

# Determinants Of Mental Health Of Awaiting Trial Inmates In Oyo State Correctional Centres

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**Abstract:** *Mental health represents a critical yet often overlooked topic within criminal justice system especially among the inmates.. Unlike convicted prisoners, awaiting-trial detainees face profound uncertainty about their legal fate, often compounded by prolonged incarceration and adverse prison conditions that badly impact their well-being. When inmates are faced with mental challenges it could lead to emotional trauma, depression suicide thought and even suicide. This study, therefore, examined the correlates of psychological and environmental factors (social support, prison climate, quality of life, religiosity, and prison resilience) on the mental health of awaiting-trial inmates in Oyo State Correctional Centers. Grounded in the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping and Social Support Theory. The research employed a descriptive correlational design with 300 awaiting-trial inmates randomly selected from Agodi and Abolongo correctional centers, using simple random sampling technique. Data were collected using 6 validated questionnaires namely: the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS), Prison Climate Survey, OPQOL-Brief, Religious Orientation Test (ROT), Brief Resilience Scale (BRS), and Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS). Research questions were raised and answered using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that social support ( $r = 0.317, p < 0.05$ ), prison climate ( $r = 0.377, p < 0.05$ ), and prison resilience ( $r = 0.176, p < 0.05$ ) showed positive and significant relationships with mental health, while quality of life ( $r = -0.281, p < 0.05$ ) and religiosity ( $r = -0.310, p < 0.05$ ) demonstrated negative but significant relationships. Multiple regression analysis indicated that the independent variables collectively explained for 28.5% variance in mental health of the inmates ( $R^2 = .285, F = 23.412, p < 0.05$ ), confirming their composite contribution. Based on these findings, the study recommends that correctional authorities should institutionalize well -structured social support programs, enhance prison climate through proper training of staff and procedural fairness, improve inmates' quality of life and implement resilience-building workshops to promote mental health of the awaiting-trial inmates in the correctional centres*

**Keywords:** Awaiting-trial inmates, Mental Health, Social Support, Prison Climate Prison Resilience, Correctional Centers

## Introduction

The mental health of awaiting-trial inmates in correctional facilities represents a critical yet often neglected issue within the criminal justice system. Awaiting-trial detainees, unlike convicted prisoners, they face prolonged incarceration with uncertainty about their legal fate, exposure to adverse prison conditions, and significant stressors that can severely impact their mental well-being. These conditions contribute to elevated risks of depression, anxiety, hopelessness, anger, suicidal tendencies, and other mental health challenges.

with a significant propo ,trial detention is substantial-the scale of pre ,In Nigeriartion of inmates awaiting trial often for extended periods, sometimes exceeding the maximum sentences they might receive if convicted. Systemic failures in the judicial system, correctional facilities, and socio-economic factors compound this crisis. Key issues include chronic case backlogs, abuse of the bail system, deficient legal aid, overcrowding, poor sanitation, health crises, and a near absence of mental health services in prisons. While much has been written on convicted inmates not much has been done especially in Nigeria where the works of Odedokun (2022); Omopo and Odedokun (2024) Odedokim and Muraina (2019) dwells so much on recidivism, smoking, dependency psychological wellbeing and prison climate. In view of the above, this study sought to investigate the influence of social support, prison climate, quality of life, religiosity, and prison resilience as correlates of mental health among awaiting-trial inmates in Oyo state Correctional Centres.

Social support as a variable in this study involves assistance and comfort the awaiting trial inmates gets from It can be .relationships and significant stakeholders to cope with problems encountered within the prison explained as the perception that one has assistance available, the actual received assistance, or the degree to which a person is integrated in a social network. Social support is crucial for inmates coping with pre-trial detention in Nigeria, Stigma significantly impacts social support; families face ostracism and hardship, with about 27% of inmates reporting poor family support, increasing isolation. (George, 2021) noted families struggle emotionally and financially, facing mental health challenges due to detention stigma. Financial barriers compound challenges; constraints limit family support.

