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## Information Needs of Prisoners and Adequacy of Information Resources in Prison Libraries in Anambra State, Nigeria

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### ABSTRACT

This study investigated the information needs of prisoners and the adequacy of information resources in prison libraries in Anambra State, Nigeria. Two research questions guided the study. The population of the study was 1781 inmates in prisons in Anambra State. The sample size of 327 was selected using Taro Yamane's formula and proportionate stratified sampling techniques. Two instruments titled the Information Needs of Prisoners Questionnaire and the Adequacy of Information Resources Checklist were used for data collection. The instruments were validated by three experienced lecturers. One in the department of Educational Foundations (Measurement and Evaluation Unit) and two in the Department of Library and Information Science, all at Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire items, with a value of 0.79. The researchers administered the questionnaires with the help of four research assistants (correctional officers). Out of 327 questionnaires administered, 314 were successfully retrieved. The percentage return rate of distributed questionnaires is 96%. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics of the mean; also, the International Federation of Library Association (IFLA) guideline for library services to prisoners was also used as a yardstick for the measurement of adequacy. The results from the data analysis indicated that prisoners have diverse information needs that, when met, would help them during their stay in prison as well as when they are eventually released; these needs include legal information, information on prison rules, financial information, and others. While there were few information resources found to be adequate, the inadequacy of most of the listed information resources is recorded in prison libraries in Anambra State, Nigeria. It is therefore recommended that information resources be made adequately available for prisoners in relation to their information needs.

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## 1. Introduction

Information as a concept in the present era has become exceedingly and exclusively central to the functioning of society due to the overflow caused by information and communication technology. Information is seen as embodying a lot of resources and power. That is why one would confidently say that information is power. The absence of information creates a vacuum and a degree of uncertainty, this inadvertently means that the presence of information serves to fill a gap and reduce uncertainty. The art of informed decision-making is one that needs aid usually in the form of adequate information. Information is the end product of processing, manipulating, and arranging data in a way that adds to the knowledge of the receiver (Anunobi & Udem, 2014; Chimah & Nwokocha, 2013). Information plays a very crucial and important role in our everyday lives both in personal and professional capacities. Information hitherto had been stored traditionally in books but can be currently found in more advanced mediums in the form of electronic media. Man as an entity, directly and indirectly, seeks after the knowledge which is expected to aid him in his daily activities. The desire for the acquisition of new and improved knowledge to satisfy man's everyday needs gave rise to information needs.

Need as noted by Stevenson (2010) is a thing that is wanted or required, the state of requiring help or of lacking basic necessities such as food, shelter, and clothing. In the same vein, Richards et al. (2018) described need as a desire to receive support with an experienced problem. Therefore going by the definitions above, information need is the state of requiring information; information need implies that an individual wants to accomplish a task and would require having certain pieces of information at their disposal. Udem and Ogungbeni, (2023); Naeema, Ahmed, and Ishfaq (2014) opined that information need is the information a person or persons should have in order to do their job effectively, solve a problem satisfactorily, pursue a hobby or interest with excitement, and overall achieve set goals. It is the desire of a person or group of persons to find and acquire information to satisfy a conscious or unconscious need. Information need is perceived as the acceptance that an individual's knowledge is not enough to achieve a goal or to accomplish an objective (Liswiki, 2008).

Information need is seen as the difference between what an individual knows and what they need to know. It is the requirement for a piece of information by an individual necessary to carry out an assignment that generates information need. Information needs come in varying forms; they could be educational information needs, medical, economic, vocational, recreational, legal, financial, and spiritual informational needs. Human beings in every capacity and field of endeavor have their information needs, this is because it is important for humans to seek information for development as opined by Thankachan (2016), and prisoners are not an exception.

A prisoner is an individual who is confined in a prison also known as a correctional facility and denied a variety of freedoms under the authority of the state. People who are charged with crimes may be imprisoned until their trial; those pleading or being found guilty of crimes at trial may be sentenced to a specific period of imprisonment (Arora, 2019). Sambo, Usman and Rabi

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(2017) observed that the prison population in Nigeria includes convicted persons and those awaiting trial (ATPs). However, in developed countries like the USA, state and federal prisons house convicted inmates who are incarcerated for longer periods than inmates kept in jails and detention centres.

