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# PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES OF PRISON LIBRARIES IN GHANA: A CASE STUDY OF THE NSAWAM MEDIUM SECURITY PRISONS

## ABSTRACT

*The study explored the provision of library services at the Nsawam Medium Security Prison in Ghana. Incarcerated people are confronted with isolation and are often faced with limitations of personal choices and quality decision making. Library services remain an important service in every society that values freedom. The prison library is one of the few places that offer solace and escape in the extremely regulated lives of prisoners. The report is the result of a study into the information needs of prisoners and the resources and services that are available for this special population. A total of 100 male and female prisoners sampled purposively were selected for the study. The study discovered that literate prisoners of all categories desire library and information services for academic, recreational and rehabilitative purposes. The study however suggests the Ghana Prison Service does not engage professional librarians to manage library services for prisoners of the Nsawam Medium Security Prison. It is also discovered that prisoners and officers alike believe information use could be an effective tool to ensure the restoration of inmates to a socially acceptable life outside of the prison walls. Suggestions made for effective and efficient library and information services for prisoners include development of a general academic collection, provision of civic and legal education for prisoners, engagement of professional librarians to manage prison library, reading promotion and collaboration with public library services to offer standard prison library services in a bid to achieve the rehabilitation goal of the prison.*

**KEYWORDS: CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES, INFORMATION USE, RESTORATION, INFORMATION NEEDS, BIBLIOTHERAPY, CONFINED PERSONS.**

## Introduction

Human societies at all times have had some of her members deviate from the generally acceptable social norms. Such deviants are often referred to as criminals in many national laws. Many of these criminals are subjected to various measures intended to punish and/or reform them. Some of these measures include payment of fines, banishment, corporal and capital punishment, community service and the much popular imprisonment. Imprisonment has gradually replaced the much cruel

forms of such measures like banishment, corporal and capital punishment over the last few centuries. Criminals who are treated by any of these measures are normally confined with the intention to reform and rehabilitate them to conform to the standards and expectations of the society. It is therefore no surprise that such institutions of confinements are now referred to, in contemporary parlance, as correctional institutions.

Every community of people requires information for decision-making and quality of life, so the prison inmate also has a need to good quality information. Campbell (2005) writes that prisoners need to know how to survive and how they might get out. To survive, they need to know who is trustworthy, what will make the prison society accept them and what rights to humane treatment they have. To get out they need to know the law and what they can do with their lives when free.

Access is the permission and opportunity to use a document in print or non-print media (Prytherch, 1987). According to Vickery and Vickery (1987), there is an initial impression that the proliferation of publications, libraries and the mass of information centers would ensure recorded information is available to everyone. They add that even in the free world, not everyone in need of information has the same chance of receiving it. Confined persons like prisoners face challenges like fear, inability to identify an appropriate source; inadequate knowledge of what the library has to offer and who can be approached for it; and psychological reluctance to ask for information for fear of any further punishment. They posit further that prisoners generally have low level of education and this inform their decision to use a library service.

## **The Historical Development of Prison Libraries**

Prisons were first established to banish and confine the offender, subjecting him or her to hard labour. While in prison, reading was confined to the Bible and similar religious material aimed at inculcating morality and the guardian of this genre was the prison chaplain, whose responsibility was to assure the reader's penitence (Shirley, 2003). According to Agboyi (1989) the growth and development of prison libraries is as old as the prison institution itself. But it is difficult to date exactly the genesis of prison libraries. Earlier records indicate that the Philadelphia Prison Society in the United States played a significant role in this direction as they provided books to the Walnut Street Jail in the 1790's. It was however until the 1840's that concrete steps were taken to extend the frontiers of prison libraries.

Saunders (1966) reports that prison library services in the United Kingdom were very closely linked to the concepts of education and reformation of that era. After the Prison Act of 1877, attention was given to prisoners' education and basic instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic. Shirley (2003) adds that further developments were fuelled by the American Library Association (ALA), The American Correctional Association (ACA) and the American Prison Association (APA) as they spearheaded the developing of standards for new and improved library services in prisons resulting in publications like the *Prison Library Handbook* (1932) primarily aimed at "moral therapy". In 1911, the ALA's Committee on Libraries in Federal Prisons moved for the provision of library services in all prisons, an action that brought tremendous growth in the development of prison libraries in the United States. Shirley (2003) maintains that the *Manual of Correctional Standards* (1946) published by the American Correctional Association (ACA) outlined the importance of a

library provision policy designed to contribute to the development of the individual and their restoration as creative members of the community.

