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UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

**RELIGION AS AN ORGANIZING PRINCIPLE IN ANKAFUL
MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON, GHANA**

BY

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

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Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

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ABSTRACT

In the field of penology, very few studies have paid attention to the role of religion in prison. The sparse scholarly studies are largely focused on the advanced countries, and rarely on prisons in Africa. In addition, the findings of the impact of religion on inmates have yielded mixed results. This study examined the *de facto* religious pursuits of inmates in attempts to cope with imprisonment, and at self-reformation for possible reintegration. The study was underpinned by social constructionist theory of reality and some functionalists' perspectives on religion. The study settled on mixed method approach to data collection. The semi-structured questionnaire data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences software. The transcripts of the in-depth interviews were also analyzed thematically using the Google Docs word search tool. The study found that while Ankaful Maximum Security Prison (AMSP) has been successful in its mandate of imprisoning convicts, the institution has failed in the rehabilitation and resocialization of inmates. These shortcomings, unwittingly, have given way to the various certified religious Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to operate supportive and religious functions in the prison. Evidently, not all inmates who participated in religious activities did so necessarily for redemption but for materialism. In addition, religion was seen as a means by which inmates were restoring their "spoiled identities", and conducting their impression management. For ex-convicts, their experiences of re-joining their families and faith communities were antithetical to what they expected upon discharge. A collaborative project by all religious CSOs to establish a sorely needed transition home to ease ex-convicts into the community is recommended.

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DEDICATION

To my late mother Elizabeth Tukwariba Yin

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AMSP	Ankaful Maximum Security Prison
ASCC	Accra Senior Correctional Centre
BCE	Before Common Era
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DSP	Deputy Superintendent of Prison
EPD	Early Possible date of Discharge
GPS	Ghana Prison Service
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDI	In-depth Interview Guide
IRB	Institutional Review Board
ISS	Interpretive Social Science
JHS	Junior High School
KEEA	Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abirem
LPD	Latest Possible date of Discharge
NCB	Narcotics Control Board
PENSA	Pentecost Students Association
POTS	Prison Officers Training School
PR	Prison Regulation
PSO	Prison Standing Orders
PSS	Positivist Social Science
QCEA	Quaker Council for European Affairs
SHS	Senior High School
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TDC	Tennessee Department of Correction
TLTFM	The Living Truth Foundation Ministry
UCC	University of Cape Coast
UCM	United Church Of Maximum
USA	United State of America

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

The objective to study religious lives of inmates in prison is neither to affirm nor to contest the veracity of their claims of conversion, or to promote religion as a panacea to reforming inmates. It must also be stated that this thesis is in no way claiming to prove the transformative power of religion based on the testimonials of inmates, prison officials or the outside clergy. The focus of this thesis is to examine, to document, to describe and to explain inmates' embrace of religion as an organizing principle in their: a) self-discovery, b) formation of meaningful interactions with fellow inmates, c) preparation for their future aspirations - upon release, parole, pardon, and even death.

As the focus of this thesis is on religion and prison, it is imperative to state that religion played critical roles in the development of the prison system, that is, formation and reformation of prisons from ancient Egypt to the modern era. For example, following Howard's agitation, the Penitentiary Act was passed in 1779 which introduced solitary imprisonment, labour regime, and religious instructions. The Gaol's Act of 1823 by Robert Peel in Britain introduced consistent visits to prisoners by pastors or vicars. In Pennsylvania, old jails were turned into state prisons where prisoners were placed into solitary cells with nothing other than religious literature with the idea that religious messages could transform the heart of the hardened criminal (Murty, 2004; McLennan, 2008).

The history and literature suggest that religion functioned as a tool to transform a) the prison system itself, and b) inmates' "unacceptable" practices

to practices that were considered acceptable by the larger society or as determined by social norms (Yin, n.d). In general, it is important to note that incarceration from history has drawn on cultural traditions, political ideologies, popular sensibilities, legal trends, academic theories (Kurian, 2006), and religious dogmas.

Despite the roles of religion in prison development, Elam Lynds expressed that:

We must understand each other; I do not believe in a complete reform, except with young delinquents. Nothing, in my opinion, is rarer than to see a convict of mature age become a religious and virtuous man. I do not put great faith in the sanctity of those who leave the prison. I do not believe that the counsels of the chaplain, or the meditations of the prisoner, make a good Christian of him. But my opinion is, that a great number of old convicts do not commit new crimes, and that they even become useful art, and contracted habits of constant labour. This is the only reform I ever have expected to produce, and I believe it is the only one which society has the right to expect. (Elam Lynds, in de Beaumont & de Tocqueville, 1979, p. 163-164).

The quote suggests how difficult it is to find inmates become religious persons after prison discharge. Most often it is common to hear speculations about how some hardened criminals have turned into religious beings while serving their prison sentence. However, it is difficult to justify if these inmates will display good behaviour (as determined by socio-cultural norms) outside the prison in case of discharge. To Lynds, religion plays a less significant role in the rehabilitation and reformation of prisoners. This position is not different from what is stated by Skotnicki (2000), that religious thought and movement cannot be considered as factors that contributed to prisoners' rehabilitation and reformation but rather it created a new prison system that had rehabilitation as its goal and the penal system as its method. More so, the works of Johnson,

Larson, and Pitts (1997), Johnson (1987), and Pass (1999) have all shown a negative relationship between rehabilitation in prison and religious programming.

Despite this belief and position above, Bedi (1998), in the study of the Tihar Jail argued that religion acted as an important tool for the reformation of offenders. This finding resonates with Gaur (2011) who propounded the view that religion played a vital role in the lives of inmates by way of transforming their behaviours from a violent one to a more peaceful one, as well as helped prisoners to rise above their selfish interests to that of societal interests. The empirical writings of other scholars such as Armstrong (2014), Baier and Wright (2001), Clear, Bruce, Harry, Kelly, Hardyman and Shapiro (1992), Johnson and Larson (2003), La Vigne, Solomon, Beckman and Dedel (2009), O'Connor, Yang, Patricia, Crystal and Estrelida (1997), Stansfield, Mowen, O'Connor and Boman (2017), Sumter (2000; 1991), and Young, Gartner, O'Connor, Larson, and Wright (1995) have all found a positive relationship between religious programming and rehabilitation of offenders.

These findings have made it difficult for academics and policy makers to conclude on the role of religion in prison. In addition, these non-coherent positions by these scholars suggest that, as stated by O'Connor and Duncan (2008), there are complex set of factors that have propelled the growth of the religion-penology debate. Perhaps it is plausible to assume that these contradictory findings may be attributable to the fact that in contemporary liberal democracies, religion in prison is encouraged and facilitated by the government in fulfilment of Constitutional rights of all persons. Inmates are not mandated to participate in any religion against their will. Thus, it is not

uncommon for inmates to subscribe to religion in pursuit of their own varying strategic interests as the situation warrants.

Another captivating issue is that the aims of religion and prison differ in some practical terms whilst at the same time they share certain similarities. Religion creates a sense of belonging based on shared moral values. Apart from these norms and moral values, religious code guide people's behaviour and actions by helping them to become useful members of the society. Nevertheless, to Clear et al. (1992, p.1) the prison is about "bad" things: criminality and chastisement whilst religion is about good things: sacredness and dedication. The inmate is considered a social outcast, eschewed by the public, "but the religious experience of 'conversion' promises to transform the prison experience from 'you are caught' to 'you are free'". That is, from control over the body or bodily imprisonment to spiritual salvation or redemption.

With a more recent emphasis on prison-approach, from punishment to rehabilitation and reformation, this objective is similar to the goal of religion. Despite the similarities and differences, Agnew (1992) argues that individuals are more vulnerable to a transformative dogma inside the prison environment. This is based on the assumption that the prison setting creates a small population where amalgamations of issues congregate to generate unique need for and access to "change". It is important to note that the message of religious repentance, of God's mercy and grace in various ways absolves the criminal from the emotional and subjective guilt if at all. In effect the established religious wing within the prison provides a noncriminal option - the rights of inmates to engage in legal and legitimate activities, and the thought to contribute

to their rehabilitation or reformation - within an otherwise incarceration institution (Yin, n.d).

As a consequence, religion is considered as one of the numerous treatment programmes integrated with other outcomes based ingenuities that offer people who desire corrections to achieve it (Rigsby, 2014). This has led to the development of faith-based programmes in prisons. The role of religion as an organizing principle in prison settings cannot be undermined, hence necessitating more studies into the religious adherence (observances and practices) in prison, and more specifically that of Ghana.

Statement of the Problem

The Ankafu Maximum Security Prison (AMSP) is a total institution expected to radically alter a person's personality through a predetermined set of administrative practices. Like any other prison in Ghana, AMSP operates in line with the Ghana Prisons Service mandates of safe custody, welfare of inmates, and rehabilitation and reformation of inmates. However, preliminary investigations at AMSP suggest that the facility is a total institution without structured rehabilitation facilities (formal and non-formal education, Information and Communication Technology, agriculture, tailoring, Kente weaving, blacksmithing, block/brick making and laying etc.). It is in effect out of the rehabilitation business. One can conclude that the prison has failed to live up to its objective of educating and preparing inmates for release. As a result, most inmates utilize their time to engage in religious pursuits, hence making religion the most important organizing principle in the lives of inmates. Similarly, the pervasive engagement of religious CSOs in the operations of

AMSP is in response to the agency's inefficiencies and lack of resources to fulfill its mandates. Despite the pervasiveness of religion in this rational legal bureaucracy, the issues of how religion interfaces with the prison, the role of religion, as to how, why, and what inmates have to say their religious beliefs and practices do for them have received little attention in scholarly writings.

There are strands of studies focused on the impact of religion in the lives of convicts and ex-convicts. Armstrong (2014), Beckford (2009), Beran (2005), Clear et al. (1992), Gaur (2011), Johnson and Larson (2003), La Vigne et al. (2009), O'Connor et al. (1997), Rigsby (2014), Stansfield et al. (2017), and Thomas and Zaitzow (2006) have examined, to a large extent, the disparities in the religious accommodation of inmates, inmates religious conversion, the validity of religion as a vehicle of inmates' rehabilitation and therapy, what counts as religion in correctional facilities, as well as post-release support offered by religious communities to ex-prisoners. The majority of these studies are limited to the confines of the prison. The very few studies (see Armstrong, 2014; Stansfield et al., 2017) that examined post-release support, especially the former, paid little responsiveness to the role of family and peers whereas the latter appeared to have overemphasised the role of faith communities, all in the reintegration process of ex-felons. These referred studies are Western and Asian focused.

Very few studies have till today explored the many aspects of religion behind prison walls in Africa. Akunesiobike's (2016) recent empirical study for instance, focused on the role of religious groups in offender reformation and the challenges encountered by these religious sects in Nigeria. Akih and Dreyer's (2017) scholarship paid attention to spirituality and pastoral care in Africa's

prisons. The latter's assessment remains a review without empirical data. Similar, but insufficient studies have also been carried out on prison chaplaincy in Africa (see Brault, 2014; Hausmann & Spooner, 2009, p. 215; Kusada, 2014). Other writings on religion-penology in Africa are just newspaper articles without scientific basis.

Prior empirical works on prison in Ghana, for example, Antwi (2015) has paid special consideration to the challenges faced by offenders in the transitional process of rehabilitation. Hagan (2013) examined the socio-economic impact of rehabilitation programmes of the Nsawam Medium Security Prison on inmates. Van-Ess (2013) assessed the HIV related risk behaviours among male prisoners in some selected prisons in Ghana, while Boadu (2014) examined the rate of overcrowding in prisons in Ghana. McCann (2014) assessed the challenges associated with prisoner intervention programmes in Nsawam Medium Security Prison, whereas Addai-Boateng (2015) studied the extent to which emotional support and administrative structures affect the reformation and rehabilitation of prisoners. Afari, Osei and Adu-Agyem (2015) investigated the impact of the guidance and counselling programme on prisoners as well as its impact on recidivism. These empirical researches are interesting in their numerous contexts, yet they reveal that more research works are needed, particularly in the area of religion-penology.

The scholarly works discussed above disclose that much of the existing literature on religion-penology is dominated by Western and Asian scholarship. The constrained focus of these studies can be problematic in an attempt to generalize to other prison populations in other jurisdictions. In the case of Africa, the perspectives shared by these writers have contributed greatly to our

understanding of religion-penology issues. However, the scholars' focus suggest that other constitutive elements of prison studies, such as inmates' accounts of their own religiosity in relation to their personal criminal history have yet to be studied. More so, the empirical researches on Ghana are very important in their own right, as they have made significant strides in the study of prisons and prisoners activities in Ghana. Nonetheless, their emphases suggest paucity of literature on the *de facto* religious commitments of prisoners and how inmates religiosity is preparing them for reintegration, as well as ex-convicts' experiential accounts in relation to the faith community and their family.

It is against this backdrop of extensive permeation of religion in AMSP and the void in literature that this study seeks to examine inmates' religious practices and observances as a facet of meaningful social relationship.

Objectives of the Study

The overall aim of this study is to examine the *de facto* religious commitments of inmates and the influence of such commitments in facilitating inmates' self-socialization towards reintegration into mainstream society.

The specific objectives are to:

1. Explore the structure and process of AMSP
2. Examine the social background of inmates
3. Examine inmates' religious beliefs and practices
4. Analyse inmates' religious adherence in the context of rights
5. Analyse the role of religion in the self-socialization of inmates into the society

6. Analyse the experiential accounts of ex-convicts in relation to the faith community and their family.

Research Questions

In the process of achieving the objectives set out for this study, the following questions will be answered:

1. How did religion emerge to pervade an otherwise secular and rationale-legal bureaucracy? (The extent to which the prison bureaucracy makes provisions for external religious organizations and individuals to proselytize in the confines of the prison so that willing inmates may subscribe. And, the extent to which religious CSOs contribute to the management of the prison, and in effect, contribute to the control of inmates' prison life).
2. In what ways do inmates express their religious faith in prison? (The extent to which inmates practice religion in prison vis-à-vis the various religious activities that help in adaptation to prison culture).
3. To what extent is religion significant in the self-socialization of inmates? (Inmates' religious conversion (or rediscovery) while in prison, the impact of their religious experiences and practices facilitating their self-socialization and eventual release).
4. What is the place of religion in reintegration? (The extent to which ex-prisoners' religious faith has enabled them to avoid the temptation to reoffend, or refrain from associating with criminal groups; and the extent to which religious organizations (faith community) and individuals that

render religious services to inmates extend such services to ex-convicts to help them disavow a life of crime).

Significance of the Study

Contribution to Scholarship

As indicated earlier, a number of scholars have researched into inmates' embrace of religion in prison. However, their focus suggest that there is more to be studied. Likewise, all the aforementioned studies on religion-penology were undertaken outside the jurisdiction of Ghana, with different groups, ideas, and experiences. This suggests that the knowledge and experiences garnered from the previous studies are more likely to differ from this current study in terms of its contextual experience and applicability. As argued by Mannheim (1936, p. 244), all knowledge and ideas are location bound, though to different degrees within the social structure and the historical process. Mannheim stated that:

Perspective... is something more than a merely formal determination of thinking. [It] signifies the manner in which one views an object, what one perceives in it, and how one construes it in his thinking. [Perspective] also refers to qualitative elements in the structure of thought, elements which must necessarily be overlooked by a purely formal logic. It is precisely these factors which are responsible for the fact that two persons, even if they apply the same formal-logical rules, may judge the same object very differently.

This implies the situational relativity of human thought and experience, as in the case of comparing previous studies with this current one. It is essential to bear in mind as argued by Mannheim (1936, p. 130):

... that not only do fundamental orientations, evaluations, and the content of ideas differ but that the manner of stating a problem, the sort of approach made, and even the categories in which

experiences are subsumed, collected, and ordered vary according to the social position of the observer.

On the basis of the above analysis of erstwhile studies, the numerous literature suggest that studies have been undertaken in relation to prison. These studies have significant differences in terms of thought and approach. However, there is some kind of a great similarity in the general way in which they have viewed and studied prisons and prisoners. That is, many of these studies have focused on the institutional frameworks of prisons and prisoners. The very few studies related to religion and prison are not related to Ghana but instead focus on other countries. Religion is pervasive in Ghana, yet it is uncommon to find some narratives about inmates' religious practices in prison. This means that a scientific study of religion in prison has yet to be undertaken. Hence, makes this current study on the role of religion in prison potentially fruitful for theory building, comparative analysis and understanding. Given that this is the first sociological study of AMSP, this study has implications for literature on religion and prison studies, criminology, and sociology of law. The study also provides a fresh insight into the religion-penology debate.

Contribution to Policy Formulation

The Prison Regulations of 1958 (L.I. 412), Prison Standing Orders of 1960, and the Prisons Service Decree of 1972 (NRCD 46) have all made provisions for the practice of religion in Ghana's prisons. These prison documents touted the significance of religion in "helping" prisoner's reform, and yet there is rareness of empirical studies of such claims. This study brings on board an appreciable level of empirical assessment of the role of religion and its implication for policy direction.

Unofficial Institutionalization of Religion

The Constitution of Ghana grants inmates the free exercise of their religion, but there is nothing in the constitution that stipulates that the government (the prison) should institute religion as a “tool” of rehabilitation. If religion is a governmental “tool” then it is an ideology - a false consciousness - aimed to pacify inmates to behave themselves. In this context, is religion really a spiritual quest or merely a mirage, or an illusion?

Ghanaians are overwhelmingly Christians and Muslims [71% and 18% respectively, Ghana Statistical Service, 2010] in a democratic country, but the nation-state of Ghana is not theocratic. If the practice of religion is a right, then the government (its agencies) needs not use religion as a “tool” of rehabilitation. Government agencies and civil servants must remain neutral in the execution of their services to the public or the wards of the state. AMSP is not in the business of using religion as a “tool” to rehabilitate inmates. Its task includes the facilitation of inmates’ rights to free exercise of their religious beliefs and practices within reasonable means.

It is the government’s Constitutional mandate to provide a religious facility for inmates to willingly, without coercion (*Quid Pro Quo*), to practice (or to abstain from) the religion of their choice within defined limits in the confines of the prison. It is the inmates’ choice to practice their respective religions in the facility as scheduled.

To this extent, religion remains in the sphere of civil society within the confines of prison. In this thesis, I will examine, from the standpoint of inmates, the instrumental (tangible rewards, leadership) and expressive (personal fulfilment, spiritual awakening) dimensions of religion. For sociological

analytical purposes, one needs to separate the Constitutional right of the free exercise of religion from the taken-for-granted assumptions that religion is an integral part of Ghanaian life, and thus a routine activity that everyone must partake.

Scope of the Study

The Ankafu Prisons Complex is composed of four prisons. These are; Ankafu Maximum Security Prison, Ankafu Main Camp Prison, Ankafu Annex Prison, and Communicable Disease Prison. However, the study area covered only AMSP. AMSP was chosen because of the following reasons: it is the only Maximum Security Prison in Ghana; it had the highest number of inmates within the Ankafu Prisons Complex; it had majority of its inmates serving a sentence of 15 years and above. The inmates were mostly high profile and hardened “criminals”. It had a Mosque and a Church (converted cells in this regard) with outside clergy from near and afar coming in to share with inmates the words of the Quran and the Bible. The composition of inmates is heterogeneous. Both Ghanaians and foreigners are found in the prison, hence, bring to the fore issues of religious differences and experiences, socio-political, cultural, economic, and normative dimensions.

Ankafu Main Camp Prison, Ankafu Annex Prison, and Communicable Disease Prison were exempted because of the transient nature of the inmates in such prisons. Despite the likelihood of such problems manifesting itself at AMSP, it was not expected to be rampant compared to the other prisons.

This study centres on inmates religious beliefs and practices before incarceration, in incarceration, and post-release incarceration experiences.

These variables - religion, rehabilitation/resocialisation, and reintegration will be examined in relation to the happenings within AMSP.

Working definitions

Religion: Beliefs, rituals, practices, and symbols (overt or covert) in and of a higher power considered by adherents and (or) a group of adherents (organization) as sacred and performs certain meaningful functions in their life and in the life of other believers.

Prison: All places of restraint of people suspected or convicted of a criminal offence by a court of competent jurisdiction (Barnes & Teeters, 1959, p. 329).

Inmate: Is a person above eighteen (18) years convicted of a crime by a competent court and serving a sentence in a prison.

Religious conversion: Assuming a new religious identity, or to change from one religious faith to another. There must be internalization of a new belief system by the individual concerned.

Resocialization: Efforts by mandated institutions to radically change an inmate's personality and behaviours through a predetermined set of administrative practices.

Self-socialization: A conscious effort by an inmate to alter his conduct through a series of practices and observances in alignment with community standards or this is the conscious undertaking by an inmate to reflect and to account for the transformation of his self-concept.

Materialism: It's basically inmates' pursuits of scarce resources such as food, clothes, money, friendship, and other donations from religious bodies or persons to supplement their needs in the austere or deprived prison setting.

Unofficial institutionalization of religion: Inmates are not mandated to practice religion; those who practice religion do that at their own volition; and at the discretion of the prison staff.

Organization of the Study

The structure of this thesis will proceed as follows. The first chapter provides a general introduction to the research by describing the following issues: background to the study, research problem, objectives and questions, significance of the study, scope of the study, definition of terms, and chapter organization. The second chapter engages significant scholarly works on religion and prison as well as the theoretical and conceptual framework guiding the study. Chapter three looks at the historical development of prisons, as well as the case of Ghana. Whilst chapter four describes the research methods.

Based on the data collected, Chapter five examines the structure and process of AMSP by showing why religion remains the single most important organizing principle in the lives of inmates. Chapter six analyses inmates' social background and their daily religious practices. Chapter seven examines some legal regimes on inmates' religious rights while chapter eight examines the role of religion in the self-socialization of inmates into the mainstream society. Chapter nine looks at the experiential accounts of ex-convicts, and how ex-convicts were received by both family and faith communities. Chapter ten is the

final part in which I recapitulate the key findings of the study, provide policy implications, give concluding remarks, and proposes areas of further research.

The ensuing chapter examines related literature in line with the objectives outlined for this study. It shows how the chosen theories are applicable to the study. And how the theories informed the conceptual framework.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The aim of this study is to examine the daily religious commitments of inmates and the effect of such commitments in facilitating prisoner reintegration. This chapter examines the numerous literature on religion and prison. The review is in line with the objectives of this study. Issues such as defining religion, components of religion, social functions of religion, religion and crime, religion and prosocial behaviour, prison life, prison-religion programmes, religion in prison, religion and prison subculture, religious conversion in prison, rehabilitation and reformation in prison, as well as reintegration of ex-convicts are thoroughly analysed. Theoretical and conceptual issues are also discussed below.

Religion: Definition and its issues

The history of religion is characterised by error and illusion (Radcliffe-Brown, 1945). To Gaur (2011), the exact place and time of the origin of religion is not really known. As a result, this thesis will not dive into its origin and history. That said, I have to make it clear from the onset of this chapter that in the sociological study of religion, certain things are not of so much importance to the sociologists. For instance, whether a particular religion is true or false (Assimeng, 2010), but rather the social functions of religion to individuals, groups, and its maintenance of social order is what matters (Radcliffe-Brown, 1945; Nottingham, 1952).

Unfortunately, there is no generally accepted definition of religion, as according to Beckford (2009) ‘What is religion?’ or ‘What is really religious?’ remain argumentative and has the possibility of rousing up disagreement in public life. Nonetheless, many scholars have attempted to define religion in their own way based on their background and understanding of the concept, as the concept means different things to the sociologist or anthropologist, the theologian, and the psychologist. In the Henry Myers’ lecture of 1945, Radcliffe-Brown stated that the common way of probing religion “is to regard all of them, or all except one, as bodies of erroneous beliefs and illusory practices” (p. 153). The implication is that only one type of religion may not be erroneous, that is, if we are to regard all except one, but how is such a religion determined? This will be a difficult question if not impossible to be answered.

The following are some definitions of religion with its identified key concepts in Table 1 below:

Table 1- Religion and Key Concepts

Scholars	What is religion?	Key concepts
Taylor (1873)	“Belief in spiritual beings”	Belief, spirit beings
Pratt (1920: 2)	“The serious and social attitude of individuals and communities towards the power or powers which they conceive as having ultimate control over their interests, and destinies”	Social attitude, ultimate power, interest
Durkheim (1912)	“A unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things; things set apart and forbidden which unite into a single moral community called a church, all those who adhere to them”	Beliefs, sacred, forbidden, unity, church
Martin (1957)	“Man’s response to what is ultimate in the human experience of existing in so far as that response is a conscious cultivation of one’s form of conscious being...”	Ultimate, human experience, conscious cultivation, conscious being

To Assimeng (2010), some of these definitions of religion exclude many or little fundamental items of religiousness. Practically, these definitions do not capture every meaning-granting and value-imbued act of human endeavour that may be considered within the ambience of religion. However, some common elements in these definitions are beliefs, spiritual beings and powers – all considered sacred.

Roberts (1984), identified the substantive definitions, the functionalist definitions, and the symbolic definitions as three basic definitions of religion.

The substantive approach centres on the “essence” of religion. This falls in line with Tylor’s (1873) idea of spirit beings, and Durkheim’s (1912) notion of the sacred. In respect of the functionalist definitions, Roberts (1984) exemplified Yinger (1970), that “we define a social institution as religious if it fulfils the manifest function of the religion”. That is, the focus on religion should be on what it *does* and not what religion *is*, as already discussed above. This approach by Yinger seems to be dependent on Malinowski, Radcliffe-Brown, and Evans-Pritchard. The last approach – symbolic - identified by Roberts (1984), epitomizes Geertz (1966, p.14) position of religion “as a system of symbols which act to establish powerful, pervasive and longstanding motivations in people by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic”.

These approaches of definitions adopted by Roberts (1984) from different scholars seem to examine religion from different angles and not from only one perspective. This approach to religion, to some extent, is all embracing and encompassing so far as our knowledge and understanding of religion is concerned. A definition of this nature is always best fit, as a result this study will examine subsequent issues from these multiple perspectives.

Components of Religion

For the purpose of this thesis and the likely themes that may emerge I will discuss in brief the following major components of religion: faith, self-surrender, emotion, moral values, self-sacrifice, devotion, inspiration, and spiritual and transcendental experiences.

Faith: According to James (1985), faith is about a belief in the glory, uniqueness and superior quality of the object of faith. This object of faith may be a “God”, spirit, or object. It may be something that can or cannot be seen. This object may be superior in character and intellect; or the inevitability, universality and relentlessness of a norm. The faith in an object is held firm as long as the value ascribed to the object of faith is not considered false, as it is evident that unless a person is of the view that something is powerful and of high value one cannot trust in it.

No human relationship with an object can flourish without faith. Faith produces trust, and mistrust engenders hatred and suspicion that may tear a society into pieces. Apart from religion, faith is relevant in the domain of science and logic. The *reason* for an action is distorted into disbelief if the person involved has no faith in its ability and effectiveness to produce sound judgement (Clark, 1958, cited in Gaur, 2011). Hence, removal of faith makes the science, morals, and logic indefensible, disordered and rudderless.

Self-surrender: When one gives up or yields up his personal will and sees him or herself as a tool for the comprehension of some Supreme-will. The person involved can sacrifice anything and everything of his (James, 1985, cited in Gaur, 2011) to glorify the Supreme Being. In some interpretations of Christianity, one has to totally surrender him or herself to Jesus Christ in order to be saved.

Emotion: Feelings activated by experiencing sorrow, hate, love, fear, hope, wonder etc., and frequently accompanied by certain physical changes, as increased heartbeat or respiration, and often obvious manifestation, as crying or shaking. To Gaur (2011), emotions may manifest itself to comprise an emotion

of reunification with supreme-being; emotion of esteem or admiration over the miracles of an Almighty; and an emotion of total obedience to His will. The harmony between human beings and universal being (Omni-present) provides the bedrock for emotions to happen.

Moral values: A set of principles that guide an individual or group on how to distinguish right from wrong. Moral values are usually used to justify decisions, intentions and actions. People with high sense of moral values typically show characteristics of integrity, compassion, courage, fairness, respect, and honesty. Moral values are essential components of religion, as Kant observes that religion is based upon morality and the existence of God is due to the existence of moral values (Matthews & Smith, 1923). This does not imply that religion and morality are synonymous. Religion is independent of morality and vice versa. Morality needs not religion to exist; nor do people need to practice a particular religion in order to have the characteristics of a moral being. At times, people perceive morality and exercise it from a religious perspective. Quite a legitimate point of view, but not all people view morality from that viewpoint. It is imperative to state that while some individuals need religion to be moral at certain stages in their lives, others moral behaviour is not reliant on religion (Arnold, 1897).

There are many theories that claim that religion is a main determinant in the development of moral values of a person. Nevertheless, moral values do not only depend on a person's religion, but also the individual involved (Elifson, Peterson, & Hadaway, 1983). Irrespective of this analysis, both moral values and religion strive hard for the development of human outlook and seek

improvement in behavioural patterns. The two concepts develop along and influence each other (Arnold, 1897).

Self-sacrifice: To deny oneself for a cause; to give up one's own interests in order to help others. Religionists are of the view that self-sacrifice is that state of amalgamation with divine, the ground of all being, for less there is self, more there is Him; the self of individual vanishes in the oceanic being of divine (James, 1985, cited in Gaur, 2011). In Christianity, it is believed that Jesus Christ sacrificed himself for all humanity to be saved.

Devotion: This means loyalty, love, or passion for religious activities. Devotion sprouts out of faith. Through devotion and love one can achieve spiritual insight (James, 1985). The acts of paying tithes and giving offering, alms to the poor all demonstrate devotion.

Inspiration: An influence or power of moving the emotions of a person. Transcendental experiences, spirituality, and undoubted expectations kindle this emotion of inspiration. Whether this feeling of inspiration is self-induced or due to any supernatural power is difficult to determine. Nonetheless, inspiration derives its sources from faith in that object of inspiration and that this inspiration plays important role in the lives of individuals (James, 1985).

Spiritual and transcendental experiences: Like stated earlier, religion is about sacred things, transcendental aspects of the life and world. According to Turner (2003), no matter a tradition, culture, or people, there is somewhat mystical and spiritual experiences. These experiences, whether spiritual and transcendental give the individual some kind of a feeling of complete satisfaction, be it physical, biological or psychological. These experiences are

means through which the individuals depart from the human self to experience the infinite and cosmic consciousness.

Social functions of Religion

Sociologists, according to Assimeng (2010), have discovered the social functions of religion for any particular society as follows:

1. Maintenance and support of the social order;
2. Control of the activities of men and women in their encounter with their social and natural environment;
3. Provision of circumstances which bring people together to participate in common activities understood and meaningful to them, such as festivals in traditional societies;
4. Regularization of the network of social relationships and;
5. The ultimate source of cohesion in society.

Religion in Ghana

Religious composition in Ghana

The religious composition of Ghana in the first post-independence population census of 1960 was 12% Muslim, 38% traditionalist, 41% Christian, and 9% for other religions. In 1985, the Christian (62%) and Muslim (26%) population increased significantly. The population of traditionalists and non-believers declined to 22% (Owusu-Ansah, 1994). According to the 2010 government census, 71% of the Ghanaian population are Christian, 18% are Muslim, 5% are indigenous faith persons, whilst 6% belongs to other religious groups or has no religious beliefs (Ghana Statistical Service, 2010).

Christianity in Ghana

Christianity in Ghana is dated to the arrival of the Portuguese in the fifteenth (15th) century. In the nineteenth century, the Basel and Wesleyan missionaries laid the foundation for the Christian church in Ghana. Presently, there are various Christian denominations in Ghana. This includes among others Evangelical Presbyterian, Catholicism, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church), Methodist Church, Seventh - day Adventist Church, Anglican Church, and many other organized and unorganized churches.

The unifying organization of Christians is the Ghana Christian Council, founded in 1929. The Council represented the Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, Evangelical Lutheran, Mennonite, Evangelical Presbyterian, African Methodist Episcopal Zionist, Christian Methodist, F'Eden, and Baptist churches, and the Society of Friends. The Seventh-day Adventist Church is not a represented member of the Christian Council, however, the church shows a strong presence in Ghana. The link between the World Council of Churches and other ecumenical bodies is bridged by the Christian Council (Agbeti, 1991).

Some members of the Christian community believe that through their beliefs in the Son of God - Jesus, and in his death and resurrection, they can have a good connection with God whose compassion was made once and for all through the death of the son of God. A number of Christians believe in the Trinity - that is, the three God heads; God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Some Christians believe that God took human form as Jesus Christ and that God is present today through the work of the Holy Spirit and evident in the actions of believers. The religion promotes moral behaviours based on its faith and teachings.

Christmas and Easter are the major Christian celebrations, usually recognized as national holidays. Many people use these occasions to visit friends and families who are near and afar. These occasions are characterised by sharing of food and other gifts to vulnerable people like the sick, prisoners, and the physically challenged. However, to Max Assimeng (2010), “apart from funerals in Ghana, people no longer come together on large scale, although we have remnants of this spiritual togetherness at Easter, Christmas, Id el Fitr, as well as annual traditional festivals which still serve as generators of social cohesion and collective stock-taking”.

Islamic Religion

The prophets of Islam are most often identified as those humans selected by God to be his messengers. The prophets, according to the Qur’an were mandated by Allah (God) to bring His will to the peoples of the nations. One of the central teachings of Islam is that all prophets are human beings and not divine. According to Islamic theology, all the messengers of God proselytized the message of Islam, that is, submission to the will of God (Robson, 2003).

Muhammad, is believed by Muslims to be the last law bearing prophet to carry the celestial message of God to the whole world. The "normative" example of the Prophet Muhammad's life, in Islam, is called Sunnah (literally "trodden path"). To Robson (2003), all Muslims are to emulate Muhammad's actions in their daily lives. This issue of emulation is preserved in Islamic traditions known as hadith, which recount his actions, words, and his personal characteristics. Islam teaches members to uphold good behaviours and promote the course of moral soundness.

Indigenous religions

According to Nukunya (2003), the concept of the High God or Supreme Being is very common to the traditional people of Ghana, long before the introduction of Christianity and Islam. This makes Christianity and Islam foreign religions in Ghana. The relationship between family loyalties and local mores have contributed greatly to the sustenance of traditional religions in Ghana. The traditional cosmology expresses belief in a supreme deity referred as Nyame in Twi, Nyogmo in Ga, Mawu - Dangme and Ewe (Owusu-Ansah, 1994; Nukunya, 2003). Apart from believe in Higher God's, is believe in smaller gods that take "residency" in stones, animals, rivers, streams, trees, mountains etc. These smaller gods are usually professed as mediators between the Supreme Being and society. According to Nukunya (2003), though the small gods are multi-functional in their labour and accomplishments, some tend to specialize. For example, the Nyigbla god of the Anlo and Tano of the Akan (Ashanti) are regarded as war gods though their activities are never limited to this.

According to Owusu-Ansah (1994), ancestors of the local people and plentiful other spirits are also recognized as part of the cosmological order. Just as the physical world is considered real, so is the spiritual. The double worlds of the ordinary and the consecrated are connected by a web of reciprocated responsibilities and relationships. In this religion, it is believed that the action of the living can affect the gods or spirits of the departed, while the support of family ancestors ensures prosperity of the lineage or state. One major characteristic of traditional religions is the worship of dead family members, regarded as the most instantaneous linkage between the spiritual world and the

physical world. To maintain a balance between the profane and the sacred, family elders have critical roles to play. The functions of such elders are manifested during festive occasions.

Like the two other religions discussed above, some traditional religions also detest local members from stealing and doing other bad things that may harm the community. Bad people are punished whilst good people are blessed by either the Higher or smaller gods.

Religion and Crime

In a study of high school students by Hirschi and Stark (1969), it was established that there was no correlation between criminal behaviour and church membership, as churches failed to teach their members to love their neighbours. The churches' "failure", as argued by them, "would seem acute" (1969, p. 203). Burkett and White (1974) argued that while it is challenging to squabble with the findings of Hirschi and Stark (1969), their conclusions attract questions. Christian adolescents like many other adolescents do engage in unlawful activities. This may mean that some Christians are not living up to the implications of biblical teachings, but it could also mean that the Christian adolescent faith is an honestly effective influence; nonetheless other secular or worldly influences are equally effective. Could the findings of Hirschi and Stark (1969) hold true for other countries like Ghana? Or other religious faith such as Islam, Judaism etc.? I share that, whilst some adherents may express and demonstrate "love" to their neighbours, others may be unable to do so. After all, the church may preach about love but it behoves on the individual to practice it. This, to some extent, points to the fact that churches, unless they are cults, are

not in the business of controlling the behaviours of individual members. The quantifying of religiousness as church attendance in the work of Hirschi and Stark leaves much to be desired as their research seems to have focused on self-professed religious adherents.

To Burkett and White (1974), there is a strong relationship between religion and victimless crimes like marijuana and alcohol use. This I think does not suggest that to engage in a particular religion necessarily prevents one from engaging in such victimless crimes. Apart from this, to some extent there is a victim, in an event of death, the consequences of such crimes may be on the survivors of the deceased.

Religion deters criminal behaviour (Banks, Maloney, & Wittrock, 1975; Jensen, 1981). Criminal behaviour had a strong inverse relationship with church attendance, and church membership than with other specific religious beliefs like belief in God, heaven, after life etc. (Ellis & Peterson, 1996). This implies that the number of times people attend religious services do not determine whether they will engage in criminal activities or not. This is also suggestive that people go to church for varied reasons and not necessarily to curb their criminal behaviours and tendencies. However, to Evans et al. (1996) participation in religious activities may reduce the risks associated with both minor and serious forms of delinquent behaviours. Ellis and Peterson (1996) have been critiqued for using few number of countries in their study. In that, a more broad based study could have added more credibility to the findings of the study considering the variability within and among other countries.

Baier and Wright (2001) have established that religion has a statistically significant effect on crime. This position differs from what was established

previously by Hirschi and Stark (1969); Ellis and Peterson (1996), but coincides with the study carried out by Banks, Maloney and Wittrock (1975); and Jensen (1981). The authors indicated that “highly” religious communities showed stronger deterrence effect on crime. Thirumalai (2004) also found that, the deterrent effect of religion on crime was strong. Could the same effect be found on inmates in a prison that is regarded to be religious?

In several empirical studies that used belief in a personal God and supernatural beings, the findings were non-coherent. According to Thirumalai (2004), studies that did not clearly indicated its measures of religiosity showed some kind of ambiguous link between criminality and religiosity. Other empirical studies revealed that different denominational groups have different levels of commitment to their religious beliefs, as a result there are differences in terms of their criminal behaviour. In a comparative study of Jews and Christians, it was revealed that Jews had lower level of criminal activities compared to Christians (Ellis, 1984). What accounted for these differences? What could be said about the various religious denominations in prison such as Islam, Christianity, indigenous religion etc.?

Many studies in the area of religion-criminology used church attendance as indicator of a person’s religiosity. This method is obscure. To Elifson et al. (1983), church attendance is most likely compared to “classroom attendance” (p. 78), an indicator of performance considered as poor. Nevertheless, they showed in their studies that a relationship existed between religious activities like personal prayers (Benda & Corwyn, 2001), religious salience, and criminal behaviour. Criminality is of course not totally dependent on church going or the number of times one attends a church service, but rather other secular factors

like peers, parents, and environmental dynamics play a significant role in terms of influencing a person's attitude towards committing a crime (Fernquist, 1995).

Religion was found to be an unimportant predictor of criminal behaviour when other variables such as parental control and peer influences were added in the multivariate analysis (Fernquist, 1995). However, other empirical facts (Freeman, 1986; Jang & Johnson, 2001; Johnson et al., 2000a, b) suggest that in communities characterised by poverty, decay, disorganisation, and disadvantaged the effects of religiosity remain significant. For example, in respect of individuals living in inner city areas of Boston, Chicago, and Philadelphia, it was discovered that a person's religiosity helped him/her to do away with drug use and other unlawful activities. An implication of a strong relationship between religion and poverty. Poverty may make people religious, as they may always want to seek answers and solutions from a supernatural being other than human. To Johnson et al. (2000), religion was not only significant in respect of crime but also in terms of making better grades in school, as well as find and retain stable employment.

Out of these analyses, it is obvious that the relationship between religion and criminal behaviours are mixed, yet, one thing that comes up clear is that apart from the numerous factors in the society, religion is among the influences that shape people's behaviour towards crime.

Religion and Pro-social Behaviour

Empirical evidences (Johnson, Larson, Li, & Jang, 2000; Jang, & Johnson, 2001) indicate that individual religious commitment, and religious congregations can help avert urban youths who may be considered as high risk from engaging in delinquent behaviour. Other evidences show that individuals, particularly youths who have a long history with religion may benefit from the cumulative effect of the practice by reducing the risk of involvement in illicit drugs (Jang & Johnson, 2001). This is a clear case of religion as a protective factor. Shielding its members from violating social norms.

The link between increasing religiosity and higher levels of prosocial behaviour has received much attention in recent years. Among this numerous research, is found that religious commitment is a source of promoting social well-being, hope, meaning, purpose, and self-esteem (Koenig et al., 1999), and educational accomplishment (Johnson et al., 2000b). Undeniably, the more religious people are, the more likely they are to give to charities and to volunteer time for civic purposes (Brooks, 2006).

According to Byron and Curtis (2014), research has shown that individuals involved in prosocial activities and attitudes - something that forms an integral part of faith-based organizations and many churches - seems to reduce the risk of violence among youth. It is believed that having a good understanding of the issues associated with prosocial behaviour will help in the improvement of future intervention and prevention strategies. Disentangling the role of religion in our societies, religious sects and institutions such as the prisons and hospitals, as well as religious beliefs and practices in promoting

prosocial behaviour among the youth should be a priority for academic researchers, hence the reason for this very study.

Prison Life

In the empirical work of Crank (2010), it was shown that about 33.5% of inmates agree or strongly agree that prison life is not difficult, while 66.6% of inmates disagree or strongly disagree with that assertion. Those who disagreed, probably may have felt the pain of imprisonment, as Menninger (1968, p. 71) stated that: "Imprisonment carries out the idea of punishment that law interprets it and seems to be that inasmuch as the individual has offended society, society must legally offend. It must deliver him a tit for the tat that he committed. This tit must not be impulsive retaliation; not mob action. It must be done dispassionately by agency, by stipulation and by statute. It must be something that will make the offender sorry for what he did and resolves to do more".

Crank (2010) found out that the perceived prison difficulty exhibits a statistically significant association with whether crime was the easiest way to achieve one's need. It was shown that inmates who view prison as a difficult place do not share in the perspective that crime is the easiest way for one to get what he/she want. These category of inmates indicate future intention to escape crime after prison discharge. To Crank, these relationships shows that prison life was more meaningful to such inmates whilst at the same time it did not serve any meaningful deterrent to those who did not perceive such life as difficult.

These positions depend on whether the inmate involved is young or old, as most youth found incarceration as not difficult whilst the aged thought

otherwise. However, it was clear that the off-putting effect of prison varies according to how one perceives prison life, that is, whether difficult or not. Also when people perceive prison as difficult, it may at times strengthen their intents to go directly into the society after discharge from prison. It is most likely that those who find prison life difficult are those who may be inclined to religion for protection or for solace. This is based on the assumption that religion relieves people of some psychological burden, and as a result those inmates turn to it for many other purposes (Yin, n.d). That is why it is important for some researchers in the area of penology to turn their attention to religious matters in prison.

Sykes (1958, p.64) observed that: “The deprivations and frustrations of prison life might be viewed as punishments which the free community deliberately inflicts on the offender for violating the law”. Among the deprivations is liberty. The aim of these deprivations, mostly, is to make the prisoner change his ways, however, Gaur’s (2011) empirical work showed that many prisoners wasted their potential and settled for destructive activities such as gambling, fighting, drug abuse and sodomy. Those who made use of their talents in activities like sports, religion, music, arts, education, and agriculture improved their individual skills and potential.

In Gaur’s (2011, p.76) work on India prisons, when the question of “What do you feel about imprisonment or prison life?” was put to inmates, multiple responses were received. Among these responses, 81% of inmates viewed their imprisonment as the will of God. This response should place religion at the heart of prison work, as religious interpretation of imprisonment serves as adaptation technique used by inmates. Religion in this regard can also serve as a tool for rebranding and reshaping of inmates. About 48% saw

imprisonment as a platform to cultivate the ambition of becoming useful members of society, about 21% said it was an opportunity for inmates to repent of misdeeds, 17% as source of deterrence, 34% the emergence of a better person, 58% proximity with God and His creation, 47% the retrogression of progress, 41% the opportunity for correction, 29% the source of incapacitation, 29% the place of spoiling, whilst 43% saw prison life as the source of inclination towards criminal tendencies. This portrays different experiences of prisoners in respect of prison life. Whilst some inmates saw imprisonment as a useful tool others also saw it as not beneficial. Nevertheless, the value inmates placed on religion shows that indeed religion is an important aspect of prison life.

Gaur (2011) presented important case histories about prison life such as:

Imprisonment compels us to understand the value of social norms, therefore, we change our attitude towards society. Incarceration period increases our attraction towards our children, parents, family members and society. This phenomenon creates in us a firm desire for becoming a member of the society again.

Prison is a place where one can take a lesson from his past misdeeds and correct himself. It is like a school where both the intelligent and inapt students exist. Intelligent students learn something and improve their behaviour; while duffer students get contaminated, become more inapt and ruin themselves.