Prisoners also referred to as prison inmates are individuals who have been incarcerated as punishment for a crime. Ejike (2014) defined prisoners as people who are incarcerated and whose movements are restricted because of the crimes they committed. With respect to their state of incarceration, they are restricted from free movement and full social life. They are remanded in these correctional facilities as a means of rehabilitating them in order to be worthy to be part of society at no harm to themselves or others. Prisoners due to their status are unable to move around and therefore do not have access to information by themselves in the same way people who are free do. However, prisoners need information for varying purposes. Some of these prisoners have low educational qualifications which sometimes pose a disadvantage that may inadvertently push them into a life of crime. Therefore, they need literacy training, career and educational programs that are geared towards improving their educational background.

Incarceration as the word implies means that these individuals do not have the liberty to move around, communicate freely or access information at ease. This does not in any way obliterate the fact that they need the aforementioned necessities. Prisoners need information for the enhancement of their general and psychological and well-being, Emesealu and Popoola (2016) asserts that the psychological well-being of prisoners is important to preserve both their mental health and physical wellness during incarceration, in order to ensure that they are in the right frame of mind as well as be efficiently equipped at the point of their release. They need information resources that will assist them to do intellectual activities, spend leisure time that is rewarding, interesting and engaging. It is the responsibility of the prison library to provide inmates with the needed information resources.

Information needs of prisoners are those specific needs that are unique to prisoners in correctional facilities arising from their state of incarceration. In the case of prisoners, information needs range from the most basic information needed for survival, educational reasons, good health and hygiene, and recreation to spiritual/moral development (Sambo, Usman, and Rabi 2017). Prisoners need information resources to navigate their day-to-day activities and the onus lies on the library to equip them adequately with needed information on how they handle themselves and how they relate with others, and also provide the information needed to prepare them for eventual release into the larger society and to prevent a repeat offense.

Information in various forms is needed by prisoners for varying purposes. These pieces of information are expected to meet the information needs of prisoners and satisfy their yearnings and information problems. Prisoners have information needs as free people do but unlike free people, they have limited access to avenues through which to get this needed information. Eze (2013) studied the information needs and resources provision through the prison libraries in South-East zone of Nigeria. The study revealed that recreational information, religious/spiritual information, health information, and legal information are predominantly the major information needed by prisoners due to their state of confinement. Sambo, Usman and Rabi (2017) further recognized information on health conditions, spiritual and moral information, literacy education, rights in prison and information on

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legal issues as information needs of prisoners. The rehabilitative and reformatory goals of the prison would be unattainable if peradventure the established information needs of these prisoners are not adequately met.

The term resources signifies materials that when at an individual's disposal help in the satisfaction of needs. Information resources are resources that fulfill users' information needs by serving as a conduit between information and those who are in need of it. This is supported by Agarwal (2011) who described an information resource as an information agent or transporter that can appear through conventional sources; the more traditional source (majorly print source), and electronic source. Msoffe and Ngulube (2017) pointed out that there is a tendency for users of the information to want to gain access and have it conveyed to them through a preferred source, which could be print or electronic medium. Information resources comprise all forms of information carriers including print and electronic sources such as books, databases, encyclopedias, newspapers, magazines, reports, conference proceedings, articles, journals, E-books, websites, manuscripts, and special collections, the internet, which solve several information needs including research activities and developmental projects (Chimah & Nwokocha, 2013).

There are categories of information sources and they are primary, secondary, and tertiary information sources. Primary sources are first-hand documents that are most often created during the time the events under study occurred. They are information materials in their original state. Examples of this are: interviews, speeches, diaries, correspondence, patents, conferences, archival materials, journals, theses, and manuscripts. Secondary sources are accounts written after the fact with the benefit of hindsight. They interpret, analyze, evaluate, summarize and repackage primary literature. They are not direct evidence but rather they are discussions of evidence. Some of these are: bibliographies, reviewed journals, textbooks, and commentaries. Tertiary sources consist of primary and secondary sources that have been summarized and condensed. Examples are: almanacs, abstracts, dictionaries, encyclopedias, fact books, and handbooks. Information resources are therefore those resources acquired by the library, processed, and made available and accessible to users for the purpose of providing information in order to satisfy the quest for knowledge and enlightenment of the library patrons.

There is an undeniable necessity to make information resources not just available but also adequate to actualize the purposes for which prison libraries are established. The libraries in prisons are therefore expected to house collections that are in line with the objectives of its parent body which is primarily rehabilitation of inmates and equipping them with the necessary information that will help them function efficiently in society when they are released from the prison.

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions released a guideline for library services to prisoners (IFLA) (2005). The guidelines are applicable to all facilities where individuals are incarcerated. The guidelines indicate that the library collection should include materials in print and other formats to meet the informational, educational, cultural, recreational, and rehabilitative needs of the prison population. This collection should include a wide range of current print and non-print materials similar to those found in a school or public library. The library collection is also expected to be regularly enhanced with new acquisitions chosen by professional librarians.