### **The Nsawam Medium Security Prisons Library**

The Nsawam Medium Security Prisons Library, alongside the Prison School were two units dedicated to the intellectual development of inmates since the establishment of the Nsawam Medium Security Prison in 1960. From the layout of the Prison, a Library block had been located close to the Prison School to be patronized by inmates.

The collection of the Library is mainly religious material donated chiefly by religious institutions. But there are also books on English Language and Literature, Geography, Politics, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. It must be emphasized that many of the books in the collection at the time of conducting the study were religious books like the Bible, the Qu'ran, and other books by religious authorities. With the exception of pornographic books, all donated materials were readily accepted and kept on the shelves.

It is also worthy of note that the books are arranged by subject and kept in closed shelves, a situation that hinders open access and does not allow an easy view of the titles as there is no form of a Library Catalogue for users. The author is also informed of censorship restrictions on certain library materials. The Library also grants borrowing rights of a maximum of three books for every two weeks to all inmates with the exception of Condemn Inmates.

The services offered in the Library are mainly reader services. The Library is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily with the exception of weekends. However, the library's few seating facilities are also actively used by inmates who use the Library as a classroom. As a result, inmates who wish to access the Prison Library during the opening hours are denied the opportunity once a class session is underway.

In terms of staffing, oversight responsibility of the Library is vested in the Education Coordinator of the Prison, but the daily management of the Library is by an Inmate with no basic training in librarianship. The "Librarian" is also an Inmate with penal responsibilities like any other prisoner and so is absent from the Library for some periods during which the Library is closed except there is a class session underway. This situation also largely hinders access to the Library. The study also revealed that, there was no involvement of the Public Library System in the services of the Library as the researcher was told by Prison Officials, a situation which may partly account for the quality of services provided at the Library.

The highly regulated environment of the Prison naturally results in a lot of security measures in the Library as all books are locked in shelve cases. Rules on borrowing are strict but the absence of any form of Collection Policy does not ensure an appropriate collection needed by inmates for academic, social and recreational purposes.

### **Problem Statement**

The study sought to explore the prospects and challenges involved in the provision of prison library services at the Nsawam Medium Security Prisons in Ghana. Prisons are places of rehabilitation and

reformation, a statement corroborated by the motto of the Nsawam Medium Security Prison which reads: “Rehabilitation and Reformation”. The Nsawam Medium Security Prison is the largest prison in Ghana and is constantly confronted with congestion at a scale that makes the achievement of its goal of rehabilitation and reformation of inmates very daunting. As shown by the literature, formal education could be an effective tool to achieving this end of rehabilitation and reformation of prisoners, for which a library and access to its resources remains an indispensable tool.

The Nsawam Medium Security Prison has a school which runs functional literacy programs and coordinates academic programs at all levels of education for inmates. At the time of collecting data for the study in June 2010, a number of students (inmates) were enrolled in Distance Education programmes at the University of Ghana, Legon and University of Cape Coast to acquire Degree and Diploma qualifications, while some of them also studied to obtain Junior and Senior High School Certificates. Markwei (2010) reports that 12 convicts achieved an impressive 100% pass rate in the Basic Education Certificate Examination, a result that led to the Nsawam Medium Security Prison being designated a West African Examination Council Examination Centre for their tests.

In spite of the positive impacts the education of inmates has on the rehabilitation goal of the prison, there is no fully functional library service for inmates of the Nsawam Medium Security Prison, as its present collection is predominantly dependent on donation of largely religious material. An initial pre-study into the state of library services provision at the Nsawam Medium Security Prison also revealed the poor nature of other services and the absence of vital resources like budget and funding, as well as standard quality staffing for prison library services.