All these show the difficulty and frustration of imprisonment, nevertheless, to Gaur, Social Welfare Organizations and NGO's that highly participated in prison activities helped many inmates to improve their physical and psychological well-being. These organizations aided the contact of prisoners with the free-society and made them aware of trends and happenings in the free-society.

Prison Programmes

There are institutional programmes that aim at rehabilitating and reintegrating offenders into the society. Many prisons across the world have in common programmes such as vocational training, formal education, individual and group counselling. To Baumer, O'Donnell, and Hughes (2009), drug treatment, life skills, educational and vocational preparation are examples of multiple programmes designed for inmates in the attempt of curbing their propensity to recidivate. The reason attributed is that there is a correlation between unemployment and crime (Boufard, MacKenzie & Hickman, 2000). Hence, focusing on these vocational and educational programmes are very critical in prisoner rehabilitation. As it is revealed in the meta-analysis of Cullen and Gendreau (2000); Wilson, Gallagher and MacKenzie (2000), that the focus on academic and vocational programmes in prison could reduce recidivism. Despite the promise of prison programmes, not all inmates enrol due to the pain of imprisonment (Abotchie, 2008). Nevertheless, the potential benefits of religious programmes and the implications for inmates' prison adjustment and reintegration into the community, as well as its implications for institutional management has received little attention (Thomas & Zaitzow, 2006).

To Thomas and Zaitzow (2006), due to the number of years prisoners are supposed to serve, many administrators are of the view that prison programmes form essential components of incarceration, as it helps the prisoner to deal with the problem of time. The more there are programmes to engage inmates the less likely inmate inactivity turns into resentment. Religious activities in prison, according to Fox (1982) help inmates to use their energies and talents in beneficial and meaningful ways. In the review of Thomas and

Zaitzow (2006), they argued that, for some inmates, programmes present the alternative for them to involve in gang related activities. However, informal religious activities may provide opportunities for inmates' to make use of available resources. For example, the formation of prayer groups, singing groups, spiritual peer counselling, or individual faith based exploration, enable inmates to come together to use prison church materials.

Religion in Prison

In the empirical work of O'Connor and Duncan (2011) on Oregon prison in the USA, they showed that most inmates (60% of men and 66% of women) consider themselves to be both religious and spiritual. This finding is consistent with the study of Zinnbauer (1997) that 74% of inmates were spiritual and religious, with 19% considered to be spiritual but not religious, 4% were religious but not spiritual, and 3% were neither religious nor spiritual. This shows that religion is both pervasive in our prisons and societies in general. The problem with the work of O'Connor and Duncan (2011) is that they depended so much on the Oregon Prison Religious Service staff survey which was conducted in 2004, when they could have collected a more recent data to represent a more recent opinion or perspectives on the subject matter.

There are many religious groups in prison. The dominant religious groups are usually the ones dominating in the local society. Based on data provided by the Tennessee Department of Correction (TDC) in 2011, as shown in the work of Montgomery and Turner (2013), the religious preferences of 20,259 inmates indicates that about 65.33% of inmates preferred Christianity – various protestants denomination, 25.80% had no preference/ atheist or

agnostic, 3.6% preferred Islamic/ Muslim or Mohammedan, 2.61% were Christian – Catholic, whilst religions such as Wicca, Buddhist, Mormon, Satanist etc. had less adherents. This finding is similar to that of O'Connor and Duncan (2011), where they found that majority (48%) of inmates were Christian/ Protestant, 7% had no religious preference, and 7% preferred Catholics, with the remaining inmates having preference for other religions.

The data show that majority of inmates are Christians but it does not connote that Christians are criminally oriented. Whether a particular prison will have more Christian inmates or Muslim inmates depends on the social or religious structure of the community within which the prison is located, as well as the available laws. It would not be surprising to have many inmates with indigenous religious affiliation (traditional practices) in an environment where such traditional practices dominate. The many religions in prison epitomize religious diversity in prison. This is a wakeup call that religious groups outside prison have critical roles to play in prison, as well as the need for states support system.

In the empirical article titled *The Value of Religion in Prison: An Inmate Perspective*, Clear, Hardyman, Stout, Lucken, and Dammer (2000) indicated that the practice of religion in prison is somewhat influenced by prison culture, the presence of different racial and ethnic groups etc. which they called “prison society” (p. 56). The meaning of religion in prison was attributed to different levels – individual and societal levels. The former is the fact that every inmate has different reasons for being religious, whilst religiousness is largely influenced by the presence of religious people in prison - societal level. Clear and Sumpter (2003) showed that the relationship between inmate religiosity and

their adjustment to prison conditions was statistically significant. This position by Clear and Sumpter is epitomized by O'Connor and Perryclear (2003), that religion played an important role in the rehabilitation of inmates. Nonetheless, they noted that attending religious services was not enough to convert inmates into being morally upright people; but rather inmates must highly be involved and participate in the religious services. This position is not different from what previous authors established between church attendance and crime. It must be stated clearly that the church is regarded as a hospital where people who seek treatment go for help, thus, it does not take a day for the church to heal its members of their infirmity or criminal behaviour, but rather it is a gradual process that requires time and commitment. As a result church attendance may have an effect on members in the long run but in the short run, may not.

Religious Programmes in Prison

Religious programmes are programmes (fasting, prayer, song ministrations, bible studies, evangelism etc.) geared toward promoting the faith of an adherent or connecting the adherent to his/her deity. In a qualitative report by Ofcom (2005), these programmes show personal faith in action, from a 'committed', subjective and involved point of view. They show how an individual's faith affected their lives, and culture. In the same report, participants stated that religious programmes should not just be about ritual and worship, but also about contemplation, meditation, and reflection.

According to Clear et al. (2000), "the emphasis in promoting the expansion of religion-based programmes indeed lies in the claim that faith in a higher power prevents relapse into criminal activity better than secular changes"

(p. 53). Reducing recidivism is one main reason why religious programmes are promoted in prison. Apart from recidivism, Kerley, Mathews, and Blanchard (2005) also established that the propensity of inmates to argue and fight was directly and indirectly reduced by religiosity. Some of the reasons for inmates' being religious, according to Clear et al. (2000, p.53) were attributed to their way of "dealing with guilt" - some kind of internal coping mechanisms (Koenig, 1995), to "find a new of life" in *God* or supernatural being, "dealing with the loss, especially freedom" as they claim to get another kind of freedom or redemption from their found religion, as a measure of "safety", to gain "material comforts", to get "access to outsiders" through visits of pastors or Imams and other religious organizations, and to maintain "inmates relations" as religious practices encourage good relationship with peers and neighbours (Clear et al., 2000, p.54). This supports the assertion that religion was used by many inmates as a coping strategy.

Religious Conversion in Prison

Religious conversion usually means to change from ones' previous way of life to a religiously accepted way of life. The converted person now becomes a born again. Not all conversion may be true, however, it is very difficult to distinguish between a conning person and a converted person as one would not easily know whether the self-acclaimed converted person is not conning. The difficulty in distinguishing, according to Kilbourne and Richardson (1989) may be the reason for the disparate need of research into the origins of conversions. According to Snow and Machalek (1983, p. 265), instead of asking the question of, what is conversion? Rather we should ask "what is it that changes when

someone converts?'. Paloutzian, Richardson and Rambo (1999) are of the view that a person's experience yields small by way of change that is measureable in that person's character, nonetheless in its place, conversion revolves reflective change in a person's disposition purviews such as self-identity and personal goals.

To be a born again Christian or Muslim means adopting not only the Bible or Quran as a book of faith but also abiding by the teachings and practices of the book. This new-found faith gives meaning or offer direction to the converted person (Gallagher, 1990). Both Christianity and Islam give the individual the opportunity to re-examine the world. Likewise, inmates who genuinely either embrace Christianity or Islam or any faith may have the opportunity to reflect on their lives and the world in general.

Religion and Prison Subculture

Like the outside world, prisoners form their own culture with traditions, norms, and a leadership structure (Sykes, 1958). To Carroll (1974), some inmates form cliques based on what they share in common. These cliques may be based on professional, racial, or country lines whilst other inmates may choose to mingle with only a few close friends (Jones & Schmid, 2000).

According to Irwin (1980), there is a prison subculture just like there is in the normal social world. This implies that many activities that take place within the prison may be a reflection of the 'free' world. Inmates join this subculture for many reasons, which may include for protection against physical abuse and theft from other clique members or gangs. Nevertheless, the need for protection from other clique members does not negate protection from prison

wardens, as generally, all inmates are under the protection of prison authorities. Joining a religious sect and engaging in religious practices in prison forms part of prison subculture. Inmates may join these religious sects for many reasons that include among others the need for spiritual and physical protection.

Clemmer (1958) found that inmates in prison for short periods - a year or two could endure deprivations or withdrawals for that short period due to the belief that their confinement would not last. As a result such inmates are hardly assimilated into the prison subculture. However, this depends hugely on whether the inmate is a recidivist or not. In that for a recidivist that criminal subculture is part and parcel of him or her. This may account for easy assimilation and not necessarily dependent on whether the said inmate is serving a short or long sentence. For lifers and long sentence inmates, the prison is their home, hence the need for survival. They learn to adapt to the prison environment, whether it is pleasant or unpleasant.

Out of prison adaptation, subcultures are developed to sustain inmates' daily practices - this may range from engaging in illegal activities to legitimate activities in prison - as it helps inmates adjust to the deprivations (such as from sex, movement, etc.) of prison life. Inmates' ways of acting or doing things, feeling, and thinking becomes shared practice. Drowns and Hess (1995) asserts that to be assimilated into the prison subculture is greatly influenced by educational attainment, socioeconomic status, marital status, age, race, and the extent to which the inmate is involved in criminal behaviour.

Inmates with the intention of returning to illegal activities enjoy the prison subculture, as it is consistent with the imbibed criminal values they may want to explore upon release (Zaitzow, 1998). Prisoners' long lack of contact

with the outside world - such as the church or any religious group of affiliation, family, and other significant groups - promotes easy acceptance and internalization of the intolerable prison values and behaviours (Jones & Schmid, 2000). The After-Care unit of the prisons plays an important role in linking inmates to their families, churches, and friends – with the aim of strengthening social bonds and promoting easy reintegration.

In the review of Thomas and Zaitzow (2006), prisoners find natural ways to adapt to their prison environments. But the question is, do they have an option not to adapt? What would become of inmates if they refuse to adapt? One may be tempted to think that adaptation is the only option, as prisoners' inability to adapt would mean expulsion. The consequences may be great depending on the prison structure, and the relationship that exist between inmates and prison officers. Whatever the situation may be, inmates' must develop their own techniques to survive - that may become a subculture in itself. To Thomas and Zaitzow (2006), these techniques may include the following: withdrawal, conning, passivity, aggression and predatory behaviour, manipulation, and spirituality. Many of these adaptation techniques have been empirically investigated, however, among these techniques, the role of spirituality or religion in respect of how it helps prisoners adapt has received little attention from scholars.

Religion, Human Rights, and Imprisonment

Religion and human rights are deemed to have complex and inextricable relationship. According to Witte and Green (2015), most religions have supported repression, violence, and prejudice. Despite this, most religions at the same time have played critical role for universal human rights. Witte and Green argued that, these religions have provided the essential scales and sources of dignity and responsibility, respect and shame, restraint and regret, restitution and reconciliation that human rights regime needs to flourish and survive in any culture.

Human rights are rights inherent to all persons, irrespective of sex, religion, race, language, nationality, ethnicity, or any other status (United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948). These rights imply a particular view of what a human being is and his/her relationship to the state, community, and other persons. The human rights corpus is not a faith or a set of normative principles suspended in outer space; it borders on matters that affect the daily routine politics of people and institutions. According to Kymlicka (1995), all individuals should have the same opportunities to participate in the construction of the institutions and practices of the polity and should be equal before the law. However, people who are convicted of criminal offenses forfeit certain rights. These rights may include the right to freedom and liberty, movement, privacy etc. Notwithstanding, prisoners, irrespective of the crimes committed are still entitled to the following: the right to fair trial, protection from retrospective laws, slavery, right from torture, the right to life, and religion. It is for the latter that international and national laws make provision for prisoners to practice their religion of choice.

Prisoners are a vulnerable group of individuals whose rights can easily be violated as they are restricted and isolated from the free world. Prisoners barely have the opportunity to access legal assistance even when they have such rights. Within the African context, and to be specific in Ghana, prisons are relatively well less resourced compared to the developed world (Kaguongo, 2003). Infrastructure is a huge challenge for prisons in Ghana. As a result, many prisons suffer from the problem of overcrowding and the easy spread of communicable diseases (Hagan, 2013; Ofori-Dua, 2015). These challenges expose prisoners to an environment where their rights can easily be violated by prison officials.

Amidst these problems, there are many statutes that aim to control the behaviour of inmates. These laws regulate the clothes inmates should wear, their visitors (i.e. the number of visitors inmates can receive within a week or a month), their diet (type of food), bedding, and waking time. All these are 'degradation functions' of the prison toward inmates (Garfinkel, 1956). There are schools of thought that hold that the strict enforcement and implementation of these prison laws makes inmates comply with to the prison conditions and to the dictates of prison officers (Cullen & Johnson, 2012). Through this, warders exercise control over inmates' activities to achieve the reformative and rehabilitative objectives of the bureaucracy, that is, if rehabilitation is ongoing.

Rehabilitation and Resocialization in Prison

To Cullen and Jonson (2012, p. 25), “the concept of rehabilitation rests on the assumption that criminal behaviour is caused by some factors. This idea postulates that committing crime is not only the freewill of the offender, but violating the law is also due to a person’s psycho-social environment and development, or biological make-up”. The main justification behind rehabilitation is that, if breaching the law is caused by certain environmental factors such as social, economic, and psychological, then reoffending can be dealt with if the right correctional intercessions are put in place.

There are three different perspectives on imprisonment of offenders of the law. Some scholars are of the view that incarceration is the way to deal with criminals, as harsh sanctions is believed to deter people from committing further crimes. The second perspective shares that prisons should be scrapped off or abolished. The abolitionist share that the prison institutions have been unable to rehabilitate or reform prisoners; hence all prisons irrespective of the type should be shut down (Cullen & Johnson, 2012). To Conklin (1995), the prisons have failed to rehabilitate and prevent inmates from reoffending after being released. In as much as it has failed in this regard, it is also an inhumane approach to dealing with people who commit crime. Lanier and Stuart (1998) are in favour of community controls and community treatment replacing the prison system. The final view shares in the domain of rehabilitation of inmates. These scholars are of the view that imprisonment provides the opportunity to help inmates to rethink and reshape their lives through training and moral guidance (Lewis, 2009).

In respect of the third school of thought, educational and vocational programmes have been introduced in some correctional facilities to serve a rehabilitation function for inmates. To Schumacher and associates, those inmates who were enrolled in vocational and or academic programmes were more successful after discharge than those who did not enroll in any. Baumer et al. (2009) assert that educational and vocational preparation, drug treatment and some other life skills training are examples of programmes designed for inmates with the purpose of economically empowering them in order to curb their propensity to recidivate. Notwithstanding, other factors such as age, and previous experiences of incarceration play a role in recidivism.

The aim of prison, as a total institution is to equip inmates with skills they can apply in the labour market upon discharge (McKean & Ransford, 2004). Tyler and Kling (2005) have argued that educational programmes in prisons are not only meant for the purpose of economic opportunities, but for inmates to also acquire knowledge, in terms of numeracy, writing and reading skills.

Harrison and Schehr (2004) share that rehabilitation programmes in prison are not effective and do not work in curbing recidivism. These authors are of the view that the debilitating prison environment is not the ideal place for rehabilitation programmes, but rather outside the confinement walls of the prison. In the context of Ghana, Hagan (2013) makes the point that educational programmes in the Nsawam Medium Security prison is fraught with challenges such as lack of trained teachers and text books, as well as lack of motivation for both teachers and student-inmates. These problems make rehabilitation in prison almost impossible. Boufard et al. (2000) and Lewis (2009) argued that

most of the studies that seem to have favoured rehabilitation as effective lack rigor in its methodology.

Resocialization is critical to the development of inmates. If the essence of imprisonment is to rehabilitate convicts then the needed structures must be in place to teach inmates new values and norms, and practices (Crossman, 2017). New roles must be assigned to inmates to aid the resocialization process. The education of inmates in prison is one of the ways of helping them put aside their former self and adopting a new self that reflect the mainstream culture (Antwi, 2015; Hagan, 2013). In the context of this thesis, through religious training inmates adopt 'good' virtues to replace their previously acquired criminal traits of defrauding by false pretence, stealing, robbery etc.

Reintegration of Ex-convicts

Maruna, Immerigeon and LeBel (2004, p. 5), define offender reintegration as “a systematic and evidence-based process by which actions are taken to work with the offender in custody and on release, so that communities are better protected from harm and reoffending is significantly reduced. It encompasses the totality of work with prisoners, their families, significant others and victims in partnership with statutory and voluntary organisations”. To other scholars, “Social reintegration of offenders is the coming back of prisoners into the community to continue normal life” (Ajala & Oguntuase, 2011, p. 187). This new life must be supported by the family, friends, and faith communities. According to Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA) (2011), families play a vital role in the reintegration of ex-felons. They do this by offering them the needed support and stability. Loneliness and social

isolation are significant factors in some kinds of offending, notably sex offending, a stable family can provide a degree of social capital. This implies that, the benefits of positive support that ex-prisoners receive from close friends or relatives can make a difference in mitigating recidivism and promoting successful reintegration (QCEA, 2011).

In line with the above, some scholars have argued that providing informal support is essential for successful ex-prisoners re-integration (La Vigne, Visher, & Castro, 2004). These support help prisoners with social, mental and psychological problems (Petersilia, 2003; Travis et al., 2001). Consequently, strong family bonds provide the desirable social resources that help in reintegration. Bales and Mears (2008) showed that ex-convicts who had **good** family relationship tend to have high rates of successful reintegration than inmates who did not.

In respect of faith communities, according to Cnaan (2000), one can easily assume that there are faith communities in most neighbourhoods with the necessary resources and ready to accept ex-prisoners and help in their reintegration process. However, McRoberts (2002) shows the differences between many faith communities who visit inmates while serving their time in prison and the few programmes directed toward helping ex-felons in the challenging transition of reintegration. According to Bazemore and Erbe (2003), the type of community offered by faith communities could be important in the re-entry process. This has largely been neglected. The greater involvement of faith communities in re-entry does not only provide the forums of informal social control but also provides offenders the opportunity to act on faith community groups in the re-entry process because faith communities'

engagement is reciprocal. By this, it appears that the capacity of faith communities to help ex-felons reintegration depends on the kind of supports the faith communities have to offer and the faith communities' capacity to nurture ex-convicts in their paths towards successful reintegration (Shapland & Bottoms, 2011). The work of Armstrong (2014) shows that faith communities offered a favourable environs for ex-convicts to exhibit new behaviours both to themselves and others.

Successful reintegration of adult offenders also depends on securing reasonable employment. Lipsey (1995) revealed that, getting employment for ex-convicts is one of the single most effective means of reducing re-offending among ex-prisoners. Visher, Sara, Sherril and Haner (2005) and Berg and Huebner (2011) argue that gaining good and legal employment ensures post-release success of offenders (also see Bushway & Reuter, 2002; Duwe, 2010; Hagan, 1993; Mackenzie, 2006; Sampson & Laub, 2003, 1993; Uggen, 2000). Petersilia (2003) observes that if inmates gain employment after post-release, it plays a critical role in the reintegration process. Unfortunately, this is mostly not the case, as imprisonment makes people less likely to be employed (Brown, 2011; Schmitt & Warner, 2011). Unemployment of ex-convicts had devastating consequences on their lives (Small, 2005). It is for this reason that Adams, Chen and Chapman (2016) are of the view that ex-convicts should have employment opportunities opened to them.

Summing up the above, if inmates are embraced positively by families and faith communities, with employment options available, reintegration process will be smooth. If not, life will be lacklustre for the ex-convicts.

Theoretical Frameworks

In this theoretical framework, I used perspectives shared by theorists like Durkheim, Malinowski, and Parsons (all functionalists – macro sociological) and the social constructionist (micro-sociological) approach to the study of religion in prison. These perspectives bring different analysis to the table as the latter examines religion as reality of social construct by inmates, whilst the former examines religion (structure) in light of what it does for the inmates.

Durkheim, Malinowski, and Parsons Perspectives

The functionalist perspective on religion shares that religion contributes to the fulfilment of social order and stability within society (Durkheim, 1912; Malinowski, 1954; Parsons, 1937, 1951). In its application to the study of prison inmates, inmates who participate in religious activities are taught to respect prison regulations, authority, and fellow inmates. This is not just an obligation but also a requirement for survival in prison. By this, social stability and order is achieved within the prison environment, as behaviours contrary to a particular religious teachings and prison regulations are condemned and regarded as unacceptable by fellow inmates, visiting religious CSOs, and prison chaplains. This kind of doctrine calms down tension among inmates as they tend to forgive persons who offend them, and even at times forgive prison warders who may have breached their rights.

Among the functionalists who discussed religion extensively is Durkheim (1912); he studied a religion called totemism in Australian aboriginal culture. The totem is a sacred symbol and is the object of worship. Members

paid allegiance to this object of worship as they considered it meaningful to their lives. In this study, to Muslim inmates the moon is a sacred symbol hence it is common to see their mosque decorated with images of the moon. The said inmates conform to worship in the direction from which the moon appears. Whilst the Christians have the cross as its sacred symbol. The Christian inmates believe that it is only by the cross that salvation came to humanity. Therefore, believing in the death of Jesus Christ on the cross brings salvation and hope to them. That, if they die in prison there is paradise for them. These sacred symbols are valued by the community of inmates' believers not as means to ends, but because the inmates' religious community has bestowed their meaning on them as part of its worship. This is based on their religious reality construction.

According to Durkheim (1912), if all the essentials of society are the result of religion, then it is simply because the knowledge of society is the soul of religion. Identifying the origin of religion as social, Durkheim argued that religion united and provided identification for people in a society. In the same vein religion unites inmates. Christianity and Islam bring together inmates. Christian inmates are united in one course, Muslim inmates are united in one course, whilst inmates who subscribe to traditional religions are also united in one course. This brings out issues of identification, as inmates are identified on the basis of their religion - Christians, Muslims, and traditionalist respectively. By this, religion becomes the cement of the prison, as it becomes the anti-individualistic force *par excellence*, inspiring inmates' communal devotion to ethical ends that transcends their individual purposes (Durkheim, 1912, cited in Coser, 2010). With common beliefs and practices among inmates, religion strengthens the social norms and moral codes held together by inmates.

To Durkheim (1912), religion provided meaning to life, as well as provided authority figures. The Christian inmates believe that there is a reason for everything and that all things work together for good to them that love Jesus Christ. This makes inmates see their presence in prison as the will of God and that in God's own time things will be better for them to leave the prison. In addition, through religion, inmates have pastors and Imams who are regarded as 'holy' inmates. They are regarded as authorities in the Church and Mosque, and many inmates accord them with respect and dignity. From the above, it can be deduced that religious phenomena act as social control on inmates – that is, religion define for inmates what is 'good' and what is 'bad'. Religion brings cohesion among inmates. It also acted as means of communication and congregation for inmates to interact and reaffirm their social and cultural norms within the prison.

The functionalist Bronislaw Malinowski (1954) carried out a similar study to that of Durkheim's. Malinowski shared similar views, for example, the belief that religion reinforces social norms and values and promotes social solidarity. Malinowski connects religion with situations of emotional stress and anxiety in society - critical part that was also noted by Durkheim. In applying this to prison studies, admitted inmates who are emotionally stressed are comforted with religious sayings and beliefs such as God has a reason for you being in prison. God wants to use this place as a tool to transform and reform you into a better person. Religion therefore takes care of the emotional needs of inmates. If an inmate dies, religious rituals such as prayers are said by inmates for the deceased with the belief that the inmate shall rise upon Christ's return. This depends on whether the inmate lived a better life while serving his

incarceration. By implication, inmates' religious adherents offered them an assurance of life after death. This belief also depends on whether the inmate praying is a Christian, a Muslim, or a traditionalist.

In traumatic times such as the death of a convict, inmates pray for the dead and for themselves, particularly for a renewal of heart to do the right things in the sight of God. In a prison setting, funerals are not performed as one may observe outside the prison, nevertheless, inmates come together to share their encounters with the deceased with other inmates. This brings inmates together for a particular purpose, as well as ignites the relationships between inmates. For example, inmates who are at logger heads amends tension and friendship. Religious rituals functioned in prison to reduce anxiety and provide a feeling of control to inmates, a point Malinowski clearly made. This means that, religion performs some kind of a euphoric purpose by counteracting inmates feeling of frustration and loss of faith and assurance by re-establishing the inmates' sense of security (with their deity) and moral rightness of the prison (Malinowski, 1954; Durkheim, 1912). A direction towards inmates own self-rehabilitation and self-socialization.

Talcott Parsons (1937, 1951), like Durkheim and Malinowski, affirms that religion is a significant contributor to the norms and values of society. Religion offered inmates with different religious beliefs and practices the common grounds for deliberation. Whilst this may show a common environment, it does not necessarily imply a common practice. It demonstrates how at times these differences may clash, and how inmates manoeuvre their ways to ensure the practice of co-existence. It is important to state that, despite the differences, religion performs an integrative function among inmates,

facilitate consensus formation, while also defining the moral boundaries of inmates. Here, religion then becomes a key component of reforming the inmate to conform to the norms, values, and beliefs of the society.

Like Malinowski and Durkheim, Parsons expressed that religion acts as a mechanism to come to terms with when people die, by restoring a normal pattern of life. Parsons commented on his belief that religion provides answers to questions, for instance, suffering is imposed by God to test one's faith; suffering with courage will bring the reward of heaven, whilst also suffering is a punishment for sin (Parsons, 1937). By this, inmates answer questions such as why in prison? What is the essence of suffering? The common answers may be, that is the will of God, I'm suffering because of my sins, I'm suffering because there is always joy after suffering, and many others. With these answers, inmates appreciate their state and learn to live with it. This is an expression of how inmates construct religiousness in prison.

All these theorists argue that, religion is a means through which inmates are reformed. Their minds and hearts are softened by religion to accept the general social norms and moral principles. They tear down their criminal make up so they could easily self-socialize themselves for reintegration into the community. By this, upon release from prison, they are likely to renounce a life of crime.

These theorists make good contributions to the study of religion but they failed to touch on the dysfunctional aspects of religion. With their perspective's preoccupation with harmony, integration and solidarity, these scholars neglect the many instances where religion can be seen as a divisive and disruptive force (Glock & Stark, 1965). For example, a misunderstanding between Muslim and

Christian inmates could lead to conflict, which could be devastating inside the prison arena. These theorists overlooked the individual experiences of religion in prison, hence the need for the social constructionist theory.

Marxian Approach

This approach will not be applied in this study. However, it is discussed because of the unique perspective it shares on the subject matter as well as the critiques it offers to the stand point of Durkheim, Malinowski, and Parsons. In a much-quoted essay that Marx wrote in 1844: “religious suffering is, at one and the same time, the expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people”. Marxism is of the view that religion is an illusion (see Marx & Engels, 1950a; Bottomore & Rubel, 1963), and is there to make inmates ease the pain of inequality, oppression and abuse of their rights by prison warders. Religion is the tool used to make inmates accept their imprisonment. But then what is religion to inmates in prison? For many inmates (who care less about religion), religion is the forum to access material resources via the Civil Society Organizations that are ordinarily inaccessible.

The promise that, even if inmates die in prison there is heaven and eternal life is to soften the pain of imprisonment, so inmates can endure their period of incarceration. This makes inmates not to rebel against the prison system. It gives the idea that those inmates who suffer in misery will be rewarded in the end with heaven. Religion makes inmates accept their bad condition. Inmates do not react to crude treatment because of the belief that such

treatment will make them a better person. By this, some kind of illusion is created. Here, religion becomes a tool used by prison authorities to oppress the inmates so that social order can be maintained.

Inmates accept the master-servant (inequality) relationship as normal when in actual fact equality should be the norm. That is, religion makes the unsatisfactory lives of inmates bearable. In this case, religion tends to discourage inmates from attempting to change their situation and the status quo. It offers an illusion of hope in a hopeless prison condition. It prevents inmates from the thought of overthrowing or breaking down the prison system. It does so by providing explanations and justification for inmates' incarceration. This suggests that religion creates false consciousness in inmates, which in effect, blinds them from seeing their true situation and their real interests.

Despite the contributions made by this perspective as a critique to Durkheim, Malinowski, and Parsons, it is important to note that at times inmates rebel against their conditions by way of rioting in prison, rejecting meals, and not sleeping on time. Hence, the claim that religion creates some kind of illusion is not always the case. This is because, at times they recognize their predicament and react accordingly.

It is noteworthy that although the functionalists and Marxian approaches express different arguments, they both portray a similar aspect. Both perspectives suggest that religion and the 'eternal life of heaven' are used to comfort inmates during their life in prison. One can therefore conclude that both perspectives bring different analysis of religion to the table, making the debate interesting and not one sided.

Social Constructionism

Social constructionist theory is popularly attributed to Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1967). Berger and Luckmann (1991) were concerned with the nature and construction of knowledge. Burr (2003) acknowledges the influence of Mead, Marx, Schutz and Durkheim on the thinking of Berger and Luckmann. The central theme of the theory is that interactions by individuals and groups in a social system generate, over time, concepts of each other's actions. Through this, meanings are created, negotiated, sustained and modified (Schwandt, 2003). In other words concepts become accustomed into mutual roles played by the actors. Through socialization these roles are passed on to other generations which are then institutionalized.

Burr (2003) submits that our identity initiates not from within a person but from the social environment. Through significant others such as family members, friends, and other individuals who intermediate the reality of society, socialization takes place – reality is internalized by individuals (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). Individuals or group belief and conceptions of what reality is turn out to be entrenched in the institutional fabric of society, and made into tradition by humans. By this, knowledge is viewed as created through individual interactions (Schwandt, 2003). Reality is therefore socially constructed. And this social reality is ongoing, a dynamic process that is replicated by different people acting on their interpretation and knowledge of that reality (Vygotsky, 1978).

Religion is a socially constructed reality. Inmates' view of religion becomes highly dependent on narratives and their social experiences. Inmates may develop or identify their religious identity while being in the 'free' society

or in prison. This identity is dependent on the meaning and interpretation they give to their object of worship or deity. Out of this, inmates maintain interdependence and their individuality in respect of the deity they pay allegiance to. In addition, Inmates' identity initiates not from themselves but from their social setting. Through their interactions with significant others they construct their own religious reality. That is, how they comprehend and how they think religion contributes to their prison life based on their lived experiences.

Inmates may share that religion is the factor sustaining them in their situation. And because of religion they have shunned bad friends and are now showing compassion and love to others - a position that has made them to eschew evil ways, and given them a new identity. Reformatory and self-rehabilitative identity in this case. Inmates may be of the view that their contact or interaction with religious persons either in prison or outside prison has shaped their understanding of how they view imprisonment and how they are to live in the community. As a result, inmates may adopt religion as a technique to survive in prison.

Inmates' interpretation of religion therefore may enable them to construct their own reality in the prison setting. A number of questions emanate from the reflex: How do inmates account for their religiosity in the context of their situation (imprisonment)? How is their religious beliefs enabling them to do good, maintain optimism, and constraining them to avoid trouble or violating the law?

Social constructionist theory of reality has been criticized for the lack of ability to change things (Bury, 1986). Inmates' views become their subjective

lived experiences, and therefore cannot be judged by others lived experiences for change. Another criticism is that, human activity has not been fully addressed within constructionism. Berger and Luckmann (1991) maintain that change is brought about by human activity. They note that while reality is always socially defined, it is individuals and groups of individuals who define it. Many people, that is, if not all, always try to present their versions of issues to prevail over other people's versions (Burr, 2003). According to Burr (2003), this is connected to power, because it tends to be the more privileged or influential persons who are the most fruitful at having their version of events dominate. In this case, the views that constitute inmates' lived experiences could be described as the views of the ruling class. Despite these criticisms, this theory allows for the grasping of inmates' account of their perceptions and realities of their lived experiences. The experiences of the other actors such as the prison officials, the CSOs clergy, all contribute to the construction of realities in the prison setting. Far from being reductionist, social constructionism encompasses reality construction as a product of the ways in which the social structure enables and constraints social actors in any setting (Giddens, 1991).

Justification of Theories

Social constructionism calls for an understanding of how the inmates explain away their experiences. Social reality is situational. It is linked to structure which both enables and constrains the inmate. However, the inmate is not a puppet. They make decisions based on their own understanding of reality. These realities are shaped through interactions and experiences with others

which give them a different view of things, at times different from what is held by the structure. Notwithstanding, the individual is tied to the structure and is influenced by the structure, and vice versa.

The macro-theory views religion in prison as not an individual consciousness but a share collective consciousness as their view is a product of social forces - the degree of social integration. Whilst the micro-theory views religion as an individual consciousness. Collectively, adherents share in a particular faith, but in tandem, individual adherents utilize their religion to their own ends. The theories highly complement each other.

Additionally, the micro and macro-sociological theories adopted for this study are linked to the positivists and interpretivists approach to data collection in chapter four. The data collected through the latter was viewed through the micro-theory whilst the data collected through the former was examined through the lens of the macro-sociological theory.

Conceptual Framework

This framework is built on the understanding that, right from the development of prisons – from ancient Egypt to this modern era – some programmatic structures and religion have played a rehabilitative and reformatory role in the lives of inmates and in transforming the prison system. With reference to the objectives, literature, and the underlying theory is the conceptual framework and its simplified explanation.

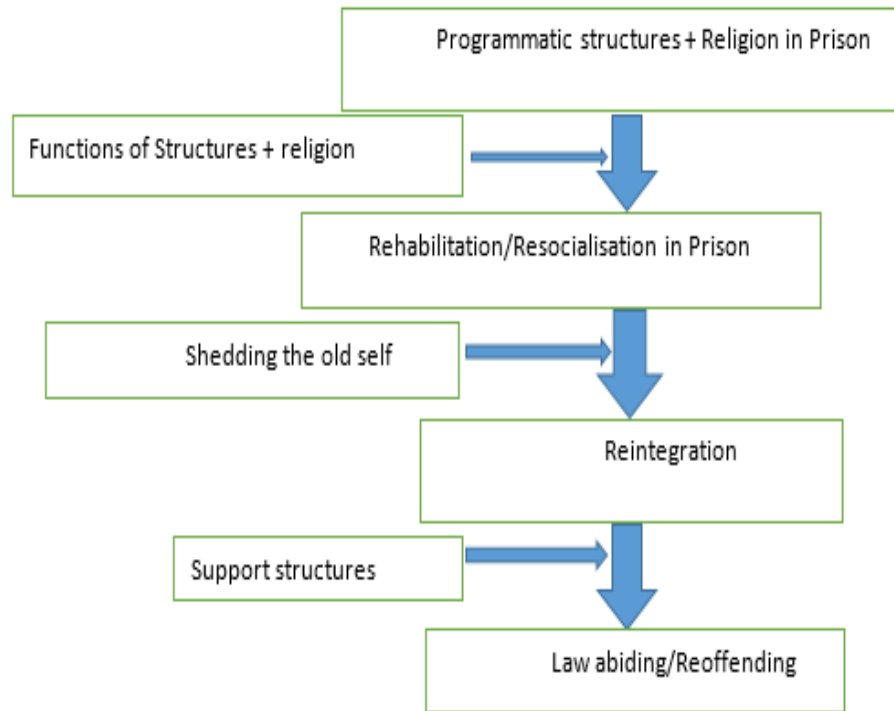


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

Source: Cullen & Jonson (2012); McKean & Ransford (2004)
 La Vigne et al. (2009); Armstrong (2014); Goffman (1959)

The literature review revealed that rehabilitation of inmates is the key aim of the prison as a total institution. Rehabilitation/ Resocialisation means equipping inmates with skills through educational and vocational programmes, and other life skills opportunities, so that upon discharge ex-convicts can easily apply themselves legitimately for economic gains. As well as helping inmates to internalize the norms and values of the mainstream society through counselling and other support services. These structures are officially mandated, unlike religion. Through these officially mandated structures, the personality of an inmate undergoes radical alteration through a process of degradation, punishments and rewards - such that upon discharge he is able to be reintegrated into society.

Religion borders about beliefs in spiritual beings, rituals, morals, values, symbols etc. Just as the structured rehabilitation programmes, religion performs crucial functions in the prison environment as discussed in the light of Durkheim, Malinowski, and Parsons. It influences inmates' construction of their own realities, as well as prison officers and religious CSOs view of inmates' conversion processes.

Religious individuals - be they certified clergy or inspired inmates - are allowed to proselytize to prison inmates. The inmates who subscribe to religion in prison do that at their own will. It is expected that when an inmate embraces a particular religion, he internalizes the precepts of the faith, and that he will live an exemplary life in conformity to the teachings and practices of the faith. The outward conduct of the inmate - his demeanour, his sense of brotherhood, selflessness, kind gestures, and respect of authority signals to others the ongoing transformation of the inmate's self-perception. That is, the act of consciously shedding the old (criminal) self in tandem to forming a new (redemptive) self. All these become part of the inmate's reality construct, and his attempts at impression management. Thus, purposively shaping others' favourable perception of him. This is the underlying principle of Ervin Goffman's *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959). This is even more the case in a defined and bounded setting of a total institution.

Through programmatic structures and religion, some inmates work towards shedding their old self. That is, unlearn old criminal traits to learn new accepted traits such as self-mortification; conscious denial of indulgences (tendency to steal, cheat, and lie) to fulfil one's own self-interest, dissociating with bad friends, and the conscious and voluntary pursuit of an emergent new

self. This facilitates the reintegration process. Consequently, restoring and maintaining an inmate's new identity. However, upon the inmate's discharge, this newly acquired identity is subjected to the available support services.

With support structures such as family embrace, employment opportunities, half-way houses, After-Care services, and with the faith community extending their services to the ex-convict, he exorcises the temptation to reoffend. La Vigne et al. (2009) found that ex-convicts who identified themselves with a religious organization or a faith-community were less likely to reoffend. In the probable manner that these structures are not available, the propensity for the ex-convicts to reoffend is high. This is exquisitely captured by Armstrong (2014, p.6) who stated that "...the capacity of faith-communities to assist desistance and ex-prisoner reintegration may depend on the kind of 'community' they have to offer and its capacity to nurture and support individuals in their paths towards desistance post-release".

Summary of Chapter

It is clear from this chapter that religion is an important issue in prison although different scholars share similar and poles apart views. It is obvious from the reviews that Sociologists and Anthropologists have focused on the social functions of religion and not what the phenomena is. It is also clear that the dominant religions seem to provide some sense of hope for inmates especially as regard a move from bodily imprisonment to spiritual redemption. Despite religious pluralism, the literature shows that inmates cope with each other, as that appears to be the only way out to survival.

It also manifested that the most dominant religion in prison is usually the most dominating one in the local society. Whilst this may be 'true', religion in prison is influenced by prison culture. It was revealed that the prison does not offer the right environment for rehabilitation programmes to take place.

The theory shows that religion is acquired within the context of society - the collective. Religious practices are transmitted and internalized from one generation to the next through interpersonal engagement (proselytizing). Religion is both a shared and private expression - dramatizing the deity and potency of the deity.

The cost of religious conversion is low, but the social capital is high in a predominant Christian and Muslim prison. The exhibition and symbolizing of religiosity binds adherent marking them as an in-group and others as out-group. Emergent in religious practices are the moral meanings inmates attach to things and people: good or bad.

Having discussed the literature, theoretical, and conceptual framework guiding this study, the next chapter examines the historical development of Prisons.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRISONS

Introduction

In this chapter, I focus on prison development in a historical context, and in large part tease out how religion interfaces with these developments. I also examine the case of Ghana.

Religion and Prison Development

The emergence of prisons dates back to the rise of the state as a form of social organization, from the days of Ancient Egypt, Babylon, Greece, and to the Roman Empire. The prison was, and in many ways, is still regarded as a place of quarantine for enemy combatants, lawbreakers, debtors, religious heretics, and political dissidents. The prison is usually found at the receiving end of the criminal justice system in which some individuals legitimately convicted of crimes by courts or other legal bodies are confined to serve their period of incarceration. Throughout the period of incarceration, certain freedoms of inmates are denied to them under the authority of the state as punishment. Until the eighteenth century, prisons did not emerge fully as a place where offenders would be confined for a period of time as punishment for criminal offences, but rather it operated as only detention centres with the aim of housing offenders pending the state's definite sentences which usually came in the form of corporal punishment - death or life of slavery (Kurian, 2006).

As stated earlier, prisons were widespread in the ancient world. Egyptian pharaohs or authorities imprisoned non-Egyptian criminals at hard labour in granaries and other areas available [ca.2000 Before Common Era (B.C.E)].

Using the Bible as a non-fiction literature, it accounts for the presence of prison in Egypt's history, as Genesis Chapter 39: 20 states that "And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in prison". The Babylonian Empire maintained prisons for offenders and debtors, captives, and for noncitizens who breached the law from about 3000 B.C.E. to 400 B.C.E. The biblical passage of II Kings 25: 27 states that "And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin King of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, that Evilmerodach King of Babylon in the year that he began to reign did lift up the head of Jehoiachin of Judah and released him from prison". I prefer to remain reticent on the biblical aspect as Rachel O'connor's (2014) thesis titled *The United States Prison System: A Comparative Analysis* has in a more scholarly way explained in details the Bible-Historical aspects of prison. However, it is important to emphasize that these ancient prisons in Egypt and Babylon acted as places where individuals claimed to have breached the law were kept while awaiting authority decision to be made on them. This demonstrates that prisons existed in these ancient countries to perform special tasks for kings and other powerful individuals.

Ancient Greece maintained the prison system, conversely, offenders faced incarceration less frequently compared to stoning, crucifixion, exile, fines, and the practice of throwing offenders from a high cliff. Rome had prisons, yet like Greece, capital punishment and exile were the basic form of sanctions. Debtors and slaves who disobeyed their masters were confined in domestic prison cells until the Third century B.C.E. when Rome started building underground prisons in rock quarry – called Tullianum. A series of dungeons

were built across Rome, with various legislation and decrees offered to provide the legal basis for prison operations. The establishment of prisons with decrees in Rome aimed at performing specific purposes which include among others eliminating staff corruption (Kurian, 2006).

During the early part of the middle Ages in Europe and the collapse of the Roman Empire, the legal jurisdiction of the Catholic Church in Rome was expanded. Church prisons were established in abbeys, monasteries, and convents as confined places for both ordinary citizens and clergy, monks and nuns who violated the laws established by ecclesiastical authority (Canon law) (Kurian, 2006). During this period, religious ideas were injected into prison management. The essence and belief was to allow the criminal to repent from his crimes, amend his ways, and convert while in isolation from others. Throughout this medieval period some individuals had control and the capability to jail others who may have breached the law. This established an air of legality to officials of government, from regional courts to city councils, and to kings. Power and authority were displayed by having the ability to have someone confined or murdered (Turning, 2012).

In the 18th and 19th century, in Europe and the United States, people rose up against torture and public execution of human beings especially the latter. Among such people are Voltaire, Montesquieu, and Denis Diderot in France; Cesare Beccaria of Italy; Frederick II of Prussia; and England's Jeremy Bentham and John Howard. Out of this, France and England enacted laws to establish prisons that would be competently managed, clean, free of corruption, subject to regular inspections, and supported by state subventions instead of fees

paid by inmates, as happened in Gaols. This, in part, reveals the early injection of state supervision in prison administration.

Subject to the call for reformation, governments began considering means to control and punish their citizens. This was a strategy adopted to prevent the citizens from tagging their rulers with spectacles of sadistic violence and oppressive rule (Kann, 2005). Like Kann, Foucault (1977) argued that during the 19th century modern penalty replaced deferral of rights for infliction of torture. It substituted penalizing of the human body for disfigurement of the physical body. It also substituted the expert stare for the public spectacle. By this, Foucault highlighted the importance of the shift from punishment in public domains to discipline within the shut walls of the prison, and the move from community observance to specialists as observers, participants-observers in this case.

Apart from this, Foucault (1977, cited in Hudson, 2003) characterized this era's prison as an arena for social experimentation and personal change, as well as a system that combines surveillance with discipline. Here, while the inmates were under strict observation by prison wardens, the inmates were at the same time required to follow a rigid timetable drafted by prison authorities. All these were reasons of security and social order within the prison environment, as well as to monitor the progress of prisoners.

Within this epoch, the prison reform movement endeavored to redefine the role of prisons as that of "reforming" prisoners into responsible citizens. Provide counseling and moral education to inmates by non-custodial prison Chaplains. Yet in the United States, many administrators of prison considered Chaplains as hindrance to running a prison. The Chaplains were considered

naive by many and simply influenced by inmates. They were considered not to have the capacity to bring any real conversion in inmates (Levinson, 2002).

During or shortly after the penitentiary period, colonialism and westernization led to prison development in Africa, Asia and South America. By then precolonial African societies classically relied on community-based sanctions and noncustodial sentence – restorative justice approach to dealing with lawbreakers. In the nineteenth century, countries that colonized Africa such as Great Britain, Portugal, France, and Belgium imposed their own criminal justice systems, including penitentiaries, which the postcolonial governments have retained (Kurian, 2006). The case of Ghana is discussed below.