Generally, the library collection should have materials covering general reference titles, fiction

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including a broad range of genres (romance, mystery, crime, science fiction, fantasy, horror, poetry, comics and graphic novels, etc.) and non-fiction covering the standard Dewey subject areas with heavy emphasis on topics dealing with self-help, life skills, and personal relationships, legal materials to meet legal informational needs as well as constitutional or court-mandated requirements, biographies, self-study materials, easy to read materials, large print books, audiobooks, audio and visual materials, multimedia and computer software; community information including brochure, directories, handbooks, literacy and numeracy materials, puzzles games, magazines, and newspapers.

The guideline further goes ahead to state the number of materials that constitute a minimally “adequate” collection bearing in mind factors such as the size of the prison population. It specifies that a minimum of the following materials is what determines their adequacy or inadequacy; for books; a collection of 2000 titles or 10 titles per inmate, whichever is greater. For magazines, a minimum collection of 20 titles or one subscription per 20 inmates, whichever is greater? These are guidelines with specific numbers as regards the collection of the prison library collection bearing in mind the population of prisoners in each prison. For audio and visual materials, multimedia, and computer software, the library is expected to provide a sufficient amount to meet basic needs and support ongoing prison programs.

### *1.1 Statement of the Problem*

Humans need adequate information resources for optimal functionality and prisoners are not an exception. Prisoners are secluded from the larger society; they inadvertently do not have freedom of movement nor can they explore. Ideally, the prison library is expected to provide relevant information resources to effectively meet the information needs of the prison community of which the inmates are an integral part.

Prisons are institutions for the confinement of individuals who have been accused of crimes. The nature and duties of the prison includes the rehabilitation of its inmates making the library a critical and inevitable part of the institution. Inmates are expected to adjust to life in prison and nothing helps adjustment more than adequate and essential information and this is where the library plays a fundamental role. The library acquires, processes, and houses necessary information resources that would be beneficial to the inmates’ rehabilitation and remediation. In order to meet up with its fundamental role, the prison library is expected to provide information resources.

The researchers have observed from literature and other media outlets, that when there is limited information in the possession of this particular group of people, it has the possibility of inhibiting them from reaching their full potentials. The library is responsible for bridging the gap between the prisoners and access to the information which they require for adjustment to life in prison and seamless reintegration into society at the expiration of the period of their confinement. For this to be achieved there is need for current, accurate, and adequate information resources.

It is therefore imperative to seek understanding of the information needs of prisoners, and steps taken towards making sure resources to satisfy these information needs are adequately provided. While studies have been carried out on the information needs of prisoners, no research has been carried out on the adequacy of information resources in prison libraries in Anambra state. Hence

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this study examined the information needs of prisoners, and adequacy of information resources provided for prisoners in Anambra state, Nigeria.

### *1.2 Purpose of the Study*

The purpose of this study was to determine the information needs of prisoners, and adequacy of information resources in prison libraries in Anambra state.

Specifically, the study sought to:

- (1) Identify the various information needs of prisoners in Anambra state.
- (2) Determine the adequacy of information resources in prison libraries in meeting the information needs of prisoners in Anambra state.

### *1.3 Research Questions*

The following research questions were formulated to guide this study:

- (1) What are the information needs of prisoners in Anambra state?
- (2) What is the adequacy of information resources in prison libraries in meeting the information needs of prisoners in Anambra state?

## 2. Literature Review

### *2.1 Information Needs of Prisoners*

Information in various forms is needed by prisoners for varying purposes. These pieces of information are expected to meet the information needs of prisoners and satisfy their yearnings and information problems. Prisoners have information needs as free people do but unlike free people, they have limited access to avenues through which to get this needed information. Eze (2013) studied the information needs and resources provision through the prison libraries in South-East zone of Nigeria. The study revealed that recreational information, religious/spiritual information, health information, and legal information are predominantly the major information needed by prisoners due to their state of confinement. Sambo, Usman and Rabi (2017) further recognized information on health conditions, spiritual and moral information, literacy education, rights in prison and information on legal issues as information needs of prisoners. The rehabilitative and reformatory goals of the prison would be unattainable if peradventure the established information needs of these prisoners are not adequately met. These information needs are as follows:

**Legal Information Needs:** This involves the need for legal materials that contain adequate, meaningful, and effective information that will assist them in meeting criminal, civil, and administrative legal needs. The prison has the responsibility to offer inmates legal assistance through working with those trained in the letters of the law (lawyers, paralegals) to provide prisoners with adequate assistance. The information provided to the prisoners facilitates their being properly informed on

