



An Assessment of Library Information Resources and Services for Inmates in Correctional Centre's in Katsina State, Nigeria

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Abstract— Correctional centre's are custodians of individuals with different social deviants and criminality. Such centre's as serve as rehabilitation centre's were individuals are expected to be trained and counsel in order to be reintegrated and accepted into the society after serving their jail term. However, the need to have a standard library is imperative specifically it will help in educating, enlightening and entertaining the inmates by the provision of adequate information resources and services. An assessment of library information resource and services for inmates in correctional centre's in Katsina metropolis of both the central and medium was carried out. The population of convicted inmates in the two correctional centre's was 1658. 322 inmates were sampled from the two correctional centre's for the study. A well-structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the inmates. 320 inmates responded, representing (99.4%) of both males and females inmates response rate. The study revealed that there is inadequate information resources in the library from the items tested, also there is poor services rendered by the library. Out of the 14 items tested, 12 items portrayed very poor service provision, while the remaining two items; Lending service and information consultation service were the only one offered to the inmates. The paper, therefore, recommends that the library in the correctional centre's should be equipped with available and updated information resources and library services be fully rendered in order to facilitate their rehabilitation and improve inmates reformation for proper reintegration to the society.

Keywords— Library, information resources, services, inmates, correctional centre.

INTRODUCTION

A Library is the gateway to knowledge and culture; it is an avenue with too much available information resources. The Library plays a fundamental key role in the society through educating, enlighten, and entertaining the society. The resources and services they offer create opportunities for learning, support literacy and education, and help shape the new ideas and perspectives that are central to a creative innovative society.

In modern societies, every human activity is organized through institutions. Every major social task, whether economic, health, social, business or educational is institutionalized. The defense or protection of the society/environment today is invariably entrusted to institutions and organizations (LISBDNETWORK,

2016). Libraries and other similar types of institutions are saddle with the responsibility to select, collect, process, organize, stored and disseminate information to the users. Knowledge and information are so vital for all human development, thus becomes very imperative to consciously acquire it. The important of libraries and other institutions that were saddle with the responsibility to acquire and disseminate information are indeed invaluable.

However, the role library plays in the educational process of formal and informal learning cannot be over emphasizes taking into cognizance of change it can bring in people's cultural activities, spiritual and ideological realms, in creation and entertainment. In today's society in which we live, the central instrument of change, direction and force is knowledge and information. To achieve all this it is pertinent and essential to have a functional library that will enable we succeed in having a good society.

Prisoners in correctional Centre's as members of the larger society desire and deserve information on events in the larger world, personal development, health information, recreational etc. Libraries are therefore a must in all correctional institutions if lasting rehabilitation of prison inmates is necessary for successful reintegration into Nigerian society (Olayinka, F.P 2019). Having available and well equipped libraries in our correctional centres in Nigeria will no doubt contribute to give the inmates a sense of belonging and prepared them fully to be reintegrated into the society.

Katsina State correctional centre is one of the congested prisons in North West Nigeria. The total capacity of the correctional centre is 400 inmates but there are currently more than 2000 inmates (Zubairu, A. et'als 2020). This congestion can be properly managed by engaging the inmates in the provision of knowledge and information which will have a direct impact in their post jail term, educating them may reduce the repetition of crime by modifying their behavior and will help to reduce the amount of contraband, such as drugs and weapons, smuggled into the prisons. According to Kaiser (1992), "the prison library is a substitute for the library at home", and that is why it is very important to develop a good library in the correctional centres. The argument is well supported by Shirley (2004), effective library service to the inmates. Access to libraries can also provide strength to the inmates to face the difficult circumstances of prisons. They can consider libraries as a place where they can spend their free time productively and ultimately it will help in their rehabilitation. Libraries and book clubs in correctional centres can play a vital role to enhance the literacy and education levels of the inmates. Through the reading information resources available in the libraries they will able to know what is happening in the outer world leading to their social and mental stimulation. inmates who read are less likely to end up back behind bars. Reading may improve, inside and out of inmates, their body and as well as their mind and ultimately leading to upsurge their self-confidence. Prison library can be of great use for the inmates who want to continue their education. Inmates can continue their education after serving their jail term by having a well-equipped library with adequate resources and services. Many examples are there in history where inmates even got a Doctoral degree while living in a prison. In addition to the formal education, inmates can also learn any vocational skill, which