Another important factor in this study is prison climate. Prison climate refers to the psychological and social environment of correctional institutions encompassing safety, staff-inmate relations, physical conditions, and overall atmosphere. The prison climate

in Nigeria is marked by severe challenges. Safety concerns are torture and physical abuse routine, including beatings with whips, rifle butts, or rubber batons, forced walking over broken glass, and sitting on benches of nails. Women have faced brutal sexual violence. Staff-detainee relations are characterized by widespread abuse and neglect, with torture used for information extraction or punishment, restrictions on family visits, and limited lawyer access. The Nigerian government often neglects to investigate torture allegations, leaving perpetrators unpunished. In addition to this, environmental conditions are harsh, with overcrowding and poor treatment contributing to detainee deaths in custody. Thousands arrested in anti-Boko Haram operations are detained without trial or proper investigation, highlighting concerns over human rights and prison conditions (Duckstein, 2014). This climate significantly impacts inmate well-being and stress coping mechanisms.

Overall satisfaction with life refers to an individual's overall satisfaction with life. Quality of life is an important factor in this study and encompasses physical health, environmental conditions, social relationships, psychological state, and personal beliefs and values, reflecting their position in life in the context of their culture and value systems. For awaiting trial inmates in Nigerian correctional facilities, quality of life is a pressing concern. Healthcare is significantly challenged with inadequate medical facilities, supplies, and personnel, leading to poor health conditions and exacerbating physical and mental health issues. The scarcity of health specialists, including psychologists, compounds the problem. Nutrition is another critical area where inmates suffer from gross malnutrition due to inadequate food and poor nutrition, with diets often insufficient and lacking essential nutrients, severely impacting overall health and well-being. Recreation is limited with few tools and tutors for profitable activities, and this lack can further exacerbate mental and physical health challenges faced by inmates (Odedokun, 2025, Adefisoye, Adejumo, & Olufemi, 2024).

Religiosity is another variable in this study. Religiosity is defined as the extent to which an individual or group is committed to and practices a particular religion, encompassing beliefs, rituals, experiences, and behaviors that reflect devotion to a religious tradition, influencing attitudes, values, and lifestyle. In Nigerian prisons, awaiting trial can be a transformative experience often leading to a deeper exploration of faith. Many inmates find solace in religion, with daily worship sessions in cells providing hope and comfort, as reported by Toromade (2024). For some, this newfound religiosity becomes a defining aspect of prison life, with individuals even becoming church workers. The harsh realities of prison life drive people to seek spiritual guidance and support, highlighting the complex interplay between spirituality, hope, social connection, and survival in Nigerian prisons. Former inmates have been noted to say, "It's a place to find God." This turn to religiosity underscores how faith can serve as a coping mechanism in the challenging situations of awaiting trial inmates.

Prison resilience is another correlating variable to the mental health of awaiting trial inmates in this work. Resilience refers to inmates' ability to cope and adapt to correctional facilities' challenging environments and stress and finding growth despite harsh conditions. In Nigerian prisons, many awaiting trial inmates exhibit remarkable resilience, finding solace in religion with daily worship sessions providing hope and comfort. Key factors influencing resilience include support systems, coping mechanisms like mindfulness and exercise, personal growth through education or creativity, religious faith, and establishing routines. These elements help inmates maintain well-being and find purpose. What builds resilience in awaiting trial inmates in Nigeria includes spirituality and faith, where many find comfort in religion as a coping mechanism. Connections with fellow inmates or groups in religious settings provides emotional backing. Adaptive coping strategies like mindfulness, prayer, or focusing on personal growth help manage stress. Hope for the future, like potential release or rehabilitation, can also foster resilience. However, this often undermined by factors that like harsh prison conditions including overcrowding, poor sanitation, and inadequate healthcare, which challenge coping. Uncertainty of trial outcomes with prolonged detention without trial contributes to stress and anxiety. Limited access to medical, psychological, or educational resources hampers growth. Reports of abuse and neglect by staff severely impact mental well-being. Malnutrition and poor health due to inadequate food and healthcare exacerbate physical and mental health issues. Resilience significantly impacts adjustment to prison life, mental health, and rehabilitation potential, pointing to the human spirit's capacity to adapt and survive adversity. With appropriate support and interventions, resilience can lead to positive transformation and better outcomes.