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what their rights are; ranging from their right to correspondence, rights to visitation, including visitation from their relatives and attorneys, their right to receive publications from the outside world, right to speak with people outside the prison via telephone, and the right to practice their chosen religion (Araromi, 2015). The right of minors whose parents have been incarcerated is to be protected and provided for by the government. They should have an awareness that they are not meant to be disenfranchised by the fact that they are in prison. Prisoners by the virtue of their status have encountered or are encountering criminal law issues. Beyond that, prisoners are faced with other civil legal issues just like every other person. Some of these issues are a result of the reckless lives they lived prior to incarceration. There are some legal issues peculiar to people in prison such as bail conditions, according to a study conducted by Rafedzi and Abrizah (2014), prisoners need information on their prosecution, conviction, and punishment. In addition, when released they need legal guidance when faced with discrimination during their search for work or employment. Prisoners need adequate legal information in order to take advantage of their rights and all that is due to them.

**Health Information Needs:** A major information need of prisoners is information on the health services which they should benefit from, especially the ones readily available to them. Prisons are notorious for being congested and there are various health conditions that could arise as a result of this, ranging from easy transmission of communicable diseases such as; chicken pox, eczema, bumps, ringworm, scabies, diarrhea, and head lice. In more recent times there has been an outbreak of various diseases including Ebola and COVID-19, diseases that are easily transmitted via human contact. Prisoners therefore require adequate and quality information to navigate this dicey situation. They also need health information to be able to keep up with measures like maintaining personal hygiene, general neatness, and extra care in using sharp objects and other tools that might inflict injuries. Prisoners need information on how to effectively harness the medical care and treatment necessary for the preservation of health. Jimam and Teyiremi (2015) in their study suggested that these information needs already mentioned are sought to be met through various sources such as health workers, television, books, the internet, radio, and magazines. It is believed that the prison's health could have an impact on public health in general. Therefore, there is absolutely a necessity for the provision of health information to prisoners. This is because according to Enggist, and Moller, Galea and Udesen (2014), some prisoners who returned to the community are discovered to have carried along new infections and untreated or poorly treated conditions that may become a challenge to community health and add to diseases that are already prevalent in the community.

**Religious/Spiritual and Moral Information Needs:** The period of confinement affords prisoners ample time for sober reflection as well as introspection and to get in touch with their spiritual side. Olojede and Mohammed (2020) posited that prisoners are provided with religious services to capture their minds and to bring peace and stability to their souls. Religion and spirituality is touted to be remarkably helpful in the rehabilitative and reformative role of the prison. In his study on the role of religious groups in offender reformation, Akunesiobike (2016) observed that religion has an influence on an individual's personality and psyche which would in turn facilitate their repentance from a life of criminality and prevent a relapse.

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**Educational/Vocational Information Needs of Prisoners:** The information needs of prisoners stem from their level of education or lack of it and according to Popoola (2016), a notable number of prisoners are unfortunately deficient in literacy. Prisoners include of people of different ages. Education is perceived as an essential rehabilitative engagement for prisoners to transform and grow while in confinement and during the trial period. These educational activities include basic literacy programs, higher educational experience, vocational training, and general studies (Adeyeye, 2019). Prison education is an innovative strategy that would ensure that prisoners leave the prison with more skills that will prepare them to be better positioned for employment (Ogbaka, Ewelum, & Apiti, 2017). Mfum (2012) recognized education as a principal factor in rehabilitation and the eventual re-integration of offenders as productive members of the community is a significant new stance for prisons. There is hope that the acquisition of vocational skills would influence the chances of prisoners positively at the point of their reintegration into the larger society. This could be through helping them get a job in order to make an honest living. Also, given the skill set they have, they can go ahead to pursue a state of self-employment. Vocational information need do not only arise from the desire to acquire skills but also to keep busy and pay no mind to their problems momentarily. Stone and Ramsden (2013) observed a statistically significant relationship between taking advantage of library materials and educational achievement. There have been indications that educational attainment reduces recidivism, a British study by Hopkins (2012) noted that prisoners who had gained a qualification while in prison has 15% less chance of becoming convicted again a year after being released unlike those who do not have a qualification.

