. It is perhaps, on the basis of this, that Lazarus (2004) opines that there is often an unusually close relationship between a state, and its correctional system.

Colonial regimes in Nigeria, for example, made use of imprisonment to suppress and control the indigenous population who attempted to challenge British right to rule and conduct trading in the early stage of state formation in Nigeria. According to Clifford, "in a country such as Nigeria which in too many of its areas has not yet emerged from barbarism, a strong and within limits, an autocratic government is essential" (cited in Oyediran, 2007:7). Thus, the philosophy behind the establishment of the Nigerian Correctional Service (NCS), formerly known as Nigerian Prison Service (NPS) was mainly that which could support autocratic rule over the indigenous people of Nigeria. It is therefore, not surprising that today's correctional centers in the country, which to a great extent remains a relics of colonial administration is often described as a human cage and worse than a zoo (Nwolise, 2008).

Similarly, the appropriation of the correctional system for violence and oppression in Nigeria by the military regimes reflects how legacies of imperialism are inseparable from how imperial control is crystallized (Young, 1994). Various military administrations in Nigeria made full use of the correctional institutions to consolidate power and satisfy personal wishes. According to Ogundipe (2009), individuals who were opposed to military regimes were "hounded into detention by decrees that had ouster clauses; they could be in prisons for as long as it pleased their jailers", which according to Ake(1996) amounts to 'criminalization of political dissent'. Consequently, several individuals, who challenged the legitimacy of the military regimes such as late Chief MKO, Abiola, Gani Faweyinmi, Chris Anyawu, and Kunle Ajibade, among others were incarcerated as punishment for daring the military authorities. The experience of those released from various correctional centers after the death of General Sani Abacha spoke of grim conditions and the absence of a humane policy for the treatment of inmates (Enuku, 2001).

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Meanwhile, Nigeria's return to civil rule in 1999 came with efforts to humanize the Nigerian correctional system and make use of it as an instrument of reformation and rehabilitation. According to Dambazau (2012), in most of the countries following the concept of libertarianism and related Western democratic ethos, emphasis on the use of penitentiaries has been shifted from punishment to deterrence, protection, and rehabilitation. Therefore, the effort to decongest the correctional centers through jail delivery, the increment of feeding allowance, and overall budgetary allocation to the correctional system were part of the immediate interventions in Nigeria's Fourth Republic. However, the increasing rate of violent extremist attacks and terrorism across the world necessitates a new policy direction in the NCS. According to the Institute for Economics and Peace (Global Terrorism Index, 2015), five countries: Iraq, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Syria - accounted for 72 percent of the lives lost due to violent extremism in 2015, while the number of deaths from violent extremism and terrorism increased from 3,329 in 2000 to 32,685 in 2014. Therefore, effective management of VEOs, particularly in the area of preventing the correctional centers from becoming a hotbed for the radicalization of offenders is a very important responsibility of the NCS. It is against this background that the paper examines the roles of the Nigerian Correctional Service in the management of VEOs.

The major concepts that need clarification in this work are those of security, prisons/correctional centers, and violent extremist offenders.

Security: Inspite of the fact that concepts such as security do not lend themselves to clear-cut definitions, there seems to be a convergence about the fact that security connotes a state of being safe. It is a precondition to the existence and development of human beings. Lasswell and Kaplan (1950) see security as a high-value expectancy because to be secured is to have confidence that one's valuables are to be enjoyed. The term security therefore, connotes a guaranteed protection or assurance against danger, harm, or threat of it on lives, property, resources, and other materials of value to human existence. It is perhaps on this basis that Adam Smith, Thomas Hobbes, and other scholars have centuries ago identified it (security) as the primary responsibility of government. Correspondingly, Section 14 (2) b, 1999 Constitution, Federal Republic of Nigeria, categorizes the security, and welfare of the people as the primary purpose of government.

Meanwhile, the shift in focus on militarism as the only essential component of security after the Second World War has translated into multiple factors such as poverty, unemployment justice and equity, protection from danger, happiness etc. being considered as an essential element of security (Nwolise 2009; Alahira2011; Yagboyaju2016). McNamara (in Tsuwa and Okoh, 2016) captures a description of security from a development point of view. For him, "security is not military force though it may involve it, security is not traditional military activity though it encompasses it, and security is not military hardware though it may include it, hence, security is development and without development, there is no security".