From the origin and development issues raised above, it seems clear that the prison reform movement was deeply influenced by two conflicting ideas though these ideas also led to social order. The first was linked to the enlightenment ideas of rationalism and utilitarianism. These ideas stipulated that prisons should serve as a replacement for community physical punishments such as hanging, and whipping. The essence of this idea was to deter people from committing similar crimes. The second philosophy equated crime to sin. It was based on Christian religious principles and beliefs (such as all sins can be forgiven if a person repents and then can go to Heaven after death) with the sole aim of rehabilitation or moral reform, so that prisoners will become obedient to social norms as well as depict proper behaviour. Those who believed in this latter philosophy held that prisons should be fashioned as civilized institutions of moral instruction, and that prisoners' behaviour could be

"corrected" so that when released, they could be model members of society (Lewis, 2009).

History of Prison in Ghana

As scantily stated above, colonialism and westernization led to prison development in Africa. Before colonization the Gold Coast (now Ghana) like other African countries classically relied on community-based sanctions and non-custodial sentence.

Colonization led to prison development in Ghana. However, the prison system in Ghana started in a way described as irregular. A time (early 1800s) in which the administration of Forts and Castles were in the hands of colonial authorities. These authorities did not only exercise criminal jurisdiction in the Forts and Castles but also the local society they supervised (Ghana Prisons Service, 2015).



Figure 2: Image of Cape Coast Castle
Source: Ghana Prison Service, 2015

The development of prisons started when spaces within Forts and Castles were converted into prison cells. For example, a form of prison was established in the Cape Coast Castle by 1841, where debtors and offenders,

perhaps, were imprisoned. By 1850, four of the Forts in Ghana had prisons with inmates' population of about 129. These inmates were kept in chains mostly on their legs and hands, and most often worked on road gangs (Ghana Prisons Service, 2015).

When the Gold Coast was formally created as a colony of Britain in 1875, the criminal jurisdiction of the British was gradually extended to present day southern Ghana. In 1876, the Gold Coast Prison Ordinance was introduced. The ordinance was modeled on the English Prisons Act of 1865. In 1880 Prisons Ordinance, rules of safe custody of prisoners were established as part of caretaker functions. By early 1900s, British colonial authorities employed Europeans to work as guards in the prisons. Ghanaians gradually replaced European workers After World War II. All these alludes to a lot of knowledge about the colonial history of Ghana and the formation of current day legal and political system (Ghana Prisons Service, 2015).

The Prison Department, initially independent, was later placed under the Police Administration due to the unsatisfactory state of the prisons at the time. In 1920, the Police and the Prisons Departments were again separated due to increased number of Prison establishment and staff. The Prisons Department was then placed under an Inspector-General of Prisons, now Director General of Prisons. By 1948, there were twenty-nine (29) establishments all over the country. In 1964, the Prisons Department became autonomous and delinked itself from the Civil Service and renamed Ghana Prisons Service. The Ghana Prisons Service, presently, is tasked with the following:

1. Safe keeping of convicted persons from the courts.

2. To ensure that the welfare of prisoners are protected as well as to provide inmates with good health care, clothing, bedding, feeding, recreation, and library facilities, among other amenities and finally,
3. To ensure the reformation and rehabilitation of inmates by offering them opportunities to develop their skills through trade training and moral education.

According to Hynd (2015, p.5), “The chief object of the Gold Coast prisons today is reform rather than punishment . . . primarily through trade training.” This implies that prisons as reformatories geared toward the rehabilitation of the convict started in the early part of the 1900s and not just some five decades ago. If this is the case, has the prisons managed to achieve this mandate? This obviously, is a question that may attract multiple responses. However, these mandates have high regards for religious training, as it forms part of moral education.

Presently, Ghana has forty-three (43) Prisons in all the ten (10) regions. Among the establishments is hierarchically the Prisons Headquarters in the capital city of Ghana, Accra. It is the administrative centre of the service where prison policies are formulated for effective management of all prison establishments in Ghana. In the Headquarters are the Director-General of Prisons and his two deputies, five Directors of Prisons and other principal office holders. There are seven (7) Central Prisons, seven (7) Female Prisons, fourteen (14) Local Prisons, one (1) Medium Security Prison at Nsawam, and eleven (11) open and Agricultural Settlement Camp prisons. There is one (1) Maximum Security Prison, one (1) juvenile facility, and one (1) special facility. There is one Prison Officers Training School (POTS) in Accra and the Accra Senior

Correctional Centre (ASCC: formerly called Ghana Borstal Institution) for moral training and socio-religious development of juvenile offenders. The function of ASCC implies the high regard the prison service accord for rehabilitation in prison (Ghana Prisons Service, 2015). Figure 3 below shows the locations of prisons in Ghana.



Figure 3: Locations of Prisons
 Source: Ghana Prison Annual Report (2013)

The Ghana Prison Service: The Legal frameworks

There are various legislations that established the Ghana Prison Service. These laws, which range from policy formulation to implementation, direct the activities of the correctional institution. The legislative mandates of Ghana Prison Service includes:

1. Prison Regulations 1958 (L.I. 412).
2. Prison Standing Orders 1960.
3. Prison (Amendment) Regulation 1970 (L.I. 648).
4. Prisons (Declaration of Prisons) Instrument 1971 (E.I. 22).
5. Prisons Service Decree, 1972 NRCD 46.
6. Ghana Prisons Service Scheme of Service Administration (1991).
7. The 1992 Constitution of Ghana.

All these mandates are subjected to the 1992 constitution of the Republic of Ghana.

Ghana's Prisons and Prisoners: Demography and Current Issues

The increased incarceration level in recent times in Ghana suggests an increase in crime rate, or as stated by Walmsay (2003), Ghana witnessed a 38% rise in prison population within the first four years of the millennium. The question is, how should the society react to those who commit crimes? Is prison the answer? Different commentators may have different responses to these questions. No matter how these responses differ or are similar, one cannot undermine the contributions of the prison system and religion to criminal justice.

As stated already, one cannot also take for granted the demographic dynamics when interested in religious issues especially in a prison setting. As a result, it is important for us to examine the prison population trend over time. Below is Table 2 showing categories of prison population in Ghana.

Table 2- Categories of Prison Population in Ghana

Item	Population/ Percentage
Prison population total (including pre-trial detainees / remand prisoners)	14,375 at December 2015 (national prison administration)
Prison population rate (per 100,000 of national population)	53 based on an estimated national population of 27.23 million at December 2015 (from United Nations figures)
Pre-trial detainees / remand prisoners (percentage of prison population)	17.9% (December 2015)
Female prisoners (percentage of prison population)	1.4% (December 2015)
Juveniles / minors / young prisoners incl. definition (percentage of prison population)	0.9% (June 2015 - under 18)
Foreign prisoners (percentage of prison population)	6.0% (of convicted prisoners, December 2015)
Number of establishments / institutions	43 (2015)
Official capacity of prison system	9 875 (December 2015)
Occupancy level (based on official capacity)	145.4% (December 2015)

Source: World Prison Brief, 2016

Referencing Table 2 above, with a prison capacity of about 9,875, the total population of prisoners is about 14,375 (including remand prisoners) which exceeds prison capacity of about 4,500 prisoners. An indication of overcrowding, which suggests either the need to expand the existing prison facilities or to improve or introduce rehabilitation programmes to reduce the rate of reoffending. Other approaches such as restorative justice or non-

custodial sentence or community sanction could be adopted. Foreign prisoners form about 6% of total prisoners in Ghana. Many countries also have foreign prisoners, including Ghanaians. This is suggestive that the phenomena of foreigners' incarceration for wrong doing is a common global issue and not related to only Ghana. This does not imply that committing crime in foreign lands is something acceptable but rather a canker that needs universal attention.

At the local level it may further be described as something considered a threat to national security, and the relative stability of Ghana. The percentage (17.9%) of remand prisoners shows the slow and problematic nature of judicial processes. There are other factors that may contribute to this, such as logistics to aid the paralegal unit of the Ghana Prisons Service and the courts, absence of legal representation for inmates, and sometimes the 'unnecessary' adjournment of cases. Juveniles (0.9%) and female prisoners (1.4%) recorded a low percentage. However, this does not denote a low percentage in crime rates among such categories, as many activities engaged by this group may go unreported due to fear of stigmatization and possible socio-cultural sanctions.

Table 3 shows the population of prisoners and the prison population rate from 1982 to 2015.

Table 3- Prisoners Population Trend and Rate

Year	Prison population total	Prison population rate (per 100,000 of national population)
1982	4,852	42
1984	7,237	59
1988	9,366	68
1995	7,727	46
2000	9,507	51
2002	11,390	58
2004	11,581	56
2006	12,847	59
2008	14,128	61
2010	13,507	56
2012	13,487	53
2014	14,599	55
2015	14,375	53

Source: World Prison Brief, 2016

Table 3 shows that prisoners' population has been unstable as it increases and decreases. The highest increase occurred from 1982 to 1984 at a difference in rate of 17. This may be attributed to the presence of military government during that period. Prison population decreased tremendously in 1995. This may also be attributed to the practice of democratic governance in the country at that time. The year 2000 to 2002 showed a slight increase whilst 2004 showed a decrease in the rate. Also, the year 2010 to 2012 showed a decrease in prison population. The number of prisoners increased in 2014 with a rate of plus two (2). However, the year 2015 suggest a marginal decrease at a rate of minus two (-2). Based on this data, the question worthy of repetition is, what is therefore the role of rehabilitation and resocialization programmes in the reformation of inmates in prison?

Table 4 below shows the age distribution of prisoners in Ghana.

Table 4- Age Distribution of Prisoners

Age Range	Frequency	%
12 – 17	103	1.34
18 – 25	3201	41.52
26 – 35	2224	28.85
36 – 45	1214	15.74
46 – 50	524	6.8
51 – 50	285	3.7
60+	158	2.05
Total	7709	100

Source: Ghana Prison Service Annual report, 2014

Table 4 shows that majority of inmates fall within the labour force (i.e. from 18 years to 50 years). This means that potential labour force has been incarcerated due to criminal activities, hence making them a component of the unproductive labour force. Unproductive labour force yet they are fed with the resources generated by the productive unit of the population. The energy of all these young people can be channelled towards economic growth and sustenance of many families. Considering the number of yearly discharged inmates [e.g. in the year 2014, six thousand seven hundred and sixty six (6766) inmates were discharged according to the 2014 prison annual report], it is expected that majority of these inmates will acquire skill training to implement upon discharge. It is for this reason that the mandates of the prison service speak volume about the rehabilitation of inmates. With reference to the third mandate on rehabilitation through moral education, if religion plays a role in helping inmates to become useful members of the society then it merits investigation.

The next chapter examines the methods of data gathering for this thesis, as well as the ethical issues considered.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology employed for this study. It examines the philosophy of the research approaches, study design, data sources and research participants, how data was collected, strategies involved, instruments used for data collection, reliability and validity issues, limitations of the study, how data was analysed, and the ethical issues considered.

Research philosophy

Many academic disciplines, if not all, have some kind of a philosophical foundation. Research philosophy concerns itself with the way in which information about a phenomenon should be collected, examined and used. There are two philosophies that inform research in the social sciences. These are Positivist Social Science (PSS), and Interpretive Social Science (ISS). The distinguishing feature(s) that set(s) these two traditions apart is based upon how each one of them perceive reality. This thesis was informed by these two philosophies.

Research Design

To Punch (2005, p. 58), the basic difference between qualitative and quantitative approaches lies in “their level of measurement”. Therefore, empirical study could have all qualitative data or all quantitative data, which ever applied is not a matter of rules but what one is trying to find out. However, by using both qualitative and quantitative approaches, researchers can obtain a

fuller understanding of their research questions at the time of their study. Therefore, whenever possible, the extra time and effort of combining both forms of research is desirable (Bryman, 2008). Neuman (2007; 2006) also recommends combining qualitative and quantitative methods because it is better to look at something from several angles rather than to look at it in only one way – mixed method. A frame of research method that may be considered to derive its inspiration from C. Wright Mills' (1959) Sociological Imagination. Despite the benefits of mixed method, the approach has been described to be time intensive and exhaustive from a field, data coding, cleaning, and analysis perspective.

The two research philosophies described earlier with their corresponding designs guided the data collection methods. Triangulating made it easier to validate the responses. The choice of this method was effective in getting in-depth and varied responses in a more flexible way.

Sources of Data

The data for this study were primary and secondary. Primary data was obtained directly from participants and respondents by the use of in-depth interviews, semi-structured questionnaire, observations, and through informal interactions. Open-ended and probing questions gave participants the opportunity to respond in their own words, how they understood and perceived the happenings around them (Creswell, 2007), as regards religious practices in prison. The aim of collecting data through these means was to obtain first-hand information about the religious lives of inmates, the role of religion in the self-socialization of inmates, and the place of religion in the lives of inmates after

discharge. Secondary data was collected via prison documents – standing orders and regulations-, internet search – websites of organizations and news reports-, and reports from International Organizations such as the United Nations. This type of data helped to generate new insight, and was complimented with the primary data.

The research participants included inmates (those who participate in religious activities or not) and their religious leaders (Pastors and Imams – inmates in this case), inmates of/ with indigenous faiths, official designated Chaplain and Imam of the prison (prison officials), licensed religious leaders of churches/ visiting clergy to the prison, ex-convicts and their significant others. The inmates were the major stakeholders in this study. As a result, I solicited their views on religious practices before and during incarceration, the role of religion in their prison life, and how religion is preparing them for reintegration after discharge. Inmates own underlying explanations of why they subscribe to religion behind bars was also asked. Inmates were made to express their thoughts on questions, such as, how does religion influence their moral and material behaviour, do inmates experience a sense of belongingness to their religious group, how does a religious group mediate healing to group members, and what were the effects of this kind of religious intervention on members everyday lives.

Other questions, such as, how do religious sects in prison recruit and convert new inmates, how have the beliefs and practices of religious group influenced the socio-economic situation of its members and, how do inmates uphold and express unity through religion. Inmates who did not subscribe to religious activities were also interviewed. The aims here were to understand

why they do not participate in such practices, and to find out if religion was losing or gaining influence on the different category of inmates.

In respect of the ex-convicts, similar views were solicited, but here the impact of religion in prison was assessed, as we have two category of ex-convicts, that is, those who subscribed to religion while in prison and those who did not. In order to get a good picture of the effects of religion, both subgroups were interviewed. The essence was to find out what has become of them after release or whether inmates who subscribed to religion in prison did so because of their confinement. This meant that ex-convicts religious positions and views on religion before incarceration, during incarceration, and after incarceration were solicited. This approach aided a comparative analysis of experiences garnered from inmates and ex-convicts. This helped compare and contrast the views of inmates who subscribed to religion and those who did not. Some significant others (relatives) of ex-convicts were also interviewed on the character of the ex-convicts after release from prison. This helped to validate the responses of the ex-convicts who were interviewed.

The official prison chaplain and Imam were interviewed on the religious practices of inmates, inmates' roles in religious activities, and the roles of religion in the lives of inmates, as well as their jobs as a chaplain and Imam, and their accomplishments (souls saved). These views were compared to that of the inmates as a form of validation technique. In interviewing these officials, inmates' permission was sought before the officers were interviewed about their religious experiences in prison. This was to ensure a kind of balance of power and respect for ethical principles in this sociological research.

A number of prison officers with over fifteen (15) years of prison experience within AMSP were also interviewed. The essence of the experience was to involve officers who had practical and relevant information about inmates and ex-convicts. The role of religion in prison administration was solicited from these officers. In general terms, officers' perception of the religious conversion and the significance of religion in the self-socialization of inmates within and after imprisonment provided critical insights into the study. After all, the extent of reoffending is dependent on the kinds of services that the Prison Service Ministry provides to ex-prisoners to ensure they do not reoffend. More so, the essence of interviewing prison officials was to examine the extent to which prison bureaucracy provides "spaces" for the practices of religious choices by inmates. This was based on the assumption that religious practices are an ad hoc (requested by external religious institutions) and at the same time an integral component of the prison services.

Licensed religious leaders who visited the prison to carry out religious assignments were also interviewed. The motivation behind their visits was asked, and their roles and achievements in religious activities in prison were also solicited. The other important consideration was the extent to which there are structured religious services by these visiting pastors and Imams to support the aspirations and spiritual needs of the ex-convicts to go straight – that is, refrain from criminal behaviours and other law violations after their release.

Quantitative Approach: Sample Size, Sampling and Data Collection Procedures

For the quantitative aspect, AMSP has six (6) blocks with a total prison capacity of about 2000 inmates. However, at the time of this study only three blocks were in use with inmates' total population of 802 (as of 12 December, 2016). The six (6) blocks were labelled A to F. The 'A' block houses 79 inmates, 'B' block houses 331 inmates, with 'C' block 392 inmates. A list with the following breakdown was given: "A" block had 35 Christian inmates, 16 Muslim inmates, 2 indigenous faith persons, and 26 inmates without religious affiliation. "B" block had 151 Christian inmates, 28 Muslim inmates, 6 indigenous faith persons, and 146 inmates without religious affiliation. "C" block had 193 Christian inmates, 30 Muslim inmates, 2 indigenous faith persons, and 167 inmates without religious affiliation. Yamane's (1967) mathematical method was used to determine the sample size for the study. Below is the formulae and procedure:

$$n = N / [1 + N (\alpha)^2]$$

Where n = sample size, N = Sample frame, α = margin of error which is 0.08 with a confidence level of 92%. With 379 Christian inmates and 74 Muslim inmates, the sample size was 112 for Christians and 49 for Muslims. Eight (8) indigenous faith persons participated in the semi-structured questionnaire interview. The total sample size was 169 male inmates. This formulae is distressed by some amount of inaccuracy for the reason that researchers seldom have good estimates of the parameters necessary for calculation (Noordzij, Tripepi, Dekker, Zoccali, Tanck, & Jagar, 2010). This is one of the reasons why supplementing the qualitative data with the quantitative data was useful.

A proportional quota was assigned to each block depending on the number of inmates and their religious affiliation. For the Christian inmates, a proportional quota of 10 was assigned to A-Block, 45 to B-Block, and 57 to C-Block. For the Muslims, a quota of 11 was assigned to A-Block, 19 to B-Block, and 19 to C-Block. The use of proportional quota sampling ensured some differences in the sample.

The systematic sampling approach was used in selecting the respondents. The essence was to give each inmate on the list equal opportunity to participate in the study (Jackson & Verberg, 2007). This meant that a chit of papers labelled 1-10 was mixed in a pot. The same was done in another pot. These two pots represented the Christian inmates and the Muslim inmates respectively. Each pot had one chit randomly selected from it. The numbers 9 and 6 were selected. Every 9th person on the list of Christian inmates became eligible whilst every 6th person on the list of Muslim inmates also became eligible. This was done until the sample size was attained.

Inmates' participation in the research was purely voluntary, and free of coercion. Therefore, only willing and ready inmates participated in the study. At the end, 147 semi-structured questionnaires were retrieved. This means that 22 of the instruments could not be retrieved. Some inmates were exempted in the selection process due to their strategic position to inform the in-depth interview. The aim of the survey is to get a representative sample of inmates in order to capture their views on religious practices and experiences in respect of the various research questions. The data represents a significant collection of inmates' views on religious practices and experiences. As argued by Irwin (2008) a well-structured survey can provide a broader context in which to make

sense of narrower, and more focused interviews. Table 5 below gives a summary of inmates' religious affiliation by block and the corresponding sample.

Table 5-Religious Affiliation and Proportional Quota by Block

Religious affiliation	Sample size by Block
Christians	A-Block: 10
	B-Block: 45
	C-Block: 57
Muslims	A-Block: 11
	B-Block: 19
	C-Block: 19
Indigenous faith persons	A-Block: 2
	B-Block: 4
	C-Block: 2
Total	169

Source: Field data, 2017

The problem of attrition was encountered due to the transient nature of the prison population and the lack of control over the prison environment. For instance, I lost two (2) potential inmate respondents (i.e. those who had already given consent to participate in the study and were already involved to some extent) due to release and transfer. The contributions of these inmates were therefore exempted at the analysis stage. To equipoise these loses, new inmates were recruited via the same process to replace the defunct inmates. I anticipated this challenge because imprisonment is transitory, as some inmates may die, fall ill, escape prison, may be transferred, and most often may also be discharged.

Qualitative Approach: Sampling and Data Collection Procedures

Right from the justification of the scope of study, it was obvious that the strategy used to select the study site (AMSP) at best could be described as purposive. A purposive approach was used to select some participants for this study. Purposive technique was used to select the official prison Chaplain and Imam, and other officers (2 - with over 15 years of experience). The same technique was used to select visiting religious leaders (Pastor - 1, Imam – 1) as well as inmates' religious leaders (2 – one Pastor and one Imam). Two (2) inmates of indigenous faith were also sampled purposively due to their few numbers in the facility. Two (2) inmates who did not subscribe to religious activities were also sampled purposively for interview. The inmates who did not subscribe to religion were selected for validation purposes. All these participants were purposively chosen due to their strategic positions in the prison facility, the information they had to inform the research questions, as well as their willingness to participate in the study.

Apart from inmates religious leaders who were purposively selected, other inmates with Christian and Muslim affiliation were systematically selected for interview from the list of religious membership available at the Chaplaincy unit of the prison. This gave each inmate belonging to any of this group an equal chance of participating in the study. The same systematic process was repeated. However, the number seven (7) and four (4) were picked respectively. This meant that the 7th person on the membership list of 379 Christian inmates and 4th person on the membership list of 74 Muslim inmates became my first participants. If discovered that such inmate was part of the quantitative studies, he was exempted and the immediate person considered.

The systematic selection was done until the point of saturation was reached. According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), and Given (2016) data saturation is reached when new cases no longer reveal new features.

Throughout the research interview the data collected from interviewees were compared. After interviewing six (6) Christian inmates' and four (4) Muslim inmates I began to find certain patterns and similarities emerging in the interviews. It was therefore concluded that one (1) interview with an inmate from each religious divide would be manageable within the framework of this study.

Some ex-convicts were also purposively selected to be engaged in In-depth interviews. These ex-convicts were selected upon recommendation from prison officers, dependent on such inmates' level of participation in religious activities during their period of incarceration. For both Christian and Muslim ex-convicts, I was given a list of 18 ex-convicts with the contact numbers of relatives by the AMSP chaplaincy. The contact numbers were crosschecked from the prison reception. This was to ensure that all the numbers given were accurate with the ones on record. Eight (8) of these ex-convicts were unable to be traced, as calls to relatives could not go through. Out of the remaining 10 ex-convicts who were contacted, 4 declined to participate due to their personal schedules and reasons. The remaining 6 were then selected to participate due to their alacrity and availability for the study. Out of the 6, 4 were Christian ex-convicts and 2 Muslim ex-convicts.

The need to interview ex-convicts was to: i. having been out of prison, they now have the advantage of retrospection to put their prison life in context, and ii. provide information on the extent and relevance of their religious faiths

in mainstream society. Confinement demands compliance, therefore, it is expected that the behaviour of an inmate in prison will differ from the behaviour outside prison due to the element of freewill. Hence the need to also focus on the activities of ex-convicts to find out if their religious involvement was due to their confinement. An area most scholars overlooked (see Beran, 2005; Beckford, 2009; Gaur, 2011; Rigsby, 2014).

In furtherance, interviewing ex-convicts who either subscribed to religion or not was based on the assumption that inmates who submitted voluntarily to religious education were less likely to recidivate. Like stated above, as a result the research tracked down released inmates (ex-prisoners), interviewed them about their religious conversion (or rediscovery) while in prison, the effect of their religious experiences and practices facilitating their rehabilitation and eventual release, and the extent to which their religious faith (and faith community) has enabled them avoid the temptation to reoffend. As a control measure, ex-prisoners who did not subscribe to religion in prison were interviewed. The essence here was to know: what became of such subgroups upon release? And also for validation purposes. The ex-convicts signed a consent form (see Appendix G).

All the 6 indigenous faith persons whose relatives' phone numbers were given to me could not be reached as their phones were off. A separate list of 16 ex-convicts who did not participate in religious activities was also provided by the prison authorities. Out of the number, 8 could not be traced. Among the remaining 8, 6 declined to participate. The 2 who agreed to participate were selected. The ex-convicts were drawn from Accra, Cape Coast, Kumasi, and Sekondi-Takoradi. On my own volition, after the interviews with ex-convicts, I

transferred GHc10.00 of air time units to cover their cost, and for some I provided a compensation of GHc40.00 for their time after the interview. Others resisted but I insisted to offer them a token of appreciation. In the interview process it became clear that interviewing relatives of ex-convicts could be a good way of checking the truthfulness of the information given by them, as a result, 2 relatives were interviewed. Table 6 below gives a summary of interviewees, sample size and the technique used in this study.

It was anticipated that some ex-convicts would not be comfortable discussing their prison life, hence such inmates were given the liberty to opt out of the study or decline at any time they feel uncomfortable. In total, 10 ex-convicts declined to participate. In addition, although at times it was difficult to reach some selected inmates and ex-convicts due to some constraints such as rules of access, generally, the sample used for this study generated an affluence of information that was highly satisfactory to understand inmates' and ex-convicts religious experiences and the variations in these experiences.

Table 6-Summary of Interviewees, Sample Size and Technique Used

Interviewees	Sample	Technique
Prison Chaplains (Pastor and Imam)	2	Purposive
Prison officers with 15+ experience	2	Purposive
Visiting Pastors and Imams/ Licensed Religious Leaders	2	Purposive
Inmates religious leaders (Pastor and Imam)	2	Purposive
Indigenous faith inmates/ Traditionalist	2	Purposive
Inmates with no religious affiliation	2	Purposive
Inmates with religious affiliation	Christians – 7 Muslims – 5	Simple random/Systematic
Ex-convict with religious affiliation in prison	Christians – 4 Muslims – 2	Purposive
Ex-convict without religious affiliation in prison	2	Purposive
Relatives of ex-convicts	2	Purposive
Total	34	

Source: Field data, 2017

It must be stated that the records (including the contact numbers and addresses of friends and relatives of inmates) of ex-convicts are still with the reception of the prison. This aided follow ups on recommended ex-convicts. The reasons for employing purposive technique were that, first I am dealing with a specialized population whose follow ups at times can be very difficult considering the setting of the study; second, I am interested in identifying particular types of participants for in-depth investigation, and finally to select participants who can provide useful information (Maxwell, 1997; Neuman, 2006; Teddlie & Yu, 2007). This implies that not all persons within the prison community were eligible as participants since the study had its target group and

required specific information that can only be provided by those who fall within this said group. This helped the study achieve its aims.

The number of participants (Pastor, Imam, other prison officers; visiting clergy; inmates religious leaders, and inmates of indigenous faith) slotted for the in-depth interviews is justified by Myers (2000) who argued that a small sample size is often accurate to offer an in-depth and useful data in conducting qualitative research. It must be stated that these strategy is not without limitations, in that, it would have been better if all visiting Pastors and Imams were interviewed. However, this did not affect the quality of information gathered.

Apart from these sampling procedures discussed above, another important technique that was employed in this study to supplement the qualitative aspect of this work was the use of observation (participant and non-participant in this case). With observation I paid close attention, and watched carefully the religious activities of inmates. Here, the physical setting of the prison atmosphere was captured and scrutinized (Neuman, 2006). According to Silverman (1993, p. 30 cited in Neuman, 2006, p. 397) good field researchers are intrigued about details that reveal “what’s going on here” through careful listening and watching. Field researchers believe that the core of social life is communicated through the mundane, trivial, and everyday minutia. This is what people often overlook. In this study, details of inmates’ religious processes and activities such as time for religious activities, how such activities were organized in prison, the types of instruments used, and how religious organizations and individuals used the prison to reach out to inmates were observed and recorded.

The unique nature of all the interviews conducted was that it provided critical information from which to understand inmates' religious adherence, the role of religion in prison, and its effect on self-socialization of inmates, as well as the place of religion in reintegration.

Data Collection Instruments

By the use of In-depth Interview (IDI) guide [see Appendix B, C, D, and E] data was collected at their natural settings (Greenhalgh & Taylor, 1997). Separate IDI guides were developed for the officers, licensed religious leaders, inmates and ex-convicts. The IDI guides contained themes, questions for participants, and prompts to remind us, the interviewers. The IDI guides were appropriate technique since it allowed participants the time and scope to talk about their opinions on the subject matter which other methods such as questionnaire survey cannot be used for. Also, the use of IDI guides gave the interviewers the opportunity to control the domain of the study. This procedure was complemented with the use of digital recorders so that the study does not lose any relevant data. This was done with informed consent. Inmates who did not want to be tape recorded were interviewed, and their responses were directly written. The IDI guides were administered by two research assistants, and I, the researcher.

Notes were taken through direct and indirect observations with the use of observational protocol/guide [see Appendix F] which according to Creswell (2007) helps researchers organize their thoughts. It was revealed that a wide range of issues were simply not amenable to observation. Therefore, asking respondents about them represented the only viable means of finding out about

them within a qualitative research strategy (Bryman, 2008). This justifies why the study made use of both in-depth interviews, and observation to complement each other.

A semi-structured questionnaire (see Appendix A) was used to collect data from inmates. The semi-structured questionnaire allowed my research assistants, and I, the researcher to pose questions whilst concurrently providing some flexibility to digress from the guide and go far beyond. This allowed the respondents to develop their opinions about the subjects of their most concern (Witzel, 2000). The semi-structure questionnaire had a cover letter explaining the purpose and ethical issues involved in the study. It was administered by two research assistants, I, the researcher, and self-administered by some inmates. This was because not all respondents could read, write, and understand. The questionnaire administrations were largely conducted in Twi (local language) and English.

Validity and Reliability Issues

After designing the instrument, it was given to the thesis directors for expert advice. After that, I did a pilot study to pre-test the instruments at Ankaful Main Camp Prison in Ankaful from October 14, 2016 to October 30, 2016. In all 15 people were involved in the pilot study. For the quantitative instrument, the semi-structured questionnaire was administered to 10 inmates – 5 Christians, 3 Muslims, 1 traditionalist/ inmate of indigenous faith, and 1 inmate who did not subscribe to religion. For the qualitative instruments, the following persons were interviewed: 1 Imam (external religious person), 1 Pastor (external religious person), 1 prison chaplain, 1 licensed religious leader, and 1 ex-convict

at Abura, a suburb of Cape Coast. It was revealed that most of the questions were easily understood by the respondents and participants. However, some few questions appeared difficult to inmates. As a result they were taken out. The responses were then compared to the objectives of the study and it became obvious that the instruments were reliable and valid for final use. This sits well with Sarantakos (1997) and Yin (2003) as they argued that pre-testing helped to identify some minor mechanical deficiencies associated with the data collection instruments, as well as some administrative challenges of the whole study.

In the special case for the semi-structured questionnaire, the overall reliability using Cronbach's coefficient alpha was 0.9391 with 71 cases and 114 items from the instruments. The reliability co-efficient of 0.9 suggest that the instrument was valid and reliable as described by Jackson and Verberg (2007). The correlation among the items appeared averagely high. After the main fieldwork the overall reliability test using Cronbach's coefficient alpha was 0.9401. This meant that the instrument was valid. All these processes were followed to ensure maximum veracity and reliability of research results.

Minimising biases was critical at the data presentation stage, as I saw myself as an insider and outsider researcher. I am very much aware of how values and moral judgements can influence data analysis. I therefore took the following steps to ensure that unintended biases were reduced. First of all, after the data analysis stage, I distributed the manuscripts to two inmates and one ex-convict (that is, those who could read and understand), one prison chaplain, and one licensed religious leader. The essence was to ensure that the views or issues they presented and discussed were captured as presented in the manuscript. Additions were made in this process, as these manuscript reviewers added

certain experiences they later remembered. The chaplain pointed out one paragraph of analysis that did not reflect his response. I used that opportunity to gain insight into what they really meant. I rewrote that section to reflect their personal views. I also organized a validation exercise with 15 staff of AMSP on September 2, 2017. Through the validation exercise, other officers had the opportunity to offer inputs and insight into the results. I was mindful of not letting their perspectives and inputs influence the perspectives submitted by other stakeholders. All these helped to minimize biases in this research.

One other important strategy I used to minimize biases and maintain a high degree of objectivity in this study was the advisory roles of my thesis directors. They read through this research work with critical lenses and pointed out other perspectives I never thought of. This helped to improve the reflective nature of my analysis and presentation of data. All these steps ensured that I maintained objectivity throughout the study. However, in doing this, it did not mean I had no point of view, but rather it helped to overcome unintentional biases that could have made me skew my analysis to prearranged outcome of moral judgement. I therefore have confidence that this thesis traded against value bias for value free (to a large extent). And that, the research results are reliable and valid.

Limitations of the Study

Just like many regimental institutions, the activities of AMSP are guided by 'strict' rules and schedules. In the interview process, at times we had to halt the interview to allow interviewees to go for roll call. This delayed some interview sessions, but did not affect the quality of data.

A number of ex-convicts who initially agreed via phone to participate in the study could later not be traced. Among those who could be reached, a number of them declined participation. This reduced the initial anticipated number slated for the interviews. Despite these limitations, the ex-convicts who agreed to participate provided useful information that adequately addressed the research questions.

Data Analysis

The recorded interview transcripts, field notes, and other observation notes were typed and saved as word documents. It was later pasted on Google Docs. Google Docs allowed for easy access, coding, and theming. The data was reduced through coding. This simplified the complex aspects of the data as words, terms, phrases or sentences were assigned to categories of the data. I did this by skimming through the transcripts on the Google Docs page and identifying the major points raised in the transcripts. This process helped to cut out conversations which were slightly off topic. This also made me to focus on pertinent texts. After coding, theming was done using the Google Docs word search tool. The display of data through themes was followed by analysis and drawing of conclusions. This was done by describing, classifying, and seeing how the concepts were related (Punch, 2005).

Google Docs is an online Web-based application in which documents can be created, edited, and updated in various fonts and file formats. With this online platform, I was able to access files from any computer with internet connection. The platform lends itself to multiple users (I and my supervisors) at

the same or different times from diverse locations. My supervisors were able to track the analyses, and comment instantly on my write ups.

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 22 was used to analyse the data collected with the semi-structured questionnaire. The responses were coded and entered into the software. A descriptive statistical analysis on the data was made using tables and graphs.

The analysed quantitative data was supported with the analysed qualitative data. The qualitative explanations gave in-depth meaning to the quantitative data.

Ethical Issues in Prison Research

The ethical issues come in two fold. The first is directly related to field work and prison research in general, whilst the second is related to researcher-respondent and participant relationship.

The success of this study was highly dependent on the relationship between the prison administration, the inmates, ex-convicts, licensed religious leaders, and I, the researcher. To begin, the study permission was sought from the Prison Headquarters in Accra to gain access to AMSP (see Appendix I). This was done after ethical clearance was sought from the University of Cape Coast's Institutional Review Board (IRB). I also sought support from prison warders and their assistants.

I understand that, as stated by Neuman (1958, p. 127), most prison research considered valid are the ones carried out by a trained outsider "who has no axe to grind on any aspect of correctional structure". Whilst this position may be valid to some extent, it also has some challenges as inmates at times

may not be willing to release all significant information to the outsider, but will do so for the insider. This implies that, a person considered an insider-outsider will be the best for a project of this nature. The researcher here is the After-Care Officer at the Ankafu Prisons Complex. I am a staff of the Department of Social Development, and not a prison warder. I have access to all the prisons at any time depending on the issue at stake. I am viewed as an insider-outsider by prison warders and inmates. I therefore consider myself to be at a strategic position to collect data in this subject area. As the relationship between inmates and prison officers are most often inherently antagonistic and distrustful.

In my official role as the sole After-Care officer, I have gained the trust of many of the inmates who have come to depend on me to attend to their family, legal, and personal troubles in and out of the prison. To this end, many of the inmates trust me more than they do majority of the prison officers. My position has also given me the opportunity to build good rapport with officers, inmates, ex-convicts, and some licensed religious leaders - something that an outside researcher will take some time to build.

I took into consideration the fact that prison officers have loads of work on their hands and therefore cannot be asked to halt work while data collection is ongoing. As a result, in designing this study I took measures to ensure that prison routine disturbances were minimized. A separate office space for interviews was provided by the prison authorities at AMSP. A prison guard was also provided to offer security at the office gate. The essence of a separate office for the interview and the administration of semi-structured questionnaire were to make the research environment distinct from all things custodial and also to provide a neutral ground for the inmates' respondents/participants. To avoid

Hawthorne effect in this study, interviewees were also given the opportunity to decide the place they thought was convenient for them and how they wanted to be interviewed.

Issues of trustworthiness, reliability and validity of information was considered crucial in this study. The importance of relationship development and the definitive reliability and credibility of the research data obtained is honesty regarding the inmate's specific case. I therefore made it clear to research participants/respondents, especially the inmates that this research was not going to reduce their sentence. It was not going to benefit them in any way for now, but I pointed out to them about the long-range effects of the research in prison development in the future. I also alerted the respondents/participants that this research have no detrimental consequence on their records. All these issues were considered with the necessity that the kind of information required in this study was collected in a natural environment as possible.

Furthermore, I tried as much as possible to comply with some ethical issues that involved researcher-respondent/participant relationship while in the field which according to Punch (1998) is very paramount. I also properly identified myself to respondents and participants as a PhD candidate of the University of Cape Coast collecting data for my thesis, and also explained clearly to them the purpose and importance of the study, and the type of questions they were to answer.

According to Neuman (2007, p. 54) "a fundamental ethical principle of social research is: Never coerce anyone into participating; participation must be voluntary at all times. Permission alone is not enough; people need to know what they are being asked to participate in so that they can make an informed

decision. Participants can become aware of their rights and what they are getting involved in when they read and sign a statement giving informed consent". In this research it came out that some inmates were functionally illiterate; they could read but could not necessarily comprehend what they were reading. Hence, the consent statement was discussed/interpreted in a dialect comprehensible to any of the interviewees who had such concern. This was to ensure they had a clear understanding of what they were consenting to. After this, I sought the consent of respondents and participants through the signing of an informed consent form before data was collected. I educated respondents and participants on their right to opt out of the study at any time or not to respond to a question they seem not to be comfortable with.

I assured respondents and participants of their privacy, confidentiality and anonymity while making this research results available. I protected the privacy of participants by not disclosing their identity after information gathering. I did this by using different names to represent participants. I also did hold in confidence names of participants and their responses from public disclosure. By this, issues in the consent form (see Appendix G) granted inmates' anonymity and confidentiality at all cost as argued by Neuman (2007, p. 49) that "a researcher's authority to conduct social research and to earn the trust of others is accompanied always by an unyielding ethical responsibility to guide, protect, and oversee the interests of the people being studied". In my position as the After-Care Officer, it has been my ethical duty to guide, protect and to oversee the interests of all the inmates under my care. By default, my insider role and responsibilities make me the "Ethicist" in the Ankaful

Maximum Security Prison, as a result I did my best to continue to uphold the ethical principles in this research.

From the data gathering strategies and processes, the analysed results are presented in the ensuing chapters.

CHAPTER FIVE

EXPLORING THE STRUCTURE AND PROCESS OF ANKAFUL MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON (AMSP)

Introduction

This study aims to examine inmates' account of their religiosity in relation to their criminal past. That is, the role of religion in the lives of inmates. This chapter explores the structure and process of AMSP, and explains why religion remains the single most important organising principle in the lives of convicts.

Ankaful Prison Complex

The Ankaful Prison Complex consist of four different prisons. They include Ankaful Main Camp (for convicted criminals), Ankaful Annex Prison (for both convicted and remand prisoners), Communicable Disease Prison (for sick prisoners), and Ankaful Maximum Security Prison (Regional Headquarters of Prisons in the Central Region). All these prisons are located in Ankaful, within the Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abirem (KEEA) municipal assembly of the Central Region.

Ankaful MSP in Perspective

The AMSP is the most modern prison facility in Ghana. The outside of the prison is a very serene environment with armed security officers (police and prison officers) at post. Towards the first gate on the left is the prison officers' mess. It is a place where prison officers and civilians from neighbouring towns, at times go for their lunch. Other civilians found in the premises are those

visiting either their relatives or friends who are inmates. The metal gate of the prison has notices such as *tap once, all officers irrespective of rank are to render themselves for bodily search, contraband materials are not allowed into the prison* etc. The impression created is that one is within a security zone that suggests an environment of rules and regulations. These rules bound all users of the facility. As a result, everyone irrespective of rank is subjected to bodily search.

AMSP was established in 2011 to house high sentence and high profile criminals. It was a way of decongesting the overcrowded prisons in Ghana. The facility is on a stretch of a land size of 1,800 feet by 1,800 feet. According to Attafuah (2013), the cells of AMSP measures 16 feet 5 inches by 10 feet 10 inches. It was observed that ventilation was not a major problem though the cell temperature (30°C) is higher than the temperature of a normal room (Average of 23°C). Each cell holds between six (6) to ten (10) inmates. However, most cells accommodated not less than 8 inmates. The number of inmates per cell exceeds the standard required number of four (4) inmates as prescribed by UN; an indication of overcrowding. The same cell houses a toilet facility without any partition. This violates the right to dignity as well as international human rights standards and norms. Inmates used double-decker student-type beds (up-bed and down-bed) with most beds having mattress and blanket for private use.

AMSP is presently described as the most modern prison facility in the country. The first phase of AMSP is completed. The uncompleted second phase of the prison appears abandoned. The prison has a capacity of 2000 inmates with six (6) blocks labelled A-F. 'A' and 'F' blocks have a capacity of 200 each whilst 'B' to 'E' blocks have 400 inmates capacity with 40 cells. However, at

the time of this research, only three blocks were in use with inmates' total population of 802 (as of 12 December, 2016). The 'A' block houses 79 inmates, 'B' block houses 331 inmates, with 'C' block 392 inmates. At the time of this study, the number of commissioned officers was 24 whilst subordinate officers were 99 summing up to 123 warders, as against 802 inmates. The officer-prisoner ratio recommended by the United Nations is 1 officer: 3 inmates. Unfortunately, in the case of AMSP the ratio is almost 1:7. By this, and comparing the number of inmates to the rehabilitation structures discussed below, one can say that AMSP is over capacity.

The facility has an administration, infirmary, kitchen, and reception blocks, and a store house. There was no built Church and Mosque, but the prison administration had converted a number of cells, open spaces in the ground floor, and the top parts of the blocks to be used as Churches and Mosque. It is quite common to see inmates worshipping at these locations. As will be examined further on, many inmates gravitate to religious services for many reasons.

The prison environment is very immaculate with a decent football pitch and internal gutters. The cleaning of the compound was occasionally done. Inmates from Ankafu Main Camp Prison are used for garbage collection and disposal at AMSP. AMSP has a beautiful infirmary that attends to inmates' health issues. However, the infirmary lacks the requisite clinical materials and pharmaceuticals to diagnose and treat inmates of their reported infirmity. Inmates who can afford buy pharmaceuticals through officers to treat themselves when ill. The prison facility also houses a kitchen, where inmates are supervised by prison authorities to do their own cooking. The inmates ate three meals in a day. It was observed that though the prison served inmates with

diets, most inmates did not eat the prison food. A prisoner revealed that it was because of its poor taste and nutritional content. Some inmates had their relatives visit them with cooked foods and fruits. Every inmate is entitled to one visit in every two weeks. Though this was supposed to be the case it was observed that there were some inmates who had more than one visit in two weeks. It was found through interactions that relatives visited their brother inmate through other inmates who hardly had visits or through inmates who do not expect any visit within a stipulated time.

It was also observed that inmates whose families visited with money were allowed to deposit such money at the reception. Inmates were entitled to a fixed amount of GHc40.00 in a week to buy items like bread, drinks in plastic bottles, sugar, spices etc. from the prison 'supermarket' to supplement their diet. It was observed that though inmates were entitled to the stated amount, some inmates were seen with huge sums of money on them. When one of them was approached and asked, he opined, that was his accumulated weekly entitlement. Informal discussion with another inmate revealed otherwise. Families and officers smuggled in money for inmates. Inmates and relatives bribed officers for such illegal jobs. Though illegal yet it appeared lucrative.

Through informal interactions, it was revealed that inmates used this money to buy marijuana, and MTN/AIRTEL-TIGO/VODAFON electronic cash at cheap prices from other inmates. With accumulated electronic cash, the inmate then transfers the said cash to someone (family/friend/ex-convict) outside the prison yard for cash collection. The physical cash is then smuggled back into the prison to transact further business. This smuggling, as a number of inmates claimed was done by officers, relatives, and friends. This seemed

like a cyclical business venture. Inmates with such money appeared powerful and influential as they easily persuaded some officers to do their will.

There is also a communication centre where inmates who want to reach their families via phone calls do that at a fee of 20 pesewas per minute. The communication centre was opened from 8am to 12 noon from Mondays to Fridays (see Table 7 on daily routine of inmates at AMSP). During one of the telephone calls by an inmate to a relative for monetary assistance, the officer in charge of the phone was overhead influencing the inmate on what to say and how to convince the relative. When an inmate was asked why the officer was playing that role, it was revealed that in case the inmate succeeds in this endeavour he gives a token of appreciation to the officer.

Although some inmates made use of the communication centre, the place was often locked up denying inmates the opportunity to reach their relatives. This possibly explains why inmates have illegally acquired phones to enable them call their cronies and family. Through an informal interaction with an inmate it was revealed that inmates in possession of phones rented out their phones to other inmates at a fee higher than that of the prison communication. Inmates preferred these illegal phones to the legitimate ones because of privacy. An inmate revealed that all types of phones were used in AMSP. This facilitated inmates fraudulent ventures while in prison.