Despite accumulating research on inmate mental health, a significant gap exists in studies focusing specifically on awaiting-trial detainees in the Nigerian context, particularly in Oyo State. This population is uniquely vulnerable, caught in a cycle of prolonged detention, overcrowding, poor living conditions, and a near-total absence of dedicated mental health services. Systemic issues such as chronic case backlogs and abuse of the bail system exacerbate this crisis. Most critically, the intricate relationships between social support, prison climate, quality of life, religiosity, and prison resilience, and their profound collective bearing on the mental health of awaiting-trial inmates in Oyo State, remain strikingly underexplored empirically. It is this substantial knowledge void that this study purposefully seeks to illuminate. Leveraging established theoretical frameworks, the research will deliver a thorough examination of these correlates, thereby generating pivotal insights to steer impactful mental health interventions and foster humane, evidence-informed correctional policies tailored to the specific needs of awaiting-trial detainees in Oyo State's correctional centers.

### Research questions.

This study will be guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the correlation between social support and the mental health of awaiting-trial inmates in selected correctional centers in Oyo State?
2. What is the correlation between prison climate and the mental health of awaiting trial inmates in selected correctional centers in Oyo State?
3. What is the relationship between the quality of life and the mental health of awaiting trial inmates in selected correctional centers in Oyo State?
4. What is the correlation between religiosity and the mental health of awaiting trial inmate inmates in selected correctional centers in Oyo State?
5. What is the correlation between prison resilience and the mental health of awaiting trial inmates in selected correctional centers in Oyo State?
6. What is the composite contribution of the independent variables psychological and environmental factors (social support, prison climate, quality of life, religiosity, prison resilience) on the dependent variable (mental health) of awaiting trial inmates in correctional centers in Oyo State?

### Research Design

A descriptive research design of correlational type was used to investigate the correlates of psychological and environmental factors (social support, prison climate, quality of life, religiosity, and prison resilience) and the mental health of awaiting-trial inmates in correctional centers in Oyo State, Nigeria. It was designed for the purpose of describing the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable

### Population

The target population for this study comprises all individuals awaiting trial at correctional facilities in Oyo State. There are three correctional facilities, in Oyo State, Nigeria. These are: The Agodi Correctional Center in Ibadan, Abolongo Correctional Center, Oyo, and Ogbomoso Correctional Center, Ogbomoso.

### 3.3 Sample and Sampling Technique.

A sample size of three hundred (300) awaiting trial inmates were randomly chosen from two (2) correctional facilities they are Agodi Correctional center in Ibadan and Oyo Correctional center, Abolongo, Oyo town.

### 3.4. Instrumentation

The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) by Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet, Farley (1988) was used to measure perceived support from three sources: family, friends, and significant others, assessing an individual's social support network. The scale consists of 12 items rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from Very Strongly Disagree to Very Strongly Agree. Sample statements include "There is a special person who is around when I am in need", "My family really tries to help me", and "I can count on my friends when things go wrong". The reliability of the MSPSS scale was reported as .88, with internal reliability coefficients of the subscales: significant other ( $\alpha = .91$ ), family ( $\alpha = .87$ ), and friends ( $\alpha = .85$ ). Scoring involves calculating mean scores for subscales.

The Prison Climate survey, by Green et al; (2022), was used to measure the correctional facilities' environment of the awaiting inmates. The survey includes 23 items rated on a 5-point scale (Not at all to Very Much) covering aspects like facility livability, inmate support, staff-inmate interactions, threat, and sense of belonging. Sample items include "This facility has a livable atmosphere", "Inmates here care for each other", and "Staff take a personal interest in the progress of inmates". It exhibits good internal consistency (Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.85$ ),

is a questionnaire (2013) Bilotta and Grant, Windle, Hankins, Brief by Bowling-The OPQOL used to assess quality of life of the inmates. It includes a single global quality of life (QoL) item rating overall quality of life (Very good to Very bad) and 13 items scored on a 5-point scale (Strongly agree to Strongly disagree) covering aspects like enjoyment of life, health,

social support, independence, and financial situation. Sample items include “I enjoy my life overall”, “My family, friends or neighbors would help me if needed”, and “I have enough money to pay for household bills”. Scoring involves summing items with reverse coding of positive items, yielding a total OPQOL-Brief score where higher scores represent higher quality of life. The OPQOL-Brief shows robust internal consistency (Cronbach’s alpha 0.70-0.90)