**Financial Information Needs:** Financial information is needed by everyone in order to make informed decisions regarding managing their individual finances. Prisoners are of different financial levels, and they all need to be adequately informed in order to take smart decisions. Financial concerns such as debts, investments, businesses require management even while in incarceration. Simunic, Tanackovic and Badurina (2016) in their study on library services to prisoners suggested a financial model be put in place to address these issues. Prisoners have need of financial publications to keep tab on their investments for those who have invested in the stock market. At the expiration of incarceration, they are thrown back into the larger society and may find it hard getting employment due to the stigma that is attached to being an ex-convict and this would inadvertently affect their finances. The information services provided for prisoners while incarcerated help them surmount these obstacles and find employment, thereby improving their financial standing (Davis, 2014). Anderson (2012) pointed out that when prisoners are provided with financial education, they are motivated to acknowledge their current position and seek to find means to increase their income. Therefore they need as much information as they can get to handle their financial situation. Call, Dyer, Wiley and Day (2013) further opined that prisoners need financial information on investments, budgeting, management and savings.

**Information on Current Affairs:** There are new and updated information churned out by the minute, especially with the advent of information and communication technology. Gbashima, Akpe, Iorfa (2016), in their study of the information needs of prisoners, observed that information on current affairs made up a part of these needs. This is confirmed by Emesealu (2018), who in her study indicated that information on current issues constituted a good percentage of prisoners' information

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needs. The library has the unique duty of providing much needed current information on different fields including science and technology, and politics.

Sharda and Twari (2021) found that the prisoners need information resources for various purposes including; to gain knowledge, read news, for educational purposes, for recreational purposes and to while away time. They enjoyed reading books on religion, health and education. They also enjoyed reading fiction, legal books and books on general knowledge. The prisoners recognized the need for more books to be provided for them, citing inadequacy of those available. Limbani, George, Austine and Winner (2020) observed that information on education, health information and spiritual information were the major information needs of the prisoners.

Canning and Buchanan (2019) found that the information needs the prisoners identified with were categorized as; educational information needs, information spanning from general to specific health needs and information needs relating to everyday prison routine. Some other information needs mentioned were legal, financial, housing and employment needs in relation to their eventual release.

Sambo, Usman, Rabiou (2017) observed that the information needs of prisoners include; spiritual and moral information needs, information on their health condition and finances, information that will help them in skill acquisition, information on their rights in the prison, literacy education, information about life after prison and legal issues. Tarzan, Chorun, and Mbatsoron (2015) found that the information needs of prisoners include health related information, information on legal issues, their religious needs and information on how to tackle educational related problems. Rafedzi and Abrizah (2014) found that the information needs of prisoners are categorized as follows: health information for health well-being, recreational information for leisure, family information for dealing with loneliness, information about how the prison is run, legal information and academic or educational information.

## *2.2 Adequacy of Information Resources in Prison Libraries*

The central objective of a library is to ensure that users get the right information, at the right time and in the right measure and equally have access to diverse information materials, both print and electronic in order to achieve their information goals (Wanyonyi, Odin & Sikolia, 2018). Olugu (2017) affirmed that users are essential partners of the library and should be the focal point while building a library collection and that the collection be tailored towards meeting the users' information needs. Thus, adequacy of information resources determines greatly the extent to which the library is used by the target patrons. This is because, without adequate use of the library, the essence of its establishment is lost.

There has been a recognition that all prisons should have a library that would be made readily available and accessible for the use and patronage of all the categories of prisoners being housed in a prison and that they should be adequately provided with information resources that would cater to their recreational, instructional and other information needs, (Simunic, Tanackovic & Badurina, 2016). Adequate collection in prison libraries has a remarkable role in the intellectual, emotional, psychological and the overall development of prisoners. This is in line with the prisoners' right

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to information contained in the United Nations (Rule 40) Standard Minimal Rules for the treatment of Prisoners of 2005 (IFLA, 2005), which states that every institution shall have adequately stocked library. The prisoners' participation in identifying the information resources to be procured for the prison library is paramount.

Echezona (2012) inferred that the responsibility of library professionals is not limited to only providing appropriate and useful materials containing information needed by patrons but also making sure these resources are adequate. Afolabi and Afolabi (2019) in their study stated that libraries are burdened with the responsibility of stocking the library with relevant information resources like legal texts, fictions, non-fictions, textbooks, magazines, newspapers, coupled with human resources to promote information provision, utilization and satisfaction of information needs. The study went further to state that these resources were grossly inadequate, while noting that inability of the prison library to provide adequate information resources to meet the information needs of prison inmates may undermine the reformative and transformative goals of prisons. Also, according to the findings of the study by Suleiman and Umar (2022) on an assessment of library information resources and services for inmates in correctional centres in Katsina state, Nigeria, the information resources provided for prisoners are not adequate. Odutola and Alegbeye (2019) stated that information resources available in most of the prisons in developing countries are not adequate and it is because the necessary materials such as reference materials, books needed for educational purposes, newspapers, periodicals, audio-visual materials and electronically stored materials are in low supply. Inadequacy of prison libraries arise as a result of poor and limited funding of the prison library (Chandoni, 2019).