Table 7- Daily Routine of Inmates at AMSP

5:30 am	Wake-up, shower, personal hygiene Black Coats allowed to stand on guard at cell entrances
6:30 am	Breakfast served in various blocks
7:00 am	Physical education - walk, jog, basketball, soccer Voluntary attendance of formal education classes (but inactive; defunct) Voluntary participation in I.C.T training (but inactive; defunct) Selected inmates attend to the prison farm supervised by officers Telephone calls to family and friends (At 8am on days without sporting activities)
10 am	Bell rings; inmates return to cells for number-checking (roll call) Telephone calls to family and friends (At 10am during sporting days)
11am – 11:30am	Mid-day rush/lunch; leisure time Voluntary religious participation
12:00 – 2:00pm	Voluntary religious participation
2:00pm- 2:15pm	Bell rings; inmate return to cells for 2nd roll call
2:15pm – 3:30pm	Inmates return to yard to socialize Some inmates use the time to engage in religious discourse
3:30pm	Bell rings; Supper time
5:30pm	Inmates remain to their cells for final lock up; Bedtime
9:30pm	All sound and lights must be off

Source: Field data, 2017

Goals of AMSP

The goals of AMSP fall in line with the mandate of Ghana Prisons Service. Presently, AMSP is tasked with the following:

1. Safe keeping of convicted persons from the courts.
2. To ensure that the welfare of prisoners are protected as well as to provide inmates with good health care, clothing, bedding, feeding, recreation, and library facilities, among other amenities and finally,
3. To ensure the reformation and rehabilitation of inmates by offering them opportunities to develop their skills through trade training and moral education.

To understand the pervasiveness of religion as an organizing principle in the lives of inmates, and by default the prison officials, one must examine the extent to which AMSP is able to fulfil its mandates as a government bureaucracy.

Rehabilitation Structures in AMSP

Education

The education unit of the prison is in charge of promoting and sustaining educational activities within the prison. The prison offers both formal and non-formal education to inmates. With the formal education, the prison has established a primary school, Junior High School (JHS), and Senior High School (SHS). Though the schools exist on paper their functions appear in a skeletal form. In that, the formal classroom education was not fully developed within the prison. What exists could best be described as near collapse.

The prison did not have an educational block designed purposely to house inmate-students. It was observed that one of the unused prison blocks

(Block F) had been converted into the structure housing the students. Within this structure were cells converted into classrooms. The total number of inmate-students stood at about 6 out of the over 800 number of inmates. All these students were in the prison JHS. The SHS had 3 students but they had all stopped schooling. Interactions with one of the teachers revealed that, some of the inmates claimed the prison has never registered any of the prisoners to write external exams to complete either the prison SHS or JHS. As a result formal education at AMSP was viewed by many inmates as a complete waste of time.

At the time of data gathering, it was observed that the prison had recruited 3 inmates to double up as teachers with the officers. Two officers teach and supervise the inmates' teachers at the same time. The inmates recruited as teachers were not professionals but could be described within the Ghanaian context as pupil teachers. These inmates' teachers did not receive any payment for their services. Though they were accorded respect by other inmates because of their status as teachers, yet one could easily perceive the frustration on their faces. The situation of the inmates' teachers was not different from the prison officers who doubled as teachers. Through interactions with the teachers, they complained of not been given any monthly allowance for the additional teaching jobs.

The educational unit, ranging from Primary School to Senior High School was bedevilled with severe challenges such as lack of materials (text books, pens, exercise books, chalk/markers etc.) to aid teaching and learning. The available text books were found to be in the office of the School's head teacher. The books were not readily available to inmates who needed it. Most of the books were also outdated. However, the prison was developing a library

(my thesis adviser in the U.S. had donated assortments of books to build up the AMSP library) for all inmates and officers who had the desire to learn or improve their reading and writing skills. The JHS inmate-students were not regular at school because of harsh prison conditions. This made absenteeism a norm. The teachers, both inmates and officers, at times were also not regular in the classrooms due to prison schedules. All these seem to demotivate enrolled and to-be enrolled inmates from joining the formal education. These observations are similar to the findings of Hagan (2013).

Though the non-formal education section appeared functional, it was not regular. It was observed that much importance was attached to the formal education than the non-formal education. During interactions with one inmate-student, he quizzed that, if there is no good food to eat, how can they learn in such a harsh environment? The point is, what is the essence of formal or non-formal education to an inmate who is already 40 years old, and also serving 60 years or over 100 years Imprisonment with Hard Labour (IHL)? The fact of the matter is that AMSP offers no outlet for inmates, regardless of their status, to apply their education. Despite the opportunities educational programmes tend to provide for inmates as stated by Tyler and Kling (2005); in terms of offering economic opportunities, as well as helping inmates to acquire knowledge, this was hardly the case of AMSP.

Information and Communication Technology (I.C.T)

AMSP has an ICT office that is meant to equip willing inmates with ICT skills. The centre is housed on the ground floor of the prison administration block. The centre had about 4 computers to teach inmates. At the time of data collection it was observed that 2 of the computers were broken down without keyboards. The centre was most often locked up due to the change in shift of the officer in-charge of the centre. The officer in-charge holds a Bachelor of Science degree. Even when the centre was opened inmates were not allowed to go there without an officer to supervise their activities. The broken down computers and the regular lock up of the ICT centre denied inmates the right and privilege to acquire computer skills. The question still remains, what is the point of acquiring these skills, knowing that you cannot use it to earn a living in prison? And also knowing that the inmates were likely to come out as weak and aged people, that is, if they do not die in prison.

Agriculture

The Agriculture unit of AMSP is responsible to cultivate vegetables and other food items to supplement inmates' diet. The cultivation is expected to be done by inmates under the supervision of officers. Prisoners who were more likely to be used for these projects on the prison farm were short sentence prisoners. AMSP host high risk and high sentence criminals who cannot be allowed to work on the prison farm for security reasons, as well as prison regulations. As a result, over 97% of inmates were not involved in agricultural activities, though it seems that some of the inmates were already farmers as shown in figure 6. Inmates at AMSP only eat, walk, and sleep in their blocks or cells pending a miracle for their release.

Sports

It was observed that a number of inmates were engaged in sporting activities in the yard. In the early hours of 7am it was common to see inmates taking a walk either in groups of two or three. The main sporting events at AMSP were soccer and basketball. The recreational days and hours for sports was on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 7am to 9:30am making a total of 7 hours 30 minutes in a week. Inter block football competitions were organized by warders for inmates. Some letters I chanced upon suggest that outside churches and other organizations wrote to AMSP authorities requesting for a soccer competition between them and the inmates. For example, ATL FM in Cape Coast competed with the inmates of AMSP in December, 2016. The commentary of the match was aired to the general public.

The aim of sports at AMSP appears to be more of just physical exercise and for entertainment. It was easily observed that few inmates really participated in the sporting activities. The rest of the inmates either observed or remained in their blocks. It was also common to see sick inmates taking a walk around the pitch. Sports in my view did not seem to perform a rehabilitation function on inmates. In a casual interaction with an inmate, he asked “*Am I playing soccer to become like Asamoah Gyan or Michael Essien in my 60s when discharged?*” This is not idle talk. The cynicism of this inmate is widely shared by many inmates who see their long sentences as death sentences. In view of this, there is no need expending energy towards their self-development. Absent of any significant rehabilitation structures, many inmates find meaning in something else, that is, religion.

Counselling

The counselling unit is responsible for providing counseling services to inmates. The office is occupied by a Deputy Superintendent of Prisons (DSP). The DSP who occupied the office had a BA in Counselling and Guidance. At the time of this study, it was observed that very few inmates patronized the services of the counsellor. In a week, at times only one or two inmates visited the counselling unit for advice. The session was more of a talk therapy. At times no inmate visited at all. In the course of interactions with the counsellor it was revealed that, at times when inmates quarrelled they came to him for resolution. The unit is very important but played very little or no role in inmates' rehabilitation process at AMSP.

Summary Assessment of Rehabilitation Structures in AMSP

Against the prison's mandates above, the only thing that AMSP does well is the "Safe Custody" – that is, to warehouse the inmates. But this also begs further questions. What becomes of safe custody when inmates are ill, malnourished, and contracting communicable diseases? (See McCann, 2014; Ofori-Dua et al., 2015). The prison's mandate of safe custody is even questionable. Considering the nature and size of AMSP, its desire to control the daily routines of inmates, yet with the absence of mandated resources produces a kind of Althusserian effect of [s]pace without places, and time without duration (Althusser, 1972 cited in Hamzic, 2017).

One can surmise that the prison has failed to live up to its objective of educating and preparing inmates for release. It is in effect out of the rehabilitation business. Evident is the daily routine schedule of inmates that shows that AMSP is a holding pen. There is hardly any functioning programme

to improve the potentialities of inmates. As a result, inmates utilize their time to engage in religious pursuits for the purpose of materialism. This has been discussed subsequently. In addition, the extent of the importance of religion in prison is evident in the extent to which the prison administration makes all effort in finding places and spaces for the various inmate congregant to practice their religion. This does not pose a surprise as to why inmates flock religion, hence making religion the most significant organizing principle in AMSP.

Religion

Religion is constantly practiced by many inmates in AMSP. AMSP has one interdenominational church called United Church of Maximum (UCM). Apart from UCM, inmates had formed their various denominations often linked to the external CSO churches of their choice. The structure of each of the denomination is composed of inmate pastor, elders, secretary, financial secretary and their assistants. This was also common among the Muslims, as they had a substantive Imam and deputy. Occupancy of any of these positions was dependent on the inmates' insight into the Bible and (or) Quran, and the inmates' daily commitment to religious activities. Some inmates were observed giving monetary offering after praises and worship. Interactions with the prison chaplain revealed that part of the offerings was used to hire canopies, and chairs to host visitors and clergy, and sometimes to hire power generator in case of light out.

Many religious CSOs visited the prison almost every single day (see Table 8). At the time of data collection, the following religious institutions were officially allowed to proselytize to inmates within the confines of the prison:

Rock of Ages church, The Living Truth Foundation Ministries, Calvary Charismatic Centre, Eagle Temple, Star of the East Ministry, The Living Hope International Ministry, The Church of Pentecost, Pentecost Students and Associates (PENSA, UCC), Islamic service, Seventh-day Adventist Church, Jehovah Witness, and the Assemblies of God Church. The representatives of these churches were allowed to spend about 1 hour 30 minutes with willing inmates under the supervision of a prison officer (See Table 8).

Table 8 - Schedule for Religious Organizations/ CSOs

SRL.	Day	Time/ Period	Denomination	Average number of inmates present
1	Mondays	11:00am – 12:30pm	Rock of Ages Church	30
2	Tuesdays	11:00am – 12:30pm	The Living Truth Foundation Ministries, Calvary Charismatic Centre, Eagle Temple	13 for theological school, 50 for other churches
3	Wednesdays	11:00am – 12:30pm	Star of the East Ministry	75
4	Thursdays	11:00am – 12:30pm	The Living Truth Foundation Ministries	75
5	Fridays	11:00am – 12:30pm	The Church of Pentecost	60
6	Fridays	12:30pm – 2:00pm	Pentecost Students and Associates (PENSA, UCC)	60
7	Fridays	12:00pm – 1:30pm	Islamic Service	85
8	Saturdays	09:00am – 10:30am	Seventh-day Adventist Church	70
9	Saturdays	09:00am – 10:30am	Jehovah's Witnesses	40
10	Sundays	08:00am – 9:30am	Assemblies of God Church	70
11	Sundays	09:40am – 10:40am	Star of the East Ministries	45
12	Sundays	11:00am – 12:30pm	The Living Truth Foundation Ministries, Calvary Charismatic Centre, Eagle Temple	80

Source: Field data, 2017

A number of the outside clergy visited the prison in the morning with few visits in the afternoon. The outside clergy were mostly accompanied by the prison chaplain to the church grounds and later accompanied out of the prison yard. The visiting clergy proselytized to between 30 to 200 inmates in a day. An

indication of the high rate of attendance to religious services compared to the earlier discussed rehabilitation structures. Though prison regulations prohibited inmates from interacting with the outside clergy, it was however common to see a few number of inmates discussing issues with these visiting clergy. During church activities, inmates sung praises, prayed, and listened to the sermon from the outside clergy. It was observed that some inmates shed tears during praises and worship. At times inmates were seen also preaching to other inmates. Prison chaplains or Imams stood in for outside clergy who could not make it at the assigned day.

These religious groups did not visit the prison empty handed. Some donated assorted items worth thousands of Ghana Cedis. The items included but not limited to the following: toiletries, tooth brush and paste, soap (see Figure 4 below showing donated items worth GHc3000), uncooked foods such as bags of rice, tubers of yam etc., musical instruments, and allowable medications for sick inmates. Cooked foods in packs were also donated to be eaten by inmates after religious programmes.

According to the Prison Chaplaincy and my own observation, the number of inmates at religious programmes such as Christmas and Easter crusades, at times exceeded 500 inmates. This usually happened when the inmates suspected a package at the end of the service. The number decreased if they expected nothing. This implies that some inmates participated in religious activities just because of the material benefits associated with it. This explains, to some extent, why religion dominates the lives of inmates.

It was also observed that packages of cooked foods were reserved for officers by these clergy. These donated items were often distributed by officers.

Some donors were also allowed to distribute their donations directly to inmates under the supervision of officers. Some members of these religious bodies went to the extent of filing appeal for inmates who appeared reformed, as well as paid the medical bills of inmates whose families could not afford to do so. The aforementioned roles performed by members of these religious Civil Society Organizations stated above were neglected functions of the AMSP due to under funding by the central government.



Figure 4: Donation to AMSP by Adventist Men Ministry

Source: Field data, 2017

One of the most significant religious institute within the prison is the Discipleship School founded by The Living Truth Foundation Ministry (TLTFM).

TLTFM in Ankaful Prisons Complex

TLTFM established a discipleship school in the Ankaful Prison Complex in 2008. The school aimed to train inmates in Bible Knowledge in line with theology and award them with certificates as “Disciples of Christ”. The courses were run in seasons and each season comprises twenty-four students at a time. Training lasts for about a year and a batch of students graduate before another batch enrolls. Tuition is led by the leader of the ministry. Admission to the programme is voluntary, and it is based on first come first served principle.

TLTFM so far has graduated six batches since the programme started in 2008. Approximately 142 inmates and six officers turned into Disciples of Christ in Prison. The first batch of disciples graduated on 4th January, 2009, the second on 9th January, 2010, the third on 12th April, 2011, and the fourth on 10th March, 2012. All the four batches graduated at Main Camp and Annex Prisons. The courses were not run at Ankaful Maximum Security Prison because the Prison by then was yet to be commissioned.

The fifth batch of discipleship school were from the following prisons: Annex had six (6) students, Main Camp six (6) students, and AMSP twelve (12) students, making a total of twenty-four. The sixth batch of students were all drawn from AMSP, comprising twenty-two (22) prisoners and two officers. Nineteen prisoners and two Officers graduated in 2016. The officers were included not only to provide security during classes’ hours but also to take the opportunity to learn the course in order to teach in subsequent seasons and probably take over the programme as a whole. All these add to show the pervasiveness of religion in AMSP.

What follows is my field notes on a TLTFM graduation ceremony.

Graduation Ceremony of Disciples

Graduates recited Bible verses after which testimonies were given. Interestingly, an old disciple who is now on discharge had the opportunity to also recite and give testimonies about the role of the ministry in his life. The testimonies described how his life has changed for the better since the introduction of the religious course. An ex-convict who was invited to attend the program gave this testimony:

You all know me very well in this prison. I was always part of the illegal things that happened. You people can testify how I used to fight. Look at me today. Isn't God wonderful? Give God a chance and he will use you as a vessel. I thank God for this change of life. Amen.

The inmates and officers who participated shouted a big amen in response to the testimony. The atmosphere was full of praises and joy.

The pastor for the day took the Bible verse from Exodus Chapter 15: 22-25.

So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea; then they went out into the wilderness of Shur. And they went three days in the wilderness and saw no water. Now when they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters for they were bitter. Therefore the name of it was called Marah. And the people emphasized on Moses saying "what shall we drink?" So he cried out to the lord and the lord showed him a tree. When he cast it into the waters, the waters was made sweet.

The preacher said God loved Israel and so when they were under captivity in Egypt God remembered the covenant he signed with them and made a way where there was no way and brought them out of Egypt through the Red Sea to Canaan. When food was in short supply God made manna to drop from heaven and when water was too bitter to be drunk, God again turned it into sweet and drinkable water. He told the inmates that they were not in prison but rather

on a training course from which they will soon finish. That God has a destination for all of them. The preacher furthered by saying that there are times in life things do not go on well, like to be in prison, because most of the inmates have failed their families. Despite the disappointment they can still change their lives for the better, like how the bitter water was changed to sweet water. What they have to do therefore is to accept Jesus as their Lord and personal saviour who will cancel all the negative manipulations in their lives and bring a positive attitude in its stead. When Jesus was about to die on the cross on mountain Calvary, he said “it is finished” and so when they accept Jesus, all their problems are finished and they will now become stars and the source of sweetness in their various families as was heard from the testimonies of their friends.

The Discipleship course was still ongoing at the time of writing this piece. I must state that inmates’ participation in religious activities for whatever purpose did not necessarily grant them some kind of credit at a point of parole hearing, but then the belief in a higher power provided inmates with assurances that, at God’s appointed time, they will be set free from prison.

Summary of Chapter

Against the background of other failed rehabilitation structures at AMSP, religious practices have become the primary preoccupation of many inmates and officers. Religion, as it appears in AMSP, has become the single most important organizing principle in the lives of convicts.

The next chapter examines inmates’ social background and their daily religious practices.

CHAPTER SIX

INMATES' SOCIAL BACKGROUND AND DAILY RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

Introduction

This chapter examines the social background and daily religious practices of inmates, and how these commitments facilitate inmates' self-socialisation.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Inmates

Ages of Inmates

Age is an important factor when it comes to serving an imposed prison sentence. To a large extent, the age of an inmate may determine whether the inmate will feel the pain (loneliness, neglect, etc.) of imprisonment or not. It may also determine whether the inmate will accept religion or any other form of rehabilitation. It was gathered from the observations that, the aged (50 years and above) hardly mingle with the young inmates. Informal interactions suggest two reasons for not mingling: culture or tradition, and self-preservation for self-esteem. These aged suffer more of degradation because of issues related to family stigmatization, status and prestige in the society. The young inmates felt less pain; with time the feel of being imprisoned became part of their social order. As established by Crank (2010), most youth found incarceration as not difficult whilst the aged thought otherwise.

However, the off-putting effect of prison varies according to how one perceives prison life, that is, whether difficult or not. When a person perceives prison as difficult, the likelihood of reoffending after discharge is low. It is also

most likely that those who find prison life difficult are those who may be inclined to religion for protection or for solace. By deduction, the aged are more likely to tend to religion than the youth. Is this applicable in the context of Ghana?

Below is Table 9 showing ages of respondents.

Table 9- Ages of Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
18 – 24	9	6.1
25 – 31	9	6.1
32 – 38	43	29.3
39 – 45	23	15.6
46 – 52	23	15.6
53 – 59	25	17.0
60+	15	10.2
Total	147	100

Source: Field data, 2017

The study comprised inmates of varied ages. Table 9 reveals that majority of respondents (29.3%) were between the ages of 32 and 38 years, 15.6% were between 39 and 45 years, with the same percentage between 46 and 52 years, 17% were between the ages of 53 and 59 years, 10.2% were 60 years and above whilst the least respondents (6.1%) were between 18 to 24 years and 25 to 31 years respectively. At best, more than 70% of the respondents could be classified as active youthful population. Crank (2010) argued that the more youthful a prison population is, the less likely for them to be religious or be involved in religious practices. By this finding of Crank (2010), one may be

tempted to think that the same apply in the context of Ghana. However, this study finds that Ghana presents a different case, as it will be discussed in our subsequent paragraphs.

The data further implies that crime rate among the youth in Ghana is high compared to older persons. This finding is consistent with Antwi (2015) that the youth are highly involved in criminal activities. The pre-factors leading to high involvement of youth in crime are mixed and varied. For example, the attitude of get rich quick without any hard and legitimate labour is becoming, that is, if not already a social norm. The high rate of youth unemployment, high demands from family members, the need for recognition and social status, and high societal expectations from the youth are among other dynamics considered under this condition. The reason, though not always, for the disparity in youthful population and older population in crime could be attributed to the idea that the older population have aged out of crimes involving heavy lifting, or physically demanding tasks. This is because they lack the agility and upper body strength. However, older persons are still capable of extorting money, or engaging in child defilement, and defrauding people.

These youthful inmates are fed, warehoused and provided utilities at the expense of the taxpayers' money rather than contributing to national accounting structures. In effect, the inmates who are expected to be tax payers have become tax takers. The data begs the question of what are these youth up to in prison. What are the rehabilitation structures available to reform these inmates back into the free society? Is religion playing this role or it is used by inmates and officers to satisfy other purposes?

Marital Status of Inmates

Marriage is recognised and regarded as one of the most important institution in Ghanaian cultures. The union comes with normative obligations. It is characterised by rights and responsibilities. These obligations and rights include emotional, financial, legal, social, spiritual, and religious (Yin & Black, 2014). The responsibilities espoused make marital statuses of inmates an essential interest in this thesis research. This is because marriage is considered as one of the social arrangements that determines whether a person will be involved in crime or not. Studies (e.g. Antwi, 2015; Blokland & Nieuwbeerta, 2005; Hirschi, 1969; Waite & Gallagher, 2000) have suggested that, marriage as a social bond makes husbands less likely to have criminogenic needs. This does not infer that men in marriage relationships do not commit crime. If they do, then the question is, how has incarceration affected marital partners, children and relatives? How are the affected coping with the situation? In the writings of Ofori-Dua et al. (2015), they established that spouses and children of some inmates resorted to prayers from churches and pastors. If religion does not only offer motivation to the family of the incarcerated inmates but also provides the inspiration in transforming such convicted individuals to a convert, then it merits attention. Below is Figure 5 showing the marital status of inmates who participated in this research.

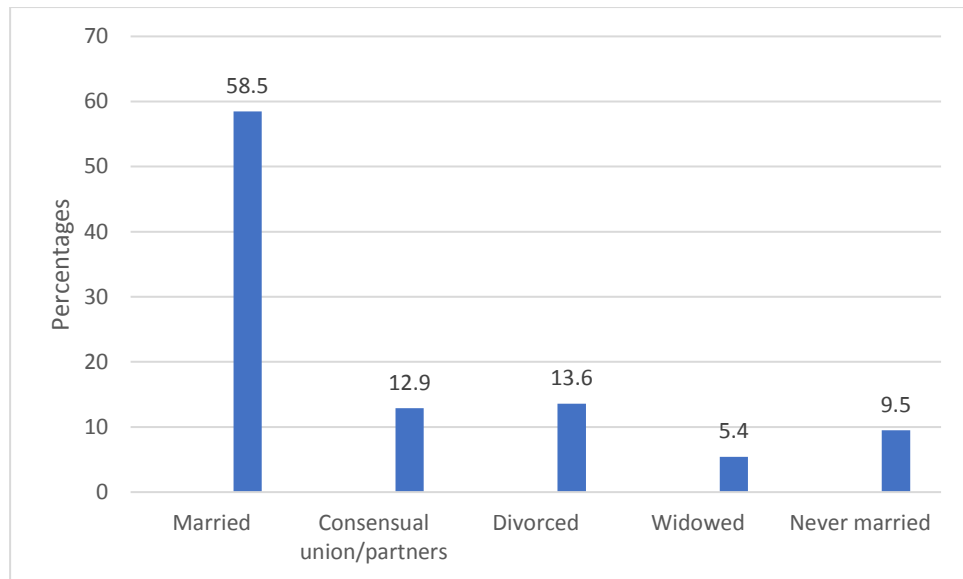


Figure 5: Marital Status of Inmates

Source: Field data, 2017

Figure 5 shows that 58.5% of inmates' respondents were married before imprisonment, 12.9% were in consensual unions, 13.6% were divorced, 5.4% were widowed, whilst 9.5% had never been married before. The data infers that 90.5% of inmates had been in some kind of a social relationship with the opposite sex. The data is inconsistent with the findings of Antwi (2015), Blokland and Nieuwebeerta (2005), Hirschi (1969), and Waite and Gallagher (2000), as they argued that people in marriage relationships were less likely to commit crime. Possible causes of husbands' high involvement in crime could be attributed to poverty, and 'unbearable' social and economic demands from families. The consequence of incarceration on the affected family becomes undebatable in this context; as social, economic, and psychological burdens fall greatly on the affected spouse, children and relatives.

In respect of whether imprisonments have had strain on marital relationships, 70.7% of inmates were in the affirmative, whilst 29.3% were not. Imprisonment is considered a source of shame to the families of the

incarcerated. Affected partners and families become aggrieved and highly disturbed. Family orders are undermined due to stigmatization and other stressful conditions. This position is consistent and confirms Ofori-Dua et al. (2015) that families of incarcerated inmates suffer stigmatization, emotional and psychological trauma, reduction in family fortunes, infidelity, and family breakdown.

The resultant effect is neglect and divorce, especially in cases where the imposed sentence is high. This is implicitly and unambiguously captured in the comments below:

There are instances where some inmates come to see us privately. Especially the married ones that their wives have threatened to divorce them because they cannot wait for them to come out of prison in 20 or 30 years' time. There was a time that one inmate's wife brought her wedding ring to be given to the inmate. (Asare, Prison Chaplain, 2017)

...No one has ever visited me, not even my wife, for the past 15 years since I came to prison...apart from God. (Kwame, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

The question is, what is there left to do when one's only world view and daily lived experiences are shaped by the event within the confines of the prison? Religion remains constant, it appears, in AMSP. The absence of significant cohorts, and the enjoyment of nephews and nieces, brothers and sisters, depletes many inmates of their self-worth. Even for those who are fortunate to have relatives come to visit, the experience serves to intensify their consciousness of adverse impact of their imprisonment.

Regardless of the neglect and anticipated marital problems faced by inmates who are already in conditions considered by many as stressful, not all of such inmates are experiencing these marital problems. This may be an

indication of some level of family support to inmates during incarceration.

Inmates' Educational Background

Globally, the educational level of people is very crucial for personal and organizational development. Many theories suggest that there is a correlation between education and criminal decision making. Hiring managers consider educational background of applicants before considering them for a job. Even though this is dependent on the type of job and the expectation of employers, the likelihood for employers to hire people with formal educational background is high compared to those without any form of education. This is because the person with earned credential has undergone a series of academic training and has been diligent in meeting academic expectations. Employers hire people with the technical know-how to perform the job. People with no or low formal education are more likely to also receive low wage, if even employed. Such people are most likely to innovate to survive. With this, crime becomes a possible option.

Figure 6 below shows inmates' educational background.

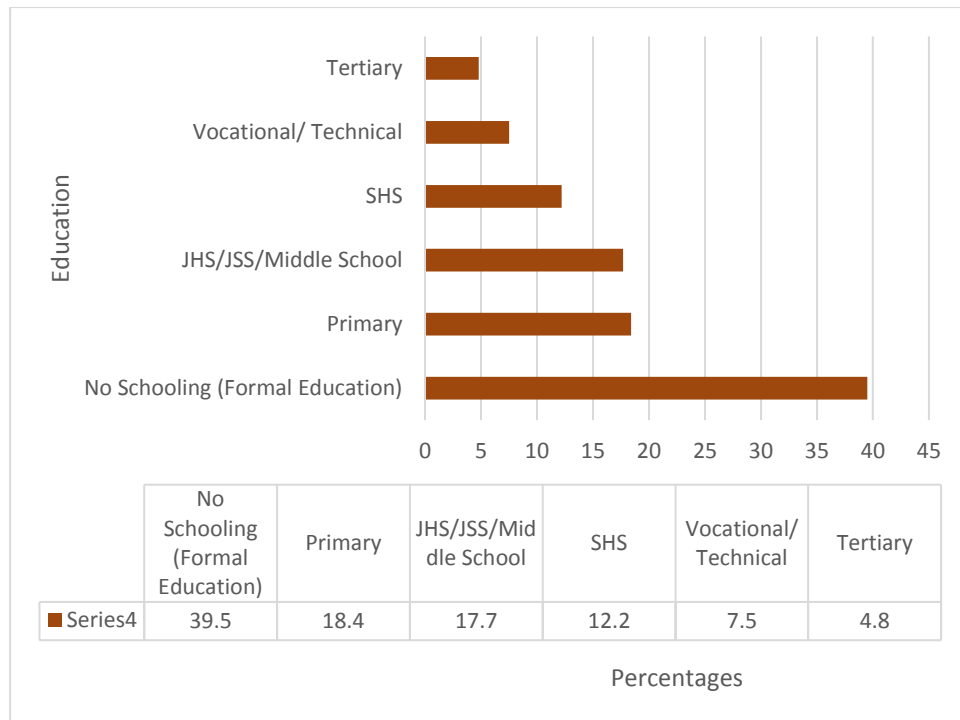


Figure 6: Educational Background of Inmates

Source: Field data, 2017

In respect of inmates’ educational background, 39.5% representing the majority have had no formal schooling, 18.4% had primary education, 17.7% had JHS/Middle School education, 12.2% had Senior High School education, 7.5% had vocational or technical education, whilst 4.8% of inmates had technical education. The data reveal inmates’ low educational background. Very much like the national trend, as the 2008 census report reveals that, about 31% of Ghanaians of 15 years and beyond have never had formal education. Only 55.7% of Ghanaians have had basic education, with 13.6% having attained Senior High School education and higher. Inmates’ low or no educational background is attributed to mixed factors that were social and family based. Inmates gave their own account below:

I was born in a broken family. I lived with my father. I have never seen my mother before. I was told that she left my father after I was born. I did not undergo formal education. I lived most of my early

life in the village. It was really a struggle for me so I moved from the village to join some childhood friends in the city. (Kwame, Nigerian, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

...I attended an Islamic Basic School. I could not continue because of financial hardship in the family. (Musah, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

I grew up in a poor family. ...it came a time where things became difficult. What to eat before going to bed was an issue of a miracle. Along the line my father died so I had to stop schooling at Junior High School. (Abraham, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

With the reasons above accounting for inmates' low education, the data reveal that people without and with low level of formal education are more likely to commit crime and go to prison. This is because they are less likely to earn appreciable income and also are easily influenced by peers. As a result, these people have the tendency to innovate to survive, as argued by Merton (1968). Unlike the educated and professionals, who when caught, have the social capital and the resources to assemble the best legal team to defend them from imprisonment. The data further show that family background is key to individual development. And that people with poor family background are more likely to commit crime.

The data correspondingly suggest that the higher people climb the educational ladder the less likely they commit crime. This could be because the resultant consequence of conviction on a highly educated person's career and earnings may be huge. Integrity is at stake, especially with people working in sectors such as banking, teaching, public relations, health, law etc. Apart from this, people with higher educational background are provided with employment options. As a result have low propensity to engage in criminal activities, unlike people with low or no formal education. This data coincides with the findings

of Lochner and Moretti (2004). They argued that people with higher education were less probable to commit crime due to their long and patience skills acquired through long schooling. Nevertheless, one cannot rule out crime among the highly educated no matter how low the rate is in this group (see Witte & Witt, 2000).

The low educational background of these inmates suggests the need for a serious and strategic rehabilitation and resocialization plan. This may range from acquiring trade training skills, religious and moral training to counselling services. In the absence of such plans, inmates without employable skills upon discharge will go back to the society to commit new crimes and return to prison. In the light of Goffman's concept of total institution, this points out a critical area for attention and development – as it gears towards rehabilitation. However, at the time of this study, AMSP falls short of equipping inmates with trade training skills. In addition, it was observed that the formal (Primary to SHS) and informal school established by AMSP to offer training was near collapse due to the lack of educational infrastructure, qualified teachers, logistics to promote teaching and learning, and the lack of interest expressed by inmates. This necessitated majority of inmates to resort to religion for these functions, hence makes religion a key factor in their reformatory process. In this regard, examining the role of religion at AMSP has become very crucial – warranting this investigation. The questions easily raised are, is religion really performing a rehabilitation role? Or it is an adjustment strategy used by inmates and officers to manage AMSP? From the perspective of Goffman's idea of total institution, can AMSP be regarded as one?

Occupational Characteristics of Inmates

Osei-Boateng and Ampratwum (2011) posited that 80% of the workforce in Ghana was within the informal sector. The sector is characterised by unfavourable working conditions, underemployment, and indeterminate work relationships. Jobs and high income insecurity are the major concerns for majority of this work force.

Majority of inmates, as shown in Figure 7 below were with the informal sector.

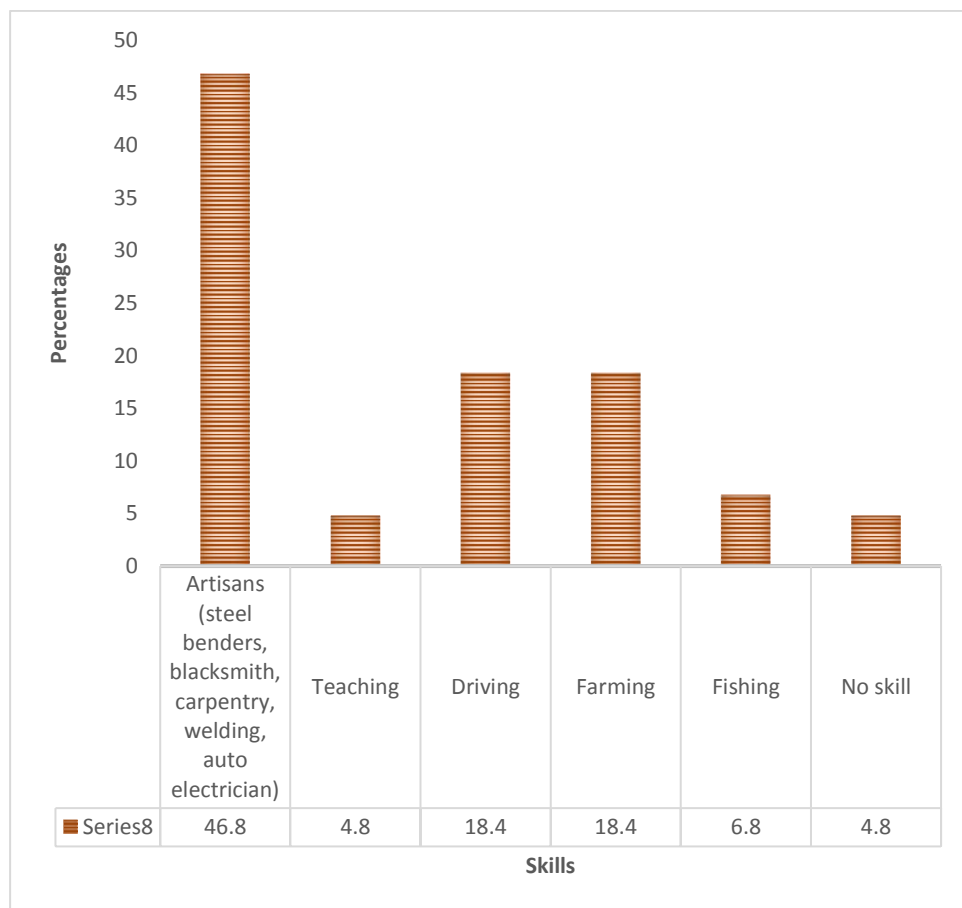


Figure 7: Occupational Characteristics of Inmates
Source: Field data, 2017

Figure 7 shows that 46.8% of respondents were artisans (steel bending, blacksmith, carpentry, welding, and auto electrician), 18.4% had driving and

farming skills respectively, 4.8% had teaching skills and with the same percentage for inmates without any skill respectively, whilst 6.8% had fishing skills. This implies that majority of inmates had some skill training before conviction. The third mandate of AMSP is to ensure reformation and rehabilitation of inmates by offering inmates the opportunity to develop their skills through trade training and moral education. Despite this mandate, and the fact that a number of inmates could boast of these skills, AMSP was unable to assist such inmates to put their already acquired skills into useful practice due to the unavailability of training centres. By this I mean that there were no programmatic activities aimed purposefully to train inmates to acquire skills of their choice - carpentry or woodwork, brick or block laying, electrical wiring etc. It appears the only meaningful activity is "religion". Hagan (2013) found that some skill training programmes were either absent or ineffective at the Nsawam Medium Security Prison. Implying skills enhancement in Ghana's prisons highly problematic.

Against this backdrop, one cannot be far from describing AMSP as a human warehouse and only performing the function of safe custody. As already stated above, if inmates cannot sharpen their already acquired skills or learn new skills to facilitate their rehabilitation and resocialization, then it is far from being considered as a total institution.

The data on status of employment before conviction reveals that, 70.7% of inmates were employed whilst 29.3% considered themselves as unemployed. Among the inmates who considered themselves employed before conviction, 86.32% were with the informal sector, that is, petty trading whilst 13.68% were with the formal government and privately-owned jobs. This finding, in respect

of inmates' large dependant on the informal sector, falls in line with Nyameky et al. (2009) that many Ghanaians, both young and old have resorted to informal activities for survival. In the case of the unemployed, it is a common knowledge in criminological literature that unemployment leads to social vices, hence for survival reasons these jobless individuals have no option than to engage in crime (see Ajimotokin, Haskins, & Wade, 2015).

For the case of artisans and others, who are largely in the informal sector, the findings of Osei-Boateng and Ampratwum (2011) may apply in this context. However, one is also tempted to argue supplementarily that the job of local artisans, farmers, and fishers are seasonal and location bound. The aforementioned factors place limit on their regular source of income. Meanwhile, most of these local people, if not all, have dependants. Consequently, they devise survival means, whether legitimate or illegitimate. This position is not different from Witte and Witt (2000), who argued that being in employment does not guarantee that people will not commit crime. In that, some specific type of jobs could aid crime, as people would want to increase their income to satisfy special needs.

Inmates' Beliefs and Daily Practices

Inmates' Religious Affiliation before Conviction

This was important as it gave a picture of inmates' religious practices before conviction. It also helped to compare inmates' previous religious practices with their current prison religious practices. It further aided in determining whether inmates changed their religious faith or they remained the same after conviction. If there is a change in faith, what has accounted for this

change?

Table 10 below gives us information on inmates' religious affiliation and types of affiliation before and after conviction.

Table 10- Religious Affiliation before Conviction

	Frequency	Percent
Christian	83	56.5
Muslim	47	32.0
Traditionalist	17	11.6
Total	147	100

Source: Field data, 2017

All inmates who participated in the survey research claimed they had some form of religious affiliation before conviction. Majority (56.5%) were Christians, 32% were Muslims, whilst 11.6% were traditionalist. When it was probed further on how they had these religious affiliation, through informal interactions, four of these inmates said the following respectively: *I was born into the religion, my environment was dominated by my present religion, the school I attended was a mission school so I followed that faith, and finally I became converted through the preaching of an evangelist.* During the in-depth interview, an inmate religious leader had this to say:

....My parents were Muslims... In the town I lived, most of the people were Muslims. Most of my friends too were Muslims. So I also became a Muslim.... (Fred, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

This reveals that most inmates were socialized into their present religious beliefs. This finding corresponds with Gaur (2011), who found that before inmates' conviction many of the religions followed by these inmates

were the religions of their parents or families. Many a times, these inmates were socialized into the beliefs, teachings and practices at the childhood level. The environment, social setting, and fellow children also played a critical role in determining religious affiliation. Many of these inmates whose religious mindset were already built found it difficult to change from the religions of their parents.

All these authenticate the importance of social structures (e.g. family and education) in determining a person's religious affiliation. The location of a person whether in an urban, or rural area can also determine one's religious affiliation. An indication that the processes of interaction with social structures are shaped at an early age by some other social structures, particularly education, religion, but subject to family relations. From the above, it is obvious that Ghana is a religion-saturated society. Very few people in Ghana can escape the pervasiveness of religion of all sorts in daily life and living. It is not surprising that many inmates enter prison already knowledgeable about the significance of religion in their lives.

Regularity of Church Attendance

Studies have shown some relationship between religious service attendance and crime. Banks et al. (1975) and Jensen (1981) showed in their studies that religion deter criminal behaviour. Evans et al. (1996) also argued that participation in religious activities may reduce the risks associated with both minor and serious forms of delinquent behaviours. However, the empirical study of Ellis and Peterson (1996) found that criminal behaviour had a strong inverse relationship with church attendance, and church membership than with

other specific religious beliefs like belief in God, heaven, after life etc. This implies that the number of times people attend religious services does not determine whether they will engage in criminal activities or not. This is also suggestive that people go to church for varied reasons and not necessarily to curb their criminal behaviours and tendencies.

Figure 8 below shows respondents’ attitude towards attending religious services before conviction.

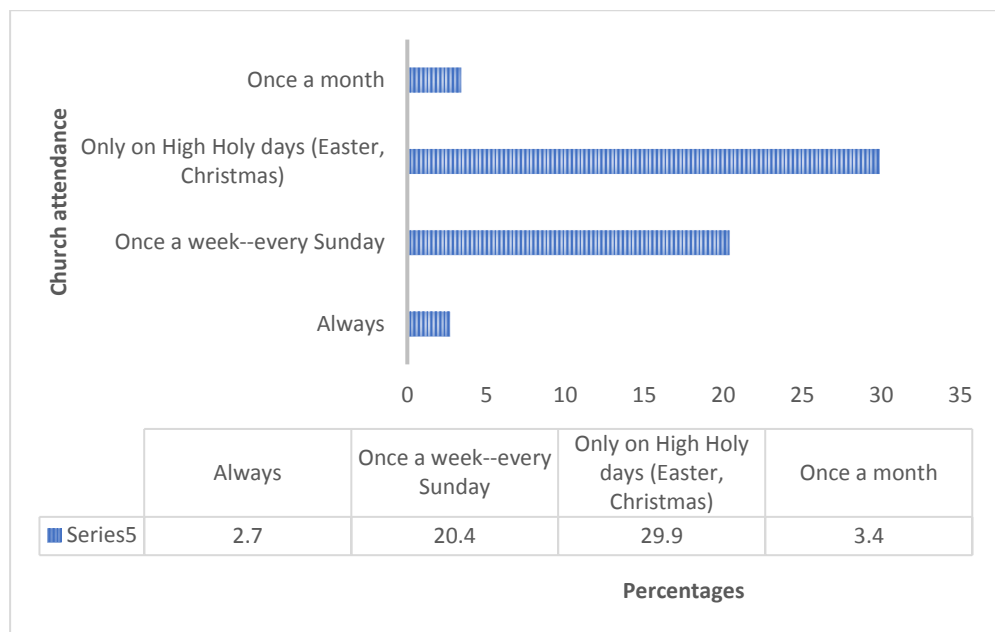


Figure 8: Frequency of Church Attendance
Source: Field data, 2017

When Christian inmates were asked how frequently they attended religious services before conviction, 29.9% representing the majority said only on High Holy days such as Christmas and Easter, 20.4% said once a week, that is, every Saturday or Sunday, 3.4% said once a month, whilst 2.7% said always. The figures show that majority of inmates were not regular church attendees but only attended church services during special occasions. Other inmates (though not the majority), before their conviction attended church services almost every

Saturday or Sunday. Yet such people were still involved in criminal activities. The question is, how does religious affiliation relate to crime? The findings of this study hold true for the work of Ellis and Peterson (1996), that there is a strong inverse relationship between criminal behaviour and church attendance.

Table 11 below shows the number of times inmates attended the mosque.

Table 11- Frequency of Mosque Attendance

	Frequency	Percent
Pray 5 times daily	5	3.4
Only for the month of Ramadan	29	19.7
Only on a holiday (id Fitr etc.)	13	8.8
Total	47	32

Source: Field data, 2017

Comparing the findings of in relation to Christian inmates before conviction and those in relation to Muslim inmates, the outcome is similar. The majority (19.7%) of Muslim inmates attended religious services only for the month of Ramadan; were infrequent attenders of religious services, 8.8% only on a high holiday (id Fitr), whilst 3.4% prayed five times a day. What is important in this context is that, inmates' religious affiliation did not necessarily connote commitment to religious activities in prison. An inmate who had never attended a Mosque service may report as a Muslim because of their parents identified with the religious denomination.

Inmates' Religious Affiliation in Prison

This is the religious association to which an inmate belongs. For

example, an inmate could be affiliated to only the Catholic Church or the Seventh-Day Adventist Church or both. Inmates' religious affiliation status does not necessarily connote commitment to religious activities in prison. An inmate who has never attended a Mosque service may report a Muslim because of parents identified religious denomination. In AMSP, religious affiliation means a lot to inmates due to reasons about to be unearthed.

Table 12 shows inmates' religious affiliation after conviction.

Table 12- Religious Affiliation in Prison

	Frequency	Percent
Christian	100	68.0
Muslim	38	25.9
Traditionalist	9	6.1
Total	147	100

Source: Field data, 2017

Just as all inmates claimed they had a religious affiliation before conviction, they all made a similar claim within prison. However, this time 68% identified as Christians, 25.9% as Muslims, whilst 6.1% were Traditionalist. This data correlates with Gaur (2011), who found that most inmates had a religious affiliation in prison. What is notable in AMSP is that almost all the inmates were actively engaged in religion. Clearly, the very fact of confinement, and the fact that AMSP offers no structured activities for the inmates to acquire marketable skills makes religion the only alternative for self-expression and self-development.