would enable them to earn money once they are released from jail. They can learn and earn while they are in prison itself. Libraries can have reading material for learning vocational skills like Agriculture, Canning, Carpentry, Tailoring, Weaving/Knitting, Soap & Phenyl making, Handloom and many more. A library with adequate resources and services in a correctional centre is much more than a place of silence, solitary self-scanning, rather it is a place where information resources and related services bring like-minded people together. It may provide a space for inmates to meet with others with common interests. Programs like book clubs and community service projects can help the inmates to improve their social skills. It can be rightly said that libraries in correctional centres are “more than just libraries” but they are actually cultural “community” centers. The exchange of ideas will definitely lead to the change of mindset of the inmates. They can lay down a positive impact on the lives of the prisoners by providing the collection, which can help the inmates to solve their psychological and behavioural problems. Provision of adequate information resources and services to inmates in correctional centres is an extraordinary service, which needs more attention. Though there are thousands of inmates in prisons in Nigeria from all strata of society, providing them with quality library and information services is still a distant dream.

Research Questions

1. What types of information resources available in the library?
2. What services are provided in the library?

Research Objectives

1. To identify the types of information resources available in the library
2. To identify the services rendered in the library

LITERATURE REVIEW

One of the core mandates of the libraries in correctional centres is to support inmates in the provision of information resources and services in the support of their reformation, and not the just passive hoarding of societal offenders. Researches have conducted a number of studies on library resources and services to inmates across the globe. Some of these studies were reviewed and reported. Omagbemi and Odunewu (2007) asserted that in Nigeria, the prisons being characteristically a closed system receive little attention and care from the public and policymakers. As such, the prison library stock is grossly inadequate. Ogundipe (2006) and Eze (2008) harped on the decayed state of prison infrastructure and equipment noting that Nigerian prison infrastructure, equipment and logistics have experienced decades of neglect. For instance, prison library furnishing which includes shelves, book stacks, reading carrels and chairs are completely in a state of disrepair. Prison libraries play a positive role in the lives of the prisoners through the provision of information resources which assist and enhance them in the skills acquired as well as help them address their psychological problems and attitudinal behaviour (Omolola, 2015). According Bajic (2015) as reported by Helen U.E in her study that majority of inmates partake in reading books as a favourite leisure activity, however, they are relatively unsatisfied with the selection of reading materials in



the prison library. That is to say, the available information materials do not meet the expectations of their information needs. Several studies (Emasealu 2015, Atanda et al 2017) have linked information as a precursor to the well-being of inmates it, therefore, goes to prove that non-availability of relevant information resources to inmates have a negative effect on their rehabilitation as they are being starved of information and cannot attain self-actualization. Ozioko, Uzoamaka & Jacinta (2012) studied provision of library and information resources and services to meet prisoners information needs in South-East Nigeria. Findings also showed that the varieties of library resources and services as well as human resources provided are grossly inadequate considering the population of the prisoners. Becker (2007) revealed that in spite of the fact that the prison library is to be funded for the provision of facilities and services for the prisoners, unfortunately, the library programmes are usually the first to be reduced or done away with when the prison's overall budget is cut. This has reflected in poor library services and resources to prisoners. Bhattachajee (2007) in his research conducted informs that many of the prison libraries do not have their own buildings; some are located in small thatched huts while some share a room and time with their institutions. The quality and quantity of prison library services and the changes they can create in the society depends on its human resources.

The review shows that number of studies was conducted on library services to inmates, provision of information resources to prisoners, information needs of prisoners but no study conducted on the assessment of library information resources and services to correctional centres in Katsina State.