This is supported by Sambo, Usman and Rabi (2017) who asserted that one of the major challenges facing prison libraries in Nigeria as regards providing adequate information resources is funding. They also asserted that another challenging factor is the management and supervision of prison libraries by non-professionals. Ozioko, Nwabueze and Eze (2014) observed that these prisons are provided with resources but in a limited quantity, implying that although these information resources are available, they are grossly inadequate.

Afolabi and Afolabi (2019) investigated the extent of availability and utilization of library information resources among out-of-school prisoners in South-Western Nigeria. The findings of the study indicated that dictionaries, encyclopedias, textbooks, dictionaries and newspapers were the only available information resources to the out-of-school prisoners, while other resources including electronic resources were neither available nor adequate. Also, Eze, (2015) conducted a study on the information needs and resources provision through the prison library in South-East zone of Nigeria. Findings of the study from observation showed that there were library and information resources provided in the library but they were abysmally inadequate. This is mostly as a result of inadequate funds. Among these resources were; religious books, fiction, books on languages, history, science and technology, textbooks on various subjects, magazines and newspapers, in different quantities. Ozioko, Nwabueze and Eze (2014), carried out a study on the provision of library and information resources and services to meet prisoners information needs in South-East Nigeria. The findings of the study indicated that while information resources were available they were grossly inadequate to cater for the information needs of prisoners. Some of these resources are fictions, non-fictions, periodicals such as newspapers

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and magazines.

### 3. Research Methodology

The research design adopted for this study is descriptive survey research design. The study was carried out in prisons in Anambra state. Anambra state is located in the South-Eastern part of Nigeria. Anambra state has four prisons; Medium Security Custodial Centre Aguata, Medium Security Custodial Centre Nnewi, Awka Custodial Centre, and Medium Security Custodial Centre Onitsha. The population of the study consists of all 1781 inmates in the four prisons in Anambra state, Nigeria. (Source: Inmates records of each of the selected prisons). The sample size of the study consists of 327 prisoners drawn from the four custodial centers in Anambra state. This sample size was drawn through the use of Taro Yamane's sample size determination formula. The proportionate stratified random sampling technique was further adopted to ensure that all sub-groups in the population participate in the study in the same proportion as they exist in the population. The instruments that were used for data collection were a researchers-constructed questionnaire, titled 'Information Needs of Prisoners Questionnaire (INPQ)' and an observation checklist, titled 'Adequacy of Information Resources Checklist (AIRC)'. The questionnaire was structured in line with information from the literature reviewed. The checklist was adapted from the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions' (IFLA) guideline for library services to prisoners as well as literature reviewed in line with the purposes of this study. The instruments were given to three experts for validation, two from the Department of Library and Information Science and one from Measurement and Evaluation, Educational Foundations all in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha. To ascertain the internal consistency of the items in 'Information Needs of Prisoners Questionnaire (INPQ)', the instrument was administered to 20 inmates in the Enugu Custodial Centre who are not part of the study area but have similar features to the population of the study.

A total of 327 questionnaires were shared and 314 copies were retrieved by the researchers and the research assistants. The percentage return rate of distributed questionnaires is 96%. In the case where the questionnaires were not retrieved on same day, a new date was rescheduled for completion and collection. The administration and retrieval of the questionnaire was carried out within a period of five weeks. The researchers employed the help of 4 research assistants. These research assistants comprising of prison welfare officers were given an orientation on how to administer, retrieve, and return the completed questionnaires to the researchers. The use of research assistants is necessitated by the unique nature of the population under study and to facilitate quick distribution and retrieval of copies of the questionnaires from the respondents. The second part of the instrument which is the checklist was handled in part by the researchers and also with the help of research assistants. This was done by checking the materials housed in the prison libraries against the resources listed in the checklist. The number of books, newspapers and magazines available were noted in order to help in measuring adequacy.

Arithmetic mean was used to analyzed data obtained from research question one. The analysis was carried out using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Research questions 2, measuring

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adequacy was analysed using the yardstick provided in the IFLA guideline for library services to prisoners and this is presented in percentages, information resources with hundred percent (100%) and above are interpreted as adequate while those with less than hundred percent are interpreted as inadequate.