,s religious life’assesses aspects of an individual (2001) by Idehen (ROT) The Religious Orientation Test seeking frank opinions on various dimensions of religiosity. The test includes items rated on a 5-point scale covering self-perceived religiosity, attendance at religious services, prayer frequency, reading of holy scriptures, engagement with religious media, and importance of religious belief in daily life. Sample items include “How religious do you consider yourself to be”, “How often do you attend religious services”, and “How important is your religious belief in your daily life”. Response options typically range from high engagement (e.g., Very religious, Frequently) to low engagement (e.g., Not at all religious, Never). Idehen (2001) found an internal consistency Cronbach alpha of 0.80 and a test-retest reliability correlation of 0.75. The ROT aims to capture facets of religious orientation and its potential influence on individuals’ lives.

(2008) and Bernard ,Christopher ,Tooley ,Wiggins ,Dalen ,by Smith (BRS) The Brief Resilience Scale s ability to bounce back from stress and difficult’masures an individualsituations. It contains 6 items rated on a 5-point scale: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly Agree (5), with some items reverse scored (BRS 2, 4, 6). Sample items include “I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times”, “I have a hard time making it through stressful events” (reverse scored), and “I usually come through difficult times with little trouble”. Scoring involves summing responses (range 6-30) and dividing by 6 for an average item score. The BRS shows good internal consistency (Cronbach’s alpha .80-.91) and test-retest reliability, useful in Behavioral Medicine for assessing resilience to stress.

University of ,by NHS Health Scotland (WEMWBS) being Scale-Edinburgh Mental Well-The Warwick and Universit ,Warwicky of Edinburgh (2006) assesses mental wellbeing focusing on positive aspects of mental health over the last 2 weeks. The scale consists of 14 items rated on a 5-point scale: None of the time, Rarely, Some of the time, Often, All of the time. Sample items include “I’ve been feeling optimistic about the future”, “I’ve been feeling relaxed”, and “I’ve been feeling close to other people”. Items cover feelings of optimism, usefulness, relaxation, interest in others, energy, problem dealing, clear thinking, self-esteem, confidence, and cheerfulness. Scoring involves summing item scores (1-5), yielding a total score indicating mental wellbeing. WEMWBS demonstrates good psychometric properties including validity, high internal consistency (Cronbach’s alpha 0.89-0.91), and reliability, making it suitable for assessing mental wellbeing in diverse populations.

### 3.5. Procedure For Data Collection

The researcher got a permission letter from the Department of Counselling and Human Development Studies and proceeded to seek the permission of the correctional officials permission.

#### Data Analysis

**Research Question 1:** What is the correlation between social support and the mental health of awaiting-trial inmates in selected correctional centers in Oyo State

**Table.1: Pearson correlation coefficients between social support and the mental health.**

Variables	1	2
Mental health	1	
Social Support	.317**	1
Mean	47.95	51.37
Standard Deviation	9.84	16.46

The table 1 above shows a positive and significant relationship between social support and mental health among the participating awaiting trial inmates. The results revealed several notable patterns. Social support showed a positive and significant relationship with mental health ( $r = 0.317, p < 0.05$ ). This implies that social support is significantly associated with mental health among individuals awaiting trial. As inmates who receive social support in the form of family visits, communication with friends or moral support from close associates are less prone to experience anxiety, sadness and hopelessness that could lead to mental health issues.

**Research Question 2:** What is the correlation between prison climate and the mental health of awaiting trial inmates in selected correctional centers in Oyo State.