Comparing the data on religious affiliation before conviction with religious affiliation after conviction, it was clear that some inmates had switched

faith. This finding is not different to Gaur (2011), that during imprisonment whilst some inmates maintained and strengthened their faith in a deity, others either gave up on religion or switched their faith to other religions. The underlying factors for these conversions are varied. Among these factors are personal encounters with other believers, friends who shared their faith through prison evangelism, and personal revelation and discovery of a deity. Apart from some inmates converting from one religious faith to another, a number of inmates in Christianity also switched faith, that is, from one Christian faith to another Christian faith due to personal revelations. In the course of the in-depth interviews, three inmates had this to say:

I joined the Catholic Church on remand. ...for 8 years until I was transferred to Ankaful Annex Prison from Nsawam. When I got to Annex I realised that the Catholic Church was not good for me so I changed my church. (Kwame, inmates' religious leader)

...I was a Muslim when I came to prison. There were some Christians in my cell who used to preach in the cell. I listened to their words and changed from being a Muslim to a Christian. I have been evangelising since I became a Christian. (Fred, inmates' religious leader)

My parents were idol worshippers so they introduced me to that type of worship. For me, there was nothing like going to church or having Bible knowledge. ...I started attending church services when I first came to prison. That was the first time I heard about the word of God. With the conditions in the prison and listening to the word of God I had hope so I continued attending church. (Moses, inmates' religious leaders)

The qualitative data show that inmates' religious affiliation either before or during conviction was influenced by their previous environment, as well as their present situational interactions. They also indicate inmates' religious socialization by family and friends or the socio-cultural environment in which

they find themselves. The data further reveal inmates re-discovery of self. This could be the result of traumatic prison experience. The implication revealed is how structured religion in Ghana is peripheral to the daily lives of citizens. Inmates religious positioning reflects that social experience. All these point to how inmates explain away their own realities through the internalization of previous social experience. It also solidifies the point that religion is a socially constructed reality based on narratives and social experiences (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Burr, 2003; Schwandt, 2003). Out of this, inmates develop their own identity dependent on the interpretation and meaning they give to their object of worship.

Inmates' Religiosity

Inmates' Religious Beliefs and Prison Life

Inmates gave different meanings to their imprisonment in Table 13.

Table 13- Religious Interpretation of Prison Life

	Frequency	Percent
It is the will of God that I am in prison	48	32.7
God brought me here to teach me some lessons in life	49	33.3
God gives me strength and hope in prison	21	14.3
It comforts me	21	14.3
God brought me here to save my soul	8	5.4
Total	147	100

Source: Field data, 2017

In respect of how inmates religious beliefs helped them make sense of their prison lives, 33.3% of respondents said God brought them to prison to teach them some lessons, 32.7% said it is the will of God that they are in prison, 14.3% said God gives them the strength and hope in prison, 14.3% also said religion comforted them, whilst 5.4% said God brought them to prison to save their souls. The data reveals how inmates used their religious beliefs to explain their incarceration. This finding is in agreement with the work of Gaur (2011) that about 81% of inmates viewed their imprisonment as the will of God. The findings also affirm Clear et al. (1992) that if inmates suffer guilt many a time they turn to religion for relief and forgiveness of their “evil” doing. Given inmates resort to religion, one could argue that religion should be placed in the heart of prison work, as religious interpretation of imprisonment serves as adaptation technique used by inmates. Religion in this regard could serve as a rehabilitation structure for reshaping of inmates.

In the in-depth interview, one interviewee’s response complemented the

data above. The inmate asserted that:

Some people say prison is a good place others say it's a bad place but in my view it is a good place for those who have come to know God. I always say that the prison is a university for those chosen by God. So if you come to prison and you allow yourself for God, He will use you. (Abraham, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

Both data explain the ontological and teleological meanings inmates give to their imprisonment, as religion provides inmates the believable elucidation of the way things are in their own reality construction, as well as the plausible importance and essence of life (Berger & Luckman, 1967; Burr, 2003; Schwandt, 2003). All the above explain inmates use of religion as a “stethoscope” with which they diagnose the diseased condition of their prison environment.

Inmates and Religiosity (Worship Services)

In respect of whether inmates attended worship services, 91.8% of respondents were in the assenting, whilst 8.2% said no. However, in respect of how often they attended this services, majority (67.3%) said always, 24.5% said once in a week, 1.4% said two days in a week and once a month respectively, whilst 5.4% did not respond (see Table 14). The data suggest that inmates were dedicated to their worship services. The ritual efficacy of inmates is revealed in this regard. During the in-depth interview, a Christian inmate said that:

We used to attend legion services on Wednesdays and go for observation of the cross on Fridays. We go for service on Sundays. I did this for 8 years... (Kwame, inmates' religious leader)

This suggests some structured form of worship services organized either by inmates themselves, prison Chaplain/Imam, or visiting preachers. The data also indicate that attending worship services in prison has become a ritual for

inmates. Probably, this is so because religion at AMSP appears to be the single most important institutionally facilitated activity, though not mandated.

Notwithstanding, comparing this data with data on how often inmates attended religious services before conviction, one can notice that, inmates had intensified their religious adherence in prison. The question is, what has accounted for this change? The answer is found in Agnew (1992), who argued that individuals are more vulnerable to a transformative dogma inside the prison environment. This is based on the assumption that the prison setting creates a small population where amalgamation of issues congregate to generate unique need for and access to change.

Table 14- Frequency of Worship Services by Inmates

	Frequency	Percent
Always	99	67.3
Two days in a week	2	1.4
Once a week	36	24.5
Once a month	2	1.4
No response	8	5.4
Total	147	100

Source: Field data, 2017

Inmates gave the following reasons for attending worship services: 20.4% were of the view that worship services helped built them spiritually, 20.4% said it helped them to move away from bad deeds, 19% said it was the command of God to worship, 16.3% said it was because of their own salvation, 6.8% said to listen and understand the word of God for their lives and for the grace of God respectively, 5.4% said to meet their friends, 3.4% said because

of visiting pastors, whilst 1.4% said to stay away from trouble and have a long life. The reasons were varied; however the majority responses show inmates need to shun bad deeds to enable them build themselves spiritually for salvation. These findings reveal that inmates did not only regard worship services as merely a ritual exercise, but a process that had an impact on their lives.

Despite the pleasant reasons underscored by inmates for attending worship services in prison, this does not mean organizing and attending worship services did not come with challenges to inmates. The prison structure at times denied inmates the opportunity to worship at scheduled times as expressed by their religion. On Sabbath (Saturdays) the Seventh-Day Adventists inmates were/are expected to welcome the Sabbath on Friday sundown and worship God from Saturday morning till Saturday sundown. However, these inmates were unable to observe the fullness of their religious practices because of prison rules that dictated their behaviour and movement. An inmate religious leader had this to say:

The only problem we have is that the prison structures do not allow us to worship as we are supposed to. For example, on Saturdays we are permitted to worship for 2 hours instead of totally observing the Sabbath. Also, we wish to be meeting every morning but we don't get that opportunity. I think we are encountering this problem because almost all the Christian churches are sharing the same venue or space. (Fred, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

The right to observe the day of worship was granted to inmates, yet they were restricted in terms of the number of hours an inmate can use in that observation. At AMSP, the schedule for religious CSOs showed that inmates had a maximum of 2 hours to worship (see table 8). Also, there seem to be an issue of competing for space to worship by religious groups. At the time of data collection, it was observed that AMSP authorities had converted the upper

floors of two of the prison blocks to be used as religious space by Christian and Muslim inmates respectively. It was also observed that some cells were converted into worship centres within the blocks. These spaces within the cells were too small to accommodate 15 inmates at a time. This meant concurrent worship by inmates was possible but the sizes of the cells and worship centres made worshipping quite problematic or uncomfortable.

Amidst these challenges, a number of inmates seem frequent in attending worship services. Inmates' dedication to attending these worship services in prison is informed by their quest to have a spiritual encounter with their God and the need to shun bad deeds as reflected in the data above. It is important to note that the message of religious repentance, of God's mercy and grace in various ways absolves the criminal from the emotional and subjective guilt, if at all. In effect, the established religious wing within the prison provides a noncriminal option - the rights of inmates to engage in legal and legitimate activities, and the thought to contribute to their rehabilitation or reformation.

Inmates and Religiosity (Prayer Activities)

Many Christians, Muslims, and traditionalists pray to establish their faith as well as remind themselves of God so that they are not carried away by the secular activities of this world. As some put it, prayer is a source of regular spiritual food for the soul and body. Prayer gives inner peace and calmness. It has social and political implications for practitioners as well. This is manifested in weekly and mid-week prayer sessions for Christians and the weekly gathering of the Jumma prayers for Muslims.

Majority of inmates (85%) attended prayer sessions, whilst 15% did not attend prayer meeting. The data suggest that most inmates prefer to attend general worship services than just prayer services. In respect of how often they attended prayer service, 34.7% said once a week, 24.5% said many times in a day, 19% said as and when it was necessary, 9.5% said once daily, 6.8% said once a month, whilst 5.4% of inmates did not respond. Prayers appeared to be something constant in the lives of many inmates with religious affiliation.

Whilst some inmates prayed during their quiet time others also prayed in groups – morning devotions. Inmates had the liberty to choose the time to pray. However, inmates belonging to religious groups were bound to be called upon by inmates’ religious leaders to pray at scheduled times. Despite this, prison authorities at times developed prayer programmes for inmates. This is captured in the statements of two Christian inmates:

...I and other members do have devotions every morning. We prayed together and meditated with the rosary. (Kwame, inmates’ religious leader, 2017)

I choose the seasons for prayers and fasting though sometimes the chaplaincy receives letters from the prison headquarters directing the religious affairs of the prison. (Abraham, inmates’ religious leader, 2017)

These prayer programmes were not mandated to be attended by all inmates. Only willing inmates and those who considered such programmes relevant attended. The data suggest inmates’ commitment to religious practices. The implication was seen in how inmates had the right to abstain or participate in any religious activities of their choice in prison. The data implies that group meetings seem to present the platform to induce inmates’ conformity. By this, inmates modify their previous behaviour to enable them comply with the prayer

group's decisions. However, conformity to such decisions was purely voluntary.

The reasons for prayer meetings are captured in table 15.

Table 15- Reasons for Prayer Meetings

	Frequency	Percent
To praise and seek the face of God	34	23.1
The Bible/Quran says we should pray without ceasing	18	12.2
To identify my purpose in life	17	11.6
To have brotherhood in God	40	27.2
To overcome temptations	10	6.8
To pray for my families	9	6.1
Sense of community	8	5.4
Privilege	9	6.1
Serves as reminder	2	1.4
Total	147	100

Source: Field data, 2017

In respect of why inmates attended this prayer meetings, 27.2% said it was to have brotherhood in God, 23.1% said to praise and seek the face of God, 12.2% said the Bible and Quran instructs them to attend, 11.6% said to identify their purpose in life, 6.8% said to overcome temptations, 6.1% said to pray for family members, 5.4% said to have a sense of community, 6.1% said it was a privilege, whilst 1.4% said it served as reminder to them. The data corresponds, as espoused by Stark and Finke (2000), prayer signifies a person's effort to interconnect with the supernatural. This included the person offering the prayer and his/her social group (Ladd & Spilka, 2006). The data also relates to the findings of Stark and Bainbridge (1987, p. 46) that prayer aid in "seeking divine aid and guidance, for confession of guilt, [and] for gaining comfort".

The data further shows that inmates used religion as the most appropriate pillar through which they solemnized their self-understanding of the deity of allegiance. Inmates paying respect to the command of their deity also shows an established conduct of religious norms with which inmates identify themselves. The social relevance of this data cannot be overlooked as religion tends to provide the space for social interactions.

The qualitative interviews further reveal that inmates prayed for God's intervention in their appeal cases before courts, for protection from evil people and over diet, health, and for their families. The following statements by two Christian inmates and a traditionalist respectively reflect the above:

When I was first remanded I used to pray every morning for God's intervention, even though I didn't know God. (Salisu, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

I do not eat anyhow. I pray to God to bless my food before eating and to give me good health. (Fred, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

Before I go to bed I go on my knees to pray to my God. I do same in the morning. I believe He protects me from evil people in this prison. (Jarto, Traditionalist, 2017)

The qualitative data disclose inmates' social reconstruction of religion as a utilitarian structure that must meet some needs and aspirations. As well as reveal the inherent benefits such as the protection inmates derive from their religious adherence. The pragmatic implications of this data cannot be ignored, as inmates' responses demonstrate that religion provides real solutions and workable alternatives that are applicable to their prison situation. All these show how inmates are constructing their religious reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Burr, 2003; Schwandt, 2003).

Inmates had different reasons for attending prayer sessions. Not necessarily as a routine activity but for specific purposes. The need for unity through religious brotherhood and drawing closer to their object of worship was very significant in diverting their attention from the activities they considered worldly. The majority position validates Durkheim's (1912) assertion that religion makes inmates to turn away from the harsh realities of prison life in which they are enmeshed to focus on the "divine" purpose of been in prison.

The findings of attending worship and prayer services above contradict Berger's (1970) claim that Churchly religiosity has been on the decline in modern times. The study of religion at AMSP shows otherwise, in that inmates' churchly religion is rather on the ascendancy. This reflects the general case of Ghana, as in the face of modernity, religion is still considered prime in the affairs of many people.

Organization of Worship and Prayer Meetings

Figure 9 below reveals those responsible for ensuring that religious activities takes place in prison.

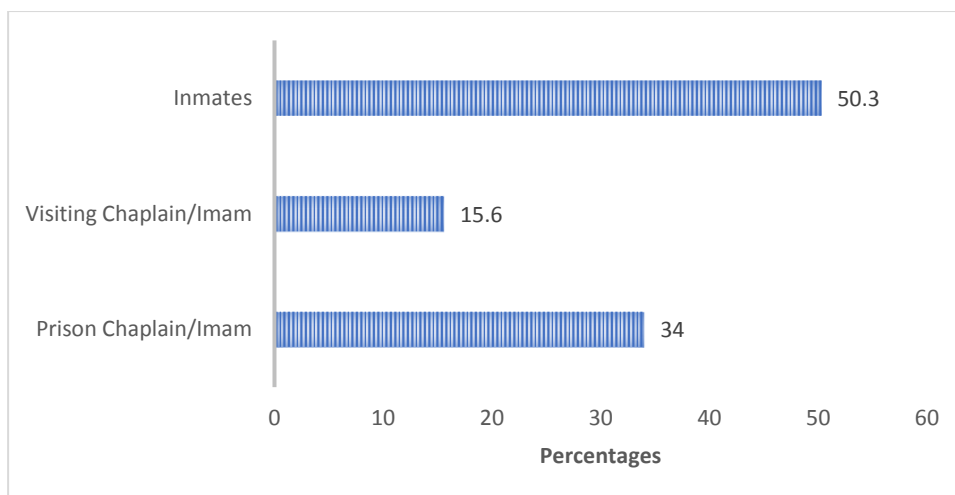


Figure 9: Person(s) Responsible for Organizing Religious Meetings

Source: Field data, 2017

When inmates were asked of the organizers of these religious programmes, that is, worship services and prayer meetings, 34% said they were organized by prison Chaplain or Imam, 15.6% said visiting pastors or Imams, whilst majority (50.3%) said inmates. The data show that the organization of inmates' religious services were issues of concern for prison authorities, inmates themselves, and the visiting Pastors or Imams. These quotes from the qualitative interview below corroborate the quantitative data.

Apart from the Friday prayers and the sermon that we do, we at times organize programmes such as celebrating the birth of the holy prophet Mohammed in order to make them realize the essence of practicing and emulating the life of the holy prophet. If they were not able to learn when they were home, here they should be able to know and also correct their mistakes and those lifestyle... (Mallam Tonto, visiting Imam, 2017)

I pass on information concerning the minister of God who will be coming to the prison to preach. I am responsible for organising my fellow inmates for this outside ministers. (Boadu, Christian inmate, 2017)

The response of the visiting Imam validates the quantitative data. This suggests the complimentary efforts of inmates, officers, and visiting pastors or Imams in inmates' religious commitments.

Despite the high level of organizational commitment, majority (83%) of inmates said they were mandated to attend such programmes whilst 17% refused to that assertion. Inmates' mandatory position is informed by their decision to pay allegiance to their religious group, and not mandatory by prison rules.

Inmates and Religiosity (Sacred Text)

Majority (84.4%) of inmates own a sacred text, whilst 15.6% do not own any text considered sacred. More than half (61.9%) of respondents owns a Bible, whilst 22.5% own a Quran. It is not only that inmates claim to own a sacred text but they also do read. However, their reading regularity differed as it was revealed that, 23.1% read their sacred text many times a day, 19% said once daily, 6.8% said once a week, whilst the majority (41%) said as and when it was necessary. Though majority of inmates had no or low formal education, their claim to reading the Bible or Quran meant that inmates who could read assisted those who could not by reading it out to their hearing. The data reveals inmates commitment to religiosity in prison. The in-depth interviews reveal that inmates did not just read the Bible but read it during worship services. They also studied the Bible to teach other inmates to improve their Bible knowledge as well as develop their critical thinking skills. Inmates had this to say during the in-depth interview:

When we go to church we read the Bible.... We explain the Bible, ask questions and share our life experiences with other inmates. At

times I give assignment on the Bible. (Abraham, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

Every morning after reading the Bible I call my fellow inmates for devotion. (Fred, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

Tables 16 and 17 show the frequency of reading sacred texts and the reasons behind such readings.

Table 16- Frequency of Reading Sacred Texts

	Frequency	Percent
Once daily	28	23.0
Many times in a day	34	27.0
Once a week	10	9.0
As and when it is necessary	50	41.0
Total	122	100

Source: Field data, 2017

Table 17- Reasons for Reading Sacred Texts

	Frequency	Percent
Communicate with God	17	11.6
For correction and training myself in righteousness	30	20.4
To learn and teach others	18	12.2
To keep me from sin	20	13.6
Renew my mind	10	6.8
Receive the desires of God	10	6.8
To give me courage	42	28.6
Total	147	100

Source: Field data, 2017

Inmates had many reasons for reading their sacred text. Among the reasons, 28.6% said it was to give them courage to pass their time in prison, 20.4% said it was to correct and train them into righteousness, 13.6% said to keep them away from sin, 12.2% said to learn and teach others, whilst 6.8% said to receive the desires of God in prison (Table 17). The majority responses prove the difficulty of imprisonment for inmates'. Sykes (1958) argues that inmates are deprived of certain liberties as a form of frustration to them. This makes prison life difficult. However, the data conjures up that many inmates' turn to religion for courage, relief, and inspiration to do their prison time. It also shows inmates acceptance of their wrong doing and their need for salvation. All these show inmates construction of their religious reality based on their social experiences (Berger & Luckman, 1967; Burr, 2003; Schwandt, 2003).

Inmates and Religiosity (Fasting)

Fasting is defined as deliberately going without food, in order to focus on prayer and communion with God. Fasting and prayer go together, nonetheless it is not always the case. A person can pray without fasting and fast without praying. The combination of these two, as religious people attest brings God's glory to full capacity. People fast and pray to depend on God for power, and insight.

All inmates said they meditate on their religious beliefs. However, majority of inmates (76.2%) said they fast, whilst 23.8% said they did not fast. Inmates had the sole power to determine the days to fast. This could be at the beginning and ending of every new week or month. Some inmates fast as prelude to their religious festivals, especially the Muslim inmates. Two inmates,

correspondingly made these assertions:

We fast at the beginning and end of every month. (Fred, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

Some inmates do fast, especially during or before their festive occasion. (Issah, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

Just as inmates decide on when to fast, inmates had their reasons for fasting. For those who fast, out of the 112 (76.2%) respondents, 24.5% said it was to help them intensify their prayers, 19.7% said it was for spiritual strength, 17% said it was for God's guidance in their prison life, 8.2% said they fast to be humble, whilst the least respondents (6.8%) said it was to clean and purify their soul (see Table 18). The data implies inmates understanding of the spiritual, social, and psychological benefits of fasting in their prison life.

Table 18- Reasons for Fasting

	Frequency	Percent
For God's guidance in my prison life	25	17.0
For me to be humble	12	8.2
For me to have spiritual strength	29	19.7
To help me intensify my prayers	36	24.5
To clean and purify my body and soul	10	6.8
Total	112	76.2

Source: Field data, 2017

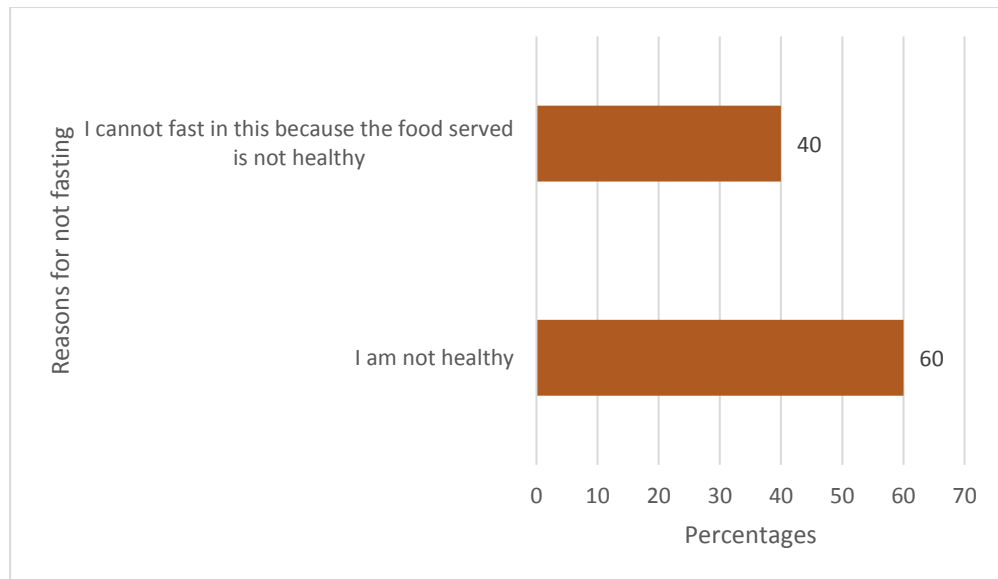


Figure 10: Reasons for some Inmates not Fasting

Source: Field data, 2017

In respect of why some inmates did not fast, figure 10 reveals that out of the 23 (100%), 60% said they were not healthy, whilst 40% said they could not fast because the food served them in prison was not healthy. These findings reveal that whilst inmates were aware of the benefits associated with fasting they also had the knowledge of the health implications of fasting.

It was generally observed that Muslim inmates participated in the annual Ramadan which is observed by faithful Muslims across the globe. During this period prison authorities granted inmates the time to wake up at dawn to eat and pray. Not all inmates ate at this time since some preferred to keep their foods so they could eat after breaking the fast. During this period it was common to see most inmates with their “Tasbah” reciting prayers. This period was characterized by special dresses in popular colours of white and black called “Jalbab”. Whilst observing this sacred activity, inmates contacted relatives via the prison communication unit for food so they could break the fast in grand style. When the fasting period is about over and the grand festive occasion is to

be celebrated, it was observed that some members of the Moslem community paid visits to inmates. These visits were accompanied with numerous food items to be shared among all inmates irrespective of religious background. The fasting was climaxed with a prayer for good attitude, health, and all other good things in life. These activities were done under close supervision of prison wardens.

Inmates and Religious Study Groups

In respect of whether inmates were members of a religious group such as Bible and Quran study groups, majority (83%) were in the affirmative, whilst 17% were not members of any religious study group. Inmates give their reasons for such affiliation below.

Table 19- Reasons for Religious Study Membership

	Frequency	Percent
To learn from other inmates and visiting pastors	28	19.0
I want to be part of the children of God	18	12.2
So that i can also benefit from the gifts brought to us from outsiders	38	25.9
So that in times of need they will help me	38	25.9
Total	122	83.0

Source: Field data, 2017

As to the why inmates were members of the study group, Table 19 indicates that out of the 122 (83%), 25.9% were members because of the help

they expected to get in times of need, 25.9% also said so that they could benefit from the gifts brought to us by outsiders, 19% said to learn from other inmates and visiting pastors, whilst the least respondents (12.2%) said they wanted to be part of God's children. The primary aim for people to join a study group is to learn and equip themselves with the teachings and practices of the faith. The data denotes that inmates desire to be a member of a study group is to satisfy personal needs such as companionship, survival and security, as well as power and control. The data further suggest that most inmates (51.8%) were members of a religious study group not necessarily to learn and practice the faith, but because of the material benefits they will derive from been a member of that group.

Table 20- Reasons for no Religious Study Group Affiliation

	Frequency	Percent
I have my sacred text missing	2	1.4
The behaviours of some inmates are not good	23	15.6
Total	25	17.0

Source: Field data, 2017

Out of the inmates (17%) who were not members of a religious study group, 15.6% said the behaviours of some inmates belonging to such groups were bad, whilst 1.4% said they had their sacred text missing (Table 20). By implication, some inmates observed the behaviours of other inmates to take a decision to either belong to a religious group or not in prison.

All these rituals (worship, reading of sacred text, fasting, etc.) find expression in the works of Malinowski (1954), Durkheim (1912), and Parsons

(1951) that religious rituals functioned in prisons to reduce anxiety and provide a feeling of control to inmates.

Inmates Proselytizing Attitude and Strategy

When respondents were asked of whether they proselytized to other members, 87.1% said yes, whilst 12.9% said no. The number of converted souls respondents claim to have brought to the fold is stated in Table 21 below.

Table 21- Inmates brought to Faith

	Frequency	Percent
Below 5	92	62.6
5-10	27	18.4
11-15	2	1.4
16 and above	7	4.8
Total	128	87.1

Source: Field data, 2017

As shown in Table 21, in respect of how many members inmates evangelists had pulled to their various faiths, 62.6% said below five, 18.4% said between 5 to 10 members, 4.8% said 16 and above members, whilst 1.4% said between 11 to 15 members. Inmates adopted many strategies to evangelize to other inmates to win souls for God. Figure 11 below reveals the approaches used by these inmates' evangelists.

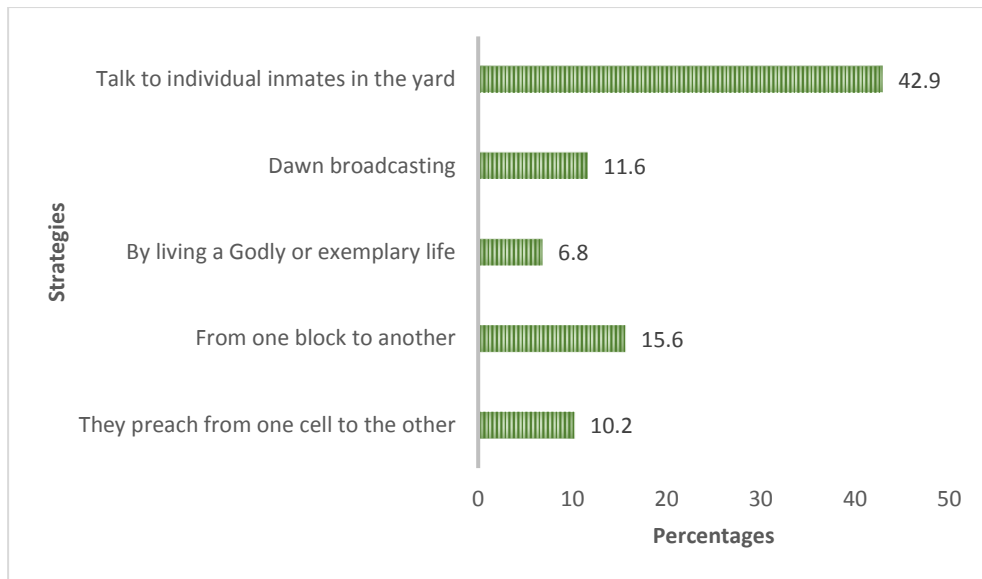


Figure 11: Strategies for Proselytizing

Source: Field data, 2017

When the inmates were asked of how members of their faith proselytize, majority (42.9%) said members talked to individuals in the yard, 15.6% said from one block to another, 11.6% said dawn broadcasting, 10.2% said they preach from one cell to the other, whilst 6.8% said by living a Godly or exemplary life.

Inmates adopted other approaches and used the opportunities they were presented with in the yard to proselytize to other inmates. Some teachers in the formal school introduced their lessons with words of exhortation from sacred texts. This means that inmates who otherwise may not have listened to inmates' evangelists whilst in the yard would now have no option than to listen to the preached words.

Other inmates used economic strategies to preach to other inmates. This strategy meant that the evangelist inmate occasionally bought food items for other inmates as means to invite them for religious services. The data reveals that inmates knew the importance of satisfying the social and economic needs

of other inmates before they think of presenting to them issues of their faith. By this, inmates ministered to the individual needs of fellow inmates as a strategy to extend invitation to them. Inmates' religious leaders had these to say:

In respect of the strategies I use to preach, in my line of duty as a teacher in the formal and non-formal school in this prison I sometimes introduced my lessons with scriptures from the Bible. I also do dawn broadcasting at the block. I also do [have] one-on-one Bible studies. I also have small groups that I teach them the word of God on daily basis. (Moses, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

I buy them fish and later invite them for church service. That is the only way you could get some of the inmates to join the worship services. They want to come to church but they cannot come and sit to listen to God on empty stomach. I share the little I have with them. This I wouldn't do in the past. (Abraham, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

The strategies adopted by inmates were confirmed by a traditionalist who said that inmates' religious leaders approached and proselytized to him so that he could join their religious services. His submission reveals that inmates' religious leaders approached inmates they know were influential and could champion the cause of their religious faith. This is captured in the statement below:

Some inmates' pastors approach me to come to church and that when I come to church I could do wonderful things considering my behaviour and way of doing things in this prison. (Kweku, Traditionalist, 2017)

Apart from inmates proselytizing to other inmates, outside clergy also came to proselytize to inmates. This denotes that prison evangelism is a shared responsibility of inmates, prison chaplains, and outside clergy. This gives a signal of the roles of faith communities towards rebuilding the social and religious lives of inmates for reintegration. The inmates shared that the

proselytization by faith communities were of immense benefit to them as it reminded them of their religious roles, encouraged them, and helped them to improve their spiritual gifts in prison. This is captured in the statements below:

They come here to visit us and to also share with us the word of the Prophet Mohammed. They teach us new things and also remind us of what we've forgotten. I ask questions related to things I hardly understand. (Issah, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

Sometimes we get visit from outside preachers. They come here to share the word of God to encourage us. They also help us to know the things happening outside the prison. We share our spiritual gifts with them and see how they can help us improve it. They give us hope that we can do many things when we go outside. (Moses, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

Inmates and Prison Chaplain/ Imam Consultations

To find out if there were times inmates went to see their Chaplain or Imam privately, 87.1% of inmates said they had gone to see their chaplain or Imam, whilst 12.9% had never gone to see their chaplain or Imam for a private discussion. The inmates went to see their prison chaplain or Imam for a number of reasons, as captured in Table 22 below.

Table 22- Purpose for Meeting Prison Chaplain/ Imam

	Frequency	Percent
To discuss my family issues involving my wife	69	46.9
My sickness	12	8.2
Conflict with inmates	20	13.6
I needed assistance from a visiting pastor	27	18.4
Total	128	87.1

Source: Field data, 2017

The inmates went to see the chaplain for many reasons which are: 46.9% said to discuss their family issues involving their wives, 18.4% said they went to the chaplain to solicit material assistance from visiting pastors, 13.6% said it was when they had conflict with other inmates, 8.2% said when they were sick. The data implies that inmates' religious affiliation facilitates access to material resources - money, psychological needs, and medical attention. One inmate religious leader and a prison chaplain expressed themselves below:

Initially I used to smell because of bad water oozing from my anus. This really worried me because it prevented me from going very close to other inmates. I prayed to God for healing. I saw Jesus in my dream operating on me. So the following morning I told chaplain about it so he took me to the infirmary for examination. (Abraham, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

Some inmates come to see me on health issues. They [inmates] want privacy. They tell us to talk to the infirmary officers because they don't want any inmate to be aware of their health problems. Especially those with TB and HIV. (Asare, Prison Chaplain, 2017)

The data reveal inmates need of officers to protect their private issues from getting to other inmates.

Inmates seem to have benefitted from their consultation with the prison Chaplain or Imam. In respect of whether inmates who went to see the chaplain or Imam, 87.5% said they had peace of mind after talking to the chaplain, whilst 12.5% said they were given the necessary assistance.

Inmates' Encounter with Visiting Clergy

Majority of inmates (89.8%) have had some kind of encounter with people coming from outside the prison to preach, whilst 10.2% said they haven't encountered such outsiders. Figure 12 shows the number of inmates who have had this encounter and the frequency of this encounter.

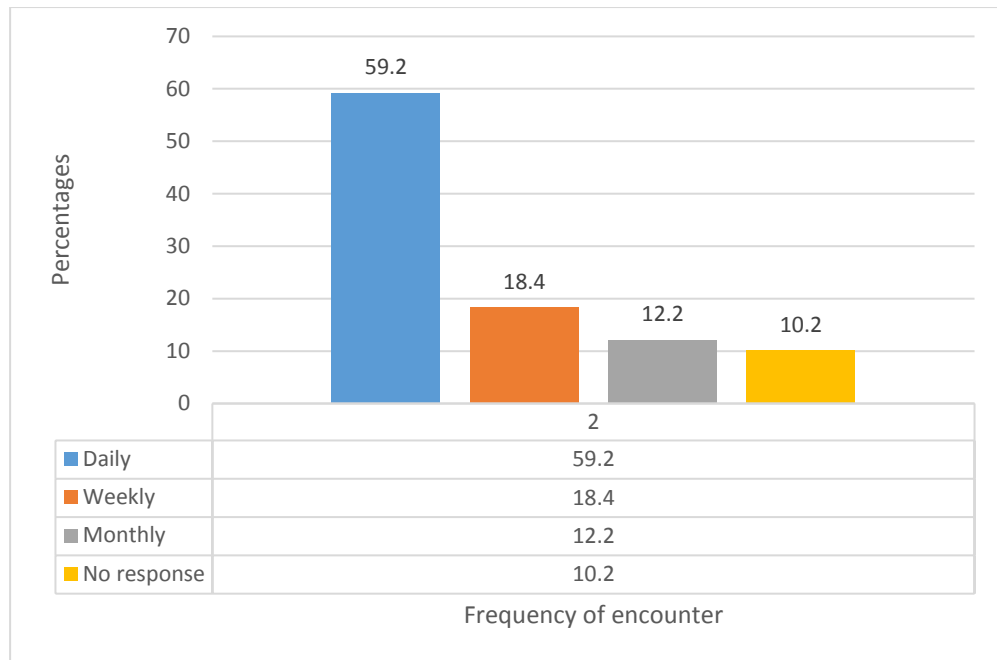


Figure 12: Frequency of Encounter

Source: Field data, 2017

In the case of how often inmates have had that encounter, 59.2% said daily, 18.4% said weekly, 12.2% said monthly, whilst 10.2% did not respond. The data strongly suggest the presence of religious organizations in prison. This confirms the validity of the official prison schedules for religious organizations and the observations been made. An inmate religious leader said:

By the grace of Allah our visiting Mallam and the community are helping us here. The Mallam comes to preach on Fridays. (Musah, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

The reasons for the frequencies of encounter are shown in Table 23 below.

Table 23- Essentials of Encounter with Visiting Pastors/Imam

	Frequency	Percent
Listen to other preachers	16	10.9
To renew my faith	36	24.5
To place my request before these outside preachers	59	40.1
To benefit from gifts or items brought to us by outside churches and clergy	36	24.5
Total	147	100

Source: Field data, 2017

In respect of why inmates find it necessary to attend these services frequently, 40.1% said to place my request before these outside preachers, 24.5% said they benefitted from gifts or items brought to inmates by outside churches and clergy, 24.1% also said to renew their faith, whilst 10.9% said to listen to other preachers. The data reveals that the reasons for inmates encounter with outside clergy had two dimensions, that is, the spiritual needs and the material needs. It appears that the material needs precede the spiritual needs. This strategy adopted by inmates is culturally based as Larbi (2001) postulates that African religiosity is to satisfy both our material needs on earth and to improve our spirituality for eternal life. Inmates' religion provides the ritual context for their needs to be met.

The benefits of these encounters from outside clergy are manifested in the interview statements as expressed by inmates below:

The presence of these preachers develops our faith. Their presence

and teachings really help us (inmates) to refrain from sin. So that when we go back to the society we would not go to commit another crime. (Kwame, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

We also receive preachers from outside. These preachers come to share with us the message of God. Some also bring us gifts (Fred, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

Whilst we the inmates worship here and at times lead our own services we most often get preaches from outside to also lead and teach. Our encounters with these outside religious persons have benefitted us a lot. Their presence alone is a source of encouragement and inspiration. We are inspired by the word they share with us. We are also able to put our request before them. My only concern is that the officers do not allow us to interact with them as we should. ...Sometimes these preachers bring us gift... (Abraham, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

The outsiders who come here bring us the word of God. But if you bring us the message and do not bring any donation the inmates will not listen to you. How can they pay attention when they are hungry? (Moses, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

Expectations after Discharge

Inmates expect that after discharge from prison, the outside clergy do the following for them, as shown in Figure 13 below.

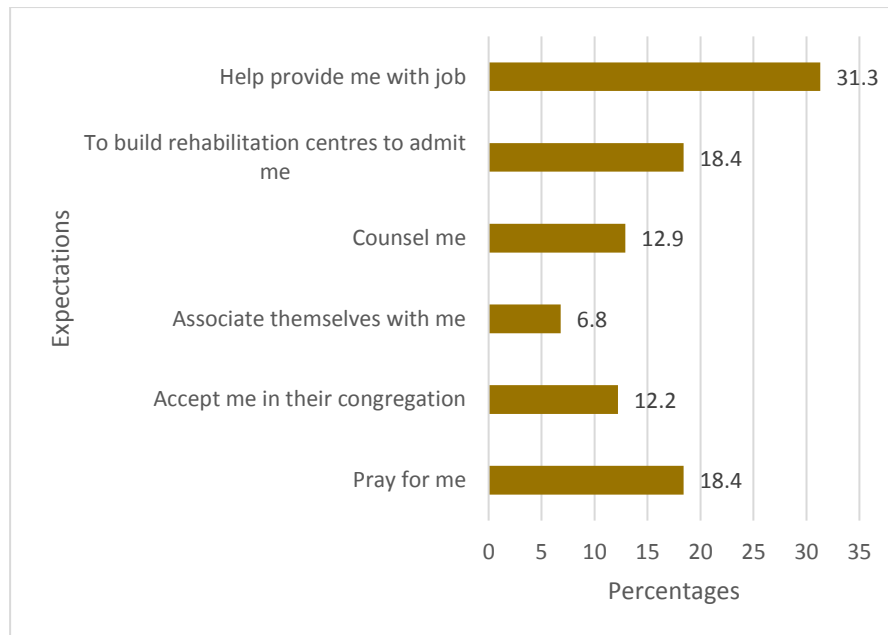


Figure 13: Expectations of Inmates from Outside Clergy

Source: Field data, 2017

Majority of inmates (31.3%) said they expected these outside preachers to help provide them with jobs, 18.4% said to build rehabilitation centres to admit them, whilst 18.4% said the outside clergy should pray for them, 12.9% said they expected the outside clergy to counsel them, 12.2% said to accept them into their congregation, whilst 6.8% said they expected the outside clergy to mingle with them.

Pluralism and Inmates' Religious Affiliation

The data suggest that the prison setting provides a social arena of unavoidable mixture of normative religious orders. These orders appear to be overlapping each other in the prison bureaucracy. This pluralism at AMSP has provided the opportunity to have some kind of a hybrid religious space. This cultural and social space is occupied by multiple religious systems. The practical implications of this is seen in terms of how inmates with Christian religious affiliation relate and view a Muslim or a traditionalist inmate, and vice

versa. As shown earlier, it appears that AMSP comprehends it as necessary to provide a "religious space" for inmates but no spaces for skills development and skills acquisition – structural activities geared towards resocialization of inmates. This makes religion a bureaucratic priority. Why?

What makes this religious plurality at AMSP notable is not about how inmates are co-existing in this social arena but the seemingly fluid diversity that exists in the various religious practices – day of worship, different religious books, different approach to worship and beliefs etc. in an otherwise carceral institution. Invisibly, these inmates' religious practices and demands proffer a competing claim of authority.

Inmates who may not be religiously affiliated but are thinking of becoming so, or inmates with religious affiliation but who wish a change, may ask questions about which religious regime is applicable to their present beliefs and orientation. This provides opportunity for inmates to choose from the multiple religious bodies at AMSP. This is evident in the conversion of inmates from one religious faith to another, and even conversion within the same religion. For example, converting from being a member or professing the faith of a Pentecostal church in prison to being a Seventh-day Adventist. The challenge posed to any of these religious bodies (Christianity, Islam, and Traditional religions) in prison is that they are rivals to each other. Amidst this rivalry, the members of these faith communities are accommodating each other. The way they accommodate each other, either by prison rules or religious principle, is a matter for another empirical study.

Pluralism in this context speaks not so much about the unflinching devotion of inmates to the worship of their various deities, however, religious

pluralism attests to the fact that inmates' initiated religion is the only mode of self-expression in AMSP. Without inmates adhering to religion, life would be difficult for the warders as strict supervision of the inmates would be burdensome.

Summary of Chapter

This chapter showed inmates social and religious background before incarceration and during incarceration. It revealed how these characteristics relates to their criminal behaviour, and their imprisonment. It was common to observe many inmates engaged in religious services on daily basis. The multiple religions inmates were affiliated to and how they co-existed in these plurality were also revealed.

The next chapter examines some legal regimes that provide the space for inmates to practice their religion.

CHAPTER SEVEN

INMATES' RELIGIOUS ADHERENCE IN THE CONTEXT OF RIGHTS

Introduction

The previous chapter examined how inmates expressed their religiosity in the context of their imprisonment. This chapter examines the various legal regimes and how inmates' religious practices play out in the context of the legal regimes.

Legal Regimes and Inmates' Religious Practices

There are national and international legal instruments that govern inmates' religious liberty and the parameters for their religious adherence. Part eight (8) of the Prison Regulations of 1958 on divine service states as follows:

(49) The Chaplain, or such other person as may be appointed by him with the concurrence of the officer-in-charge of the prison, shall perform the appointed service of his denomination every Sunday, and on Christmas Day, and on Good Friday; and moral and religious instruction shall be given to prisoners who are willing to receive it.

(50) Ministers of any recognised religion may be admitted at reasonable and proper times to the prison to visit prisoners who may wish their services.

Like the Prison Regulations of 1958, Chapter IX of the 1960 Prisons Standing Orders state as follows:

(382) Arrangements shall be made by Superintendents and Officers-in-Charge for Divine Services for all the recognised religious denominations to be held on Sunday mornings and afternoons. The times of these services shall be decided by the Superintendent or Officer-in-Charge in consultation with the Minister concerned.

(383) Attendance of prisoners at these services is voluntary, but no prisoner shall be allowed to attend the Service of any denomination other than that he declared to be his persuasion on admission.

(385) No prisoner shall be allowed to change his religion without reference to the Minister of his declared religion and the Minister of the religion to which he wishes to change.

(386) Prisoners attending Divine Service shall be properly clothed.

(388) Arrangements shall be made for an additional service or period of instruction to be held for each religion on one evening during the week. The time of such service or instructional period shall be arranged by the Superintendent or Officer-in-Charge in consultation with the Minister of the religion concerned.

(389) All such services or periods of instruction shall cease at, or before, 7 p.m. and sufficient officers shall be present to maintain good order and discipline.

The Prison Service Decree, 1972 (NRCD) also recognizes the need for religious freedom and religious tolerance as well as access to outside clergies at various times.

Section 40 – Religious Observances

(1) No prisoner shall be hindered in the reasonable exercise of his religious observances.

(2) Every prisoner shall be entitled to attend every religious service of his faith or denomination held within the prison.

(3) Ministers, howsoever known, of any religious faith or denomination shall be admitted at reasonable and proper times to visit prisoners who may wish their services.

(4) Moral and religious education instruction shall be given to prisoners who are willing to receive it.

(5) This section shall apply notwithstanding that a prisoner is undergoing punishment for offence against prison discipline.

Hierarchically superior to all these laws, and taking normative priority over them, is the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, which guarantees all persons freedom of religion. Article 21 and 26 clearly stipulates that:

21. (1) *All persons shall have the right to-*

(a) ...

(b) *freedom of thought, conscience and belief, which shall include academic freedom;*

(c) *freedom to practice any religion and to manifest such practice;*

...

26 (1) *Every person is entitled to enjoy, practice, profess, maintain and promote any culture, language, tradition or religion subject to the provisions of this Constitution.*

As is the case across the whole of Ghana for those not incarcerated, inmates also have the right to practice the religion of choice depending on whether the practices of the said religion do not infringe on prison regulations and on the rights of other inmates. These rights and freedom are derived from international instruments such as the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (1948), and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966).

Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides that:

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

This implies that inmates are not forced to subscribe to any religious sect but rather such decisions are subjected to their thoughts and beliefs.

Article 18 of the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Hereafter referred to as ICCPR) also offers for religious rights and freedom. In the second paragraph of the Covenant, it specifically provides that:

No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice.

Article 27 of the same ICCPR provides that:

In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language.

