LAFIA JOURNAL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE
Volume 5, Number 1, 2024.
https://lalibjournals.org/index.php/LJLIS
ISSN: Print - 2814-0702, Online - 2814-0710
LJLIS

ROLE OF LIBRARY IN THE REHABILITATION OF INMATES: A CASE STUDY OF MINNA OLD AND NEW PRISONS NIGER STATE

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Abstract
This paper evaluates the impotence of library in the rehabilitation of inmates in Minna Old Prison (MOP) and Minna New Prison (MNP) respectively. The study was carried out on two prisons establishments in Minna, Niger state. Instrument for data collection was questionnaire and a semi- structured interview. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics and results presented in tables. Simple random sampling technique was used. A total of 50 randomly selected inmates from the two prisons formed the population of the study. The role of library as an information provider, and educational resource in the rehabilitation of inmates are analysed. Findings from the study revealed that there is a functional library in New Prison (MSP) with relevant books and inmates make maximum use of it. The library capacity cannot accommodate all its users at a time. The library is being managed by Para- professional librarian. In the old prison, inmates lamented non- existent of library. The study recommended that: the prison library be set up at the old prison and should make use of current information technology which will not hinder the prison security., the government of Niger State should enrich the library at New Prison with textbooks in various skill acquisition programmes to equip the inmates more in their chosen career, both libraries should be supervised/managed by a professional librarian. Prison library collection should include materials in print and other formats and in native languages to meet the informational, educational, cultural, recreational, and rehabilitative needs of the prison population.
Keywords: Inmates, Rehabilitation, Library services, Information needs, Rehabilitation Programmes

Introduction

Rehabilitation is the re-integration into society of a convicted person. IFLA's Libraries Serving Disadvantaged Persons (LSDP) Section provides leadership to libraries, associations, and government agencies for the development of specialized services to those groups within the community who are unable to make use of conventional library services. These groups include persons in hospitals and prisons, the elderly in nursing homes and care facilities, the housebound, the deaf, the physically and developmentally disabled and those with reading difficulties (Vibeke and Joanne 2005). Libraries play a significant role in providing necessary information for the rehabilitation and reformation of inmate Ibegwam (2003) defined library as a body of collected information brought together for the purpose of knowledge dissemination and utilization. No meaningful

rehabilitation can take place if inmates are not adequately informed about the information on the types of trade available to them and that could match their interest after serving their jail terms. Since convicted criminals are sentenced to prisons for the purpose of rehabilitation, adequate provision must be made for the library and their staffs to enhance the rehabilitation. According to 'Vibele and Joanne (2005),' Convicted criminals are sentenced to prison for purpose of rehabilitation. In most cases, the providers of rehabilitation services are either ill-equipped or not at all to give wholesome services that can affect inmates' lives positively.

Rehabilitation services are notable for their pivotal prison role in changing lives of the inmates; unfortunately, these are either not there or grossly inadequate. Change is possible for everyone. Even prison inmates can change for the better and become productive citizens. They possess the capability to contribute to the meaningful development of their economy, particularly if their skills and talents are properly harnessed through reformation programmes (Chiemezie, 2005). However, changing for the better and becoming productive citizens need a little sacrifice from the prison inmates and a great help from government and concerned agencies. Emphasizing on the importance of prison rehabilitation services, (Asokhia and Agbonluae 2013) said that they were established in Nigerian prisons for the purpose of reforming the inmates and for any meaningful rehabilitation to take place in prisons rehabilitation services must first be improved upon; adequate provisions made and these should be accessible to the inmates. The major platform where information could be easily provided and assessed for adequate effective and efficient rehabilitation is the library. This is the place where relevant materials both in book and in non- book forms are organized and made available for users to use. In the words of McGuire and Priestley (1985), "rehabilitation means community reinstatement and should be concerned with solving individuals' everyday problems in relation to housing, work, family welfare, money management" The UN Universal Declaration of human rights stand on criminal justice and incarceration emphasised more on education, rehabilitation and constructive use of time than punishment. According to Federal Government of Nigeria (1989), the followings formed the major objectives of rehabilitation services in Nigerian prisons:

i. Ensure effective management of crisis situation of the prison inmates;
ii. Ensure an appropriate training for the prison inmates in order to reduce dependency;
iii. Promote the provision of adequate and accessible recreational and sporting facilities for the prison inmates

Sutton in Asokhia and Agbonluae (2013) asserted that there are **three** main immediate objectives of prison education given as:

a. To keep inmates meaning fully busy
b. To change attitudes and behaviour
c. To become a better citizen in the society

Objectives of the Study

This study sought to determine the role of library in the rehabilitation of inmates of Minna old and new prison in Niger State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study will find out

i. Types of collections in the library
ii. Relevancy of the collections to the information needs of inmates'
iii. Types of rehabilitation services available in Niger State for Inmates
iv. Factors inhibiting easy accessibility of information by Inmates
v. Strategies for enhancing effective and efficient usage of library by inmate

Research Questions

The following research questions will guide the study.

i. What are the types of collections in the library?
ii. How relevant are the collections to the information needs of inmates
iii. What types of rehabilitation services available in Niger State for Inmates?
iv. What are those factors inhibiting easy accessibility of information by Inmates?
v. What are the strategies for enhancing effective and efficient usage of library by inmate?