**Table 2: Pearson correlation coefficients between prison climate and the mental health**

Variables	1	2
Mental health	1	
Prison Climate	.377**	1
Mean	47.95	67.16
Standard Deviation	9.84	17.76

The results in the table 2 above revealed that prison climate showed a positive and significant relationship with mental health ( $r = 0.377$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) of awaiting trial inmates in selected correctional centers in Oyo State. This implies that the better the prison climate, the better the mental health of the awaiting trial inmates. To be more exact, the inmates that find the environment more humane, organized and supportive have good chances of an improved psychological adaptation. An environment where there is fairness, considerations, inter-correctional and positive staff-inmate relationships in a prison leads to better coping with the stresses of being in prison. Provided a correctional facility was adequately supervised with more emphasis put on rehabilitation, instead of punishment, to a large degree the rate of mental health among inmates will increase. As a result, the promotion of mental health is based on the steps which would enhance the state of prisons, status of contacts between people in correctional centers.

**Research Question 3:** What is the relationship between the quality of life and the mental health of inmates awaiting trial in selected correctional centers in Oyo State.

**Table 3: Pearson correlation coefficients between quality of life and mental health.**

Variables	1	2
Mental health	1	
Quality of Life	-.281 **	1
Mean	47.95	32.03
Standard Deviation	9.84	9.1

Table 3 above shows that Quality of life had a negative and significant relationship with mental health ( $r = -0.281$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). This implies that a decrease in the quality of life perceived is accompanied by the worsening mental health. The presence of bad living conditions, the inability to access adequate medical services, overcrowding, recreational inaccessibility and restricted individual freedom are some of the major stress factors that augment psychological distress. On the other hand, the enhancement of quality-of-life indicators (such as nutrition, treatment and sanitation) will be likely to facilitate the psychological operations of prisoners and their general satisfaction with life which could lead to improved mental wellbeing.

**Research Question 4:** What is the correlation between religiosity and the mental health of awaiting trials in selected correctional centers in Oyo State.

**Table 4: Pearson correlation coefficients between religiosity and mental health.**

Variables	1	2
Mental health	1	
Religiosity	-.310**	1
Mean	47.95	13.48
Standard Deviation	9.84	5.46

The table 4 above shows that religiosity had a negative and significant relationship with mental health ( $r = -0.281$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). This implies that the mental health of inmates is influenced to some extent by religion. Though, the observed negative coefficient could mean that though religious can be used as a coping tool, a deep reliance on religious view might be a sign of increased mental illness among some inmates. The multifaceted relationship shows the dualistic perspective of religion as the key to strength and the indicator of internal anxiety or conscience. Notwithstanding, the results indicate the applicability of faith-based rehabilitation programmes in form of constituent elements of the psychological assistance within correctional centers in order to boost the mental health of the inmates.

**Research Question 5:** What is the correlation between prison resilience and the mental health of inmates awaiting trial in selected correctional centers in Oyo State.

**Table 5: Pearson Correlation Coefficients Between Prison Resilience and Mental Health.**

Variables	1	2
Mental health	1	
Prison Resilience	.176**	1
Mean	47.95	18.34
Standard Deviation	9.84	3.04

The results in the table 5 above revealed that prison resilience showed a positive and significant relationship with mental health ( $r = 0.176, p < 0.05$ ) of awaiting trial inmates in selected correctional centers in Oyo State. This finding shows that inmates who are more resilient in terms of optimism, flexibility, emotional regulation and problem-solving ability, shows high positive mental health results. Resilient inmates would have more ability to cope with the hardships of incarceration, pressure and sanity despite the severe environment. The present findings hint at the implementation of resilience focused programme in correctional centers. Intensive training, group therapy, and counselling training in improving coping skills among inmates can be useful in addressing their overall mental health.

**Research Question 6:** What is the composite contribution of the independent variables (social support, prison climate, quality of life, religiosity, prison resilience) on the dependent variable (mental health) of awaiting trial inmates in selected correctional centers in Oyo State.