Despite these declarations, the chance to practise one's religion, either in private sphere or in public sphere, may be determined by the fact of imprisonment. For this reason, the United Nations *Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners* (1955) make specific reference to the need for prison authorities to allow prisoners to observe their religion and to have access to a minister of that religion:

41.(1) If the institution contains a sufficient number of prisoners of the same religion, a qualified representative of that religion shall be appointed or approved. If the number of prisoners justifies it and conditions permit, the arrangement should be on a full-time basis.

(2) A qualified representative appointed or approved under paragraph (1) shall be allowed to hold regular services and to pay pastoral visits in private to prisoners of his religion at proper times.

(3) Access to a qualified representative of any religion shall not be refused to any prisoner. On the other hand, if any prisoner should object to a visit of any religious representative, his attitude shall be fully respected.

42. So far as practicable, every prisoner shall be allowed to satisfy the needs of his religious life by attending the services provided in the institution and having in his possession the books of religious observance and instruction of his denomination.

Permitting the practice of religion in prison is not a favour conferred on prisoners in Ghana. It is part of the body of rights to be claimed by all inmates

and respected by prison wardens. Not because they are prisoners, but because they are human beings who deserve some dignity (Zellick, 1978). Observations at AMSP, the examination of legal instruments, and the empirical data below reveal that, there is freedom of worship within the confines of Ghana prisons; different deities with different faiths are permitted to visit their adherents in prison. These are entrenched rights, as prison warders cannot impede the practice of religion due to its relevance to reformation and rehabilitation. However, these rights are not without limit. The exercise of such religious rights must conform to prison regulations, and also not in contravention of the rights of other fellow inmates. In this thesis, this type of right is described as a “*right of no right*”, as such rights are exercised under strict control. To Palmer (1985), although religious freedoms may be subjected to modification by prison authorities, they may not necessarily be repressed. The following questions are relevant in this context: Is there a link between the rule limiting religious practices and a genuine prison interest? Do inmates have alternative ways of exercising such religious rights? How does the exercise of such religious rights affect other inmates in the prison facility? And finally, are there options that may accommodate different religious interests?

The laws above reveal the unofficial institutionalisation of religion within the confines of prisons in Ghana. The practice of religion is a right without coercion of inmates. Though a right, there are restrictions and determinants of such rights. This is in terms of the time for worship and which visiting clergy is qualified to proselytize within the prison. Though restrictions in the laws, observations revealed that the implementations of these laws were in circumspection of the social order of the prison. For example, inmates were

expected to inform the prison chaplain anytime they wanted to change their faith, but this was not the case, as inmates' switch of faith was without recourse to the prison chaplain on staff. An ex-convict exclaimed;

.....No, no (as in response to the researcher of whether he informed the chaplain of switching faith), I did not tell any officer that I had changed my faith or my church in the prison...

Interestingly, inmates had multiple religious affiliations within the prison.

This was revealed by a Christian inmate;

I attend many churches in this prison even though my main church is the Assemblies of God.

The data appeared contradictory to section 385 of Prison Standing Order 1958, whilst to some extent it aligned with section 40 (1) of the Service Degree of 1972. Inmates' change of faith, subjected to the approval of the prison clergy, was hardly so. The underlying factors necessitating inmates' subscription to multiple religions were varied, but mainly for materialistic purposes. Implicitly, this shows the contestation of law, and how at times warders circumvent the legal arena for penal management.

It was against this backdrop discussed above that inmates were asked whether they were aware of their religious rights or not, and whether they were able to practice these rights. The quantitative survey revealed that 61.2% of inmates were aware of such rights in prison whereas 38.8% claimed they were not aware. Through interactions, it was revealed that this awareness came through other inmates, prison officers, and religious CSOs. With this rate of awareness, 93.9% of inmates were able to practice their religion, whilst 6.1% were unable to do so. The significance of the data in the affirmative suggest religious liberty in Ghanaian prisons. The data further infer that, whether

inmates were aware of their religious rights or not, such knowledge did not determine their chances of practicing their religion of choice.

Ghana recognizes these rights of inmates as demonstrated in the laws stated above, as well as its manifestation in the building of Churches and Mosques in some prisons. Prisoners have the right to practice the religion of their choice with freedom of conscience. As stated earlier, inmates cannot be forced to follow beliefs and practices of a particular religion. They solely decide in this process of either maintaining their previous faith, that is, if any at all, or to switch faith, or maintain multiple faiths.

In relation to recognition of and respect for human rights, it is vital to appreciate the distinction between the two – both might be said to be necessary for human rights to be meaningfully enjoyed. That is, the state (and emanations of the state) must recognise these rights e.g. in the state legal instruments I refer to above. But it must also respect rights, in terms of ensuring they are realised in practice e.g. no obstacles in the way of individuals seeking to enforce their human rights; access to justice for all etc.

Despite this freedom of religion and practice, and the periodic engagements of Christian and Muslim clergy in AMSP, there are certain questions that need to be answered before an inmate's religion is recognised. Like Christianity and Islam, these questions have answers. Therefore, any professed religion by inmates that needs recognition must also answer the following: Does the said inmates' religion have "many" members and leaders? A sacred book comparable to the Bible or Quran?. Other symbols or artefacts like the Cross or Islamic "crescent moon and star"? (Symbol). Does the religion believe in a God or gods or any other thing? (Deity). What is the religion's belief

about life and its purpose? (Future hope; after life). What is the religions believe about the origin of people? (Creationism). These questions suggest that irrespective of the freedom of religion, before a practice may be accepted within the confines of the prison it must first be scrutinized and approved by prison authorities based on certain determinants.

Notwithstanding the questions raised it must be stated that they are not exhaustive in itself and they do not provide all the necessary and sufficient conditions for evaluating a religion in light of the Prison Service Decrees listed above, as questions such as what then become of indigenous religions without text comparable to the Bible or Quran? Clearly, it appears that the measuring rod of what qualifies as an acceptable religion is inherently biased in favour of Islam and Christianity. The close demise of indigenous religions is because they lack any texts similar to the Bible or the Quran. This legitimises Durkheim's assertion and questions: But if the reign of traditional religious orientations had now ended, what would take their place? Would the end of traditional religion be a prelude to the dissolution of all moral community into a state of universal breakdown and anomie? (Durkheim, 1912, cited in Coser, 2010). Nonetheless, one cannot deny the fact that indigenous religions remain the source of many Ghanaian cultural values and beliefs. Even in an era in which many Ghanaians claim to subscribe to Christianity and Islam, they talk about "evil spirits" or "demons" or "witches" directing the affairs of people.

Ghana's laws are, as formally enacted, in compliance with the rights contained in the relevant international instruments referred to above. However, there are interesting pre-requisites in the laws above: qualified, representative, appointed, and approved. These raise questions such as: What constitutes

"qualified" in relation to the many of these "self-made" preachers or "prophets"? How might the prison authorities handle a case of a fetish priest/priestess? To comment on issues of qualified religious representation, minority religious groups in prison are more likely to be discriminated against, as "qualified" religious representatives may be determined by prison authorities – which in many situations recognize only the dominant religions. This is a reflection of how the dominant religious groups in the local community relegate other "unrecognized" religious groups. In order to prevent minority discrimination, Kuppe (2009), in the edited work of Kirsch and Turner (2009) argued that universal human right laws on religious freedom should protect "old" recognised world religions, as well as protect the religious observances and conscience within the framework of other religious beliefs. In this case, indigenous and "new" religious practices.

Whilst the data on whether inmates were able to practice the religion of their choice proved positive, these practices appear to come along with challenges. During the interviews, inmates posited that even though they worshipped freely, there were times their religious observances had to be halted or suspended because of some prison administrative issues. This meant that there were times daily prison activities impeded such religious rights. Inmates had this to say:

...I respect prison rules even though at times such rules make worshipping difficult... (Fred, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

I say that whilst I worship in this prison I am unable to worship as I want. The prison rules help us but at times it does not. ... My problem with the rules is that when it is even 10am and we are still worshipping we hear the officers shouting at us telling us to get into our cells. ...because a high level government official is visiting. This makes worshipping in the prison quite problematic. When this

*happens and you don't have faith you may stop worshipping.
(Abraham, inmates' religious leader, 2017)*

Two ex-convicts reiterated by saying that:

Practicing religion in prison was sometimes very difficult. For example, we the Muslims individually prayed in our cells instead of praying together at dawn. We could not pray together because of prison rules. (Bugum, ex-convict, 2017)

...You could not move about anyhow. You were forced to sleep even when you really did not want to sleep. At times you could even be asked to stop a church activity for something else. The restrictions were too much. I remember there was a time our crusade had to be postponed because some prison officials from the prison headquarters were visiting the facility. (Baron, ex-convict, 2017)

The data imply rigid rules and schedules in AMSP. The data further divulge that although inmates have rights, this does not imply they always have a constitutional right to do things or worship the way they want because of their religious faith. The rights of prisoners to practice their religion is balanced against prison rules, and the interests of the general society. The exercise of these rights in AMSP reveal that, the abstract principle of humanity or humane treatment underpinning the respect for human rights in prison is ignored and reduced to mere formal respect for rights; as inmates were unable to enjoy their rights fully – evident in the testimonies above.

One of the key distinctions between prison religious practices is the adaptability of the adherents. The precept of Islamic practice is to pray five times a day, whilst some evangelicals are also expected to engage in all night prayers. These practices are certainly not possible under the safe custodial programme of the prison administration. Despite the rigid rules, inmates advise

or inspire each other through their beliefs to respect such rules. This is captured in a statement made by an inmate:

We do not have the freedom to worship Allah the way we want to in this prison. The truth is that our freedom has already been denied us so we have to act according to the rules of the prison. We only have to submit to the officers so that we don't have problems with them. I've been telling my Muslim brothers that we have to obey the time given to us by officers... we are under the law of the prison. Our beliefs tell us to respect authorities and laws. ...so we have no option than to see to it that their rules are implemented to the latter. This is what Allah expects of us. (Salisu, inmates' religious leader April, 2017).

We respect prison rules. I would not even call it prison rules. I would say the rules are God's rules.

Apart from inspiring each other, some inmates explained their reasons for respecting prison rules in the context of their religion.

I am a changed person not because the prison is a difficult place but because I have now come into contact with the light (Jesus). (Moses, inmate, 2018).

...not because officers are strict with enforcing the prison laws ...but because my Quran tells me so. (Musah, inmate, 2018).

The Christian visiting clergy stated;

The Bible instructs them (prisoners) to obey authorities (Warders). Refusing their (warders) instructions is disobedience to God.

The Muslim clergy reiterated that;

Islam is a religion of peace and law. Allah commands every person to respect the laws of the nation he/she finds him/herself. It is not only about you being a prisoner but even as free person. ...you have to strictly follow Allah's rule so that you don't have problems with authority. Following Allah's rule is basically following the prison rules. And doing this means you are fulfilling Allah's commandments.

From the above, religion, by default, is an agent of control of the inmates. Religion anchors and reinforces the prison rules by which inmates conduct themselves. This shows how religion is knotted into the social order of the prison as it reinforces and gives legitimation to prison values and norms (Durkheim, 1912; Parsons, 1951). All these also show how inmates are explaining away their religious reality through their social constructs (Berger & Luckmann, 1967).

In addition, the data reveal inmates' self-conception: hardly any inmates interviewed talked about the impact of the prison rules and regulations and practices changing their personality and their lives. Most explained the changes in their character purely in the contexts of the transformative power of religion. That is, inmates claim to obey the prison rules simply because their religions warrant obedience to authority.

It is important to note that, the rigid rules and schedules and structured activities are not designed to radically alter the personalities of inmates. AMSP is at best a confinement institution of persons deemed "dangerous" to society. Due to the underfunding and lack of direct services to inmates, inadequate quality food, the institution is unable to use institutional resources as an effective reward/punishment to exact compliance from inmates. In turn, inmates have been conditioned not to turn to the prison administration about their personal concerns for redress. For some inmates, respecting the prison rules was about upholding the authority of their deities.

Summary of Chapter

There are multiple rules and laws promoting the religious rights of inmates. These rights are functional in a boundary of rigid rules. These rigid rules limit the full enjoyment of the said rights. Nonetheless, it is still within this context of rights that inmates' religious adherence manifest.

The next chapter discusses the role of religion in the lives of inmates.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN THE LIVES OF INMATES

Introduction

Having examined the legal regimes and how warders circumvent such regimes to ensure penal management in the previous chapter, this chapter examines the role of religion in the lives of inmates in AMSP.

Role of Religion in AMSP

Religion and Inmates' Spiritual (Re) awakening

Listening and examining inmates' account of their crimes and moral failings in the context of their religious testimonies, one can surmise that inmates' religious encounter has provided them a forum for critical self-reflection of their criminality and lives. This is manifested in how inmates are charting new paths and identities for themselves through the renewal of mind and closeness to their respective deities. The belief in the divine has inspired in inmates a quest to live a life in pursuit of their divine purpose. Table 24 below shows inmates view of how religion has contributed to their spiritual life in prison.

Table 24- Religion and Inmates' Spiritual Life

	Frequency	Percent
It has brought me closer to my God	24	16.3
It has induce calmness and clear conscience	66	44.9
I have compassion for fellow inmates	38	25.9
I remain faithful to God and man	19	12.9
Total	147	100

Source: Field data, 2017

When inmates were asked of how religion had contributed to their spiritual life behind bars, 44.9% said it had induced calmness and clear conscience, 25.9% said the practice of religion had given them the spirit of compassion, 16.3% said it brought them closer to God, whilst 12.9% said it helped them to remain faithful to God and man. The data imply that the practice of religion awakened the spiritual consciousness of inmates by inducing calmness, compassion, faithfulness, and clear conscience.

This was highlighted by some inmates during the in-depth interviews:

I was really a bad person. If not for God, it would have been very difficult for prison officers to deal with me. But now I have discarded all those character away. I have gained the eternal life I lost outside. I know Jesus through my incarceration. That is my greatest achievement in life. This is followed by sowing seeds and seeing the seeds grow. (Kwame, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

When I was outside I hardly had reflections of my life. I did very bad things but now things are different. I have seen the need to prepare my path well so that even if I die I will have a place with

God. I have asked God to grant me His mercy and favour so that I can live a good life. (Musah, inmates' religious leader)

Apart from the renewal of mind I feel a sense of freedom even though I am in prison. Even if I die in prison I have no problem because I know whom I have served. I am a saved person in this prison because of Jesus. (Abraham, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

Our worship here has helped many of our brothers to come back to God. Many of these brothers did not know Allah when they were outside but now we've drawn their attention to God. (Sulley, inmate, 2017)

Every human being must understand that whatever we do God will judge us and reward us according to our deeds. I was doing what I like outside. I used to fight, drink hard liquor, smoke marijuana, womanize etc. I was quick tempered. I steal and lie. I used to live out of home for a year or two before coming home. ...I have engaged in all forms of stealing, whether it's about entering people's rooms whilst they are asleep, or breaking into people's houses whilst they are not home. Think of anything about stealing and I have done it before. This really worried my parents but that was my understanding of life. I forgot God was watching me. I have come back to my senses. Allah has touched me once again. And this time in prison I want to go to heaven. This is informing my behaviour in prison. I know that someone else's property is not mine. (Salisu, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

This awakening makes inmates to move away from fear of damnation (their soul going to hell) to a love based consciousness. In that negative emotions are removed from inmates' present life and replaced with a new religious consciousness – salvation agenda. The process permits inmates to live their best life and to embrace elements of positivity through the encounter of a divine power. This positivity is exhibited in the redeeming quality of religion with the assurance of a place in the hereafter, heaven, or paradise. This finding explains Turner's (2003) position that no matter a people's tradition, or culture, the supernatural experiences cannot be ignored. These experiences, whether

spiritual or transcendental give the individual some kind of a feeling of complete satisfaction, be it physical, biological or psychological. For inmates, imprisonment awakes these transcendental experiences. This awakening, as articulated above is also demonstrated through inmates acceptance and practice of new belief systems, emotional freedom, inspiration and personal development, daily talk with the supernatural, and a greater feeling of brotherhood. One can conclude from the data that an unexamined life is not worth living for some inmates. Religion has therefore provided many inmates a context for reflecting on the adverse consequences of their criminality. It is this (re)awakening that leads to de-socialization.

Religion and Inmates' Desocialization

In this thesis, desocialization means setting one's self apart from differing behaviours (immoral/illegal) due to one's conversion experience. Developing an inner self control to resist criminal behaviours within the confines of the prison. Inmates claim to shun the following: fraudulent activities, fighting, smoking and use of hard drugs (such as alcohol, tobacco products, cocaine etc.), unforgiving attitude, quick temper, the habit of retaliation, violence, stealing tendencies, homosexuality etc. Most of the inmates confessed to be of such dispositions, and engaged in combinations of these violations before their arrests and incarcerations; evident in the testimonies below. Their encounter with religion has given them a new reality and identity. This new identity emanates from inmates spiritual awakening, necessitating desocialization:

The worship of God puts some fear in us. If you want to commit a crime you are unable to do it. So you have no option than to move

away from sin. Using myself as an example, in the past I used to smoke weed and cigarette a lot but since I started worshipping God I have put a stop to all those things. (Kwame, inmates' religious leader)

I see many of the inmates engage in fraudulent activities but I cannot do same because of my faith and position in the church. How will the members of the church respect me if I am involved in such criminal activities? (Abraham, inmates' religious leader)

I have also observed that in the past I used to fight outside prison and even my early prison days. I hardly understood my peers especially when they don't share my views, but now knowing that Christ has tolerated me even when I was a sinner I have learnt to tolerate other inmates. I have a peaceful relationship with everyone, whether you are a Muslim, or a worldly person. (Konte, Christian inmate, 2017)

Before I came to prison I did not know all these things but now by the grace of God I know them. There were so many things I used to do outside, such as smoking weed and taking in cocaine. Even when I first came to prison I used to take them secretly but now I have moved away from them. I also hardly forgive people who offended me but now I easily forgive, knowing that it is only when I forgive that God will also forgive me. (Moses, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

In the past I used to be a quick tempered person. When someone hurt me until I hurt the person back I am not comfortable but now some of the inmates do insult me but I look at them and smile and move on. In fact my religion has change my behaviour. The bad things I used to do I do them no more. (Fred, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

If I love my fellow human, would I have gone to steal from him or fight him? No! I won't do those things now because of my faith and understanding of God. (Issah, Muslim inmate)

The inference drawn from the data suggest inmates' effort to purge themselves of criminal values, and to conform to societal norms. These claims are typical of inmates who believe their religious conversion has altered their dispositions and attitudes. Through their religion, they have unlearned their anti-

social behaviours. Evidence of their changed selves are the virtues (forgiveness, peace, love, forbearance, humility, and integrity) they practice based on their own testimonies. This finding supports the works of Banks, Maloney, and Wittrock (1975), Baier and Wright (2001), Evans et al. (1996), Jensen (1981), and Thirumalai (2004) that participation in religious activities make people to either abstain from crime, or reduce the risks for people to be associated with both minor and serious forms of criminal behaviours, but contradicts the findings of Ellis and Peterson (1996), Hirschi and Stark (1969), and Johnson et al. (2000) who established that religiosity does not deter people from engaging in crime. The caveat here is that based on the accessed available reports, it appears AMSP does not maintain an incident log in order for a researcher to assess the extent to which religiosity of inmate's correlates in the decline of altercations and other violations in the prison. As a result, the extent of de-socialization of inmates can only be measured in the testimonies of other inmates, staff and certified prison clergy/Imam.

Religion and Inmates' Self-socialization

Self-socialization is the conscious undertaking by an inmate to reflect and to account for the transformation of his/her self-concept. AMSP and many staff lack the technical know-how and the facilities to undertake the resocialization of inmates. As discussed earlier, this is one of the key reasons inmates are drawn to religious engagements in the prison. Unwittingly, religion has become the medium of inmates' self-socialization in the prison. The pervasiveness of religion in inmates' self-socialization is captured in Table 25.

Table 25- Religion and Inmates' Self-socialization

ISSUE	Agree	Disagree
I am able to build relationships through religious experience	78.2%	21.8%
My religion has helped me develop mutual trust	85.7%	14.3%
My religion motivates me	78.2%	21.8%
Religion has taught me how to sacrifice for others/ community	74.8%	25.2%
Religion has made me tolerant	85.7%	14.3%
I have compassion for others because of religion	82.3%	17.7%
I have develop the love for others through religion	71.4%	28.6%
Religion has made me humble	85.7%	14.3%
I have seen the importance of unity through religion	93.2%	6.8%
Religion has developed my sense of justice	50.3%	49.7%
I have self-control because of religion	65.3%	34.7%
Religion has made me develop that sense of social solidarity/ Togetherness/ Brotherhood	64.6%	35.4%
I have mental peace because of religion	82.3%	17.7%
Religion promotes my welfare	74.8%	25.2%
Religion is a source of recreation to me – Festivals	64.6%	35.4%
Religion has given me self-confidence	50.3%	49.7%
I have learnt to forgive others through my involvement in religious activities	93.2%	6.8%
I have developed the habit of self-analysis through my involvement in religious activities	65.3	34.7%
Religion has taught me to work hard to achieve in life	50.3%	49.7%

Source: Field data, 2017

The virtues of trust, tolerance, love, compassion, humility, unity and forgiveness revealed in Table 25 are clearly not character traits one expects of incorrigibles. Drawing from the data, it is clear inmates feel that their ability to practice their religion has had a transformative impact on their lives. Whether it was an emergent trait of their religion or mere device to win favours from others,

most inmates went to great length to challenge the testimonials to get second opinions from significant others and the prison officials about their character.

The virtues revealed in the survey research were not poles apart from the values expressed by inmates during the in-depth interview. Inmates' self-socialization is enacted through the internalization of new virtues. Inmates who accept religion have said that their encounter has made them confident, develop interpersonal relationship and the spirit of caring for others through prayers, time management skills, obedience, faith, respect for fellow inmates and prison rules, forgiveness, tolerance, and togetherness. Some inmates unlearn their criminal practices to learn new values that are reinforced by religious precepts and practices. There is a new sense of self that is socially constructed based on inmates own religious reality construction (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Burr, 2003; Schwandt, 2003).

The extent of inmates' self-socialization is apparent in the statements made by interviewees:

My faith in God has made me to be bold and has improved my relationship with others. (Fred, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

I share my encounter and experience with God anytime my family members visit me. I pray with them. I make them know the need for intercession prayer. (Moses, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

...This is informing my behaviour in prison. I know that someone else's property is not mine. Unfortunately for me, this recognition came at a time I am in prison. But it is better late than never. (Sulley, Muslim inmate, 2017)

I manage time for crusade and revival services. ((Isaac, Christian inmate, 2017)

I am very obedient to God and to my colleague inmates. I respect prison rules even though at times such rules make worshipping difficult. (Salisu, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

The presence of these preachers develops our faith. (Isaac, Christian inmate, 2017)

This religion has helped me to forgive easily. If I hate a brother then it means God is not in me. We are all one people even though some are Christians and I am a Muslim. We are each other's keeper. (Musah, Christian inmate, 2017)

Official prison chaplains testified to some behavioural changes they witnessed in the typical inmate.

When an inmate is angry, at times I hear some of them say if not for God he would have done this and that. The words of God calm the inmates down and we are able to live with them peacefully. (Abdul, Prison Imam, 2017)

First, this inmate was a Muslim before coming to prison. Later one visiting pastor gave out a Bible as a gift to him. When this inmate started reading it all the officers were surprised to see him change. He was a very violent prisoner but now very sober. In fact, some of us became very suspicious of him. His positive attitude continued until one of his school mates who was a lawyer heard that he had changed from his bad ways. His friend (lawyer) filed an appeal for him in court and he (inmate) was discharged. I once met the ex-convict's friend (lawyer), and the testimony from him (lawyer) suggest that it was a good idea for him (lawyer) to help that ex-convict to be discharged from prison because the ex-convict is now doing well at Techiman. And that the ex-convict was involved in every youth programme of the church. He said that the ex-convict's testimony has encouraged many people to refrain from crime. It has also improved the faith of many members in the locality because most people knew the previous lifestyle of the ex-convict and what they are witnessing now. (Asare, Prison Chaplain, 2017)

The data reveal that inmates attributed their reformed selves and acquired personality to their religious practices and beliefs. Through their embrace and practice of their ideologically conservative religions, inmates in effect, contribute to their subjugation. To the extent that the end result of religious practice is the docility of the inmates, the prison administration is apt

to make the free exercise of religion a priority. It is also implied by the data that inmates undergo self-socialization via their voluntary individual volition within AMSP, but not through the planned and designed programmes of AMSP. So the preachers are facilitation agents - not necessarily by their exemplary life but by virtue of their status within the prison walls.

One other observation, in respect of inmates' self-socialization process, is the ritualistic symbolic system that demands inmates' full participation. Besides regularly scheduled Bible studies, prayers, fasting, and High Holidays celebration etc., inmates present themselves for baptism of the 'Holy Ghost'. The highest mark of self-socialization - spiritually born again. A departure of the sinful "old self" into the acquisition of a "new self." The conversion process: this involves "rewards" and "punishment". Inmates, with the help of outside clergy, rebuild their newly formed selves – identities - as "born again".

Religion and Materialism

Religion and materialism is less separable in the context of African religious beliefs and practices. Materialism intersect with religion. Salvation is understood in this context, as believers aim to benefit from the material resources that their deity could offer them on earth and the eternal life hereafter. This manifest in terms of how religious persons go to church or Mosque to put before their deity various material needs and wants. As Larbi (2001) puts it, the goal of such religious adherents is to gain favours from the supernatural.

Blessings of this divine power are at times measured in terms of the material possessions of those who hold such beliefs. It is therefore not surprising

that inmates express their material needs in the context of their religious beliefs and practices through their encounter with outside clergy. Table 26 shows the importance of religion to their material needs or economic behaviour.

Table 26- Religion and Materialism/Economic Behaviour

	Frequency	Percent
It has taught me how to save	38	25.9
It has taught me kindness and the act of generosity	48	32.7
I receive gifts like food and money from the outside clergy	61	41.5
Total	147	100

Source: Field data, 2017

Table 26 reveals how religion contributes to the material lives or economic behaviour of inmates. Majority (41.5%) were of the view that they received gifts like food and money from outside clergy, 32.7% said religion taught them to be kind and generous towards other inmates, whilst 25.9% said religion taught them the culture of savings. The dominant view implies the failure of AMSP in promoting the welfare of inmates through the provision of good food and other material needs.

In addition, drawing on the challenges faced by AMSP under structure and process, inmates depend on their religion through outside clergy to satisfy some basic needs such as toiletries, food, soft drinks, slippers, clothes, and musical instruments and chairs to further promote religion in prison. Not only do inmates depend on outside clergy for their material needs, they also depend on the church offerings of their religious groups to meet some basic necessities.

These materials from the religious Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) do not only support the inmates but also support the prison administration in terms of AMSP using donations to supplement the diets and material needs of inmates. This suggests a symbiotic relationship between AMSP and CSOs. During the in-depth interviews, inmates, prison officers, and outside clergy stated as follows:

At times when members of the church complain about not having certain toiletries, we come into agreement and order for soap from our own contributions. We share the soap among the members. (Fred, inmate religious leader, 2017)

Also, apart from the food and toiletries, the churches here at Maximum Security Prison have benefitted hugely from outside religious bodies. For example, they supply us with plastic chairs and benches, speakers and Mics, maracas etc. Some of these preachers even facilitate the court processes for some of our friends. (Abraham, inmate religious leader, 2017)

There are some inmates who join us for many reasons. Probably, to get a share of the gifts (used clothes, soap, food and drinks) the church receives from the preachers and churches who visit us from outside. (Moses, inmate religious leader, 2017)

...They bring us cooked food such as rice and chicken. And other minerals. All this motivate us in our worship. (Salisu, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

The Prison Chaplain explained:

The visiting clergy don't come to visit the yard empty handed. They come with cooked and uncooked foods, slippers, pepsodent, brush, detergent and used clothes. These items help the prison a lot. We are unable to supply these items to the inmates so the items we receive reduce pressure on prison administration. (Asare, Prison Chaplain, 2017)

As validated by prison officers:

Donations from faith communities or persons ease the pressure on the prison administration. At times the administration depends on religious bodies for assistance to support the inmates. Example, some churches provide wheelchairs for physically challenged inmates who are going on discharge. The churches, in addition pay the transportation cost of officers who will transport these challenged inmates to their homes. (Buabeng, Prison officer, 2017)

The needs may not necessarily be religious but social or material. Some of these visiting pastors are able to contact relatives of these inmates for them. Some are able to help retrieve the court records of inmates. Some even go to the extent of filing appeal for the inmates. (Wisdom, Prison officer, 2017)

When these visiting pastors come around, some come with food. When the food is enough to be shared for all inmates it is done. But when it is not enough, only those who come to church get the food. So some come to church because of what they will get at the end. (Wisdom, Prison officer, 2017)

According to the visiting Imam:

On festive occasions, we go to pray with them, share foods and drinks with them. We mobilise the resources to feed them from the community. (Mallam Tonto, visiting Imam, 2017)

The data implies that some inmates join a particular religious group not necessarily because of the spiritual development their religion offers but the material benefits that come with such affiliation. The data further suggest religion as a means to material and administrative ends. In effect, the materialism inmates derive from active participation in religion makes it the most important organizing principle in the majority of inmates' prison life. Even so, the study of religiosity in prison reveals some of the failures of the prison bureaucracy, as the presence and functions of CSOs at AMSP suggest the usurpation of the prison bureaucracy by these CSOs. Administratively, the unacknowledged but evident in the research is that there is a tacit relationship

between religious CSOs and Prison Officials in the management of inmates' material and spiritual life within AMSP. One can conclude that AMSP is at the mercy of these CSOs to maintain order and stability.

Religion and Inmates' Health

The health of inmates is a critical component of incarceration, as revealed in the mandates of Ghana Prisons Service/ AMSP. It is the responsibility of AMSP to promote the health of inmates, however, AMSP is unable to perform such mandate as expected due to underfunding and lack of resources. Inmates have to improvise their own means of dealing with their health situation. In that, inmates resort to their regular contributions given during church programmes and outside clergy for the functions of transporting sick inmates to hospitals and settling medical bills. Table 27 reveals how religion contributes to the health of inmates at AMSP.

Table 27- Contribution of Religion to inmates' health

	Frequency	Percent
I get healing from God	65	44.2
When I am sick and have no money to buy drugs my church members use part of our offering to buy drugs for me	69	46.9
I have mental peace	13	8.8
Total	147	100

Source: Field data, 2017

Table 27 shows that majority (44.2%) of inmates were of the view that religion had contributed to their healing process during ill health, 46.9% said when they were sick and had no money for medical treatment they depended on other church members (inmates) and church offerings for the purpose of paying medical bills, and buying of recommended pharmaceuticals, whilst 8.8% claim to have had mental peace as a result of their religious practices. The data above imply inmates' use of both physical and spiritual means to dealing with their health problems whilst at the same time reveal the proactive nature of inmates towards sustaining their religious community through meeting the health needs of members.

Inmates' health seeking behaviour is demonstrated through their belief in a higher power for healing. It is easy for one to say that religion fosters the formation of mutual aid society of sort through which inmates pull financial resources to aid the sick or infirm. There is also evidence that the prison depend hugely on religious CSOs for the provision of some basic health needs of inmates. The in-depth interviews reveal below as explained by inmates, warders, and outside clergy:

Sometimes when I wake up in the morning I feel in my body that I am not well. When this happens I get a cup of water and pray over it. I drink it as health to my body. Because of the faith I have, I get healing upon drinking the water. I sometimes also fast for good health because falling ill in prison is not a good experience. I believe that when you worship God well certain sickness will be far away from you. (Fred, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

Initially, my body used to smell bad because of body fluid dripping from my anus. This really worried me because it prevented me from going very close to other inmates. I prayed to God for healing. I saw Jesus in my dream operating on me. So the following morning I told the Prison chaplain about it so he took me to the infirmary for examination. The nurse advised that I go for surgery. I had no

money by then so the church decided to pay for the cost of the surgery from the offerings of members. I was taken for the surgery and by the grace of God it was successful. So now I am free. I have never fallen ill after this operation. (Abraham, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

Apart from me benefitting from the church coffers when I was ill other inmates also benefits from it when they also fall ill and don't have money for their treatment and transportation cost to the hospital. (Abraham, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

The Inmate traditionalist elucidated:

Many inmates come to me at the block. They come to me for directives. If they complain of pain on any part of their body, I massage that part of the body suffering the pain with locally prepared medicine. I encourage them. I saw one of this religious inmate neglect a sick inmate in his cell. I went there to assist the inmate and he got his healing. I usually draw the attention of officers before I take such initiatives. (Jarto, Traditionalist, 2017)

The visiting Imam continued:

Some give the money as offering so that when an inmate is sick and has no money ...they can call for their savings to buy drugs to help the sick inmate as first aid. If it calls that the inmate must go to the hospital it takes T&T to go. Sometimes the prison does not have the logistics to take the inmates to the hospital. When this happens, the said inmate is left to his faith. But if you have money in the coffers of the religion, you can withdraw some of the money to support the transportation need of the inmate. If there is the need to buy more drugs and at that juncture there is no money, what do you do if not from the little savings of the religious group? (Mallam Tonto, visiting Imam, 2017)

Likewise the prison chaplain:

There was also a time administration had no money and the human resource to perform surgery on an inmate suffering from hernia. The administration called on religious bodies and persons to support. The extension of such support to the administration helped financially for the surgery. Our infirmary is surviving on the mercy of these religious bodies or faith persons. This has helped the prison

administration to run smoothly without much challenges. (Asare, Prison Chaplain, 2017)

The positions of these interviewees were validated by an ex-convict who stated that:

I usually do not want to recount my experience at Maximum Security Prison. It was very bitter. I nearly died if not for the intervention of my elders in the church at Maximum prison. They used the church offering to aid my treatment at the Ankaful General Hospital. God used the church to save me. After I gained back my health I became more attached to the church. I am very grateful to the members, especially the chaplain. (Sammy, ex-convict, 2017)

The data reveal a strong link between religious CSOs and AMSP. The practical reason for the intertwining of the religious CSOs and the government agency speaks volume about the deficiencies of the government agency. The CSOs take advantage of it to raise its profile in the prison community and the free society. Far from being a purposive collaborate project, the prison officials in effect have relegated the function of proselytizing, welfare, and religious rehabilitation or resocialization of the inmates to the religious CSOs and to the inmates themselves.

Evidently, maintaining order within the confines of the prison cannot be attained without the assistance of the religious CSOs. In that, AMSP lacks resources, and is experiencing overcapacity of inmates. This overcapacity is seen in light of the available resources for inmates. Although unintended, inmates' contributions to the collection plates during religious meetings have become a sort of *de facto* prison insurance. Regardless of their religious persuasion, inmates in dire need of medical attention are largely funded by pooled resources of other inmates.

All these reveal inmates own initiation of rehabilitation and resocialization need, at times through the religious CSOs. The relationship between the operations of the prison and the religious CSOs on the basis of materialism, health, and self-socialization can best be described as symbiotic:

- a) The CSOs expand their religious outreach by getting scheduled access to the prison, inmates, and make-shift religious rooms to conduct religious services.
- b) In so doing, the CSOs raise their profile of ministering to the deprived in the community at-large.
- c) CSOs raise their profile at the International level by drawing funding from overseas NGOs.

The prison officials in turn gain in the following ways:

- a) augment non-funded scheduled activities such as religious services,
- b) infusion of funding and material resources,
- c) complimentary counseling of the inmates by clergy, and
- d) the religious self-socialization of inmates to abide by the prison rules

Drawing on the second mandate of AMSP in light of this analysis, it appears the prison is not living up to its expectations. Evidently, the religious regime has become a *de facto* arm of the prison regime.

Religion and Inmates' Culture of Leadership

Stratification was evident in inmates own self-placement of their informal hierarchical ranking of leadership. There was a chain of command or information flow from one inmate to the other based on that hierarchy. Social control was achieved via this designed stratification.

Before I discuss how the religion of inmates relates to their culture of leadership I would first of all discuss some observations I made in respect of inmates informal leadership roles. During this study, I observed that there were many statuses occupied by inmates. This include the National leader and vice, Black Coats and their assistants, Cell leaders and their assistants, Cell judges, cell police, cell commandos, cell boys, yard boys, kitchen boys, office boys, and gate boys. These positions came with responsibilities, such as the national and vice national leaders were to ensure that grievances of inmates that could not be resolved by their Black Coats were handled properly to ensure satisfaction of all partners. In the event of prison riot these leaders mediated or served as a link between the officers and their fellow inmates.

The Black Coats were in charge of the blocks. They were also called Block leaders. They ensured discipline within the blocks. The cell leaders played a supervising role on cell members. In case of misunderstanding between inmates in the cell, the cell police would arraigned the matter before the cell judge for hearing and passing of judgement. The role of the cell boy was considered very significant as he was in charge of security - taking care of cell members' properties. Whilst some cell members may be out to either exercise or interact, the cell boys remained in the cells to ensure that no other inmate enters into the cell apart from cell members. The yard boys swept and ensured that the yard was clean, but did not play any role in waste disposal. Office boys clean the offices of warders under close supervision.

To be chosen to occupy any of these positions was dependent on the conduct of inmates in the yard. These positions do not have any tenure of office. An occupant of any of these positions could lose it upon indiscipline in the yard

or cell. These positions have become competitive due to the goodies and privileges that come along with it. As a result, inmates with strong financial background get to pay their way out for such positions from the warders, and at times from other inmates occupying high positions. Some inmates appear to lobby through other inmates for the positions. Regardless of how inmates fill any of these emergent positions, the sole aim of the prison bureaucracy is to maintain order.

At times too, troublesome inmates were rewarded with positions by warders to tame them. In that, such positions came with responsibilities, and by living a good life worthy of emulation. Knowing the privileges, whether legitimate or illegitimate, that come with the positions, such troublesome inmates seem to be well behaved upon being given such roles. In some cases, those selected were those who respected themselves and also commanded respect from other inmates. More so, long sentence inmates with knowledge of prison rules were also given such positions.

Complaints were channelled through these leaders to prison warders, and vice versa. By this, officers were able to control the behaviours of inmates. Some kind of an indirect rule. Considering the focus of this study, these findings on inmates' leadership came across accidentally (serendipity). However, it sheds light on inmates' religious leadership discussed below.

Just as inmates occupied positions in the mainstream prison culture, inmates' religious groups also had leaders such as Church Pastors, Imams, Church Elders, Secretary, Treasurer, and Deacons. These leaders performed many functions that include: represent fellow inmates, liaise with outside clergy, organize religious programmes, share responsibilities among inmates

within their religious group, teach inmates the Bible or Quran, forward complaints to prison Chaplain where necessary etc. The administrative structure of the religious groups offers inmates a chance of honing their administrative and leadership skills; such engagement gives inmates a sense of purpose and accomplishment.

During the in-depth interviews, inmates had these to say:

I pass on information concerning the minister of God who will be coming to the prison to preach. I am responsible for organising my fellow inmates for this outside ministers. I also share duties among them before going for evangelism exercise. I teach the word in the Bible. I also make sure that activities of other blocks are in order. I also forward complaints to the chaplaincy if necessary. (Moses, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

As a leader I direct the activities of pastors and evangelists from outside who come here to preach. (Kwame, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

I have been made an office boy because of my good attitude in prison. The officers don't just pick anybody to be an office boy. They first of all examine your character, get testimonies of you before you are put in such positions. I can say that it is my religious beliefs and practices that have rewarded me with this position. (Abraham, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

An ex-convict validated this role by saying that:

I was a religious person in prison. Not just an ordinary member of the Islamic faith but the leader of the prison Islamic community. I was the Imam. As the Imam I had many responsibilities. I was responsible for calling members for prayers. I also had the responsibility of teaching other members how to read and recite the Quran. Under my leadership many inmates learnt how to read and recite the Holy Quran. I carried information bothering the prison Islamic community to the official prison Imam and the visiting Islamic clergy. (John, ex-convict, 2017)

A visiting clergy reiterated the position of inmates and the ex-convict:

So religion helps them to build the culture of leadership. It also helps them to account for whatever they do. For example, our former Imam who is out now, before he left, he had to account for everything. This particular Imam left a good leadership approach. In our absence he did many things to support his colleagues. Upon his departure he did not only pack to leave but he left the inmates in the care of another leader. He rendered account to his followers. He accounted for transparency sake. He told them of how much they had before assuming office, how much they have spent, and the balance left in their coffers. With the culture of leadership, in the prison we have the Imams and their deputies, and chiefs who are the paramount heads of the religion. Every block has an Imam who leads the congregation within the block. The Imam is to inculcate good values in them. If you are going to inculcate good values into the inmate then you yourself must be an example to that life. (Mallam Tonto, visiting Imam, 2017)

The visiting Imam continued:

So when we the outside Imams go there we assemble all the Imams with their central Imam. The central Imam is the one who leads the congregation when we are unable to visit the yard. We the outside leaders help them play this role of leadership and make them do things when necessary. Even how they call the inmates together, the structure with which they deliver their message is properly arranged. Initially, they were not consistent. Inmates did what they liked so far as the religious practice was concerned. They always argued about things but when the teaching of Islam came to them, it brought some friendliness among them. At times inmates call other inmates up to join them when it is time for prayers. Even before we the outsider Imams come, the inmates who are Imams go round to call their colleague Muslims to come around earlier than expected. May be, the Imam will come at 12 noon so they have to gather at 11am before I come. (Malam Tonto, visiting Imam, 2017)

The supposition drawn from the data above suggest the critical roles played by inmates' religious leaders. Religion at this point helps inmates to acquire leadership skills, skills of accountability, organizational skills, teaching skills, and other qualities such as mutual trust. By the teachings of their religion inmates learn to respect the hierarchy of authority. The data reveal that the very

essence of inmates' leadership is composed of the sharing of privileges and rights, accountabilities, prison social values and deprivations, social power and influences among the inmates.

It is clear from previous studies and the empirical data of this study that imprisonment de-individualizes and subjects inmates to degradation ceremonies on daily basis no matter what their social statuses were in main stream society. However, it is through religion that inmates come to reclaim their dignity, and self-worth through the occupancy of such leadership positions. Religion in this regard helps inmates explain these roles as a function of the redemptive power of their deity. This finding, in respect of leadership position, is consistent with Durkheim (1912) who argued that religion provides authority figures.

Another important issue worthy of discussion is the credentialization strategies used by inmates such as being the treasurer of the religious groups' finance and resources. In the mainstream society, he is stigmatized as "onipa bonii" (a bad person), but in prison his peers revere him as a "pastor" or "preacher". It is a mark of an inmate clergy's trustworthiness. In short, religious credentialization provides a much needed cover for an inmate clergy's spoiled identity.

Irrespective of the important leadership roles played by inmates and its accompanying skills, such positions do not come without challenges. Inmates' leaders were labelled with all sorts of names. Inmates' leaders have to deal with and manage problematic followers through the means of reporting to the prison chaplain or Imam. Inmates' religious leaders had these to say:

No wonder at times we do have conflicts when sharing some of these items. Some even accuse the leaders of the church as bias. We are called all sorts of names (e.g. 'Kankama', to mean a snitcher). Some of these name tags are usually not said in my presence, but when it

becomes necessary for me to report the conduct of some of these inmates to the chaplain I do that. (Abraham, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

I am a leader, however, leadership means nothing to some inmates. As some believe an inmate cannot lead another inmate. Some inmates do not respect leaders but then if you would be respected or not it depends on your conduct and relationship with the inmates. (Fred, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

That data suggest that the emergent inmate leadership is not without controversy. In honoring their status, it is likely that some of the clergy inmates become "snitches" or spies to the prison staff. A position that is admired by the prison staff but loathed by a number of inmates.

Religion and Inmates' Education

Whilst formal education at AMSP could be described as non-existent, religious education provides an effective option. Through religious practices inmates get the opportunity to ask questions and learn about their religious faith. This enlightens and improves inmates' critical thinking skills. Inmates learn to read and write through their religious practices. The question is, what would make an inmate join a Discipleship course (theology class) and not AMSP Primary School, JHS or SHS? The answer may be found in inmates' material conception of their religious realities and the religious promise of life after death, based on their social construction of reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Burr, 2003; Schwandt, 2003). The role of religion in the educational development of inmates is captured in the transcripts below:

We explain the Bible, ask questions and share our life experiences with other inmates. At times I give assignment on the Bible. (Moses, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

I have become enlightened because of the encounter I have with God. What I have got from the knowledge of God gives me hope, understanding and assurance in God. My faith in God has made me to be bold and has improved my relationship with others. (Kwame, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

Since I came to Maximum I have taught many inmates how to read the Quran and write Arabic. Now even those who could not read the Quran and recite it are doing it. I have even extended invitation to my former master to come and see my achievements. (Salisu, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

During Islamic festivities we celebrate here. We take the opportunity to study the history of our religion. (Issah, Muslim inmates, 2017)

The visiting clergy explained:

Some of the inmates are well versed in scriptures. At times before you open a verse from the Bible they are already there. This means they are learning. Some inmates are smarter than some of the pastors who preach around. You will disgrace yourself if you go to the prison to preach unprepared. The kind of questions they ask and the way some respond to questions tell me how deeply they are informed. (Helena, visiting Pastor, 2017)

Through the empirical study of religion at AMSP, it has been revealed that religion is a means through which inmates educate themselves, develop their confidence, as well as gives inmates a sense of achievement. Inmates through religious education develop their faith, and solidify their hope in a deity.