Shirley (2006) reiterates that prisoners have the same information needs as persons in regular society and her statement gives credence to the fact that a poor collection which is also managed unprofessionally with no form of funding support does not augur well for a standard quality library service and is counter-productive to the rehabilitation and educational goal of the prison in reforming prisoners.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This article endeavoured to study the prospects and challenges of prison libraries in Ghana, with the largest central prison in Ghana, the Nsawam Medium Security Prisons as a case study. The purpose of this study was to evaluate library services provision to inmates of this Prison and how these services affect the rehabilitation and reformation process of inmates and their subsequent re-integration into society.

### **Research Questions**

The study attempted to answer the following questions to achieve its purpose in the context of the Nsawam Medium Security Prison: What are the educational backgrounds of literate prisoners? What are the information needs of literate prisoners? What are the subject interests of literate inmates? What is the level of use of prison library services by inmates? To what extent are prison library services managed professionally? What is the role of library services in the rehabilitation of prisoners and are they aware of this role?



### **Scope and Limitation of the Study**

The study covered the Nsawam Medium Security Prison, the largest of the Central Prisons in Ghana. This prison experiences overcrowding in a scale not yet seen in other prisons in Ghana. It is expected that some of the results of this study could be applicable to other central prisons in Ghana. Again, the study covered only prisoners with formal education, and hence the concerns of illiterate inmates were not considered. Future research may focus on the latter category of inmates as well as inmates with mental health issues as previous studies show 75% of women and 55% of men have some mental illness, a condition that may affect how they access information (Greenway, 2007).

### **Significance of the Study**

The study examined how prisoners of the Nsawam Medium Security Prison access and use library services that are available in the prison and how they themselves view and appreciate such a service. In view of current advances and developments elsewhere in prison libraries provisions, the author believes it is imperative a study of this kind is conducted to find out similar developments in Ghana's largest and most populated prison, the Nsawam Medium Security Prison. Results from this study could give a fair idea as to the situation in other Ghanaian prisons of this "essential service" for future planning of prison library services. The study would also fill a research gap as there is no recent research in the literature of prison library services provision in the Ghanaian context.

### **Literature Review**

According to Lehmann (2000), incarcerated persons generally have the same reading interests and information needs as individuals in the free world; they can, however, be considered disadvantaged by the mere fact that they do not have physical access to libraries in the outside

community. Demographic data show that they are further disadvantaged by a disproportionately high level of illiteracy, lack of educational attainment, insufficient vocational skills, and a high rate of mental illness and emotional instability (Lehmann, 2000).

Omagbemi and Odunewu (2008) indicate that prisoners has information needs ranging from news and current affairs through legal information, religious information, psychological information, recreational information, vocational information to educational information. Lehmann and Locke (2005) in the International Federation of Libraries and Associated Institutions' (IFLA) *Guidelines for Library Services to Prisoners*, make some suggestions on the types of library services to be provided prisons inmates. They advise that provision should be based on a demographic profile of the prison population and the library long-range plan.

The IFLA's *Guidelines for Library Services to Prisoners* (2005) and the *U.S. Library Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions* (1992) and the *British Guidelines for Prison Libraries* all address library staff qualifications and staffing levels. According to the IFLA guidelines, all prison libraries, regardless of size, should be supervised or managed by a professional librarian with the necessary qualifications and skills obtained through a university degree in library information science or equivalent library school diploma. Lehmann (2000) adds that a broad academic education in traditional librarianship that includes coursework in outreach services, literacy, multicultural resources, legal collections, and materials for the learning disabled, is probably the best foundation on which to build a career in prison librarianship.

The fact that “books can save” is supported by the American Correctional Association’s *Manual on Library Service* which states that the library programme and its services should be geared to all prison inmates enabling them to improve their ability to live successfully in these rapidly changing complex times. Campbell (2005), Palmer (2000) and Sullivan (1947) agree on the therapeutic potential of the book on the mind. This practice of using books to ensure healing of the psychologically disturbed is referred to as bibliotherapy. The term bibliotherapy originated from two Greek words “biblion” (book) and “oepatteid” (healing). The Greek concept of healing embodies identification, insight, and catharsis. Palmer (2000) describes the concept of bibliotherapy as the use of books to help people like prison inmates to solve problems and make change in their personal lives.

