

## **Effects of spirituality and religious attendance on the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of inmates: a case study of Harare Central Prison, in Zimbabwe**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of the study was to assess the prevalence of mental health problems at Harare Central Prison, Zimbabwe, in addition to assessing the prisoners' levels of religiosity and spirituality, and furthermore ascertain how these affect their mental health and psychosocial wellbeing. This paper used a qualitative research design, whilst the target population constituted the inmates at Harare Central Prison with diagnosed or undiagnosed mental health conditions. Purposeful sampling was used, whilst the research instrument employed was structured interviews. Data were presented in narrative form and analyzed using thematic analysis. The major findings of this study were that religion and spirituality had beneficial effects on the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of inmates, including working as a protective factor. It was concluded that all the various stakeholders concerned should work on promoting the functional and beneficial aspects of religion and spirituality at the prison.

**Keywords:** Spirituality, religiosity, religious attendance, mental health, Harare Central Prison