**Table.6: Multiple Regression Analysis on Composite Contribution to Mental Health**

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
0.534	.285	.273	8.38928		
SUMMARY REGRESSION ANOVA					
Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	8238.539	5	1647.708	23.412	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	20691.711	294	70.380		
Total	124800.587	299			

Table 6 revealed that there was a composite contribution of the independent variables (social support, prison climate, quality of life, religiosity, prison resilience) on the dependent variable (mental health) of awaiting trial inmates in selected correctional centers in Oyo State. The result indicated a coefficient of multiple correlation of 0.534 and a multiple  $R^2$  of .285. This suggests that 28.5% of the variance in mental health of individuals awaiting trials could be predicted by the combined influence of social support, prison climate, quality of life, religiosity, prison resilience. Furthermore, the adjusted R square ( $Adj. R^2 = .273$ ) shows that 27.3% of the variance remained consistent even after adjusting for the number of predictors in the model, thereby confirming the robustness of the finding. In addition, the analysis of variance (ANOVA) for the regression produced an F-value of 23.412, which was statistically significant at the 0.05 level ( $p < 0.05$ ). This indicates that the regression model significantly contributes to the mental health of individuals awaiting trials when the independent variables are considered together. The implication of this finding is that the mental health of inmates is influenced by both psychosocial and environmental factors examined in this study.

**Discussion of Findings**

The findings of this study provide important insights into correlates of social support, prison climate, quality of life, religiosity, prison resilience and mental health of awaiting trial inmates in selected correctional centers in Oyo State. The study examined the relationship among social support, prison climate, quality of life, religiosity, prison resilience and how these variables impact the mental health of individuals awaiting trial. The results revealed that social support, prison climate and prison resilience were all positively associated with mental health, while quality of life and religiosity were negatively significant to the mental health of inmates.

Social support was found to be a powerful and favourable predictor of mental health of inmates. This suggests that persons who are emotionally, socially supported by their family members, friends or any other significant people in their lives are mentally stronger and more suited to face the traumatic experience of incarceration. Supportive connections create the sensation of belongingness, comfort, hope and consequently lessen the impacts of isolation, anxiety and depression. This result confirms the Social Support Theory proposed by Cohen and Wills (1985) that explains emotional and instrumental support of social networks as a buffer against psychological stress; mental health included. The fact that family and social relationships alleviate the emotional strain of inmates is also a tendency according to George (2021). In the Nigerian context, social support takes on an even greater significance because the environment is already marked by overcrowding, scarce resources, and a pervasive stigma that discourages open discussion of

mental-health struggles. Afolabi, Odedokun and Fatoye (2024) found that inmates who maintained close ties with family, friends, or supportive peers experienced far lower levels of anxiety, depression, and overall emotional distress. These relationships provide a sense of belonging, hope, and practical assistance—buffers that are especially vital when visiting hours are limited, when stigma makes it hard to seek help, and when the prison climate feels dehumanizing. Therefore, enhanced access to support groups and therapy, community outreach and expanded visiting programs might be essential in helping to ameliorate the mental problems of prisoners.

There was also a considerable positive relationship between the prison climate and mental health which demonstrates that inmates who see the correctional centers as fair, secure and compassionate are more likely to have a good mental health. Emotional anguish is minimised by a pleasant prison climate which is distinguished by trust, respect and positive staff-inmate interactions and leads to rehabilitation. Theoretically, the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, which was established by Lazarus and Folkman in 1984, offers a parsimonious framework of understanding these findings. A pleasant prison climate fosters adaptive evaluation and coping while a punitive, poor prison climate increases mental illness. Based on this, correctional centers must highlight the use of humane treatment, fair establishment of policies, and restorative practices that encourage dignity and psychological health of inmates. Afolabi et. al. (2024)

The study also indicated that quality of life is negatively significant to mental health, which suggests that inadequate living conditions in correctional facilities contribute to psychological discomfort among the inmates. The inmates who complained of substandard healthcare, diet, overcrowding of cells and fewer recreational or educational opportunities had the worse rates of mental health. Such results confirm the work of Odedokun (2025) who noted that awaiting-trial inmates experience a markedly low quality of life because the prison climate is compromised by several structural deficits: severe overcrowding strains existing facilities and reduces personal space, thereby undermining safety and autonomy; inadequate facilities limit access to basic amenities, further diminishing well-being; and the absence of meaningful activities and limited autonomy contribute to emotional trauma and psychological distress. These factors collectively lower inmates' overall quality of life, prompting the recommendation that administrators address overcrowding, provide sporting and recreational facilities, and offer training in interpersonal relationships, resilience, and coping mechanisms to improve psychological well-being.