Importance of Prison Library

The relevance of library in any functional organisation cannot be over emphasised. However, for effective and efficient service delivery and easy accessibility of information the library is the right place to visit. The library, which is a centre where good books and other information resources are made available for use, can build the emotional, social and spiritual wellbeing of people who find themselves in incarceration or work in corrections. That is to say, for meaningful learning to take place in the prisons, the inmates must be provided with a functional and well-equipped library which is adequately stocked with relevant and current reading materials and the recommended textbooks that contained the information needs of inmates. The place of rehabilitation services in the reformation and transformation of prison inmates have continued to be on the front burner of public discourse in recent time (Tanimu, 2010). This is to say library through various services it provides create forum for character modification and up keep. Good and relevant books bring the inmate or anyone else in contact with the minds and ideas of authors most people on the street are reading today. In so doing, an inmate is connected in real time to the global family of man, thus breaking the sense of isolation and banishment. Provision of relevant materials both in book and in non-book forms in prison library go a long way in making it a mini school for inmates.

In the prison, a good book will keep an inmate's mind entertained and constructively engaged while he serves time. We all know that an idle mind is the devils workshop. A reading inmate will have little time to do the devil's errands. Idleness and boredom lead to the design and experimentation with trouble. At that intellectual level, the library helps to promote peace and safety in our prison establishment. According to

Anafulu (1998), library is the engine room and power house where information is collected, stored, processed, and retrieved for use. In the library, an inmate can learn new skill set, like computer competence among others and prepare himself for the world of work upon his re-entry into the society. He would find guides to continuing education after prison.

Omagbemi and Odunenewu (2007) carried out a research on an appraisal of library service provision in prison inmates in Nigeria. The study reviewed that prison libraries stock are inadequate and are being managed by non-librarians. However despite being incarcerated inmates desire information on the happenings in the society and also seek legal information to get informed and enlightened on their predicaments. They also need information for their personal development and recreation.

According to Oketunji (2005), libraries are built and maintained to provide information resources for a specific, defined community. As such, like academic libraries, school libraries etc we have prison libraries.

Enuku (2001) posit that prison inmates prefer one rehabilitation service or activity to the other. This position was corroborated by Tanimu (2010) that rehabilitation or recreational activities prison inmates engaged in depends on whether they are inside or outside their cells and the one they prefer. He said when in their cells, prison inmates prefer games like draft, ludo and cards.

Research Methodology

This research was restricted only to the two prison establishments in Minna Old Prison and Minna New Prison respectively. Descriptive survey research method was adopted for the study. A total of 50 randomly selected inmates from the two prisons formed the population of the study. Fifty (50) questionnaires were distributed and all were filled, returned and used for the study.

The population of the inmates in the two cells is 210, while the sample size of the study constituted those that can read and write in both cells. Specifically, only 50 inmates can read and write, hence a non-probability sampling method adopted for the study.

Results

Table 1 Types of Library Collections Available in the Prison Library

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
1	Magazine	5	9	27	9	2.20	R
2	Newspapers	2	4	30	10	2.12	R
3	Religion Materials	10	19	13	8	2.26	A
4	Novels	4	16	20	10	2.28	R
5	Educational materials	18	11	4	17	2.16	A
6	Legal Books	4	9	29	8	2.18	R
7	Physiological Books	3	8	33	6	2.16	R
8	Recreational Books	6	36	1	7	2.82	A
9	Vocational Books	2	4	41	3	2.10	R

Key: SA—Strongly Agree A----Agree D---Disagree SD—Strongly Disagree

Table 1 above shows absolute agreement in favour of collection available in the library. While magazines, newspapers, novels, legal books, physiological books and vocational books which are inadequate as shown by their mean scores value below 2.50, religious books, educational books and recreational books are adequately available for use as shown by their mean value score above.

Table 2 Relevance of Prison Library Collection to Inmates Information Needs

S/N	Items	HR	AVR	R	NR	Mean	Decision
1	Magazines	11	24	8	7	2.78	A
2	Newspapers	9	31	7	3	2.92	A
3	Religion Materials	18	12	15	5	2.86	A
4	Novels	25	10	13	2	3.16	A
5	Educational Materials	31	7	12	0	3.38	A
6	Legal Books	25	18	2	5	3.26	A
7	Physiological Books	14	22	12	2	2.96	A
8	Recreational Books	13	25	11	1	3.00	A
9	Vocational Books	27	18	1	4	3.36	A

Key: HR—Highly Relevant, AVR—Averagely Relevant, R—Relevant NR—Not Relevant

In table 2 the degree of relevance of library collections are shown. All the items/ materials are relevant to inmate's information needs. This is shown by their mean score value which is all above 2.50