Recognition of education as a principal factor in rehabilitation and in the eventual reintegration of offenders as productive members of the community is a significant new stance for prisons (Wilhemus, 1999). As a result, it is becoming increasingly important for prison libraries to take a lead in this direction to ensure the achievement of the mission of the prison and justify its existence. Both Harlow (2003) and Wilhemus (1999) also believe that the educational role of the library is clear and that with over 40% of prisoners needing to attain high school equivalency, and another 50% ready to move past high school and into post-secondary education, there is an obvious need for academic programming in prisons and a collection that supports their educational needs and goals.

### **Research Methodology**

The study was conducted using the case study approach to evaluate the provision of library services available to prisoners at the Nsawam Medium Security Prison and as a user study to determine how

prison inmates access and use those services. According to Aina (2004), user studies are important for libraries to meet the information needs of their users.

The population of the study consisted of inmates who can read, write and comprehend in the English Language. According to officials of the Nsawam Medium Security Prison, literate inmate population of the prison are about 500 and this number formed the actual population of the study consisting of male and female inmates. The study made use of the Purposive Sampling approach to select sample as most literate inmates were identified to be students of the Prison School. The total population of the prisoners at the time this study was being conducted in June 2010 was 3,230. Out of this number 3,110 were males while the remaining 120 were females. Additionally, the Officer-In-Charge and the Head of Education Affairs of the Male Prison were also selected. This study made use of 100 (20%) inmates of an estimated 500 literate inmates who may also have used the library at one time or the other.

Two types of questionnaire, made of open and close-ended questions, were used to elicit the views of sampled prisoners and prison officials. Questions were asked in respect to areas like educational background and category of inmates, reading interest and subject interests of inmates, frequency of use of library, adequacy and satisfaction with library services as well as awareness of the rehabilitative role of the prison library.

Data was collected in person with the assistance of prison officers from the Prison and the Head of the Prison School. The data collected was edited, coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) software, version 16.0. The results were presented as descriptive

statistics (frequencies and percentages) at the end of the analysis. The findings were presented in tables.

### **Results and Discussion of Findings**

Out of 100 copies of questionnaire distributed to prison inmates, all copies representing 100% of the questionnaire were retrieved and analyzed and the results presented in cross-tabulation form. This was possible because the researcher personally supervised the administration of the questionnaire on June 10, 2010 and collected them on the spot upon completion.

At the Male Prison, a total of 78 copies of the questionnaire were distributed and retrieved representing 78% of the total number of questionnaires. 22 copies of the questionnaire were distributed at the Female Prison which has a total population of 120 inmates. All copies of the questionnaire were retrieved representing 22% of the total questionnaires.

### **Educational Background of Inmates**

A major question the study sought to find answer to was the educational background of literate inmates. This was to be able to find out how their educational levels influence their information needs and use. The educational qualifications of inmates were captured in **Table 1**:

**Table 1: Educational Background of Inmates**

<b>Levels of Education</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Bachelors Degree	16	16.0
HND	8	8.0
Diploma	4	4.0
GCE A/O Levels	16	16.0
WASSCE/SSSCE	32	32.0
Other	20	20.0
More than one qualification	1	1.0
No response	3	3.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Field Survey, 2010**

It can be seen in **Table 1** that the single highest qualification of inmates was WASSCE/SSSCE, with 32 respondents (32%). It is important to mention too that there were equal respondents of 16 for both Bachelors' Degree and GCE "A"/"O" Levels respectively representing 16% each. One observation here is that the frequency of respondents tended to decrease with higher educational achievement. This shows that as the level of education goes higher, the level of awareness of respondents with the law and crime increases resulting in low crime rate among much educated inmates. Omagbemi and Odunewu (2008) agree with this observation as they posited that the level of education of respondents relates to inmates' awareness of the law.

## Information Needs and Requirements of Prisoners

This question was one of the major variables of the study. Inmates were given the liberty to choose more than one option since humans information needs vary considerably. The responses are displayed in **Table 2** below:

**Table 2: Information Needs and Requirements of Prisoners**

Type of Information	Frequency	Percentage
Religious Information	14	14.0
Legal Information	4	4.0
News And Current Affairs	10	10.0
Psychological Information	2	2.0
Educational Information	18	18.0
Recreational Information	1	1.0
Other	9	9.0
More than one type of Information	33	33.0
No response	9	9.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Field Survey, 2010**

**Table 2** shows that many inmates (33%) require more than one type of information as diverse as human needs and motivation are. The single most important type of information was educational information which accounted for 18%. This is not surprising as it was discovered early on that inmates with secondary education were higher compared to any one single category. This group is normally interested in further studies and so often need subject-specific information. One

interesting finding was that only two percent of inmates indicated their need for psychological information. Burt (1977), Omagbemi and Odunewu (2008) discovered similar findings. Burt (1977) opines that the failure syndrome of prisoners must be overcome and their self-concept improved before significant learning can take place. This would therefore require the promotion of psychological and sociological information to inmates to influence and change their worldview.