In a related development, scholarly writings on security are conventionally divided into internal, and national security. Internal security is concerned with the use of non-military force to ensure freedom from danger to life and property adequate for normal functioning of a social system. In contrast, national security involves the act of using all forms of capabilities in defense of a state from all forms of threats that endangers its peaceful and continuous existence (Imobighe, 1990; Nnoli, 2006; Nwolise, 2007). The importance of security to a nation cannot be underestimated for reasons including some of the under listed:

(a) Without security, all things are meaningless.
(b) It ensures the preservation of life, liberties, and existence.
(c) It is a prerequisite for any meaningful development, sustainable order, peace, and social harmony.
(d) For nations, security is critical for attracting external investment and encouraging internal investors.
(e) It promotes national productivity, national growth, and development as well as national greatness.
(f) It ensures the smooth running of strategic installations such as electricity, military, aviation, and shipping (Nwolise, 2009:363).

Prisons/Corrections: The term 'prison' is regarded as institution of the state in which offenders are legally interred. According to Mc Corkle and Korn (1954), a prison is a physical structure in a geographical location where people live under highly specialized conditions, utilize the resources and adjust to the alternatives presented to them by a unique kind of social environment that is different from the larger society in so many ways. In the same vein, Odekunle (1974) observes that prison is an isolated community-often with a high wall, locked order, and barbed wires-it is anticipated to return its clients who were once the undesirables of the society back as fit into the mainstream of the society. Okunola (1986) defines prison from a functional perspective. For him, a prison is a total institution; carrying out multiple responsibilities. Similarly, Coetzee (1990) prison is the stomach of the state because the institution is expected to serve as the melting point for the activities of the security agencies.

Meanwhile, there is a growing temptation among writers to use prisons and corrections interchangeably or look at corrections as a contemporary term for describing prisons. In this dimension, Nwolise (2010) opines that corrections imply

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organization, and administration of prisons as a form of 'social clinic' in which psychologist, medical doctors, social workers, researchers, spiritual workers, and others operate hand in hand with the correctional personnel to achieve the best results of transforming the inmates away from being deviants to being disciplined, productive, useful and patriotic citizens. However, the term correction is more encompassing than prisons. Although correctional/rehabilitation efforts may be subscribed to by the prisons, corrections implies more than the use of physical buildings and infrastructure in the discharge of the functions of the traditional prison systems. It is a network of processes that include both custodial and non-custodial sentences in the management of the offender population and awaiting trial inmates.

Violent Extremist Offenders: The concept: violent extremism lacks precision in terms of its meaning and usage in a global context. Yet, it has never been more important to understand it. According to Berger (2018), extremism develops from a particular "them vs. us" mentality, which gradually develops into violence where there is either a real or imagined victory of 'them' over a particular 'us'. The United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (2016) sees violent extremism as a diverse phenomenon, without clear definition. It maintains that it is neither new nor exclusive to any region, nationality, or system of belief. Another challenge with attempts to define violent extremism is that issues surrounding extremism are mostly legal matters in which individual states define its contours according to their socio-cultural realities. Nevertheless, the violent extremist offenders are known as individuals who engage in any activity that comes under the description of violent extremism. However, the following are the common characteristics of violent extremist offenders:

a. They are individuals belonging to a group that justifies violence as a means to an end.
b. They are prepared to justify and resort to violent acts.
c. They are individuals who have identified a target on which to unleash violence and are disillusioned with government, mainstream society, and established political systems.
d. They use religious narratives as a justification for overcoming by violent means, perceived evil, oppression, poverty, discrimination in a society etc. (Nigerian Prison service Training Manual 2018).

Similarly, VEOs are individuals whose main motivations to resort to violent extremist acts are based on one or a combination of the following:

1. Ideological violence

(a) Political ideologies such as nationalist, neo-Nazi groups, white supremacy or hate groups that promote the use of violence;(b) Extreme interpretations of religious beliefs that advocate the use of violence; (c) Violent left-wing, anarchist, and right-wing ideologies.

2. Issue-based violence

(a) Violent animal liberation and animal rights movements; (b) Environmental or eco-related violent extremism; (c) anti-government, anti-globalization, or anti-capitalist movements that advocate the use of violence.

3. Ethno-nationalist or separatist violence

(a)Violent political or independence struggles based on race, culture, geography, or ethnicity. (UNODC, 2016)

II. Nigerian Correctional Service and the Management of Violent Extremist Offenders

The need to protect Nigeria's national security in the light of persistent terrorist attacks necessitates the development and adoption of a Preventing and Cantering Violent Extremism (PCVE) programme in 2014. The programme was developed by the Office of the National security Adviser (ONSA) with the technical support of the European Union. The PCVE programme is built on an eclectic approach with three major components;

a) Counter-radicalization by the religious leaders and influential individuals in a society.
b) Strategic communication by the National Orientation Agency (NOA), and related agencies.
c) De-radicalization of the Violent Extremist Offenders to be spearheaded by the Correctional Service.