#### 4. Results

This section presents the results of data analysis in tables in line with the research questions earlier formulated to guide the study.

##### *4.1 Research Question 1: What are the information needs of prisoners in Anambra state?*

Table 1 shows that prisoners have need for all the information listed that are needed for them to function effectively inside and outside prison walls. The various information needs they have include; information on personal hygiene, information on food and nutrition, Religious/spiritual information, Moral information, Legal information, Educational information, Vocational information, Financial information, Information on current affairs, Rights information, Recreational information, Referral information needs for doctors and lawyers consultation, and employment information needs in relation to their eventual release from prison.

Table 1. Respondents' Mean Ratings of Information needed by Prisoners in Prisons in Anambra State

S/N	ITEMS	N	Mean	SD	Remarks
1	Information on personal hygiene	314	3.69	.52	Strongly Agree
2	Information on food and nutrition	314	3.57	.58	Strongly Agree
3	Religious/spiritual information	314	3.38	.72	Agree
4	Moral information	314	3.33	.78	Agree
5	Legal information	314	3.61	.53	Strongly Agree
6	Educational information	314	3.48	.56	Agree
7	Vocational information	314	3.40	.58	Agree
8	Financial information	314	3.36	.57	Agree
9	Information on current affairs	314	3.26	.75	Agree
10	Rights information	314	3.44	.59	Agree
11	Recreational information	314	3.35	.75	Agree
12	Information on prison rules	314	3.58	.61	Strongly Agree
13	Referral information needs for doctors and lawyers consultation	314	3.61	.53	Strongly Agree
14	Employment information needs in relation to eventual release from prison	314	3.58	.62	Strongly Agree

##### *4.2 Research Question 2: What is the adequacy of information resources in meeting the information needs of prisoners?*

Table 2 shows that of all the prison libraries in Anambra state, only ACC has adequate number of books with 5386 (118.8%) out of 4500 based on the IFLA guideline for library services to prisoners, while the books in other prison libraries were found to be inadequate, MSCCO has 1098 (12%) out of 8940, MSCCA has 336 (17%) out of 2000, and MSCCN has 285 (11% ) out of 2620 book titles that are required for adequacy to be met according to the stipulations of the IFLA guideline for library services to prisoners. The library magazine collection were adequate in all the prison libraries, ACC has 150 (652%) out of 23, MSCCO has 104 (216.7%) out of 48, MSCCA has 150 (750%) out of 20, and MSCCN has 80 (400%) magazine titles that are required for adequacy to be met according to the stipulations of the IFLA guideline for library services to prisoners. None of the prison libraries in Anambra state was found to have adequate information resources on newspapers. All the prison libraries do not have any electronic resources, therefore there were no adequate electronic information resources including: CD-ROM databases, Online databases, E-news-papers, E-journals, E-books, E-newsletters, E-dictionaries and Encyclopedia, E-pictures, E-subject guide, and Internet Facilities.

Table 2. Percentages of Adequacy of Available Information Resources in Meeting the Information Needs of Prisoners

S/N	Prison	Expected Number of Items	Number of Items Available	Level of Adequacy (%)	Remarks
<b>1</b>	<b>Books</b>				
	ACC	4500	5346	118.8%	Adequate
	MSCCO	8940	1098	12%	Not adequate
	MSCCA	2000	336	17%	Not adequate
<b>2</b>	<b>Magazines</b>				
	ACC	23	150	652%	Adequate
	MSCCO	48	104	216.7%	Adequate
	MSCCA	20	150	750%	Adequate
<b>3</b>	<b>Newspapers</b>				
	ACC	23	0	0%	Not adequate
	MSCCO	48	0	0%	Not adequate
	MSCCA	20	0	0%	Not adequate
<b>4</b>	<b>CD-ROM Databases</b>				
	ACC	23	0	0%	Not adequate
	MSCCO	48	0	0%	Not adequate
	MSCCA	20	0	0%	Not adequate
<b>5</b>	<b>Online Databases</b>				
	ACC	23	0	0%	Not adequate