### **Subjects Interests of Inmates**

Inmates were also asked about their subject interests. Responses to this question could be a good indication of the study areas of the inmates whose educational statuses are known. These facts could inform the study of particular information needs of literate inmates and therefore aid in a good collection building programme in the future. The responses are captured in **Table 3** below:

**Table 3: Subject Interests of Inmates**

<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Arts	9	9.0
Business	27	27.0
Science and Technology	18	18.0
Technical and Vocational	8	8.0
Other	12	12.0
More than one subject area	22	22.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Field Survey, 2010**

**Table 3** reveals a good number of inmates read in more than one subject area (22%). This is



characteristically so since many of the respondents are not specialized in any field yet as revealed by their educational qualifications. It is therefore clear that a significant number of inmates are general readers. Business subjects were the most read (27%), followed by Science and Technology (18%). Other subject areas read were mainly religious education and spirituality.

### **Prison Library Use**

The study also intended to find out if inmates used the library by dint of their awareness of the Prison Library. As a prelude to this question, inmates were asked if they knew of the Prison Library of which 78% of respondents answered in the affirmative. It was revealed that seventy-six inmates (76%) used the Prison Library. As a result, only 2% of inmates who knew of the existence of the Prison Library did not use it. This shows that awareness of the Prison Library among inmates is also an important factor for patronising it. **Table 4** below shows the responses of prisoners on library use:

**Table 4: Prison Library Use**

<b>Prison Library Use</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	76	76.0
No	17	17.0
No Response	7	7.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Field Survey, 2010**

An important issue realized with library use also indicated low female awareness and consequent use of library services. This is apparently because of the absence of a separate library for female

inmates. This phenomenon is contrary to the International Federation of Libraries and Associated Institutions' (IFLA) *Guidelines for Library Services to Prisoners* (2005) which recommends that prison library provision be based on a demographic profile of the prison population. According to the Bureau of Justice Report (2006), even though most prisoners are male (90%), recent trends suggest this gap is closing. It is therefore imperative for authorities to consider setting up a separate library for the female prison.

Again, to maximize use of the Prison Library, inmates must be involved in the selection of library materials. This is in line with Burt (1977) who posits that the selection of library materials cannot be separated from informational needs. Selection must therefore be done by a selection committee made up of responsible inmates, members of the prison staff, and public librarians (Burt, 1977).

### **Professional Management of Prison Library**

This question intended to find out if the Prison Library was managed by a library professional. To make the question more understandable, they were asked if they knew who offered them assistance when using the library. An earlier question on whether inmates received any help when looking for information showed that they received assistance of a sort as indicated by a higher number of 48 respondents (48%) as against 31 (31%) who did not believe that. To ascertain officially if the library was managed by a professional or not, the prison official assigned to the library answered in the negative. According to the American Library Association's (ALA) *U.S. Library Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions* (1992), a prison library with a population of over 1,000 must be managed by one professional Library Director, one Assistant Librarian, and three Library Technicians or Clerks. Considering the population of

the Nsawam Medium Security Prison, it would be appropriate to have such a staff profile for the Prison Library.

### **The role of Information in the Rehabilitation and Reformation Process of Inmates**

The question of whether inmates themselves believed information was a tool for rehabilitating and reforming their lives was a major variable of the study, was also intended to find out from inmates and officials alike if they thought information and library use could be a tool for positive character change. Their responses are captured in the **Table 5** below:

**Table 5: Information as a Tool for Rehabilitation and Reformation of Inmates**

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<b>Rating</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly Agree	72	72.0
Agree	15	15.0
Disagree	4	4.0
Strongly Disagree	5	5.0
No Response	4	4.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

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**Source: Field Survey, 2010**

It is clear from **Table 5** that as high as 72 (72%) of inmate respondents and the two senior prison officers who responded conceded that information use can be a tool to reform the character of inmates and ultimately lead them to become responsible citizens. Studies done by Sullivan (1947); Campbell (2005); and Palmer (2000) throw more light on the concept of bibliotherapy.