As an agency of government with the mandate to normalize deviant characters in the country, the de-radicalization component of the PCVE falls in line with the objectives of the NCS. According to the Nigerian Correctional Service Act, 2019, correctional institution in the country, among other responsibilities, are expected to:

i. Identify the causes of anti-social dispositions of inmates
ii. Set in motion mechanisms for their treatment and training for eventual reintegration into society as law-abiding citizens on discharge.
iii. Administer Farms and Industries for this purpose (rehabilitation) and in the process, generate revenue for the government etc.

However, nature of violent extremism necessitates that the NCS rejigs its approach and strategies toward offender management in the country. Extremist violent offenders constitute a unique category of inmates because they possess skills to radicalize other offenders kept in the correctional centers, which constitute a threat to national security. Radicalization of offenders in correctional centers constitute a major threat to national security in the sense that it is a

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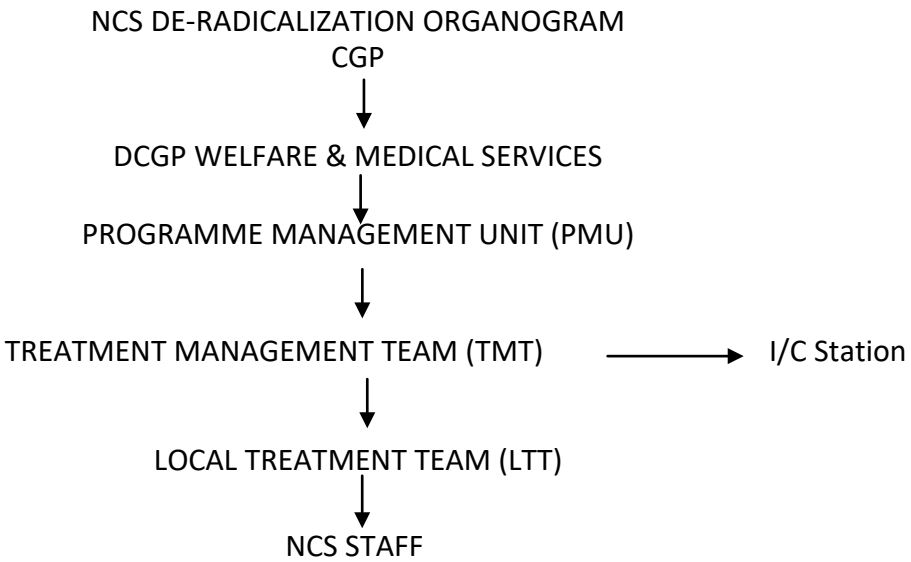
process of recruiting more individuals into anti-establishment groups and organizations whose chief instrument is violence against lives and properties. According to the Global Counterterrorism Forum (2016), correctional centers are environments where violent extremism has grown over the years.

Nigeria's approach to the subject matter of violent extremist attack and insurgency has previously been dominated by military actions, which to a significant degree, involve the use of punitive measures against suspects or convicted violent offenders. According to the Amnesty International Report, 2017/ 2018, the military detention facility at Giwa Barracks, Maiduguri, held more than 4,900 suspected VEOs and their accomplices by April 2018. Other military detention facilities that are used to detain VEOs include Sector Alpha (Guantanamo) and "Presidential Lodge" in Damaturu. However, both theoretical and practical realities suggest that 'iron hand' alone cannot be relied upon as an efficient instrument of managing the VEOs. For instance, McGuire (2004) opines that sanctions and punishment are not efficient for sustained behavior change.

Researches have also shown that harsh treatment in detention facilities can play a commanding role in the recruitment of a large number of individuals into violent extremist groups and terrorist organizations. More so, in countries where the ethos of Western democracy are highly cherished, sanctions have progressively moved towards corrections/rehabilitation (Kings, 2001). It is perhaps on the strength of the preceding that the Office of National Security Adviser (ONSA) in 2014 was saddled with the responsibility of developing an ambitious Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE) programme. The de-radicalization element of the CVE programme is anchored on the establishment of a de-radicalization programme for sentenced and pre-trial inmates in the correctional centers (Barkindo and Bryans 2016:4). This effectively brought the NCS, the only government agency with coercive and persuasive capabilities, into the calculus of the management of the VEOs in the country.