Adefisoye, Adejumo and Olufemi (2024) also singled out low quality of life inside Nigerian prisons as a predictive predictor of depression, despair and aggressions. The findings consequently reveal a serious need to create institutional adjustments which concentrate on the welfare and human rights of the inmates. Not only would dealing with nourishment and access to healthcare and sanitation and opportunities for meaningful participation enhance the quality of life but also alleviate the psychological weight that comes

with

imprisonment.

The relationship between mental health and religiosity had a strong but negative correlation which demonstrates a complex and varied interaction between mental health and religion. While religion may be utilised as a means of coping by bringing purpose, hope and morality, too much or guilt-driven religion may be a symptom of misery or a hopeless approach to suffering. This subtle trend aligns with the study done by Toromade (2024) that found that many prisoners in Nigeria resort to religion as a tool of emotional survival and spiritual change; to some, the increased religiosity represents the excessive compensation of the inner conflict or the unresolved guilt. The relevance of these results is that therapies based on religion must be carefully structured to concentrate on balance, community and positive moral direction as opposed to fear driven repentance. By combining the use of pastoral care and psychological therapy, the beneficial elements of spirituality may be reinforced and the bad features of being emotionally vulnerable owing to excessive dependency on religious coping may be decreased.

Prison resilience has a strong relationship with the mental health and showed that inmates with higher flexibility, optimism and problem-solving abilities would have a stronger mental health. Resilient inmates are more likely to adapt to the stresses of prison, develop self-control and find purpose even in the face of suffering. This discovery confirms recent researches that define resilience as a buffer psychological element that helps to overcome the trauma and stress situations. Resilience is vital in the correctional situation because it allows inmates to withstand the uncertainties connected with awaiting trial, cope with emotional disturbances and have hope of coming back later.

The independent variables composite analysis indicated that mental health is a significant joint impact of social support, prison climate, prison resilience, religiosity and quality of life which means that there is an interaction between psychosocial and environmental situations in determining the mental health of inmates. The highest predictors with positive impacts were social support and prison climate while quality of life, religion, and the prison resilience had modest and positive roles. This pattern demonstrates how mental health predictors are connected in correctional centers. Ajayi and Bankole (2025).

## Conclusion.

The findings points out that social, environmental and psychological determinants interact in a complex manner that predominantly controls the mental health of awaiting-trial inmates in Oyo State. Social support and positive prison climate turned out to be the most

predictive variables, which highlights the critical role of the supportive social relations and the role of humane prison conditions. Prison resilience also presented a positive correlation thus highlighting the importance of resources of inner coping in negotiating the adversity. On the other hand, low quality of life in the correctional facilities as well as over-religiosity was linked to negative mental health. These results confirm once again that the mental health of the inmates is not only as a result of personal traits, but it is deeply rooted in a systemic and environmental context. In line with this, interventions that work have to be aimed at addressing both the internal and external aspects of inmate coping mechanisms as well as the outside factors of incarceration.

### Recommendations.

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

1. The correctional centers should institutionalise the structured social support programmes which will help in family visitation, mentorship and peer support networks in the prison institutions.
2. To better the institutional climate, the Nigerian Correctional Service should be strategic in terms of promoting procedural fairness, as well as proper supervisory oversight; it should also look into promoting positive staff-inmate relationships whose priorities are rehabilitative-focused.
3. The government should uplift the living standards of inmates by ensuring that they have access to balanced diets, medical and hygienic sanitation, a wide range of recreational facilities.
4. Religious institutions in the correctional institutions ought to cooperate with licenced psychologists to come up with balanced religiosity programmes that promote positive coping strategies and emotional recovery.
5. Thorough group counselling, life-skills training and vocational empowerment programmes, resilience-building workshops should be incorporated into rehabilitation procedures systematically.
6. In collaboration with health authorities, the ministry of interior should engage qualified mental health professionals throughout the correctional facilities with a view of providing continuous counselling, systematic screening and therapeutic interventions on the awaiting-trial inmates.
7. The reforms in the correctional areas should focus on cutting back on the long pre-trial detention through expediting the court proceedings so that people awaiting trial are not subjected to psychological torture of the of the offense they did not commit.

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