Table 3 Types of Rehabilitation Services Available for Inmates in Niger State

S/N	Rehabilitation Services	S/A	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
1	Carpentry	18	15	6	5	2.56	A
2	Building	7	22	11	10	2.52	A
3	Painting	16	30	1	3	3.18	A
4	Tailoring	28	17	4	1	3.44	A
5	Printing	5	16	20	9	2.34	R
6	Soap Making	35	10	2	3	3.54	A
7	Pot Making	13	22	10	3	2.82	A
8	Metal Work	9	17	21	3	2.64	A
9	Pomade Making	19	15	10	6	2.94	A
10	Insectcides Making	36	11	2	1	3.64	A
11	Shoe Making	4	12	29	5	2.30	A
12	Football	11	19	13	7	2.68	A
13	Badmiton	2	7	31	10	2.02	R
14	Vocational Services	9	11	24	5	2.44	R
15	Farming Methods	13	10	18	9	2,54	A

Key: SA—Strongly Agree A----Agree D---Disagree SD—Strongly Disagree

In table 3 respondents accepted that all the rehabilitation services are available except printing, badminton and vocational programmes that are not available

Table 4 Factors Inhibiting Easy Access of Library Materials

S/N	Factors Affecting Accessing Library Materials	S/A	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
1	If the library is far from the inmates' cell	27	4	6	13	2.90	A
2	When the rules for using library become too much	3	9	1	37	1.59	R
3	If the prison library staff is not friendly with inmates	18	7	2	23	2.40	R
4	Lack of inter-library loan between libraries	9	5	2	10	2.26	R
5	When the prison library is located in a noisy place	22	8	1	9	2.86	A
6	Level of educational background of inmates	30	5	14	1	3.28	A
7	Not displaying library materials physically to see	24	9	6	12	2.94	A
8	Inability to shelf library materials well	29	7	10	5	3.24	A
9	Lack of enough reading space	33	4	2	11	3.18	A
10	Lack of library orientation for inmates	31	8	2	9	3.22	A

Table 4 reveals the problems to the respondent's inability to access library materials. The result shows the issue of level of educational background of inmates, inability to organise library materials well and lack of library orientation are the most prominent problems, while library rules, unfriendliness of library staff and lack of inter-library loan were seen as not problems to inmate's easy access of library materials.

Table 5 Strategies to Enhance Library Use by Inmates

S/N	Strategies	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
1	The prison library should be centrally located	27	8	5	10	3.04	A
2	The prison must be devoid of noise	14	21	1	14	2.70	A
3	The prison library staff should be friendly with Inmates	31	9	3	7	3.28	A
4	Availability of photocopiers in the library	6	15	8	21	2.12	R
5	Enough sitting space be provided in the library	13	28	2	7	2.70	A
6	All library books be displayed on the shelves	21	17	1	11	2.96	A
7	Rules governing library use by inmates be relaxed	9	30	7	4	2.88	A
8	Prison library materials be well shelved	16	10	5	19	2.45	R
9	Availability of novels on Nupe, Yoruba, Hausa, Ibo languages etc be made available	29	14	1	6	3.52	A
10	Library orientation for inmates must be put in place	31	8	7	4	3.32	A

Table 5 above shows the result of the strategies for enhancing inmate's library use. From the table it is evident that all the identified strategies were good for enhancing inmate's library use with their mean value scores above 2.50. It was the issue of photocopying services and unorganised library materials that don't proffer much solution to inmate's access to using library materials.

Conclusion

The conclusion to be made from the findings of the study is that magazines, newspapers, novels, legal books, physiological books and vocational books are inadequate in the library, while religious books, educational books and recreational books are adequately available for use. There was no functional library at Minna old prison, but a small room stocked with some books, where inmates attend lessons. Upon all these, the collections in the two libraries were considered highly relevant to inmates' information needs. Respondents accepted that all the rehabilitation services are available except printing, badminton and vocational programmes that needed to be addressed. The level of educational background of inmates, unorganised library materials and lack of library orientation are the most prominent problems affecting inmate's easy access to library materials while problem of library rules, unfriendliness of library staff and lack of inter-library loan were seen as minor problems to inmate's easy access to library materials.

Strategies for enhancing inmate's library use such as displaying books on shelves, provision of enough sitting space relaxed rules for library usage among others were also identified. It was the issue of photocopying services and unorganised library materials that don't proffer much solution to inmate's access to using library materials.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following, recommendations are made:

1. The government should be in support of putting up a functional library at the Minna Old Prison for the benefit of inmates and staff.
2. Both libraries should be well equipped with shelves, reading tables, air conditioners and relevant books that will enhance inmate's educational advancement.
3. Books that contain legal, vocational and recreational information should be equally provided for the two libraries. Novels written in major languages such as Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo should form part of library collections, since some of the inmates can read in their native languages.
4. Rehabilitation programmes such as printing, badminton, metal works among others that are not on ground yet could be put in place for inmates to partake in.
5. Inmates should be introduced to library orientation for effective and efficient use of the library.
6. Professional librarians should be appointed to manage prison libraries and be well paid their colleagues in other libraries. The government should provide conducive environment for the library and its users which in this case are the inmates for the maximum patronise and utilisation of library services.

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