According to the NCS (2015), efforts to effectively VEOs in Nigerian correctional centers was premised on international collaboration, commencing with the support of the Office of the National Security Adviser in partnership with the European Union, the British Government, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Although, the NCS has suffered series of setbacks through the activities of VEOs in the North-East Nigeria. For example, as at 2015, 45 men of the NCS have lost their lives during attacks by the VEOs, while several correctional centers also got destroyed (NCS, 2015). Yet, the service has continued to play its role in the management of VEOs. Quoting a senior officer of the NCS: "our de-radicalization programme is built on four pillars including 1. Buy-In/Engagement 2. Risk Assessment 3. Needs Assessment and, 4. Intervention. The goal of this approach is to bring about a behavioral and attitudinal changes through rehabilitation programmes tailored towards addressing identified needs and risks".

Management of violent extremist offenders in the Nigerian correctional institution is built on two layers; national and local levels. At the national level, there is a Treatment Management Team charged with the responsibility to develop a de-radicalization assessment tool; identify; appoint; and train Local Treatment Team members; supervise and monitor programme delivery; collate national data on risks and needs, and ensure that the necessary materials, tools, and equipment were available for the programme. The Local Treatment Teams is charged with the responsibility to undertake risk assessments; identify appropriate intervention; maintain case file records; deliver programme interventions, and participate in case conferences.



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Meanwhile, despite the provisions of Nigeria's Terrorism Prevention Act 2011(amended in 2013), which recognizes kidnapping, bunkering, activities of violent group etc. as acts of terrorism, only members of Boko-Haram insurgents group are currently being handled under NCS's de-radicalization programme. According to a member of the treatment team, the management of VEOs is carried out in compliance with the provisions of the Standard Minimum Rule for the Treatment of Prisoners. According to him: "special cells with basic facilities such as water and mattress are provided for them. We provide these for forestall hardship which may increase the possibility of radicalization". Further, in the area of capacity building, he maintains that members of the Local Treatment Team undergo a refresher's course on a quarterly basis. Similarly, a two-week training course on de-radicalization of violent extremist offenders is part of the curriculum for the training of all categories of recruits since 2016 (Nigerian Prison Training Manual 2018).

Although, the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (2012) maintains that management of VEOs often lacks an accurate description of intervention programmes, the de-radicalization model adopted by the NCS fit into a 'risk-needs-responsivity' model (Andrews, Bonta, and Hoge, 1990), which consists of four stages: engagement, risk assessment, needs assessment, and interventions.

Engagement: The first stage involved the Treatment Team members getting to know the violent extremist offender, establishing a positive professional relationship, developing trust, and entering into a constructive dialogue.

Risk: Once Treatment Team members had engaged the VEO, the next stage was for the Treatment team to undertake a thorough risk assessment to identify the reasons for the inmate becoming a violent extremist offender and the level of risk the inmate currently posed.

Needs: Having identified the underpinning reasons for a violent extremist offender's involvement in violent extremism, Treatment Team members need to identify his risk-related needs. That is, the activity that would help to reduce the risk that the offender would engage in, or advocate, future violent extremist activity.

Response: The fourth stage was to implement the interventions that would meet the violent extremist offender's identified risk-related needs and thereby reduce risk.

III. Challenges of Managing Extremist Violent Offenders in Nigerian Correctional Service

Efforts to strengthen national security through effective management of violent extremist offenders in the Nigerian correctional centers are jaundiced by some of the protracted challenges facing the NCS. For example, the de-radicalization programme of the (NCS) lacks a post-release component. According to the SMR rule 108 (1) "Services and agencies, governmental or otherwise, which assist released offenders in re-establishing themselves in society shall ensure, so far as is possible and necessary, that released offenders are provided with appropriate documents and identification papers, have suitable homes and work to go to, are suitably and adequately clothed having regard to the climate and season and have sufficient means to reach their destination and maintain themselves in the period immediately following their release". It is pertinent to note that lack of compliance with the SMR rule 108 portends a setback for the de-radicalization mandate of the NCS.

Furthermore, the involvement of the Nigerian Army in the treatment of the VEO is a cog to the progress of de-radicalization agenda of the CVE. While it is possible to effect a behavioral change through the use of 'iron hand' attitudinal change which offers a hope of life-long rehabilitation can only be guaranteed with the voluntary participation of the VEO in his own treatment According to Andrews (1995), behavioral interventions that would employ cognitive behavioral and social learning techniques of modelling, graduated practice, role playing, reinforcement, extinction, resource provision, concrete verbal suggestions (symbolic modelling, giving reasons, prompting) and cognitive restructuring have also been found to have positive influence on rehabilitation. These are activities and processes that are better performed by the NCS because it is the agency of the government in Nigeria whose primary mandate is to rehabilitate all categories of offenders. Similarly, some of the perennial problems of the correctional system in the country are capable of affecting the success of the programme. These include:

Corruption: Public service in Nigeria has been described as a cesspool of corruption "and the NCS is no exception" (Ogunsanwo 2015). Corruption impact rehabilitation of all categories of offenders in many ways. The UNDP (2016), for example, notes that corruption erodes the legitimacy of the correctional officials and increases the perception of injustice of violent extremist offenders. It promotes dissatisfaction with the established authorities and justifies the use of violence. Corrupt practices, therefore, tend to encourage radicalization of inmates. Meanwhile, the NCS is challenged with the menace of corruption from all angles. For example, Family visitation, allocation of bed spaces, and feeding programme are riddled with corrupt practices in the NCS. The United State Department of State (USSD) Country Reports (Nigeria) on Human Rights Practices, 2015 reveals that "Guards and correctional officials reportedly extorted inmates or levied fees on them to pay for food, prison maintenance,

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and release from prison. Female inmates, in some cases, faced the threat of rape". In another dimension, the report of the panel of inquiry set up by the then Anthony General and Minister of Justice, Chief Bayo Ojo, in 2007 indicated that out of the143 drug convicts for the year 2006, 96 of them were not brought to the correctional centers. Similarly, 101 drug convicts for the year 2005 were also not taken to the correctional centers as expected.

Inhuman and Degrading Treatment in Nigerian Correctional Centers: Reformation of all categories of inmates of the Nigerian correctional centers still conjures punishment (Kalu, 2002). Inhuman treatment is a key driver of radicalization and violent extremism. It spurs inmates to join radical groups to seek protection from inhumane conditions and treatment by correctional authorities (Belgium Federal Public Service–Justice, 2014). According to the USSD Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for (2015), "prison and detention centres' conditions in Nigeria remained harsh and life-threatening. inmates and detainees, the majority of whom were yet to be tried, were reportedly subjected to extrajudicial execution, torture, gross overcrowding, food and water shortages, inadequate medical treatment, deliberate and incidental exposure to heat and sun, and infrastructure deficiencies that led to wholly inadequate sanitary conditions that could result in death".

Congestion in the Nigerian Correctional Service: The problem of overcrowding is one of the perennial challenges of effective management of correctional centers in Nigeria. Most of the correctional facilities in urban centers across the country are overcrowded. For example, the Agodi Correctional Center with a lock-up capacity of 290 incarcerates 1214 as of June 2019 (Oyo State Correctional Command). This condition affects service delivery in the correctional centers and does not allow them to concentrate on the task of rehabilitation. This challenge affects the management of VEOs in the country because it reduces the hope of effective inmate classification and therefore increases the possibility of radicalization in the correctional centers.

IV. Conclusion and Recommendations

The importance of the correctional institution to the effective management of violent extremist offenders has been recognized by several countries as well as global and regional bodies as imperative of national security. Although Nigeria's response to the danger of violent extremism seems not to be timely enough, the collaborative efforts of the Office of the National Security adviser and NCS, especially through the introduction of de-radicalization programmes in the correctional centers is considered as a necessary intervention towards strengthening Nigeria's national security However, lack of aftercare service, the involvement of the Nigerian Army in the treatment of VEOs, and some of the perennial problems of the NCS such as corruption, congestion, and the preponderance of awaiting trial inmates, inhuman and degrading treatment are considered adversative to effective management of VEOs. The paper therefore concludes that the success of de-radicalization programme in Nigerian correctional centers depends on how well the factors of aftercare service, professionalism in the treatment of VEOs, corruption, congestion, inhuman treatment etc. are handled.

Adherence to the provisions of relevant instruments in the treatment of violent extremist offenders, especially, as contained in the Standard Minimum Rule for the Treatment of Offenders, Rome Memorandum on Good Practices for the Rehabilitation and Reintegration of VEOs are recommended by the paper. Furthermore, correctional centers in Nigeria should be opened for partnership with the non-governmental agencies to enthrone a regime of accountability, thereby, reducing the spate of corruption in the Nigerian correctional system. Also, Nigeria's penal landscape should embrace non-custodial sentencing, especially for minor offenses to reduce congestion and, by extension, reduce the possibility of radicalization among the often poorly classified inmates. Lastly, the NCS should be encouraged to play a leading role in its statutory responsibility of the management of offenders in the country. The use of military detention facilities, associated with inhuman and degrading treatment, should be discouraged. As the only rule of law institution that combines the corrective with coercive powers of the state, the correctional service remains the only government agency in Nigeria with human and material resources to 'grind rogues honest, and idle men industrious'.

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