S/N	Prison	Expected Number of Items	Number of Items Available	Level of Adequacy (%)	Remarks
6	MSCCO	48	0	0%	Not adequate
	MSCCA	20	0	0%	Not adequate
	MSCCN	20	0	0%	Not adequate
	<b>E-Newspapers</b>				
	ACC	23	0	0%	Not adequate
	MSCCO	48	0	0%	Not adequate
	MSCCA	20	0	0%	Not adequate
7	MSCCN	20	0	0%	Not adequate
	<b>E-Journals</b>				
	ACC	23	0	0%	Not adequate
	MSCCO	48	0	0%	Not adequate
	MSCCA	20	0	0%	Not adequate
8	MSCCN	20	0	0%	Not adequate
	<b>E-Books</b>				
	ACC	23	0	0%	Not adequate
	MSCCO	48	0	0%	Not adequate
	MSCCA	20	0	0%	Not adequate
9	MSCCN	20	0	0%	Not adequate
	<b>E-Newsletters</b>				
	ACC	23	0	0%	Not adequate
	MSCCO	48	0	0%	Not adequate
	MSCCA	20	0	0%	Not adequate
10	MSCCN	20	0	0%	Not adequate
	<b>E-Dictionaries and Encyclopedias</b>				
	ACC	23	0	0%	Not adequate
	MSCCO	48	0	0%	Not adequate
	MSCCA	20	0	0%	Not adequate
11	MSCCN	20	0	0%	Not adequate
	<b>E-Pictures</b>				
	ACC	23	0	0%	Not adequate
	MSCCO	48	0	0%	Not adequate
	MSCCA	20	0	0%	Not adequate
12	MSCCN	20	0	0%	Not adequate
	<b>E-Subject Guide</b>				
	ACC	23	0	0%	Not adequate
	MSCCO	48	0	0%	Not adequate
	MSCCA	20	0	0%	Not adequate
13	MSCCN	20	0	0%	Not adequate
	<b>Internet Facilities</b>				
	ACC	23	0	0%	Not adequate
	MSCCO	48	0	0%	Not adequate
	MSCCA	20	0	0%	Not adequate

S/N	Prison	Expected Number of Items	Number of Items Available	Level of Adequacy (%)	Remarks
	MSSCCN	20	0	0%	Not adequate

ACC= Awka Custodial Centre. MSSCCO= Medium Security Custodial Centre Onitsha. MSSCCA= Medium Security Custodial Centre Aguata. MSSCCN= Medium Security Custodial Centre Nnewi.

The findings show that prison inmates are in dire need of several types of information most of which are necessitated by virtue of their confinement and as a result of which they do not have the same access to information as those who are free in the general society. The various information needs they have include; information on personal hygiene, information on food and nutrition, Religious/spiritual information, Moral information, Legal information, Educational information, Vocational information, Financial information, Information on current affairs, Rights information, Recreational information, Referral information needs for doctors and lawyers consultation, and employment information needs in relation to their eventual release from prison. Prison libraries are therefore expected to enquire and identify these information needs of prisoners and ensure that adequate information resources proportionate to their needs are provided. These findings are in line with the study of Sharda and Twari (2021) that prison inmates have myriad of information need for various purposes including; to gain knowledge and for leisure. Also in agreement with the current study are studies of Canning and Buchanan (2019), Rafedzi and Abrizah (2014), Limbani et al. (2020), Sambo et al. (2017), Gbashima et al. (2016), and Tarzan et al. (2015) where they indicated that several of the types of information listed including information on education, health information, rights information, information on legal issues among others are needed by prisoners and that it is the duty of the prison and prison library to satisfy these needs by providing enough resources an creating an enabling and conducive environment in the library.

The findings of the present study shows that library information resources are not adequate in prison libraries, with books only found adequate in Awka custodial centre, magazines were found adequate in all the prison libraries, newspapers and electronic resources were found to be inadequate in all the prison libraries. This is an indication that although there are information resources available in prison libraries but they are inadequate to meet the information needs of the prison inmates. The current findings agree with Afolabi and Afolabi (2019) that electronic resources are not available at all and therefore inadequate. It also concurs with Eze (2015) that information resources provided in the libraries are abysmally inadequate, mostly as a result of inadequate funds. Also, Ozioko et al. (2014) in their study, acknowledged that while information resources are available they are grossly inadequate to cater to the information needs of prisoners and recommended several strategies to change this situation, including liaising with public libraries, NGOs and other professional bodies; also that the prison authority should cautiously ease up on restrictions and invest in information resources and this includes providing and granting access to electronic resources and internet facilities.

## 6. Conclusion

This study examined the information needs of prisoners and adequacy of information resources

in prison libraries in Anambra state, Nigeria. The findings in this study have shown that prisoners have diverse information needs that are necessary for them to function effectively and efficiently. While there were very few information resources found to be adequate, inadequacy of most of the listed information resources is recorded in prison libraries in Anambra state, Nigeria.

## 7. Recommendation

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that prison libraries should collaborate with public libraries and other authorities such as the government to ensure that adequate information resources are provided towards meeting the information needs of prisoners in Anambra state.

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