Palmer (2000) describes bibliotherapy as the use of books to help people solve problems and make change. The fact that “books can save” is supported by the American Correctional Association Manual on Library Service which states that the library programme and its services should be geared to all prison inmates enabling them to improve their ability to live successfully in these rapidly changing complex times. To achieve this, the library program, among others must develop reading as a satisfying leisure-time activity, a therapeutic release from strain, and a positive aid in substituting new interests for undesirable attitudes.

## **CONCLUSION**

The study has established that adequate provision of library and information services to prisoners would greatly assist inmates in meeting their information needs. It has also demonstrated that effective access and use of available information also depends on supporting the library, both in terms of qualified personnel and resources. The study has also revealed that a significant number of inmates are general readers. This is so because many of the prison inmates are not highly educated but most also have basic and secondary education. This could inform much of the subject needs of literate inmates and therefore aid in a good collection development and management programme in the future. The study also reveals a lack of co-operation with the public library system in Ghana in the running of the Prison Library as advocated by the IFLA/UNESCO *Public Library Manifesto* (1995) which calls for public libraries to serve prisoners. Finally, in relation to the rehabilitation goal of the Prison, it has been established that books in prison can be used by inmates as a means of escape, whilst prison administrators could use it as an instrument of power to “redeem” and control (Sullivan, 1998).

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

In the light of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are being made to improve prison library services at the Nsawam Medium Security Prisons:

### **1. Development of General Academic Collection**

The prison library is currently stocked with materials that are largely for basic and preparatory education as well as religious materials. The collection also excludes any standard textbook materials for academic purposes. This calls for the development of a collection that is more academic in nature in diverse subject areas. The Prison Library must also make provision for audio-visual materials, computers, as well as a simulated Internet for learning by inmates. Finally, for optimal use of the collection of the Library, prisoners must be involved in the selection and acquisition of materials to satisfy their needs.

### **2. Provision of Legal and Civic Education Literature for Prison Inmates**

Books on the law must also be available as awareness of the law serves to deter current offenders from further breaking of the law, an act referred to as recidivism. This could also be the starting point for the establishment of a prison law library to offer basic legal education to inmates on their basic rights. The need for prison libraries in Ghana is further re-enforced by a recent ruling of the Supreme Court of Ghana to allow prisoners to exercise their franchise. In line with this, the Government of Ghana must insist that prison authorities make a portion of their budgetary allocation available for the development of libraries in every prison in Ghana.

### **3. Professional Management of Prison Library**

The study also revealed that the Prison Library is not managed by a professional librarian, but by inmates and untrained “librarians” who normally have Senior High School Certificates or a similar qualification. A minimum qualification of a Diploma in Library Studies is required of the library manager. The character of the librarian must be one interested in working with prisoners and a person with a strong character to be able to provide adequate information for the transformation of the lives of prisoners. The librarian must spend at least five hours of direct service per week for inmates (ALA, 2007). The person must be schooled on prison security as this is the utmost concern of prison authorities.

#### **4. Reading Promotion for Inmates through Outreach Services**

A readership promotion must be embarked upon to whip the interest of inmates in reading. It must be made known to them the benefits of reading in the rehabilitation process. Prison authorities should be aware that inmates who are engaged in productive pursuits are less likely to cause problems and disturbances, thus properly preparing such inmates for return to the free society. This also calls for the extension of public library services to the prisons, a programme that could be spearheaded by the Ghana Library Authority. The prison librarian can serve as a liaison to ensure external service providers are familiar with prison rules and regulations as well as in the design of appropriate programmes for inmates.

#### **5. Establishment of Separate Library for Female Prisoners**

The study also revealed the low use of library services by female inmates. This is as a result of the fact that the female prison does not have its separate library, but relies on selection from the male prison. Female users also deserve their own separate library as they are increasingly becoming a significant size of the prison population (Bureau of Justice, 2006). They must therefore be encouraged to patronize this service by involving them in the planning of services and selection of the materials they read.

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