METHODOLOGY

Survey research design was adopted to conduct this research. This is because survey design could be conveniently used in the study of large and small population without sacrificing efficiency, time, cost and accuracy (Aina & Ajiferuke, 2002). The population of the study was drawn from the two (2) central and medium correctional centres in Katsina Metropolis, the central is situated at Unguwar Yari close to Katsina Central Police Station while the medium is situated at opposite 35 Battalion Nigeria Army Barrack along Jibia Local government road. Population of the Study is presented as thus; central correctional centre has (697) inmates while that of medium correctional centre have a total of 961 inmates. All together the population of the study is One Thousand Six hundred and fifty eight Inmates (1658) Sample of the study is three hundred and twenty two prison inmates drawn from the two correctional centres named above, one hundred and sixty-one prison inmates each from the two correctional centres. Three hundred and twenty-two prison inmates were randomly selected using the research advisory 2006 sample size for the study. Structured questionnaire was used to obtain information from the prison inmates selected to partake in the cause of the research. Section (A) was, to obtain information on the demographic characteristics of respondents. These include; Age, gender, and educational qualification. The Section (B) of the questionnaire was designed to collect information on available information resources in the library by ticking as many as possible, services rendered by libraries ticking as many as applicable, effectiveness of the information resources and services by using a 3 point likert scale of very effective (VE), rare effective (RE) and not

effective (NE). Data for the study was collected using questionnaire, administered to the respondents in their respective correctional centres with the assistance of prison warders who are staff in the two correctional centres studied. Three hundred and twenty-two copies of Questionnaire were distributed and all returned dully completed and found useable for the research. Data gathered were coded and analyzed using Microsoft excel package with frequency distribution tables and percentages. Rating scales was used to determine the mean score and to provide a basis for ranking the relative relevance of the variables.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Out of the 322 copies of the questionnaire distributed to the inmates in the two correctional centres, a total of 320 (99.4%) copies were returned duly completed and found usable for this study. The data collected for this research were presented and analysed. Frequency distribution tables and simple percentages were used. Below is the analysis of the responses: -

Information on the demographic characteristics of respondents

The researcher sought to know the ages of the inmates in the correctional centres in Katsina metropolis. In order to do this, a gender column was provided for inmates to tick as applicable. Below is table 1 showing the responses of the respondents: -

Table 1.1 Gender Distributions of the Respondents

Gender Distribution		
Inmates	Response Rates	Percentage
Male	282	88.2%
Female	38	11.8%
Total		100%

Table 1.1 shows that in the two correctional centres, central and medium 282 (88.2%) of the respondents were males. Whereas, 38 (11.8%) of the respondents were females. The implication of this finding is that majority of the inmates are male which means males are committing crime often more than the female counter part. This discovery conforms to the study of Folorunso (2019) were the dominant inmates in prison are males for the provision of library services and rehabilitation.

Table 1.1.2 Age Distribution of the Respondents

Age Distribution		
Inmates	Response Rate	Percentage
18-24	54	16.9%
25-35	201	62.8%
36-45	49	15.3%

46-59	11	3.5%
60 & Above	5	1.5%
Total		100%

The table above shows that inmates age distribution in the correctional centres 201 (62.8%) of the responses possesses the age of 25-35, followed by 18-24 representing 54 (16.9%) responses, then 36-45 representing 49 (15.3%) responses, while 46-59 and 60 and above represent 11 (3.5%) and 5 (1.5%) responses respectively. The implication of the study shows that the majority of criminals in the custody are individuals at their youth age.

1.1.3 Educational Qualifications of the Inmates in the Correctional Centres

Educational Qualifications	Response Rate	Percentage
Primary Cert./Certificates	166	51.8%
SSCE/Diploma	80	25%
NCE/HND	30	9.4%
BSC/PhD.	4	1.3%
None	40	12.5%
Total		100%

Table 1.1.3 shows the educational qualifications of the inmates in the correctional centres in Katsina metropolis. It was discovered that, 166 (51.8%) of the respondents possessed Primary Cert./Certificates Programmes, 80 (25%) of them has obtained SSCE/DIP., 30 (9.4%) of them possessed NCE/HND, while 4 (1.3%) and 40 (12.5) possessed BSc/PhD, and None formal educational qualification respectively. It can therefore be concluded that the larger number of the inmates in the correctional centres are literates who can read and write. This is a clear indication that they need to have access to educational resources for better reintegration into the society after their jail term.