Religion and Inmates' Companionship

Companionship is relevant to the survival and self-socialization of inmates. Despite inmates previous criminal behaviour they claim to have peace through the practice of their religion. Inmates develop love and respect for fellow inmates, and build good relationship. The need to support each other is

a common characteristic among some religious groups. This promotes a sense of belongingness among inmates. During the survey research, inmates were asked if they felt a sense of belongingness to their various religious groups in prison. Majority (88.4%) agreed to that assertion, whilst 11.6% said no. Inmates gave their reasons as captured in Table 28 below.

Table 28- Reasons for Sense of Belonging

	Frequency	Percent
A member of a committee	18	12.2
Attend meetings and allowed to teach	9	6.1
Respected	19	12.9
People inquire about my whereabouts	40	27.2
I'm provided for in times of need – sick, food	44	29.9
Total	130	88.4

Source: Field data, 2017

Those inmates who felt a sense of belonging gave the following reasons: 29.9% said they were provided for in times of need – sick or food, 27.2% said people inquired about them anytime they could not make it to church, 12.9% said they were respected by members of the group, 12.2% said they were members of committees, whilst 6.1% said when they attend meetings they were allowed to teach or lead out in some discussions. The data reveals that inmates used religion as means of defining their sense of belonging in their prison environment. As it helped them to unravel the ties that binds them as a group. By this a sense of community is preserved by inmates that counter the strains that inmates face due to the punitive prison conditions.

Inmates explain this sense of companionship through the redemptive power of a deity. This companionship aids self-socialization, reintegration, and the unifying functions of religion in prison. This development is understood by inmates in the context of their religious realities (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Burr, 2003; Schwandt, 2003). Parsons (1969) affirms that despite the differences in religious practices, religion performs an integrative function among inmates, facilitates consensus formation, while also defining the moral boundaries of inmates or society.

During the in-depth interviews inmates recounted:

I am at peace with every inmate. Mine is to live a better life in this prison. I mean I have to love my fellow human being, show respect to officers. If it is not God who has come into my life I would not be able to do these things. (Moses, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

My religious beliefs have helped me build good relationship with my fellow inmates and even with officers. It has helped me develop respect for the officers and inmates. I have cultivated love for all inmates irrespective of the person's religious background. I am a peaceful person as the Bible teaches me so. (Abraham, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

The visiting Imam further clarified:

The religion brings the inmates together. In the past they (inmates) did whatever they liked. This brought confusion and fight among them, but because of a good understanding of the religion they now come together as a body. In the past as an outside Imam you will have to move from one block to the other but now they have all agreed to worship at one place.The religion has also helped to build one-on-one relations as expected of them by Allah. For example, if a brother is not feeling well, before I or the officers get to know, the inmates themselves may have attended to the brother already. Sometimes if a brother needs something the inmates come to tell me. For example, if an inmate had a bad dream other inmates come to tell me to pray for them. It helps them to get closer to each other because Mahmud knows that Abass is his brother and they

know there is no need to fight with Alhassan. (Mallam Tonto, visiting Imam, 2017)

The data reveal inmates sense of community and the need to respect the norms of the society. Through religion some inmates have learnt to complement the efforts of each other. The need for brotherhood is demonstrated through how inmates support themselves. Living together peacefully has become a norm for inmates. The data suggest an indication of religion as the medium of meaningful engagement (cordial relationship) among inmates, between inmates and officers, and outside clergy. This companionship through religion intrinsically helps inmates to shun bad deeds to establish important social networks. This finding resonates Durkheim (1912) that with common beliefs and practices among inmates, religion strengthens the social bond, norms and moral codes held together by them.

Despite this companionship and sense of belonging expressed by inmates, the survey research revealed that not all inmates in this religious circus felt this sense of companionship. Whilst some inmates claimed they felt a sense of belonging because they were provided for in times of need, 3.4% of inmates said no one cared for them when they were in difficult situation, whilst 8.2% said members of the groups were self-centred.

It is important to note that this companionship goes beyond the physical to the spiritual. Inmates commune by sharing their personal problems with their deity. This promotes rehabilitation of inmates as they learn to shed off their problems to the supernatural.

Religion and Conflict Resolution

Interestingly, religion does not only equip inmates with leadership skills but also with conflict resolution skills. The study of religion in prison reveals that inmates claim of brotherhood is not without conflict. Inmates understand that conflict is inevitable, hence the essence to resolve their misunderstanding either through religious means - with the use of inmates religious leaders and outside clergy, or through the prison chaplaincy. Inmates revealed through the in-depth interview:

We (inmates) have Imams in all the blocks. These Imams are all under my care. If there is a misunderstanding in any of the blocks and they fail to resolve it, they call me for advice. This has equipped me with leadership and conflict management skills. (Salisu, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

We (inmates) do have conflict but we resolve it and move on. So far as we are holding one flag we are one people. We are united with this flag. If we fight now and we are brought food to eat, we will eat because our religion unit us. The Quran has given us guidelines that if we are unable to resolve our misunderstanding we should take it to the Mallam. If the Mallam fails to settle such conflict we should take it to the chief. In case the chief is unable to resolve it then we have to leave it to God and his prophet Mohammed. If we are able to do this then we have great reward on the judgement. (Musah, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

Though we worship God here in prison there are times conflicts do emanate. When this happens some members become very angry and pass by when they see me but I greet such people when I meet them. (Abraham, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

...I am a peaceful person as the Bible teaches me so. (Isaac, Christian inmate, 2017)

The data implies that inmates resolve their conflicts through structured processes. They resort to religious strategies in dealing with such conflicts. Apart from this, inmates have learnt to tolerate each other and have found the

need to live peacefully with fellow inmates. All these form part of inmates' rehabilitation process in prison. It also shows the redemptive power of inmates' religious faith and practices in prison.

Religion and Solace for Inmates

Inmates resort to religion for comfort. Inmates knowing their previous deeds run to religion for shelter. They ask for forgiveness from their deity by acknowledging their wrongs. Inmates' religious practices and faith assures them of eternal life. This implies that inmates derive a kind of freedom that do not take them out of prison but rather give them liberty to be free from their past criminal history. Inmates had these to say:

With Christ I have a peace of mind especially knowing that my sins are forgiven. (Abraham, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

I regretted my action and asked for forgiveness of sins by praying and singing. At times I even cry to God when I go wrong in this prison. I know my sins are forgiven but I do not want to die in prison. (Twum, Christian inmate, 2017)

If even I die in prison I have the assurance of everlasting life. (Moses, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

The information reveals inmates' profession of faith, renewal of mind, a sense of subjective freedom, anticipating death without guilt - sins forgiven, and obedience to their deity. Simply put, getting things right with their deity. The irony is that inmates rarely ask about the wellbeing of the persons they hurt by their criminal behaviours.

Religion and Skeptics: Questioning the Sincerity of some Professed Religious Inmates

Reading the claims by inmates about their religious conversion, and the intensity by which some of the inmates approach their religion, one may be forgiven for thinking that AMSP is a haven of the penitent. This is hardly so based on the first-hand accounts of some inmates about the behaviours of their peers:

. . . Even in this prison I hear there is a place called Hotel Vinkibamba where some inmates go to pay for anal sex. I am told some of our members patronise the place. This tells me that not everyone who claims to be a Christian in this prison is a converted person. (Abraham, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

Some inmates also pretend to have changed and attend church services, meanwhile after church services they smoke, drink, and engage in homosexual acts. Some come to church because they want to know God but others also come to church because they want to benefit from the items brought to us by outside preachers. (Moses, inmates' religious leader, 2017)

According to the fetish priest or traditionalist;

In this prison, some of our brothers (inmates) are engaged in fraud but I don't do those things. It was sin that brought me here so if I continue to sin in prison then it means I haven't changed.

Their (inmates) religious beliefs do not correspond with their practices in this prison. Especially the inmates leading the churches. I will not do things that will bring problems to me but these Christians and Muslims are engaged in many bad things. They worship God on Fridays and Sundays but leave God in the Church and Mosque before they enter into their cells. They steal, hide things belonging to other inmates, and defraud people and many other illegal activities. They are highly involved in homosexuality. If I show you some of them and their statuses here, you will be surprised.

From the standpoint of the inmates without religious affiliation;

Some of my colleague inmates go to church because they want fellow inmates and officers to see that they have changed. Or they are participants of religious activities. They do this just to win favours so that they could be appointed as office boys. (Ansah, atheist, 2017)

If you take 100% of inmates who attend churches or mosque only about 5% are really interested in knowing God. Some participate in religious activities to entertain themselves. They go to church to dance. I blame the outside preachers who come to this prison to preach because they are working for their selfish gains. Joseph in the Bible did not go to prison because he is a thief but because of a prophecy concerning the children of God. (Windie, atheist, 2017)

The inmate without religious affiliation attest to the fact that even behind the prison walls some inmates continue their lives of crime using the cover of being Christians.

Even those (inmates) who defraud outsiders in this prison pray to God for a successful process. Some even thank God when it is successful. Let me tell you that even those who want to engage in any criminal act of any form in this prison ask God for success. If they fail but are not caught they thank God. Many of these so-called religious inmates have even higher criminal brains. This is not a strange thing here. Why do you think some of these inmates go to church? I tell you that some go to pray for impending successes of fraudulent activities whilst others also dance at church to celebrate great criminal successes. The inmates are not reforming. How can they reform if they don't understand what they read and practice? I interact with my friends on their religious practices and it is clear that they participate in such activities for its sake. It sometimes appears to me that they basically have no idea of what they are doing. (Ansah, atheist, 2017)

He argues that it is not religion per se, but skills acquisition that will thwart recidivism:

This is my second time in prison. When I first came to prison I was highly religious. I pray and fast. At times I even slept in the church house because I wanted God to use me as instrument for his work. But when I was discharged there was no one to help me. . . . I became frustrated and begun to think of means to survival.

Along the line I met an ex-convict who was a pastor. He told me he was using the Bible to defraud people to survive. I could not do that so this ex-convict linked me up to another ex-convict who was into robbery. I joined him for an operation and see where I find myself. If I had a skill to work with, coupled with my previous religious background I wouldn't have been here. (Windie, atheist, 2017)

It is one thing for some inmates to doubt the veracity of their fellow inmates' religious conversion and religiosity but quite another to hear the Prison Chaplain lament of external CSO pastors being defrauded by their own inmate converts:

We had an inmate who was very active in church activities. This inmate could easily give you a memory text from the Bible. It was like the Bible was in his head. This inmate upon discharge went to defraud PPAG in Cape Coast. He went further to defraud the members of Pentecost Students Association in the University of Cape Coast. He deceived them that he was initially imposed a prison sentence of 30 years but because he gave his life to Christ the prison sentence was reduced to 5 years when he appealed. The student's body contributed money and gave it to him. This ex-convict did not end there, he went to the homes of some inmates in Cape Coast to defraud their relatives. Unfortunately for him, one of the people he defrauded identified him in Accra and caused his arrest. He's currently in prison again with a sentence of 5 years imposed on him. If someone ever told me that inmate will come back to prison I wouldn't have believed it. This is because anything you asked him was responded with the Bible.

I heard of another pastor who accepted an ex-convict into his house. The ex-convict stole and made away with the pastor's money together with the daily sales of the pastor's wife, all amounting close to GHc 1500.00. This pastor has vowed never to accept any ex-convict in his house again. My point is that whilst some inmates repent in prison others also pretend to repent. (Asare, Prison Chaplain, 2017)

Two ex-convicts who were interviewed also raised issues about the sincerity of some professed inmates Christians and Muslims;

I attended church services with fellow inmates but it was clear that some were just faking for warders and other inmates to believe that they were repented inmates. I had to isolate myself from some inmates who were my church members because I realized that the things they did after church was terrible. It was shameful seeing some of them engaged in 419 business. They make calls with illegal phones and deceive the ladies outside that they had just arrived from Europe or America and would want to marry them. Some ladies fall victim and they defraud them. How can you defraud someone and be happy. After that you go to church to pray for success and forgiveness. (Baron, ex-convict, 2017)

I have to let you know that not all the inmates who called themselves Muslims were true Muslims. Some were worse than the non-Muslims even though most of them joined the Friday prayers. I hope that they change their lives for the better. (Barnes, ex-convict, 2017)

Not only did inmates doubted the sincerity of their fellow inmates, some inmates even doubted the sincerity of the CSOs;

I hear some inmates say the outside preachers are using them for money. And that these CSOs do not give to them all the items they received from international donors. (Ansah, atheist, 2017)

The CSOs affiliation with us (inmates) is because of their link with donors outside Ghana. At times these outside preachers come to fool prisoners with food and used clothes. Some of the clothes are not even good for use. They come to tell us Joseph left prison and became a prime minister and so we will become prime ministers. This is not true. How can an illiterate become a prime minister? It is the NGO's pretending to be religious bodies who benefit. They (outside religious bodies) do this to steal from what is given to us (prisoners) by benevolent individuals (donors). We all hide behind religion to do all kind of things. (Windie, atheist, 2017)

All these show that whilst some inmates are using religion to improve their spoiled identity, others are also using it as epiphenomena to achieve material needs.

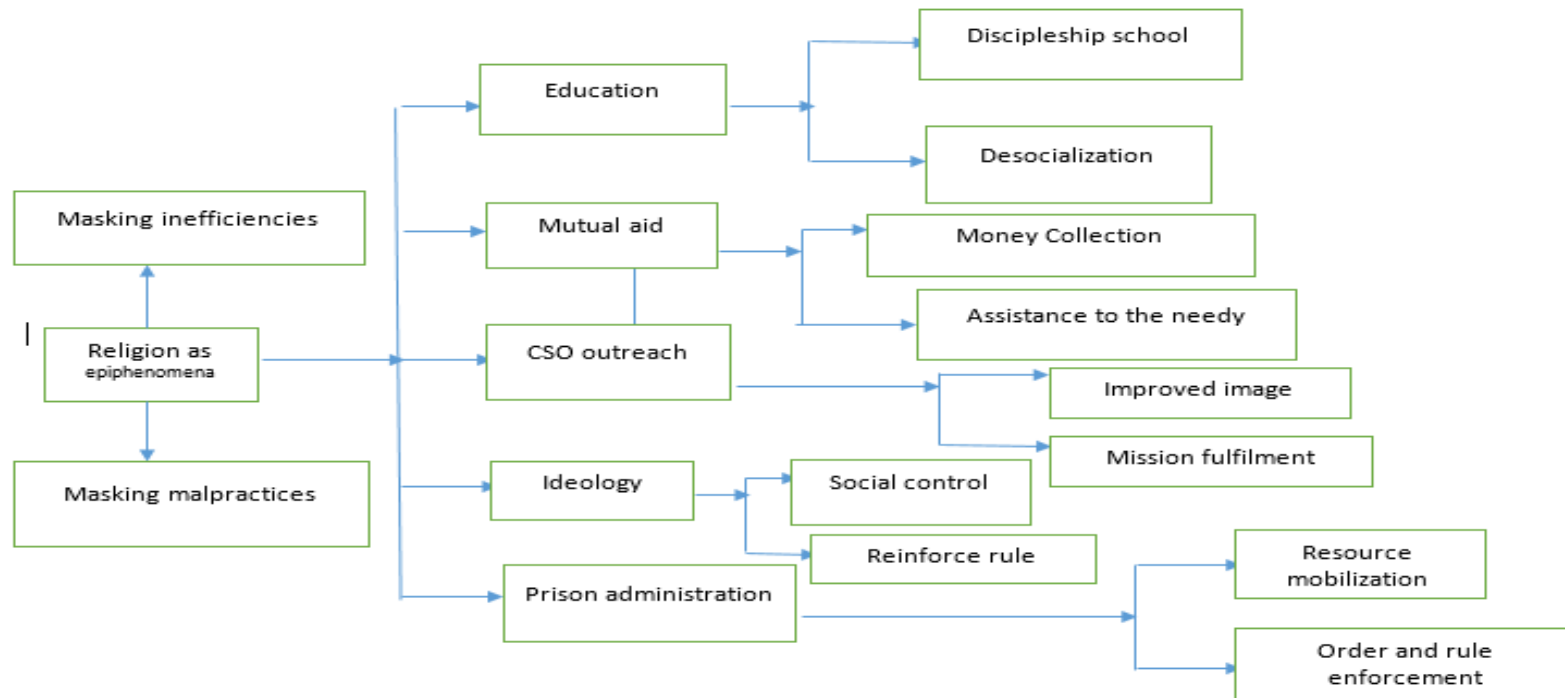


Figure 14: Role of Religion in AMSP in Summary

Author's Construct, 2017

Summary of Chapter

Religion appears to play a major role in the life of inmates and in helping the prison administration to carry out their daily duties without chaos. Religion plays the roles of spiritual (re)awakening, desocialization, and self-socialization. In addition, inmates depend on religion for solace, companionship, knowledge, material, health, and leadership needs - all these toward their impression management. Despite these roles, it was revealed that other inmates used religion as a cloak to engage in illicit activities.

The next chapter examines the experiential accounts of ex-convicts in relation to their family and faith community.

CHAPTER NINE

EXPERIENTIAL ACCOUNTS OF EX-CONVICTS: FAMILY, FAITH COMMUNITY AND REINTEGRATION

Introduction

If one critically reflects on the roles of religion in prison as discussed in the previous chapter, it may pop up obvious that inmates are self-socializing themselves through their religious beliefs and practices. However, the truth of self-socialization can only be confirmed when the inmate is released from prison. This chapter offers a cartography of the life of ex-convicts, the challenges confronting them, and the extent to which their expectation for assistance from CSOs and families were realized.

There is an assumption that the harsh conditions of prisons coupled with the inmate's internalized religious beliefs will block ex-convicts from recidivation. However, the data analysis shows that the matter is more complicating. There are multiple factors that define the contexts of ex-convicts' re-entry into their communities. These factors are interrelated but separable for analytical purposes. I will examine them in turn.

Life of Ex-convicts

An inmate assumes the status of an ex-convict on/ after the day of discharge. This is a shift in status that is embraced by inmates with a mix of jubilation and uncertainty. Jubilation because they are free to rejoin society. Uncertainty because they are doubtful about the pending challenges of restoring their freedom. This is in respect of how their families and neighbours might

react, the employment prospects, and how religious CSOs may receive them.

An ex-convict stated that:

Before I was discharged I was happy but I feared about what I was going to do. I really didn't know if I could adjust. I knew many things had changed outside. Looking at the number of years I spent in prison I also realised many things had fallen behind. I am not married and don't have a child. Most of my peers outside are married. I was now going to begin life again. I was worried because I felt I had wasted most of my youthful years. The questions I asked myself were, how is life going to be for me? How am I going to survive without any employable skill? I was really scared but I kept my faith in God. Knowledge of living the yard gave me a mix feeling. I was happy but feared at the same time. (Aikens, ex-convict, 2017)

Another ex-convict said that:

When my discharge date was drawing closer I was happy but I didn't know how things were going to be for me outside. Age has caught up with me... (Sammy, ex-convict, 2017)

It was recounted by another ex-convict that:

I kept counting my days in prison till it was left for about 3 months for my discharge. I stopped because I didn't want to be disturbed emotionally. But the memory of going back home after many years in prison made me smile. I was happy on the outside but deep within my heart was pain. I felt the most part of my life has been wasted. (Kennedy, ex-convict, 2017)

This sentiment is typical of anyone who has been locked up for a decade or more. Amidst the uncertainties, sentimentality, and adjustments confronting them, upon discharge some ex-convicts draw on the familiar: their faith. Similar to the expectations most Ghanaians have of close relatives assisting them in time of need, many ex-convicts cultivated the beliefs by virtue of their shared faith that, their fellow Christians or Muslims will show compassion, and assist them in their reintegration into the community. However, the reactions by their

families and faith communities ranged from outright rejection to marginal, and in rare cases full embrace of the ex-convict kin, brother, or husband.

Family Reaction

Despite the efforts made by some ex-convicts to deepen their religiosity, they still faced the problem of rejection by some family members. The reject by family members was due to the preliminary problems the ex-convict's behaviour caused for the family. For some family members, the arrest and imprisonment was actually a respite from not having to deal with the troublesome son or brother. Thus, upon their discharge, some family members dread having their relative back in the family. In instances where they avoided contact while he was in prison, family members do not want the ex-convict relative back in their household. This manifested in the rejection and disregard of some ex-convicts:

I am a Rasta man. I am not happy seeing myself in this condition, but what can I do? I am seen as an outcast by my people (family). Nobody is willing to support and accept me. My family treats me like a rug. I am nothing to them. (Fiifi, ex-convict, 2017)

In other situations, family members' embrace of an ex-convict kin is with trepidation and distrust. According to one fellow:

Despite I was well received by my mother who is a single parent and siblings yet my father and uncles rejected me. They said I haven't changed, and that I was faking that I am a Christian. I have tried to talk to him but anytime he sees my call he declines it. I have gone to his house to apologise but he sacked me. My father is not willing to accept me. My uncles said I disgraced them so they have nothing to do with me. I even sent a friend to apologise on my behalf but they refused to listen to him. Though they have rejected me I know my God hasn't rejected me. (Frank, ex-convict, 2017)

The extent to which family members value their imprisoned kin is related to the extent to which they maintained contact with him while in prison.

Lamenting his regretful longing, this ex-convict recounted:

My mother and siblings never visited me whilst in prison. I am very sad they did this to me. Yet immediately after my discharge I went to greet my mother. My intention was to stay with her for some time before I settle on my own. But I was disappointed. She told me she could not stay with an ex-convict under the same roof. I pleaded with my siblings but she refused to accept me. I left with pain and since then I haven't set my eyes on her even though at times my siblings do call to check on me. (Raymond, ex-convict, 2017)

Family members feel deeply ashamed of the criminal conduct of a member. Not only do family members want to avoid the stigma, they do not want the presence of the ex-convict to remind neighbours that they have a hardened criminal in their household. The data further infers that even before the discharge of an ex-convict the family may have denounced him already. This denigration is dependent on previous knowledge of the ex-convicts behaviour even before his incarceration. The manifestation of the denigration is found in how ex-convicts were treated by their families. This finding corroborate with Furstenberg (1995) that some family members of released prisoners are suspicious of the returned prisoner as they are unable to determine whether they have truly changed. Although no longer in prison uniform, the ex-convict is known to the neighbours for his past transgressions. In this case, it is not what he did; he is what he did.

The issue of family rejection of ex-convicts was not entirely the case because there were times ex-offenders were accepted by their families. According to La Vigne et al. (2004; 2006), family acceptance and informal support are essential for successful ex-prisoner re-integration. In the context of

this study, few ex-convicts were accepted yet they became a burden to the receiving family. Their livelihoods became dependent on family members whose meagre income could hardly sustain the household. In addition, the return of an ex-convict meant that family members assume new roles of financial and expressive burden.

Introspectively, the ex-convicts are very conscious of the burden they are placing on their various families but they have resigned to their fate:

Since I came out of prison I do nothing. I continue to go to church on every Sunday. I currently live with my eldest son and wife who is a Motor Bike rider. I depend on him (my eldest son) and sisters to survive the day. It seems he earns a small income from his business. For my other children, at times I call them but they are unable to send me anything. My sisters have children to take care of. I appear more like a burden to them. (Baron, ex-convict, 2017)

I am still depending on my relatives for daily survival. Instead of the other way. (Kennedy, ex-convict, 2017)

Life is difficult for me. I live with my mother and siblings. Though they are happy with me but at times I feel disrespected because of how my siblings talk to me. I don't blame them because I am old and should be staying on my own. I depend on my mother for accommodation and at times feeding. (Frank, ex-convict, 2017)

Noteworthy, however, is the rare exception in which two ex-convicts felt fully accepted by spouses and immediate family members:

I do not work. I depend on my wife for survival as she sells food along the road. My wife treats me well... She really provides for me and I appreciate her effort so much... The family were happy to see me... (Kennedy, ex-convict, 2017)

Another said:

Since I came out my siblings have been supportive. They provide for me though not always. Where I stay now is the house my father gave to my mother before his demise. I currently assist my sister to sell in her provision shop. What I do is that I help her with offloading

and bringing the provisions to the shop. She pays me at the end of the month. And even gives me additional money when I am in need. My sister is currently my life. Her husband and children have been nice towards me. It is also a pleasure to me when I hear my nephews and nieces call me uncle. (Sammy, atheist, 2017)

Despite the acceptance of these few ex-convicts by their respective families, the extent to which many reported that their families rejected or shunned them, points to the changing dynamics of the traditional family network in contemporary Ghana. The belief in the family cohesion and the obligations that come with it is eroding. The cultural value of reciprocity no longer weighs on family members to invest in deviant kins. Ironically, should the same shunned ex-convict kin meet his demise, family members will hurriedly pool money to provide a burial service for the deceased.

The data from ex-convicts also signify that, critical to their reintegration into mainstream society short of structured or administrative guidance, is the acceptance by the families. This acceptance begins and continues with contact with ex-convict while serving time, family visitation and presence to take custody of discharged inmate, and the family's role to keep the ex-convict focused on his reintegration, and finally the ex-convict having paid employment.

Religious CSOs Reaction

As discussed earlier, one of the most constant and meaningful activities that involved nearly all the convicts is the practice of religion. Through religion some inmates acquired statuses enabling them to establish cultural and social capital with the various CSO clergy who visited the prison daily. In view of this, it came as a rude awakening when some ex-convicts realized that not only

were the religious CSOs not as charitable as they were to them in prison, but marginalized them as returning members of their churches. An ex-convict articulated that:

Since I came out of prison no visiting clergy has called me to ask of how I am doing. I've realised that those who cared for me whilst in prison left me after two weeks of discharge. There is no support for ex-convicts in this country. The religious bodies only come to preach to us in prison but after imprisonment most often we are left to our fate. This is an aspect I expect the prison and religious bodies to take seriously. (Barnes, ex-convict, 2017)

Another ex-convict added:

The encounter I had with visiting clergy whilst in prison is not the same whilst outside. ..The painful experience I had was that whilst I thought I could easily be accepted into any of the visiting Clergy's church I was rather disappointed. I was told by one of the visiting clergy to go back to my home and parents. I was not happy but I tolerated it. Despite this I am still in good terms with that clergy. (Aikens, ex-convict, 2017)

This data contradicts the finding of Armstrong (2014) that faith communities offered favourable environs for ex-convicts to exhibit new behaviours both to themselves and others. Disappointing as the ex-convict might have felt, it could be argued that this is a case in which the clergy wanted to ensure the reunification of the ex-convict with his family. Even with the best intentions, not all clergy and congregants are willing to be full care-takers of ex-convicts:

I was with church B before my conviction. I called an elder in the church to assist me. He gladly welcomed me in his home the first day but I realized the house was too small to contain me and his family. So he advised that I sleep in the church house. I slept in the church house for almost two weeks when I was told by the elder that the church has taken a decision that no one should be allowed to sleep in the building. I packed my things and left to this childhood friend who assisted me to get a single room. Though the room is not

the best but I am grateful to have it than to sleep outside. (Kennedy, ex-convict, 2017)

Ex-convicts reacted to their rejection in variety of ways. For ex-convicts who felt it was the Christian obligation of the clergy and congregation to facilitate their transition into mainstream society, the blow of rejection by the faith community was palpable. Speaking about his pre-incarceration church, one ex-convict stated:

I felt very uncomfortable and rejected by my church members. I am not surprised because they even rejected me when I was in prison. I nearly lost my faith. (Raymond, ex-convict, 2017)

It is clear that many of the CSOs invest considerable time, energy and expense in meeting the spiritual needs of the convicts, however the CSOs experience with inmates upon discharge is mixed. The reject of ex-prisoners by these CSOs is informed by their previous knowledge with other ex-convicts. A visiting pastor narrated her personal experience:

There was also another prisoner I accepted into my home. He deceived the ladies around that he was my biological son. He also assured some of them marriage. One particular lady agreed and was following him. Meanwhile this inmate had a wife and children in Liberia. ...One of the ladies family approached me and told me my son had expressed interest in their daughter. I revealed to them that the boy was not my son. The prisoner became angry and even fought with my husband. He packed his things and left. I used to help them upon discharge. But I realised that some only came to lie to me... ...For those who were discharged and we received them, at times they were hard to stay with. Some of them came here and ended up gossiping about me and my household to the neighbours around. (Helena, visiting pastor, 2017)

The visiting Clergy recounted the experiences of other clergy:

There was a case where an inmate was discharged from Maximum Security Prison. He went to one of the visiting prison pastors to explain his ordeal after discharge. He was received and employed by the church. He officially worked in the pastor's office and also

drove the church's car. He was paid and fed by the church. He familiarised himself with the routines of the church. ...This boy (ex-convict) teamed up with his friends to steal the handbags of members of the church. The church ...found out that it was the ex-convict who did that to them. So he was arrested by the police. He confessed to the crime. If you were a pastor, would you accept such a prisoner into your house?

I heard of another pastor who received an ex-convict into his house. The ex-convict stole and made away with the pastor's money together with the daily sales of the pastor's wife, all amounting close to GHc1500.00. This pastor has vowed never to accept any ex-convict in his house again. My point is that whilst some inmates repented in prison others also pretended to repent. (Helena, visiting pastor, 2017)

Ex-convicts who felt neglected and rejected by their affiliated CSOs had no option than to change that affiliation to hide their ex-convict status:

The good thing is that I left that church to join the Presby church. Members of my new church don't know that I am an ex-convict. They relate well with me. (Kennedy, ex-convict, 2017)

This rejection by the family and the faith community is the result of how the ex-convict may have tarnished the image of the family, the faith community to which the ex-convict was affiliated to before conviction, and the CSOs previous encounters with other ex-offenders. As it is said in Ghana, "a good name is better than riches". No family or CSO wants its reputation tarnished by the negative stigma of an ex-convict member. It is one thing for a person to be falsely accused and wrongfully imprisoned. In such instances, most family members and CSOs will exhaust their assets to get redress. However, having been imprisoned for 20 or 30 years for armed robbery is a label with which most families and CSOs do not want to be associated. According to Chikadzi (2017), it is this rejection of ex-convicts by families and religious organizations that

slow down the confidence of ex-convicts. It becomes an issue of test of faith especially to genuine ex-convicts.

Test of Faith

The veracity of inmates' internalization of religious teachings as the guiding principles of their lives is mixed. While in prison, many embraced religion for the micro opportunities it granted them in terms of leadership, liaison between group members and the external CSOs, and serving as peer counsellor to their fellow inmates. Once they were discharged, many religiously committed ex-convict feel they are unwanted even by the external CSO members. Faced with the challenges of having to reintegrate themselves into families, finding jobs, and earning income, their faith begins to wane. While in prison they saw the manifestations of their faith in the material gains and social relationship, but as ex-convicts their faith is inconsequential to the mass of people that pass them by. While in prison, they woke up having a good reason to praise the Lord, or give thanks to Allah, but as freed ex-convicts they now dread the dawn of day. The consequence thereof is the decline in faith of ex-felons, as revealed by an ex-convict:

Even though I was very religious in prison I think my commitment to religion has reduced because of the hardship outside prison. (John, ex-convict, 2017)

The prison Chaplain recounted the ordeal of another ex-convict:

We also had an inmate who was very active in the church of Pentecost. He was even the leader of the Church in Prison. When this inmate was discharged from prison he went back to steal due to the challenges of rejection he faced outside. He was arrested and sent to Winneba prison. (Asare, Prison Chaplain, 2017)

Despite the challenges encountered by ex-convicts, like the Christian adage goes, “as I have done unto you, do same unto others”, some ex-convicts upon discharge have duplicated the act of visiting Clergy by visiting their former friends (inmates). Apart from that, they have also kept their religiosity through church attendance:

I am a strong Christian. I have been visiting some friends in prison. I even donated some items to them (inmates). (Aikens, ex-convicts, 2017)

Since I came out of prison I continued to serve God through serving the church. If not for God and my church members I would have died by now. (Barnes, ex-convict, 2017)

I go to church at stipulated times. (Frank, ex-convict, 2017)

Stigmatization of Ex-convicts

Apart from the rejections ex-convicts suffered, they were also stigmatized. Stigmatization designates an ex-prisoner as spoiled. It functionally dehumanizes the ex-convicts and by implication, stigmatizing takes away their humanity. Goffman (1963: 5) argues: “By definition, of course, we believe the person with a stigma is not quite human. On this assumption we exercise varieties of discrimination, through which we effectively, if often unthinkingly, reduce his life chances”. The stigma is expressed and experienced in varying ways: For some convicts, stigma is experienced in subtle ways:

...the people are not willing to engage me because they say I am an ex-convict. Now, my only hope is God. (Raymond, ex-convict, 2017)

The interview revealed that ex-convicts experienced covert and overt rejects in a few ways. First, it is by family members:

My children seem to have distanced themselves from me. I am sure they feel ashamed of what I did. (Aikens, ex-convict, 2017)

Outside of family relations, ex-convicts experienced additional sting of stigma from the faith community:

Initially some church members found it difficult to get close to me. I had challenges with my status as an ex-convict... (Frank, ex-convict, 2017)

I presently attend the Presby church. In the past I attended church X but I left there two weeks after discharge. This was because no one seemed to show concern for me. They hardly approached and talked with me. Some even pointed fingers at me just because I have been to prison before. ... (Sammy, ex-convict, 2017)

I slept in the church house for almost two weeks. I was told by the elder that the church had taken a decision that no one should be allowed to sleep in the building... I was told by a member of my church that some members raised alarm that I may steal all their instruments if they allowed me to be sleeping in the church house. That's why I was asked to vacate the church building. I was not surprised to hear that because some people I knew in the church even disassociated themselves from me. I was not comfortable so I had to stop the church. I used to be very religious whilst in prison but now I feel the church don't want me. If my father rejected me at an early stage, my mother rejected me after incarceration, I expected the church to accept and help me stand on my feet. The church rather stigmatized against me. As if I was not a human being and had nothing good to offer humanity. (Raymond, ex-convict, 2017)

Likewise, in a donation exercise to support the Koforidua prison by students of the Koforidua Nurses and Midwifery Training College (published on peacefmonline.com on 29th May, 2014), the president of the Students Representative Council validated the position of the ex-convicts:

Social stigma is one of the common problems which ex-convicts are facing today. This is one of the reasons why they cannot change themselves for the better because of the labels being imposed on

them. Social stigma imposed on ex-convict hinders the willingness to change for the better because of the bad impression about them.

The data implies that stigma distresses the performance of ex-convicts through multifaceted interactions. Some ex-convicts were marginalized, stereotyped and discriminated against by family and community members. The fact is that the life of an ex-convict in the family depicts subverted social status; and mark of disgrace. The religious community, to some extent, exhibit similar reaction. Although they appreciate the ex-convict's freedom, they are weary of him in their midst. This is informed by the assumption that there is always the possibility for an ex-convict to revert back to his criminal ways. This position propels some ex-convicts to shift to join criminal groups as a response to stigmatization. These findings agree with Yawson (2013), that inmates released from prison were faced with the problem of societal stigmatization and social rejection. Ex-convicts faced these problems because the effort made by individuals and the state to place the stigmatizing label on them is not the same effort made by these labelling agents to reduce this stigma during the time of re-entry. They are left to decide their own faith. As a result, ex-convicts who are religious, hide their past from fellow members to avoid being ostracized. This is a face-saving devise to avoid stigmatization.

Economic Situation

In the face of stigmatization, inmates lacked marketable skills to get them into employment. Apart from the lack of available structures to promote the learning of more skills, ex-convicts even lost their already acquired skills to imprisonment as imprisonment did not offer them the opportunity to sharpen

their skills. This formed the basis of ex-convicts struggle outside the prison yard.

For some ex-convicts their skills withered away because they had no ways to ply their trade in prison:

I have fallen sick when I came out of prison. My legs got swollen. It only took God for me to survive it. I am well now. I want to work but nothing to start with. I can't work as an auto mechanic again because I have lost the knowledge and skills due to lack of practice in prison. (Raymond, ex-convict, 2017)

Like I told you (interviewee) I was a fashion designer but I have lost those skills to imprisonment. You (interviewee) can imagine 16 years of been in prison. It is not easy. (John, ex-convict, 2017)

Whilst the skills of some ex-convicts depleted, others lacked any marketable skills going into prison. The prison, on the other hand, did not provide these ex-convicts the opportunity to acquire trade training skills. As a result ex-offenders do not see any way into the informal or formal economy:

I could not learn any trade in prison because at Ankafu Maximum Security Prison those trade practices were simply not available. The officers showed less concern towards our rehabilitation. The best was to ensure that we were locked up on time. Due to this my life in prison was more of doing religion...I don't have any employable skill to enable me get a job. (Frank, ex-convict, 2017)

I am not employed... I had no employable skill before imprisonment and the prison did not also provide me with any employable skill. Things are difficult for me because at times what to even eat before bed becomes a problem. (Kennedy, ex-convict, 2017)

Berg and Huebner (2011), Lipsey (1995), and Visher et al. (2005) revealed that, the opportunity for ex-convicts to get into employment is one of the single most effective means of reducing re-offending among ex-prisoners. The data show that this is hardly so for many ex-convicts.

Even in the face of all the challenges, some ex-convicts are undaunted, and are persevering in the pursuit of entrepreneurship and in their aspirations:

I want to venture into laundry business, but I have no money to start. I need money (about GHc800 to GHc1000) to rent a place to start. I have already communicated with a store owner. The man is ready to offer the place out but I can't go to him again because I have no money. I am really struggling and life is becoming unbearable for me. (Kennedy, ex-convict, 2017)

I am in my 40s. I cannot be sitting idle without doing anything. I need to develop and build my life again. (John, ex-convict, 2017)

...though at times I collect some second hand clothes from my friend to sell at Kejetia market. (Aikens, ex-convict, 2017)

Religious practices do not provide food to ex-convicts but being engaged in meaningful job and earning income brings food to the table. The phrase "...man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God..." implies that food for the stomach is very important just like the word of God. Therefore ex-convicts cannot survive on only being religious. The implication is that, in the absence of material needs religious beliefs and practices would be meaningless. It is not surprising that ex-convicts religiosity is declining, apparently necessitating ex-offenders criminal anticipation and involvement.

Comparing the challenges confronting ex-convicts and the expectations of inmates after discharge as discussed earlier, one would expect nothing other than doom for inmates. Despite these challenges some ex-convicts did not express the desire to be engaged in any meaningful activity.

Ex-convicts Unwillingness to Work

The data above does not insinuate that all ex-convicts had the desire to engage in meaningful business. The data from two significant others of ex-convicts reveal that there were some ex-convicts even when presented with job opportunities they will not allow themselves to be engaged. Such ex-convicts even hid behind their religious beliefs to exploit others. During an interview with two significant others, the 1st significant other stated:

X is my brother. He came out of prison about a year ago. For the first four weeks my brother appeared to have changed. He was preaching the gospel to me so I believed him. Little did I know he was only aiming to deceive me to get transportation to the village. After he spent a month with me I told him to join me to work as an assistant in my car. I offered to pay him but he refused. He told me he wanted to go to the village and come back. So I gave him some money for transportation and upkeep. As I am talking to you now he is not back from the village. It's almost 11 months now. Almost every single day I get complaints about him causing troubles in the house and stealing from people's farms. I thought that he would have learnt some lessons after serving 25 years in prison. But that's not the case. I hear he is back into his old ways. The last time I visited the village I could not meet him because he left the home upon hearing I was on my way. I don't know what I should do. I call to advise him but nothing seems to come out of the advice given him. I have no option than to leave his life for himself.

It was also proclaimed by another relative (2nd significant other) of an ex-convict:

Bethel is my brother. He was discharged from prison about six months ago. We are happy he's home. For the first two months we allowed him to stay in the house so he could adjust before getting some job for him to do. It is almost 6 months now but my brother does not want to do anything for himself. He only eats in the morning and go out to meet his friends. There was a time he came home smelling weed. I asked him and he told me he only went to visit his friends meanwhile you can see in his reddish eyes that he had gone to smoke.

The 2nd significant other continued:

I alerted my parents about it. We all advised him to desist from going to his friends. I decided to get him a vulcanizing job which he attended for two weeks and stopped. He gave the excuse that the work place was too far. I linked him up to another friend to learn bicycle repairing. He went there for just a week and deserted that job. I was told by his master that he stole someone's bicycle part to sell to another person. He was caught in the process that's why he stopped coming. He does not go to church, but he could give you over 50 Bible texts from his memory. He was very smart during his tender age but could not continue with schooling because of friends. He is out of prison now but does nothing other than to be moving around with his ghetto friends. My brother is lazy and does not want to do any hard work to earn income for himself. I am a mechanic but he has refused to join me at the workshop. We are only praying that he does not go to steal again.

The data implies that some ex-convicts were not willing to engage in any meaningful venture even when provided with options. They enjoyed visiting their criminal past and being engaged in criminal activities. This meant some ex-convicts enjoyed the company of other criminals because of the acceptance, recognition, and other material benefits they may be deriving from their in-group. Critical to this issue is that, these ex-convicts have been incarcerated for many years. They do nothing at AMSP to propel their lives after imprisonment. At best, they eat, walk, and sleep. They pay no bills. What should one expect of them in their post imprisonment life? If not to shun engaging in any meaningful job and embracing the attitude of being taken care of. After all, this is what they are used to - institutionalised personality.

The desire for ex-convicts to reject employment options could also be the consequence of family and CSOs rejection, and societal stigmatization. My observation at the prison revealed that inmates shun away the company of other inmates, officers, and religious CSOs who attempt to pass stigmatizing

comments on them. If this is the case of inmates, how about ex-convicts who have their freedom?

The data also suggest that few ex-convicts were fortunate to have families with the necessary resources to reintegrate them into the family and community, but their acquired institutionalized personality has become a stumbling block. The family is open to assisting the ex-convicts to restore their spoiled identity through jobs training. However, the ex-convicts lack the inner drive and motivation to undergo the apprenticeship. Cheating, lying and stealing appear to be much easier than working to earn an income.

Imprisonment over Outside Community

Generally, it could be deduced from the data that life is difficult for some ex-convicts. They even think the prison is a better option than the free world. Ex-convicts had this to say:

I must be honest with you that life is tough outside prison. I am currently unemployed. I cannot travel because I lost my passport to Narcotics Control Board. ...I have made several attempts to retrieve my documents from NCB but to no avail. ...It's been over a year since I came out and you can imagine the frustration. Being free after imprisonment is like a punishment. (John, ex-convict, 2017)

Life seems more difficult outside than in prison. I live with my son but it is not always that he is able to provide me with my needs. At times I go hungry in the morning and afternoon. I only eat at night. This was not the case when I was in prison. The prison food was not good but at least you were sure of getting three square meals in a day. Sometimes I wonder whether coming out of prison was good for me. After spending many years in prison and coming out to be frustrated outside is painful. (Raymond, ex-convict, 2017)

The data disclose the prison as a better option to the outside community. In that the prison provides three square meals in a day to inmates but ex-convicts

hardly get a meal. Coming out of prison after 10 or 20 years to meet harsh economic and unfavourable social conditions could be very frustrating. Ex-convicts would have no option than to go back to crime as discussed below. The challenges faced by ex-convicts are attributed to the lack of preparedness by the family, religious CSOs, and political will to reintegrate them. The consequence on inmates is frustration.

From 'freedom' to Frustration

It is clear from the survey of inmates about their disposition in the context of religion as liberative. They hardly have any personal responsibilities other than to survive the austere conditions of prison. In fact the significant complaint, apart from the poor quality of the food, is the boredom and monotony of prison life many inmates feel. The regimented prison life is immediately replaced with a life of decision making, planning, and executing projects. For inmates whose immediate families lack the financial means and the social capital to get them reintegrated into the community, life can be straining for all concerned.

While in prison, inmates clergy were noticed, encouraged, admired, and rewarded for their contributions to the prison ministry and leadership by the CSO's, warders, and their peers. Upon discharge, however, the situation shifts dramatically. The jubilation ex-convicts feel about re-entering society is met with mixed feelings in their families and in their faith communities. For the families that are poor and lacking the household income to support another adult, an ex-convict is nothing short of a burden. For neighbours, the ex-convict is a deviant; someone to be distrusted and feared. The CSOs the ex-convicts

became acquainted with in prison are no longer around or readily accessible for assistance.

Table 29 below gives a summary of the experiential accounts of ex-convicts.

Table 29- Summary of Experiential Accounts of Ex-convicts

Ex-convicts	Time Served	Presidential Pardon	Religion	Time Out	Family Relations	Faith Community	Job status/wages	Caring Social Network
Case 1	20	No	Christian	1yr	Accepted	Accepted	No	Family
Case 2	16	No	Muslim	1yr	Rejected	Marginalised	No	Family/Ex-convicts
Case 3	25	No	None	2yrs	Rejected	Rejected	No	Ex-convicts
Case 4	20	No	Christian	1yr6m	Rejected	Rejected*	No	Church members/Family
Case 5	20	Yes	Christian	1yr4m	Rejected*	Rejected*	Apprenticeship	Family
Case 6	17	No	Christian	6months	Rejected	Rejected	Buy & Sell	Old Friends
Case 7	15	No	Muslim	7months	Accepted	Unknown	No	Family/Neighbours
Case 8	25	No	None	3yrs	Accepted	Unknown	Yes	Family

Source: Field data, 2017

Summary of Chapter

For many of the ex-convicts, their unfulfilled masculine role of directing the affairs of the family and being able to provide for, or to contribute to the family as breadwinner is a deep sense of shame and powerlessness. The shift in social statuses of having to live under parents or son's home, and having to take orders from them is a constant reminder to the ex-convicts of how disruptive their lives have been for all persons connected to them. The data reveals issues of abdicated leadership in the family and community. The data further denotes that apart from ex-convicts being a burden on family, friends, and religious organizations, they also have personal burdens of overcoming the many lost years of contact, and possible bitterness.

Whilst many incarcerated convicts commit their lives to Christianity and Islam, they have the expectation that their show of Biblical or Quranic knowledge to family members and neighbours will demonstrate their change in character. Hence, encourage their acceptance by family members, relatives and the faith community. Unfortunately, the examination of the experiences of the ex-convicts shows that reactions range from tepid acceptance, skepticism, distrust, fear and out-right rejection.

Irrespective of one's religious commitment in prison, if the outside world is unready to accept and work with ex-convicts they are more likely to associate with other ex-convicts to reoffend. In a nut shell, religious education or conversion in prison is meaningless unless it is linked up with meaningful employment or productive activity.

The next chapter of this thesis presents the summary of findings, conclusions, recommendations for policy directions, and suggested areas of future research.

CHAPTER TEN

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This thesis aimed to achieve the following objectives:

1. To explore the structure and process of AMSP
2. To examine the social background of inmates
3. To examine inmates' religious beliefs and practices
4. To analyse inmates' religious adherence in the context of rights
5. To analyse the role of religion in the self-socialization of inmates into the society and finally,
6. To analyse the experiential accounts of ex-convicts in relation to faith community and family embrace.

The last five chapters have addressed these objectives. This final phase presents the summary of findings. Reliant on these findings, conclusions and recommendations have been drawn for policy implications. Some areas have also been suggested for future research.

Summary of Major Findings

Structure and Process of AMSP

AMSP has a failed rehabilitation structures. As a result organized religious activities by CSOs have become the primary preoccupation of many inmates and officers. These activities range from worship observance (prayers, fasting, reading of sacred text etc.), proselytizing to other inmates, and studying theology within the confines of the prison.

Religion, as it appears in AMSP has become the only *de facto* means of legitimate self-expression. Coupled with the Ghanaian religious ethic, inmates develop a heightened consciousness of the material and spiritual reward religion offers. The other point is that religious expression is not mandated by the institution; it is a choice. That being the case, religion per se is not institutional, but an informal means of rehabilitation. Nowhere in any of the AMSP annual reports is offered that religion is a required "structured programme". This explains why AMSP could easily be described as merely a "human warehousing" facility. This accounts for why "majority" of inmates flock religion.

Inmates' Social Background and Daily Religious Practices

Ghana is a religion saturated society. So inmates do not necessarily discover religion behind prison walls; they bring their religion into the prison as convicts. This reveals that many of these inmates were socialized into their present beliefs by family, environment and peers. Despite this socialization, majority of inmates were not regular Church or Mosque attendees before imprisonment. For many, they attended religious services on high holidays such as Christmas, Easter, and Ramadan etc. After conviction, inmates did not depart from religious affiliation in prison, however, a few number of them switched faith.

For most lifers whose families and relatives cease visiting as the years drift by, religion provides the means to maintain rewarding relationships with visiting clergy who visit frequently. One of the insidious consequences of prolonged imprisonment at AMSP is the feeling by most inmates that they "have

nothing to do.” Although many of the inmates were there to serve “Time with Hard Labour”, there was hardly any labouring going on. Very few inmates get the privilege to “go outside” the confines of the prison to do gardening work. For many inmates, prison life is nothing short of monotony. Those with marketable skills such as tailoring, auto-mechanic, masonry, and steel bending, feel a deep sense of deprivation for not being able to apply themselves. It is for this reason that many of the inmates strive to make themselves relevant by assuming statuses and responsibilities such as Inmates’ President, Black Coats, Cooks, Office Boys, Inmate Clergy/Imam, Cell Judge, Cell Police, and Cell Boy in the prison. For the fortunate few, these are ego gratifying statuses. Unfortunately, they are not marketable skills one can utilize in search of employment upon discharge.

Inmates worship, pray, fast, read sacred texts, and proselytize to other inmates in the confines of AMSP. The idea of daily provision and redemption informs inmates’ religious behaviours.

AMSP is not a religious institution. Although the institution has a chaplain on staff, his job has nothing to do with inculcating the inmates with religion. He serves as a listening ear to the concerns of the inmates and to offer comforting words of encouragement. So how did it come about that many inmates are adherents to Christianity or Islam? The answer is that the various CSOs have created auxiliary churches or mosques within the prison. However, it is not just proselytizing by the religious CSOs that attract inmates. The more material resources any CSO mobilizes to support the wellbeing of inmates, the more adherents it attracts. As a result, many inmates register their names with multiple CSOs, and participate in their events. Needless to say that the single

most important event that occurs daily within the prison walls is the religious services.

Inmates' Religious Adherence in the Context of Rights

The penal system was or is established by different legislative mandates with these instruments recognizing freedom of religion as well as freedom off religion in prison. A mark of respect of inmates' civil rights. Despite this right to freedom of and from religion to be claimed by inmates, inmates were at times restricted by prison warders depending on the assumed consequences of allowing such religious practices. Inmates' rights to religious practices do not imply that all kinds of religion could be practiced in prison, and that the religion must first of all be recognized and meet some necessary requirements. This means that whilst there is no anarchy in terms of inmates' religious rights and practices, at times prison officers circumvent the laws and rights of inmates to succeed in penal management.

The need to adhere to prison rules conforms to the lessons reinforced by the CSO clergy. Inmates take to heart the instructions of the clergy to respect prison rules and to show deference to prison officials even where inmates were aware of the violations of their rights. This is in consonance with Durkheim (1912). To this extent inmates serve as agents of their own subordination.

Role of Religion in Prison

The extent of the importance of religion in prison is evident in the priority the prison administration devote to finding places and spaces for the various inmate congregants to practice their religion. Unspoken *quid pro quo*:

guards provide place and space for inmates to practice their religion, inmates in turn police themselves to keep the peace.

Various inmates have their covert reasons for subscribing to religion. The most feasible reason for this subscription is materialism. To the extent, some inmates fake being believers for the sake of material rewards - extrinsic motivation. It also appears that the prison religion is organized - a rudimentary bureaucracy of inmates religious leaders interfacing with the religious CSOs.

The materialism inmates derive from active participation in religion makes it the most important organizing principle in the lives of the majority of the inmates. The most religious CSOs that are deeply entrenched in the prison ministry are those who provide considerable material resources such as food, medicine and clothes to support inmates in need. Even to the most skeptical and disbelieving inmates, signing up to participate in array of religious services, not only reliefs them of their individual sense of isolation, their affiliation enables them to access a share of the comparatively quality food that CSOs bring to them. This makes religious discourse the main medium of meaningful social interaction between inmates, prison guards, and religious CSOs.

Deducing from the responses of the inmates and the clergy, it is clear that one of the most important reasons why some of the inmates are passionate about religion and proselytizing, instead of pursuing academic studies, points to their future goal of becoming "street evangelists" or "street pastors". Unlike an earned academic certificate or credential, becoming a street evangelist (a prophet or a spiritual healer) is an individually developed talent. For any would-be or aspiring street evangelist, combining their imprisonment narrative with

the message of the redemptive power of the gospel or the Quran would most likely make them compelling and persuasive to their potential audiences.

Religion is a critical means by which inmates are restoring their spoiled identities. Even among inmates, the fellow inmate clergy or Imam, command respect and admiration for living what they preach. In effect, expressions of religiosity and spirituality are dis-identifier symbols that inmates utilize to normalize their spoiled identities. Religion will be most useful once they have been discharged. Meanwhile in the prison setting, having clergy and prison officials testify to how an inmate has changed in character, demeanour, and in faith makes religion fervently pursued by some inmates.

Although these characteristics are similar to the adherents in the mainstream society, they have taken on added significance behind the prison walls. Constrained by prison rules, and having to live under the constant surveillance of Wardens, Black Coats and Cell Leaders, self-professed adherents have the need to live up to expectation.

Imprisonment de-individualizes and subjects inmates to daily degradation ceremonies no matter what their social statuses have been in the mainstream society. It is through religion that many inmates come to reclaim their dignity and self-worth. For some inmates this is attained through the caring of their flocks, managing and accounting for the group's church tithes, and making financial contributions to pay for the medical expenses of inmates in poor health. Repeatedly, many inmates pointed to religion as the shared and personal experience which enabled them to put things into perspective. Religion provided them contexts for contemplating their lives and mortality.

Shifting from inmates' religiosity to the bureaucracy, not only is AMSP experiencing overcapacity of inmates (in terms of officers-prisoners' ratio 1:7), the institution also lacks the sorely needed resources to care for the inmates. Although unintended, inmates' contributions to the collection plates during religious meetings have become a sort of *de facto* prison insurance. Regardless of their religious persuasion, inmates in dire need of medical attention are largely funded by pooled resources of other inmates. Inmates have provided funding to transport gravely ill inmates to hospital, and to buy sorely needed medication to restore them to health.

Administratively, the undervalued but evident in this thesis is the inferred relationship between religious CSOs and Prison Officials in the management of inmates' material, health, and spiritual life within AMSP. If the rigid prison rules are aimed at subduing the inmates to the prescriptions of the institution, then it is the religion that provides the ideological justifications for why inmates abide by the rules. In fact, it can be said that without the religious CSOs, AMSP will descend into chaos.

In the case of Inmate's self-concept, hardly did inmates interviewed talk about the impact of the prison rules and regulations and practices changing their personality and their lives. Most explained their character changes purely in the contexts of the transformative power of religion. Many religious adhering inmates have come to associate with the prison rules with the precepts of their various religions. Admittedly, a breach of prison rules is a sin against God.

Most inmates interviewed claimed that by virtue of their religious consciousness, they are sure not to enter into any criminal enterprise upon their

discharge. The question left unanswered is, if inmates were discharged, how would they be able to support themselves and their families? Are they exiting prison with the necessary marketable skills to enable them to earn a living?

The rife nature of religion in AMSP has emerged as an epiphenomenon of the flawed prison bureaucracy. The prison does one thing right; it has a perfectly efficient programme of confinement of inmates, as AMSP has yet to record a single inmate escape.

A careful probing of inmates during the interviews revealed that religious beliefs and practices professed by inmates and ex-convicts cannot be taken to mean they are completely reformed. It is evident that religion provides some inmates a necessary cover to practice their crimes even behind bars. Typical examples are the 419 scams, drug smuggling, gambling, homosexuality etc. For some ex-convicts their religious rhetoric is the means by which they connect with people, win their trust, and to defraud them at the opportune time. Some professing to have visions or dreams of things to come.

The free exercise of religion, in fact, masks the reality of the inefficiencies at AMSP. The fraud, the exploitation, and even the tolerated lawlessness of the inmates by the prison staff (mobile phone confiscation and sales, guards are couriers of cash from relatives to inmates, contrabands such as alcohol, purchases of consumable products from outside vendors for inmates) point to the deficiencies and inefficiencies of the bureaucracy. The intensity with which many of the inmate clergy pursue the doing of their religion can be best described as vocation. It provides a context for their waking up, and going about their day in a maximum prison whose schedule is composed of eating, sleeping and waking, exercising, and practicing religion.

Religious beliefs and practices; regardless of how it comes to be experienced within the confines of the prison, is a powerful force that influences the conduct of prisoners, prison officials and the CSOs.

Ex-convicts, Faith Community, Family, and Reintegration

To say Ankaful Maximum Security Prison is neither reforming nor rehabilitating inmates is not an earth shattering finding. Reports by outside observers, expression of concern by prison officials, and the statements by convicts and ex-convicts all concur to the fact that AMSP has fallen short of its most important mandates; rehabilitating and reintegrating inmates. The institution lacks the staff with the technical expertise to provide corrective behavioural skills such as anger management, civility, and marketable technical skills to inmates. The equipment needed to train inmates in carpentry, clay work, electrical and auto mechanics, and tailoring are defunct. For inmates who could benefit from basic education, there are no appropriate grade levels learning materials let alone qualified academic instructors.

Inmates who enter the prison without any significant education leave the prison worse off or just the same. Those who entered the prison with talents or skills of any kind lose them sooner or later. Lacking the resources, expertise and facilities to engage inmates in various skills acquisition, the prison stunts the potentialities of the inmates. Most of the prison statuses and role performances (such as inmate president, inmate clergy, inmate judge, inmate cooks, office boys, black coats and other cell executives) do not translate into employment in society.

The point is well noted in the assertion by the ex-convicts that they came out of prison feeling helpless than when they were in prison. This is because there are no half-way houses to assist them. Inmates depart prison for their homes with only their hopes and prayers that they will be able to restart their lives afresh. Their hopeful expectations to be contributing members of society soon turn to frustration and disappointment. By custom and tradition, these abled bodied men who are expected to earn income to feed their households rather becomes dependent. Each day of dependence on families and friends for food reminds them of their abject failures.

More so, ex-convicts' experiences of re-joining their families and faith communities is antithetical to what they expected upon discharge. Family members who knew them as sons, brothers, nephews react with indifference and even shame once the inmates are discharged. Typical of the experiences of the ex-convicts is that it is only in rare cases that family members celebrated the return of their ex-convict family member. The reaction to the ex-convict is that of indifference to disassociation. While in prison, family members rarely visited or did so intermittently. This cannot be explained away as a result of not having the financial means to travel to the prison. Relatives who have the means simply do not want to reward the black sheep of the family with visitations. Given the large sizes of families and expenses needed to maintain a household, some families are willing to sacrifice their troublesome kin to the prison. Once out of prison, the family members are unwilling to assist the ex-convict reintegrated into the family perhaps because they want to preserve the honour of their family name.

The infrequent visit by family members is replaced by the constant presence of religious CSOs. It is clear that many of the CSOs invest considerable time, energy and expense in meeting the spiritual needs of the convicts. In their desperation for medical attention, food, entertainment and compassionate ear, the inmates are captive audience for the CSOs. With each name of inmate recorded in their registers, the CSOs can boast of drawing sizeable congregants of inmates within the confines of the prison.

The ex-convicts are unable to gain trust of religious CSOs and families due to their blemished character. Although covert, the mark of disgrace for having been to prison, along with the stereotypes of what being in prison might have done to the individual, and the disassociation church members maintain with the ex-convict in their midst intensifies their woes. Even at a church function, an ex-convict feels the sense of social isolation. These findings resonate with the work of Cnaan and Sinha (2004), that many religious bodies and individuals visited inmates but few of these religious bodies and individuals had programmes to help ex-convicts in their transition of re-entry.

The extent to which families and faith communities reject ex-convicts upon their discharge is akin to social death - the loss of identity and social disconnectedness. To this end, the ex-convict is compelled to the only fictive kinship he knows: fellow ex-convicts. This is not the most ideal of social relationships. But given that there is strength in numbers, collaborating with others in pursuit of some nefarious enterprise is better than going solo. In a nutshell, weak family ties, weak ties to faith community, lack of dependable sources of wages/income, and strong ties to other ex-convicts are potentials for reoffending.

Conclusions

Ankaful Maximum Security Prison, the only one of its kind in Ghana is designed to hold the criminals deemed “incurrable and aggressive”. However, the transcripts of the interviews of the inmates about the impact of their religious conversion contradict the images of “incurrability and aggressiveness”. Many of the inmates attest to the fact that they have internalized prison norms through the precept of their religious faith. Over time, through their religious awakening and conversion, they become “subdued” by the austere prison living, and the meagre food and amenities. Faced with limited social network, inmates work on establishing meaningful social relationships with other inmates, prison officials, and especially the visiting external CSOs. Interviews of the prison staff, chaplain and CSO clergy all speak about the dramatic shifts in the personalities and characters of the inmates after they join any of the religious groups. In effect, it is not the prison per se that is reforming the inmates; it is the religious groups brought in to proselytize to the inmates.

The adverse impact of AMSP on the inmates cannot be underestimated; it is for now, at best a human warehouse. The reasons are as follows: many inmates have been stripped of their humanity, have resigned themselves to dying in prison, lack aspirations, lack creative initiative, have no work life, no meaningful daily routine, have internalized degradation, and stunted self-development. The underlying situation is largely attributable to the absence of any structured facility to give the convicts the opportunity to self-actualize.

The concept of half-way house is nothing new in Ghana. However, there appears to be no national will to institute half-way houses for a host of reasons. The religious CSOs merely facilitate a means for inmates to develop

their spiritual lives. Unfortunately, the spiritual lives of inmates hardly enable them to acquire gainful employment. What is even shocking to some of the religiously devoted inmates is that the CSOs with whom they had established strong relationships while in prison did not express the same willingness to help them upon discharge. The clergy's focus, it appears, is on the collective prison inmates, and not on individual ex-convicts. In fact none of the prison ministries operates an organization aimed at assisting inmates to reintegrate into the society. Disappointment sets in when the ex-convicts, who had invested so much trust in the CSO clergy in helping them build their respective prison ministries, become aware that they are on their own upon discharge, and that the clergy do not have the means to reintegrate them into the community.

It is not the prison and its official policies and practices per se that changed any individual inmate. It is the pervasiveness and internalization of religious principles that appears to have altered their self-concepts. Many inmates share in common with people, after their discharge, the tenets of Christianity or Islam. But this shared beliefs end once an ex-convict's previous life becomes known. People tend to disassociate with them. Somehow their stigma of criminality reinforces their spoiled identity.

With the prevailing conditions, most ex-convicts are fated to fail. These are not juveniles who need socialization from family elders. They are adults who are set in their ways. Thus, their criminal identity - they are what they did. Conditions for recidivism is high, as some ex-convicts are unable to make earnings meet, they see crime as the easy way out. Others are determined and striving but the odds are against them. The intense frustration to survive outweighs the danger of possibly being re-arrested and incarcerated.

Recommendations

1. The best resources of any society are its people. It is rather odd that many inmates are merely warehoused without any effort on the part of the prison system to access and to harness their talents and skills. AMSP should establish programmatic structures such as tailoring, Kente weaving, block laying, computer skills, agriculture, etc. to equip inmates with skills to aid their resocialization into the society upon discharge. Whilst it is the government of Ghana's mandate to establish training centers for inmates, philanthropists and CSOs could complement the efforts of government.
2. There is a need for a collaborative project by all the religious CSOs to mobilise resources, and to form a sorely needed transition home for the ex-convicts. This will aid a smooth transition from prison into the society. The government of Ghana could create the enabling environment for interested CSOs to invest.
3. The need for strong follow ups or After-Care system, through a collaborative efforts between Ghana Prison Service and the Department of Social Welfare to educate inmates, and the relatives of inmates and religious CSOs on the necessity to accept and show love to ex-convicts rather than vilifying and stigmatizing them.

Contribution to Knowledge

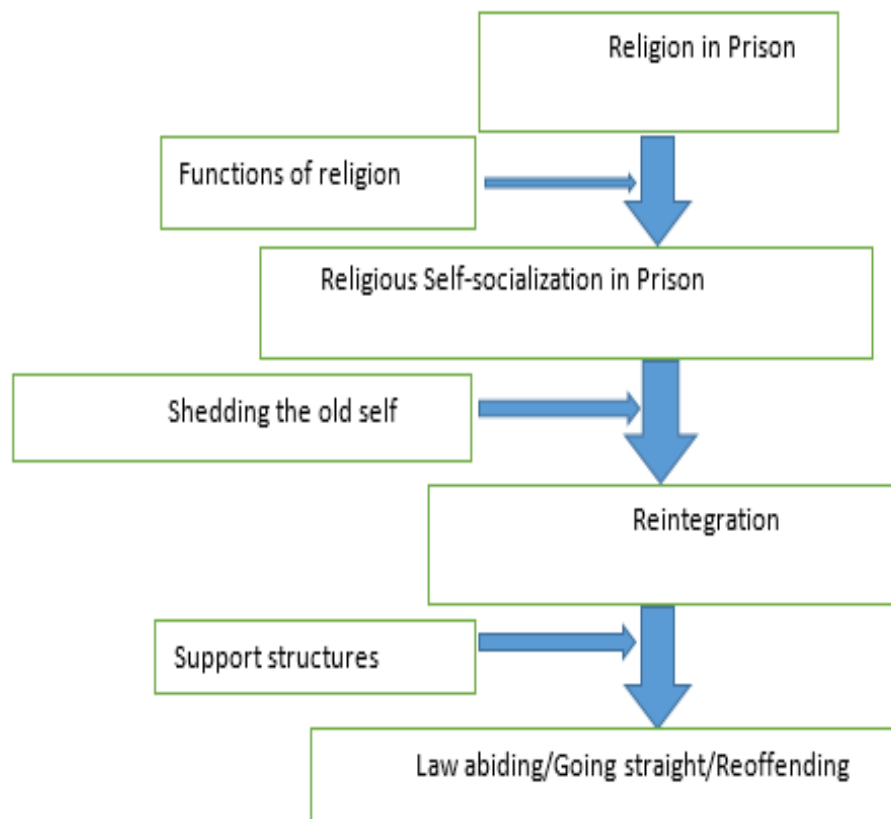
The first major contribution to knowledge is the fact that this research is the first of its kind to examine AMSP. Billed as an "ultra-modern" prison that will be operated to rival international standards, this study opens avenues for

more research in areas such as the informal prison economy, inmates' sexuality, consequences of long term incarceration on inmates, families, and communities. Other than what is occasionally reported in the media, this is the first research examining the inner workings of AMSP, and more specifically inmates' religious experiences in the prison.

Very few researchers in Ghana get granted the privilege to access such a highly secured and sensitive prison to undertake research for fear of exposure of the informal bureaucratic processes and inefficiencies of the prison administration. As an After-care staff from the Department of Social Welfare, managing the affairs of inmates, my status and roles in the prison more often than not was perceived as a "threat" by the prison officials. The underlying fear of my inquisitiveness was expressed in casual exchanges by officers as - "why is he (researcher) asking so many questions" as quizzed by a prison staff. The position of an insider-outsider researcher demands a heightened sense of objectivity (in observing corrupt prison subcultural practices as they were), while maintaining the ethical standard of protecting the privacy of inmates and staff members involved in such practices. This thesis documents the insider-outsider experiences in data gathering, the ethical considerations, the navigation of sensitive issues of interviewing inmates, ex-convicts, religious CSOs and willing prison staff about the operations of the prisons. These are all research practices that were unsettling to the prison staff about the going-ons that were best restricted to the prison.

Additional contribution to knowledge is the re-examination of the concept application of resocialization in the context of Ghana prison structure and processes. In most low and middle income countries such as Ghana,

prisoners are stripped of most of their human rights. The study has shown that resocialization or rehabilitation is of the least concern to the government or prison officials in AMSP. It is to this end that voluntary religious self-socialization pervades prison life in AMSP – reformation is inmates initiated rather than AMSP. AMSP is a total institution minus a resocialization/rehabilitation agenda. This is antithetical to the ideals of “reformatory”, “penitentiary” and “corrections” found in the literature and as discussed in the conceptual framework. Figure 15 below shows the situation in AMSP.



Source: Yin (n.d), La Vigne et al. (2009); Armstrong (2014); Goffman (1959)

The schools of thought on the positive and negative correlate of religion with the rehabilitation of inmates in the literature need rethinking. The significance of religion in prison could best be understood from the standpoints

of various affiliates: prison officials appreciate the charitable contribution of provisions, and the sustained and funded religious programmes that structure inmates' behaviours in conformity to prison rules. For religious clergy/proxies, the roster of inmates and staff membership shows congregants the extent of their evangelizing to win lost souls. In addition, for visiting clergy, the social function of religion takes on an added significance, as visiting clergy have become conduits for transmitting messages to and from friends and families. And for inmates, religious affiliation is instrumental in garnering resources sorely lacking in the prison: clothes, food, medicine and emergency health care, and a possible social network vehicle for reintegration into society.

Another contribution to knowledge is the interplay between religion and bureaucracy. How did (a “non-rational” civil society) religious organization become pervasive in the prison; a rational legal bureaucracy (a state society)? Religion thrives on supernatural powers to explain the natural world and to give meaning to the human condition. Rational legal bureaucracy is driven by laws and procedures to address human problems. In principle, religion and rational legal bureaucracy are antithetical. What is sociologically instructive here is that it is the “institution” emergent from religion that has given it the rationality and significant role in a state bureaucracy. Thus organized religions as CSOs pervades the prison largely as a result of the deficiencies of the prison rational legal bureaucracy. By their organizational structures, process and resource mobilization, the religious CSOs can be viewed as informal extensions of the prison bureaucracy. This is a case of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs; religious CSOs) becoming an arm of the Governmental Organization; State Society.

Areas of Further Research

The results of this thesis have opened avenues for further research.

These include:

1. The inability to integrate ex-convicts is resulting in the emergence of a community of ex-convicts. An investigation into this community will add up to the literature on ex-convict studies.
2. The extent to which the prison lives up to its mandate as a state bureaucracy will be worth researching.
3. The consequences of long term incarceration on inmates, families, and communities will add on to the literature on prisoner reintegration.
4. Inmates' sexuality at AMSP will add up to the literature on sexuality in prison.
5. The prevailing underground economy that is rife with the exploitation of inmates by prison staff, and in effect engenders the corruption of prison staff is worthy of investigation.
6. There are ex-convicts who are rejected by family and marginalized by the faith community upon their discharge. A follow up study on what becomes of these ex-convicts should be informative.

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**APPENDICES
APPENDIX A**

**SEMI-STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INMATES
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND LEGAL STUDIES
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY**

**TOPIC: RELIGION AS AN ORGANIZING PRINCIPLE IN
ANKAFUL MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON, GHANA**

Dear respondent, the aim of this research is to examine the de facto religious commitments of prisoners and the extent to which voluntary adoption of religious faith by inmates account for their rehabilitation while in prison, going straight upon release into their communities, and the influence of such commitments in reintegration.

Please, tick the appropriate box or provide the information in the spaces provided. Your responses will be treated as confidential and used only for research purposes. Your identity is not required. Hence, respond to the items as *truthfully* as possible.

A) *DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS*

1. Sex
 - a) Male
 - b) Female

2. Age
 - a) 18 – 24
 - b) 25 – 31
 - c) 32 – 38
 - d) 39 – 45
 - e) 46 – 52
 - f) 53 – 59
 - g) 60+

3. Marital status
 - a) Married
 - b) Consensual Union/ Partners
 - c) Separated
 - d) Divorced
 - e) Widowed
 - f) Never married

4. Educational background
 - a) No Schooling (Formal Education)
 - b) Primary
 - c) JHS/JSS/Middle School
 - d) SHS
 - e) Vocational/Technical
 - f) Tertiary

5. Special skills/ trade?
.....

6. Status of employment before conviction?
 - a) Working
 - b) Not working

7. If working, type of employment?
 - a) Formal employment
 - b) Informal employment

8. Nationality
 - a) Ghanaian
 - b) Dual Nationality (Ghanaian and other)
 - c) Other ECOWAS national
 - d) African, Other than ECOWAS National
 - e) Other (Specify).....

9. Ethnicity
 - a) Mole/Dagbani
 - b) Ga/Dangbe
 - c) Ewe
 - d) Akan
 - e) Other (specify).....

10. Type of custody
 - a) Remand
 - b) Custodial sentence
 - c) Convict on Trial
 - d) Juvenile Detention
 - e) President's pleasure

11. Offense
 - a) Stealing
 - b) Defrauding by false pretence
 - c) Robbery

- d) Defilement
- e) Rape
- f) Other (specify).....

12. Unit of duration/ stay

- a) 10 years and below
- b) 11 – 20 years
- c) 21 – 30 years
- d) 31 – 40 years
- e) 41 – 50 years
- f) 51+

13. Offenders' frequency

- a) First offender
- b) Second offender
- c) Recidivists

14. Any religious affiliation before conviction?

- a) Yes
- b) No

15. If yes, type of affiliation before conviction?

- a) Christian
- b) Muslim
- c) Traditionalist
- d) Other(s).....

16. If no, why?

.....
.....

17. (For Christians Only) Before you were convicted how frequently did you attend religious service?

- a) Always
- b) Two days in a week
- c) Once a week – every Sunday/ Saturday
- d) Only on High Holy days (Easter, Christmas)
- e) Once in two weeks
- f) Once a month

18. (For Moslems only): Before you were convicted how frequently did you attend mosque?
a) Pray 5 times a day
b) Only for the month of Ramadan
c) Only on a Holy Day (id Fitr etc.)
19. Any religious affiliation in Prison?
a) Yes
b) No
20. If yes, what is your religious affiliation?
a) Christian
b) Muslim
c) Traditionalist
d) Other(s).....
21. If no, why?
.....
.....

B) RELIGIOUS LIFE OF INMATES

22. Do you know your religious rights in prison?
a) Yes
b) No
23. Are you able to practise your religion in this prison, if you want to?
a) Yes
b) No
24. Do you attend worship services in prison?
a) Yes
b) No
25. If yes, how often?
g) Always
h) Two days in a week
i) Once a week
j) Once in two weeks
k) Once a month

26. If yes, why attend such religious services?

.....
.....

27. Do you attend prayer meetings?

- a) Yes
- b) No

28. If yes, how often?

- a) Once Daily
- b) Many times in a day
- c) Once a week
- d) Once in two weeks
- e) Once a month
- f) As and when it is necessary

29. If yes, why attend prayer meetings?

.....
.....

30. Who organizes these religious services for you?

- a) Prison Chaplain/ Imam
- b) Visiting Chaplain/ Imam
- c) Inmates

31. Are you mandated to attend such programmes?

- a) Yes
- b) No

32. Do you own a holy or sacred text?

- a) Yes
- b) No

33. If yes to Q32, what is this sacred text?

.....

34. Do you read your Bible/ Quran (including any other religious material)?

- a) Yes
- b) No

35. If yes, how often do you read your Bible/ Quran?

- a) Once Daily
- b) Many times in a day
- c) Once a week
- d) Once in two weeks
- e) Once a month
- f) As and when it is necessary

36. If yes, why do you read your Bible/ Quran?

.....
.....

37. Do you meditate on your religious beliefs whilst alone?

- a) Yes
- b) No

38. Do you fast?

- a) Yes
- b) No

39. If yes, why?

.....
.....

40. If no, why?

.....
.....

41. Are you a member of a religious study group (e.g. Bible study group, Quran study group etc.)

- a) Yes
- b) No

42. If yes, why?

.....
.....

43. If no, why?

.....
.....

44. Do you participate in religious services organized by visiting pastors or Imams?

- a) Yes
- b) No

45. Do your religious beliefs influence your behaviour in prison?

- a) Yes
- b) No

46. Do you feel a sense of belonging to your religious sect?

- a) Yes
- b) No

47. If yes, what makes you feel that sense of belonging to this sect?

.....
.....

48. If no, why?

.....
.....

49. How does your religious beliefs help make sense of your prison life?

.....
.....

50. Have there been an occasion where you went to see the Chaplain/ Imam in your life?

- a) Yes
- b) No

51. If yes, could you explain the purpose for your meeting?

.....
.....

52. Explain how your consultation with the Imam/ Chaplain benefited you?

.....
.....

53. How do members of your faith proselytize?

.....
.....

54. Do you actively proselytize to other inmates?

- a) Yes
- b) No

55. To the best of your knowledge, how many people have you brought to the faith through proselytization?
.....

56. Have you had any encounter or experience with people coming to prison to proselytize?
a) Yes
b) No

57. If yes, how often do you have that encounter?
a) Daily
b) Weekly
c) Monthly
d) Annually

58. Explain why you find it necessary to attend this services frequently
.....
.....

59. What would you expect this clergy or preachers do for you after your discharge from prison?
.....
.....

C) ROLE OF RELIGION IN THE LIVES OF INMATES

60. Explain the importance of religion in your prison life
.....
.....

61. Explain how religion has contributed to your spiritual life in prison
.....
.....

62. Explain the importance of religion to your economic behaviour
.....
.....

63. Explain the importance of religion to your health in prison
.....
.....

64. Role of religion in prison: Choose the appropriate response

ISSUE	No.	Agree	Disagree	No opinion
<i>Role of religion in the lives of inmates</i>	-	-	-	-
My behaviour is transformed positively because of my religion	1			
I have my freedom in prison through religion	2			
With religious belief, I have been able to withstand the shock of my imprisonment	3			
Now that I practice my religion, I feel less frustrated about life in prison	4			
I pray for forgiveness to [Deity] for my crimes/sins	5			
I pray for forgiveness from the people to who I caused harm	6			
Without religion I would have created problems in prison	7			
I have found peace through my religious beliefs	8			
I am obedient to prison authorities because of my religious beliefs	9			
I am obedient to fellow inmates because of my religion	10			
Practicing my religion has enable me to remain obedient to the prison rules	11			
I feel a sense of moral obligation to love my neighbours as myself	12			
I have found faith through outside clergy/Imam	13			
I will not commit further crimes when discharged	14			
Religious activities provide me with the opportunity to make use of available resources	15			
I don't feel guilty anymore because of my religious beliefs	16			
I have found meaning and purpose of life in prison through religion	17			

I have a new life and I am looking forward to exhibit this new life upon my release	18			
Even with religion I am still who I am in the past	19			
I don't subscribe to any religion; Religion does not play any role in my life in prison	20			
I am been truthful in all my answers to your questions	21			
<i>Religious rights</i>				
Prison warders are hindrances to my religious practices	22			
I worship at stipulated times determined by my religion and in conformity to prison rules	23			
I am provided food consistent with the dietary rules of my religion	24			
At times my religious rights are trampled upon	25			
I respect other religions in prison	26			

65. Overall, do you see religion as key in your prison life?

- a) Yes
- b) No

D) RELIGION AND REHABILITATION/ RESOCIALIZATION

66. How is religion in prison preparing you for the outside world?

.....

67. Role of religion in resocialization/ rehabilitation

ISSUE	No.	Agree	Disagree	No opinion
I am able to build relationships through religious experience	1			
My religion has helped me develop mutual trust	2			
My religion motivates me	3			
Religion has taught me how to sacrifice for others/ community	4			
Religion has made me tolerant	5			
I have compassion for others because of religion	6			
I have develop the love for others through religion	7			
Religion has made me humble	8			
I have seen the importance of unity through religion	9			
Religion has developed my sense of justice	10			
I have self-control because of religion	11			
Religion has made me develop that sense of social solidarity/ Togetherness/ Brotherhood	12			
I have mental peace because of religion	13			
Religion promotes my welfare	14			
Religion is a source of recreation to me – Festivals	15			
Religion has given me self-confidence	16			
I have learnt to forgive others through my involvement in religious activities	17			
I have developed the habit of self-analysis through my involvement in religious activities	18			
Religion has taught me to work hard to achieve in life	19			

68. What are the 3 most important things (in order of significance) in your prison life that drives you to focus on doing your time and getting out of prison?

.....
.....

69. Any other comment on this subject?

.....
.....

70. Please, can you provide us with any contact number of an ex-prisoner who may be interested in this research?

.....

THANK YOU

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR INMATES

SECTION A: General information

Date:

Time commenced:

Interview location:

Language used:

Interview Code Number:

Interviewer:

Time ended:

SECTION B: Demographic information

Gender.....

Religious affiliation.....

Position.....

Experience in religious practice in Prison.....

SECTION C: Inmate and Religion

- Life before incarceration and Religion

Can you please tell us about your life before incarceration?

*Prompts: family, family size, rural/urban, education, religious faith/practices

- Life during incarceration and religion

Can you please tell us about your life in prison?

*Prompts: daily practices, religious faith and practices, prison structures and religious practices, religious encounter with external religious bodies/ individuals, role of religion in their prison lives,

religion in behaviour change in prison, religion and relationship with inmates (social behaviour), religion and health, religion and economic behaviour, religion and criminal behaviour, and finally, religion and preparation for release.

What is your view on religion in prison?

What are the 3 most important things (in order of significance) in your prison life that drives you to focus on doing your time and getting out of prison?

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PRISON

CHAPLAINS/ OFFICERS

SECTION A: General information

Date:

Time commenced:

Interview location:

Language used:

Interview Code Number:

Interviewer:

Time ended:

SECTION B: Demographic information

Gender.....

Position in Prison.....

Rank.....

Experience in Prison.....

SECTION C: Religion in Prison

How would you describe religion in this prison?

1. Processes involved for religious practices in prison
 - Prison regulations
 - Prison churches/Mosque
 - Support for prison churches/ Mosque/traditional beliefs
 - Outside churches/ Mosques/ individual visitations
 - Processes involved for external churches/ Mosques/ Individuals/
indigenous faith persons
 - Religious programmes

SECTION D: Religion and prison administration

What is the role of religion in prison administration?

- Role of religion in prison administration
- Role of outside churches/ Mosques/ Individuals/ indigenous faith persons
- Major contributions of religion to prison administration
- Challenges associated with religion and outsiders (Imams, pastors, indigenous faith persons) in prison administration
- Way forward/ Any recommendation

SECTION E: Religion and inmates

Can you please tell me about your prison religious life?

- Inmates' religious practices
 - Worship, prayers, fasting, meditation, scripture reading etc.
 - Conversion experiences of inmates
- Religion and behaviour change in prison
- External religious bodies and religious programmes in prison
- Religious bodies and festive occasions in prison
- External religious bodies roles in inmates' religious lives
- Experiences to be shared
- Religious programmes for rehabilitation/ re-socialization
- Religion in recidivism

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR VISITING CLERGY

– PASTORS AND IMAMS

SECTION A: General information

Date:

Time commenced:

Interview location:

Language used:

Interview Code Number:

Interviewer:

Time ended:

SECTION B: Demographic information

Gender.....

Religious affiliation.....

Position.....

Experience in religious practice in Prison.....

SECTION C: External religious bodies/ individuals in prison

What are the roles of religious CSOs in AMSP?

- Processes involved for religious teachings in prison
- Frequency of visits
- Motivation behind visits
- Religious programmes
- Experiences with inmates' conversion process
- Achievements in religious activities in prison
- Role of religion in inmates' lives
- Religion and reoffending

- Support structures for inmates spiritual needs and aspiration after discharged
- Challenges associated with support structures in minimizing recidivism
- Way forward

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR EX-CONVICTS

SECTION A: General information

Date:

Time commenced:

Interview location:

Language used:

Interview Code Number:

Interviewer:

Time ended:

SECTION B: Demographic information

Gender.....

Religious affiliation.....

Position.....

Experience in religious practice in Prison.....

SECTION C: Ex-convicts and Religion

Life before incarceration and Religion

Can you please tell us about your life before incarceration?

*Prompts: family, family size, rural/urban, education, religious faith/practices

Life during incarceration and religion

Can you please tell us about your life in prison?

*Prompts: daily practices, religious faith and practices, prison structures and religious practices, inmates encounter with external religious bodies/individuals, role of religion in their prison lives, religion in behaviour change in prison, religion and relationship with inmates (social behaviour), religion and

health, religion and economic behaviour, religion and criminal behaviour, and finally, religion and preparation for release.

Reintegration into Society/Community

After you were discharged, what were some of the major differences you noticed comparing how things were before your imprisonment?

What was most shocking to you as a free citizens when you left prison?

What are some of the changes that have taken place in your community (or in Ghana at large)?

How did you expect to restart your life since last entered prison?

What did you need to restart your life after prison?

*Prompts: Clergy/Imam, role models, mentors

Education/Training/apprenticeship, university degree (probe for specifics)

Small loans to start business

Join a friends/or relatives business

Family farm etc.

Where did you go to for help to get adjusted to life in society? Explain

Who was willing to help you get adjusted to life in society? Explain

Current Church

Do you attend any particular church now? Do the congregation know you of your past? How do members react to you?

Are you able to confide in the minister or any of the church elders about the help you need?

Family/Friends

Since being discharged, who have you been living with? Family home, your wife and children, or brother/sister's home or friend's home?

How do you think the people (name relations) feel about you living with them?

What contributions (financial, duties) do you make to the household?

How did your friends (people you grew up) react to you now - as an ex-convict?

Who are your friends now?

(If things are hard due to lack of money and job), how do you manage to avoid getting into trouble with the law?

What do you think are some of the special challenges facing ex-convict in pursuing their aspirations?

Employment

So how are you supporting yourself (and your family)?

When you get up in the morning, what do you do during the rest of the day?

What role does religion play in the way you see your current situation?

General Challenges/barriers Ex-cons Confront

What would you say have been the top 3 most pressing challenges since you've been out of prison? (Or, if someone is willing to help, what would be the 3 most important things that you want help with right now?) *Prompt: employment, schooling, apprenticeship, support from clergy, acceptance by family, stigmas etc. What are the chances that you might end up getting into crime because of these challenges? Tell me more about them.

APPENDIX F: OBSERVATION GUIDE

SECTION A: General information

Date:

Location:

Observation Code Number:

Observer.....

SECTION B: Things/ Items to be observed

- Religious processes and activities
- Organization of religious programmes
- Daily routine of inmates
- Time of worship
- Number of inmates per religious service
- Prison structure and environment
- Informal prison structure
- Rehabilitation structures – educational activities and facilities, sporting activities and facilities, counseling activities, Information and Communication Technology unit and their activities, Agricultural activities etc.
- Family visitation to inmates
- Inmates' telephone calls and other communication activities to family and friends.

APPENDIX G: INFORMED CONSENT

Introduction

My name is ELIJAH TUKWARIBA YIN. I am a Doctoral student at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology of University of Cape Coast, Ghana. I am conducting a study on the *de facto* religious commitments of inmates and the influence of such commitments in facilitating prisoner rehabilitation in order not to recidivate. The information I gather from this study will be helpful for me to write my PhD thesis.

Participation and confidentiality

I would like to ask you some questions about your religious adherents, the role of religion in facilitating resocialization, and your experiencing accounts after discharge. The interview will last for about an hour. Participation is entirely voluntary. This is because the topics may have questions that may cause some discomfort to you. However, every effort will be made to reduce embarrassment and you can stop your participation at any time of the interview process. All the information you provide will be kept confidential and none of the personal information that I obtain which could identify you will be used in any report. There is no cost for participation.

Benefits and incentives

When you participate in the study, you will be contributing to the understanding of the issues relating to religion and imprisonment. The information will help in planning future policies. The findings of this study will be shared with the community, researchers, government officials, and other stakeholders. The findings will also be published in international journals for others to learn from.

Data capture and management

Your responses will be entered into a handheld device and stored for future analysis. Later, it will be transferred into an electronic database. To ensure anonymity, no reference will be made to your name when entering responses electronically. Instead, a number will be assigned to you. All the electronic data will be kept for a period of 5 years after all publications have been produced.

You are at liberty to ask any question. If at any time you have any concerns or issues regarding the study please contact:

Prof. Nelson Koffie
Assistant Dean
Faculty of Sociology, Religion and Philosophy
Virginia Community College
U.S.A
E-mail: nkoffie@nvcc.edu

Dr. William Boateng
Head of Department
Department of Sociology and Anthropology
University of Cape Coast
Ghana
E-mail: wib981@gmail.com

Statement by participant

The content and purpose of the study has been read to me and I have been assured of confidentiality of my responses. I have had the opportunity to ask questions. I agree to participate voluntarily in this study and give my consent to the publication of findings.

Signature/Thumb print of participant.....

Date:

Day/month/year

Statement by the researcher

I confirmed that the participant was given the opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by me have been answered correctly to the best of my ability. I confirm that the participant has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been freely and voluntarily.

Name of Researcher.....

Signature.....

Date.....

Day/Month/Year

APPENDIX H: INTRODUCTORY LETTER

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND LEGAL STUDIES
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

Direct Phone: 03321-32440 Ext.: 216/215
Direct: 0332136072
Telegrams: University, Cape Coast



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
CAPE COAST, GHANA

Our Ref: SS/SD/R.1
Your Ref:

24th January, 2017

The Director General
Ghana Prisons Service
Headquarters
Accra

Dear Sir/Madam,

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION: MR. ELIJAH TUKWARIBA YIN

We write to introduce to you Mr. Elijah Tukwariba Yin, a doctoral candidate of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Cape Coast. Mr. Tukwariba Yin is seeking permission to collect information from your outfit as part of research for his Ph.D thesis titled "**Religiosity and Rehabilitation at Ankaful Maximum Security Prison, Ghana**".

We would be grateful if you could extend to him all appropriate courtesies to enable him complete his research.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,


Brempong Osei-Tutu (Ph.D)
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

**THE HEAD
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
AND ANTHROPOLOGY
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST**

/F/A/

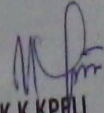
APPENDIX I: PRISON ENTRY PERMIT

My Ref. No: OC/1082/V.19/2017/335
Date: 15 FEBRUARY, 2017

RE: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION
MR. ELIJAH TUKWARIBA YIN

Reference your letter NO. SS/SD/R.1 of 24th January 2017, approval has been given to the above-named Doctoral student of Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Cape Coast to collect data at the Ankafu Maximum Security Prison for his thesis on the topic: "Religiosity and Rehabilitation at Ankafu Maximum Security Prison, Ghana".

2. The student is directed to report to the Regional Commander/Officer-In-Charge of the Ankafu Maximum Security Prison for directives prior to the commencement of his research.
3. He is also required to submit a copy of his research work to the Service for study upon completion.
4. By a copy of this letter, the Regional Commander of the aforementioned station is to offer the student the necessary support without compromising on security.
5. Accept for your information, please.


K K KPELI
DIRECTOR OF PRISONS/HRD
For: DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF PRISONS