Table 2.1 Types of Information Resources Available in the Library

S/N	Information Resources Available	Response Rate	Percentage
1	Textbooks	290	90.6%
2	Journals	4	1.25%
3	Dictionaries	10	3.2%
4	Encyclopedias	6	1.8%
5	Atlases	2	0.6%
6	Newspapers	120	37.5%
7	Computers	0	0%
8	Internet Facilities	0	0%

9	Fictions	0	0%
10	Non-Fictions	0	0%
11	Handbooks and Manuals	4	1.25%
12	Magazines	21	6.5%
13	Bulletins	23	7.2%

Table 2.1 above presents the responses of the inmates in the correctional centres in Katsina metropolis on the type of information resources available to them. From the above presentation, it was discovered that textbook was the highest frequency of information resources with 290 (90.6%) response rate, followed by newspapers with 120 (37.5%) response rate, while information resources such as magazines, bulletins, handbooks and manuals, fictions and non-fictions, internet facilities, computers, atlases, journals, encyclopedias and dictionaries were discovered with least frequencies of less than 8% and 1% response rates respectively. This shows that the library is just bearing the name but, there is no adequate information resources stocked in it. This is in line with the position by Aliyu (2020), that the terrible states of libraries in Nigerian correctional centres is attributed to poor funding and misappropriation/diverting of fund meant to purchase library resources to other areas by the managements.

Table 3.1 Services rendered by the Library in the Correctional centre

S/N	Library Services Rendered	Response Rate	Percentage
1	User Education	59	18.5%
2	Mobile Library	4	1.25%
3	Interlibrary Loan	0	0%
4	Lending	137	42.8%
5	Internet	0	0%
6	Reprographic	2	0.6%
7	Reference Services	4	1.25%
8	Current Awareness	15	4.6%
9	Selective Dissemination	7	2.2%
10	Outreach/Extension Services	0	0%
11	Audio-Visual Services	4	1.25%
12	Provision of relevant literatures	21	6.5%
13	Information Consultation	255	79.6%
14	Book Discussion Services	22	6.8%

The analysis on the table above shows that there are very few services rendered by the library in the correctional centres to the inmates. The responses gotten from the inmates on library services rendered were very low, only Information consultation and lending services with response rate of 255 (79.6%) and

137 (42.8%) mean score respectively said to be rendered. All other services got a response rate of below 50 (18.5%) mean score such evidence clearly define how poor the status of the library in the correctional centres are in services provision to inmates in Katsina metropolis. There is absolutely inadequate library services provision to inmates. These findings coincide with the findings by Omagbemi (2007) that Nigerian prison libraries are insufficiently stocked with human and information resources, and are managed by non-librarians. No doubt, Eneku (2000) opined that Nigerian prisons are perceived to be custodians than rehabilitation centres because little and scant attention is given to the needs of inmates in the library.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it could be concluded that there exist a library in the Katsina metropolis correctional centre, but information resources stocked are inadequate or even abysmal poor which to an extent some of the inmates have no idea of the various types of agricultural information resources. On the other hand, the services rendered in the library virtually can be seen as an abuse to the library. This is coming from the fact that library are meant to acquire, select, process, stored and disseminate information to users. But unfortunately, the services being rendered in the correctional centre is not sufficient or even very poor. Information resources available are grossly inadequate in the library.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are hereby made that:

Governments at all levels, stakeholders, groups and associations should come to the aid of library in the correctional centre by supporting them with fund or donation of information resources library development. As the world is moving virtual now there is need for computers and internet facilities in the library for accessing digital information which is cheaper, faster and up-to-date.

There is need to recruit people with the library profession in the service to engage in handling library professionalism effectively. Also there is need to have a standard building of the library, furnished with the required facilities to make it more accommodative. Because the room dedicated as the library presently is unorganized and not comfortable for use as library.

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